

Minutes of a Meeting of Bradfield Parish Council held on

Tuesday 1st November 2022 at 7.30pm in St. Peter's Church Hall, Bradfield Southend.

Present: Cllr. A. House (Chairman)
Cllr. M. Ashbrook
Cllr. K. Dearing
Cllr. S. O'Reilly
Cllr. T. Wale
Cllr. R. Wyatt
Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk)

There were four members of the public in attendance.

123. **Apologies.**

Apologies of absence were received from Cllr. R. Balsdon, Cllr. P. Isherwood, Cllr. P. Henwood and District Cllr. MacKinnon.

124. **Declarations of Interest.**

The Clerk received updated copies of declarations of interest from two councillors. There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.

125. **Public Forum.**

125.1 **Proposed Phone Mast.**

Concern was raised by residents of Heath Road about the proposals to place a 20m high phone mast on the corner of Heath Road and Southend Road. Local residents have not been consulted on the proposals. It was suggested that information about the proposal could be posted on social media.

District Cllr. MacKinnon has confirmed that planning permission for phone masts within the AONB is required.

125.2 **Bradfield Village Hall.**

A letter has been sent to Bradfield Village Hall Committee by a parishioner raising questions and concerns about the finances of the existing hall on the basis of reduced income following one of the main users vacating the hall in August 2022.

All the focus of the committee has in recent years been on the development project.

It is three years since the project was granted planning permission and the project has been stalled for the last year due to a shortfall in funds, during which time the projected costs of the project have increased significantly. As a result of research into the funding situation, the feasibility and viability of the project should be discussed and reviewed. In particular,

1. There are a very limited number of funding providers who make funds available to projects with a cost of £2.2million. A significant number of funding bodies will only consider projects with a total cost of £250,000 or less. Where eligibility criteria do not include the cost of the project, funds offered are generally less than £100,000.
2. The hall utilisation in the revised Business Plan doesn't include information on hall utilisation rates, charging rates or calculations at how the projected income is achieved. To achieve the stated, projected 5-year income of £163,000, it has been calculated that the hall would have to be in use for 11 hours every weekday at £15 per hour. This was considered to be a high level of usage in order to cover operating costs. As a result, use of the existing hall has been examined. In 2016 the hall recorded a modest profit with utilisation of 43%. Utilisation of the existing hall is estimated to have dropped to 13% in 2022 with an associated loss in income. If the hall is running at a loss, questions have been asked about how long the financial reserves can sustain the hall.

As a result of these issues, BPC were asked to consider broadening the scope of the financial reason for non-support of the project to include funding availability, eligibility criteria for grants and concerns about whether the existing hall will need additional support in order to sustain it

126. **Approval of Minutes.**

126.1 **BPC meeting held on Tuesday 4th October 2022.**

It was resolved that the minutes of the BPC meeting on Tuesday 4th October 2022 were an accurate reflection of the meeting, and they were signed by Cllr. House.

127. **Matters arising from the minutes.**

127.1 **McVeigh Parker Planning Conditions.**

Research is ongoing into the condition on tree planting on the most recent planning application.

127.2 **Dog bin.**

No progress has been made with the new dog bin opposite Wellington Gardens.

127.3 **Bradfield Alms Houses.**

No update on the constitution of the Alms House Charity has been received.

127.4 **Picnic Benches.**

Delivery of the picnic benches to the play area and the field is still pending.

127.5 **Sovereign Housing Footway.**

The footway from South End Road to New Way is overgrown with brambles and weed in addition to the surface needing attention. This will be reported to Sovereign Housing Association.

127.6 **Footway from Hungerford Lane to The Avenue.**

Works around the outfall of the ditch at The Avenue end of the footway still need to be fenced.

127.7 **Southend Road Footway by the Old Bakery.**

The spongy footway (pavement) has been reported to WBC as problem number 212546.

127.8 **Platinum Jubilee Plaque.**

The supplier of the Platinum Jubilee Plaque has been contacted about a commemorative place for Queen Elizabeth II. If available this could go alongside the Platinum Jubilee Plaque.

127.9 **Heath Road Tree Replacement.**

No recommendation has been received about a replacement for the cedar/pine tree.

127.10 **Blossom into Spring watering.**

Thank you, cards are being organised for the people concerned.

127.11 **Bylaws restricting practicing golf in open spaces.**

The Clerk has enquired of WBC about bylaws prohibiting the practicing of golf. Whilst a final answer is awaited, it is thought that it is up to the custodian to set the rules.

128. **Planning Applications**

128.1 **Planning Applications on which BPC has been consulted by WBC:**

128.1.1 **22/02421/HOUSE – Flora House, Southend Road.**

Single storey rear extension, internal alterations, new porch and new patio area.

It was unanimously agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application.

128.1.2 **22/02384/FUL – Fishers Copse House.**

Erection of a garden room following demolition of stables and erection of garage as an alternative to extant garage approved under 82/17076/ADD.

It was agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application, subject to the buildings remaining ancillary to Fishers Copse House and the carports not being enclosed.

128.1.3 **22/02501/HOUSE – Stanford Woods.**

Erection of three-bay, oak-framed garage.

It was noted that the access track goes over a bridge, over the footpath and doesn't cross the footpath.

It was agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application subject to no windows being inserted into the garage structure and it remaining ancillary to Stanford Woods.

128.1.4 22/02597/FUL & 22/02598/LBC – The Lodge, Buckhold.

Reroofing, window and door repairs, installation of new rooflight, internal alterations to move bathroom to first floor level and installation of air source heat pump.

It was unanimously agreed that BPC has **no objection** to these applications.

128.1.5 22/02616/FUL – Stanley House, Bradfield College.

Section 73: Variation of Conditions 2 (Approved Plans), 7 (Tree Protection Fencing), 8 (CMS), 9 (Biodiversity) and 10 (Drainage) of previously approved application 22/00921/FUL: Extensions to boarding house, new disabled access platform lift and associated works including drainage works, tree removal, hard and soft landscaping.

It was unanimously agreed that BPC has **no objection** to this application.

128.2 Planning decisions taken by WBC:

128.2.1 22/00921/FUL – Stanley House, Bradfield College.

Extensions to boarding house and associated works including drainage works, tree removal, hard and soft landscaping.

BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

128.2.2 22/01842/LBC2 – Church of St. Andrew.

Section 19 Application: Variation of a Condition 2 (approved plans) following Grant of Listed Building Consent of approved application 20/01308/LBC2: Works associated with the conversion of the Church comprising internal and external alterations and building fabric repairs; removal, relocation and adaptation of internal fixtures; partial demolition of south transept south façade and existing Gray School plant room; erection of link building to Gray School and new plant room; complete reroofing, works to basement, installation of staircase within south transept, raised floor, mezzanines, spiral staircase, internal access ramp, tiered seating, glazed screens within arches, wall panelling, bookcases, ventilation, heating and lighting, WCs, reception and refreshment counters and acoustic rafts; repairs to boundary walls and railings, replacement of southern boundary wall, new fencing and associated hard and soft landscaping works.

BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

128.3 22/01677/HOUSE – Broadwoods, Heath Road.

Garage conversion.

BPC **objected** to this application which after an amendment to the description was **approved** by WBC.

128.4 Enforcement Issues.

128.4.1 Land opposite the Old Travellers Rest.

A third large shipping container has been placed on the land, previously part of the Old Travellers Rest. This is a prominent area within the AONB. WBC Enforcement have been advised and questions asked about the land classification.

128.4.2 Speedwell, Scratchface Lane.

Brick pillars have been built within 6 feet of the road which are expected to be for electric gates. It is understood that a 6,500 litre freshwater tank has been installed by the back door (water is supplied from a bore hole). Questions were asked about whether permitted development rights were removed.

129. District Councillor's Report.

District Cllr. MacKinnon had sent his apologies and not submitted a report.

130. Affordable Housing.

- 130.1 Admoor Lane properties.
The Clerk will contact Sovereign Housing Association to enquire who has been offered 5, Admoor Lane, so that BPC can respond to the other applicants.
There has been no further information from Sovereign Housing about the mutual exchange of an Admoor Lane property.
- 130.2 Stretton Close Properties.
The four affordable properties in Stretton Close will shortly be advertised on the WBC Home Choices Website. Local people from Bradfield parish have priority for the initial lets of these properties. The Clerk will verify that the two, two-bedroom properties are for rent and the three and four bedroom properties are part ownership.
131. **Highways.**
- 131.1 Drains on South End Road.
WBC carried out a survey on the drains during the week commencing the 10th October. Tree roots were found to be blocking the drain, some of which have been cleared, but further work is needed to resolve the problem, for which there has been no time scales.
- 131.2 Footway from Wellington Gardens to Hungerford Lane.
Whilst some sections of the path have been patched others have not. The job appears to have been abandoned. The Clerk will report this to WBC.
- 131.3 Community Speedwatch.
WBC carried out a speed survey on the 19th October, between 7.30am and 8.30am, on traffic in the Boot Farm area. There were 15 drivers recorded doing over 35mph who will receive warning letters from Thames Valley Police.
The Clerk has thanked WBC for carrying out this survey.
- 131.4 Road Closures
Several road closures have been in place including one on Cock Lane due to a water leak. Buckhold Hill will be closed on the 3rd November.
- 131.5 Wheelie bin signs.
It was agreed that BPC would consider giving two wheelie bin stickers to each household on Southend Road and Cock Lane (from Southend Road to The Laffords) to encourage a reduction in speed. The Clerk will calculate how many stickers would be required and the potential costs.
132. **Remembrance Sunday Service (13th November).**
The hedges have been cut around the war memorial. A road closure application has been submitted to WBC, and management (including signage) of the closure has been ordered from Sunbelt Rentals.
The Chaplain from Bradfield College will lead the service. Bradfield College will provide an honour guard and a bugler. Thames Valley Police will be in attendance.
Bradfield WI will provide refreshments in the Social Club after the service.
Cllr. House has collected the wreath. It was agreed to make a donation from S106 funds to the Poppy Appeal of £50.
The Risk assessment for the event has been updated and circulated to councillors.
133. **Environment.**
- 133.1 Defibrillators.
There has been a recall of some defibrillators dependent upon the version of software they are running. The Clerk is verifying whether the BPC defibrillators are affected.
The Clerk is trying to clarify whether there are any first responders in Bradfield who may be able to help with training.
- 133.2 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in the Parish.
No progress has been made with TPOs in the parish.
134. **Reports.**

- 134.1 Bradfield Village Hall Committee.
Cllr. O'Reilly reported that the committee are looking to organise a meeting between a concerned parishioner, some members of the committee and District Cllr. MacKinnon. The Committee have removed some cupboards and decorated the Committee Room in the existing hall and are keen that BPC returns to hold meetings in the Committee Room.. BPC has previously agreed to continue meeting in St. Peter's church until February when the situation will be reviewed.
The Committee are close to securing a significant grant for the development project.
135. **Correspondence.**
- 135.1 Berkshire Association of Local Councils (BALC).
The AGM of BALC will take place on Wednesday 9th November at 7pm in the Oak Wood Centre in Woodley.
BALC offer a number of "face to face" and zoom training sessions for councillors.
- 135.2 WBC Cost of Living Hub.
WBC has changed the emphasis of the Hub to be those challenged by the increase in the cost of living.
- 135.3 Increase in costs of WBC dog bin emptying services.
The WBC charge for emptying of a dog bin was just over £0.50 per week. This will increase to £3.41 from January 2023.
Bradfield PC has six bins emptied by WBC. The annual charge is currently £156.66 but will increase to £1,064.04.
It should be noted that Triangle Management currently charge £4.05 per bin.
BPC unanimously accepted the increase in costs from WBC.
- 135.4 Letter from Bradfield Village Hall Committee (dated 28/10/22).
A reply has been received from the Hall committee in response to BPC's reasons for non-support. The letter sets out a way of improving transparency/openness which is welcome, but now needs to be demonstrated. A checkpoint early in the 2023 has been suggested. Concern was raised about whether the current committee fully understands the financial situation.
- 135.5 Ukrainian Hub.
A new Ukrainian support officer has been appointed to work in the Ukrainian hub and is interested in meeting with any groups who are meeting in rural areas.
136. **Finance.**
- 136.1 Bank Reconciliation to the 1/11/2022.
The finance report showed a balance of £14,973.00 in the Treasurers account once all cheques and lodgements have cleared. This is after £45,000 has been transferred to the Business Account. This reconciles to the current account bank statement dated the 3/10/2022 with a balance of £43,034.49. The business account statement showed a balance of £42,124.53 on the 27/9/2022.
- 136.2 List of payments and receipts since the last meeting.
The following payments have been made since the last meeting:
Salaries and expenses to 1/11/2022: £454.05
The following funds have been received:
Second half of the precept: £9,750.00
CIL monies for Speedwell: £8,041.44
Payment of the Clerk's salary for November 2022 was approved.
- 136.3 Renewal of CPRE and CCB membership.
It was agreed to renew membership of CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) and CCB (Connecting Communities in Berkshire) as per the budget.

136.4 CIL monies received.

The following CIL funds have been received since January 2019:

October 2022: £8,041.44

May 2022: £38,974.89

May 2020: £2,573.54

May 2019: £2,636.72

CIL funds have been used to part fund the defibrillator and the new benches.

137. **Round table comments.**

137.1 Ditches.

Drainage ditches have been dug in Cock Lane at the junction with Bishop's Road.

137.2 Southend Road by Cripps Farm.

The tarmac in the road is breaking up where Gigaclear cables were laid.

137.3 Scarecrow Trail.

The Scarecrow trail went ahead over half term with five entries.

138. **The meeting concluded at 9.30pm.**

Next meetings: Tuesday 6th December 2022 at 7.30pm in St. Peter's Church, Bradfield Southend.