

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SHOSCOMBE HELD ON THURSDAY 12TH MARCH 2015

Present: Ian Cannock (Vice and Acting Chair), Benice Hampton, Andrew Wilding, Angela Smith, Jean Fossaceco (Clerk), Filippa Ross, Joy Schneidermann and Carolyn Keating.

Also present: Cllr Neil Butters, Dr Chris Upton, Derek and Jackie Withers and Tricia Wastvedt

Apologies: Matt Kettle and Pat Bunton

Nothing was received from Mary Foskitt

Lisa Coles has resigned from the Parish Council. Her resignation was received by the clerk in January and all councillors were informed. Many thanks for all her many years of hard work with both the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee.

Due to work commitments, Angela Smith has informed the council she wishes to relinquish the role of Chair of the Parish Council but still wishes to remain a PC member. Mr Cannock will remain as Vice and Acting Chair until after the forthcoming election.

Minutes of the last meeting:

There was query with the item under the Village/Community Plan section with regard to the Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee. Carolyn Keating was under the impression that Angela Smith was re-drafting these but Ms Smith did not accept that this was the case. Other than this, the minutes were accepted as a true record.

Matters Arising	Action	Timeline
CCTV – Mrs Fossaceco received some concerns via email regarding some worrying activities in the hall car park area and they wished to know when the CCTV equipment, which has been discussed over the last few months, was going to be installed. Mrs Fossaceco forwarded these concerns to Mr Cannock and Mr Wilding. Mr Wilding, who has dedicated a significant amount of time to obtaining quotes etc, apologised about this and explained the delay was due to many unexpected issues which have taken up his time. Part of the problem is that Mr Wilding is trying to save the council money by undertaking a proportion of the work himself. He has said he will look at all this again and obtain further quotes including ones for full installation..	AW	
Surface Repairs to the road between the Mercedes Roundabout and Wellow – Mrs Fossaceco was asked at the last meeting to request an assessment from B&NES Highways and subsequent repair to this piece of road. The area directly from the roundabout has a particularly high volume of traffic towards two primary schools as well as the traffic going through the ‘back roads’ to Bath to avoid rush hour congestion. This has resulted in the deterioration of the road surface itself and the bank and edge of the road. A large puddle of water appears in wet conditions causing further problems as people have to drive in the middle of the carriageway to avoid this. She was told this would <i>not</i> be addressed until financial year 2016/17 but after intervention from Benice Hampton who let Mr Neil Butters, our district LibDem councillor know, we have been put on the list for 2015/16 repairs with a figure of £87,500 being allocated to this project. Many thanks to Mr Butters who put some pressure on B&NES to get this sorted out for us.		

Priorities and Focus for the Parish Council

There is some concern that the council has lost three Chairs in the last year or so and this is primarily down to workload. Both the last Chair, Nick Gates and now Angela Smith have felt that the volume of issues to be dealt with are too many to deal with along with a full time job. Mr Cannock pointed out that there are many duties we **can** do but only a few duties that we are **required** to do. We should be more selective in what we choose to undertake and prioritise. Our budget is relatively small which limits us somewhat so it would be foolish to promise anything we cannot deliver. The Village/Community Plan will be a good way to find out what people in the village would like to see and preserve but we do not want this to be all consuming time wise. A certain amount of delegation is necessary and Mr Butters said this is how some other councils are run. He also mentioned that some councils have a projector/laptop and screen and discuss things such as planning issues and such via Parish Online. Our issue at the Village Hall would be a lack of telephone line and our present wifi would not support this. Mrs Schneidermann is our representative on the Burial Board and Mr Withers was anxious for this to continue as we have a financial interest in this committee. Mr Butters also felt that, as well as the clerk, other councillors should attend the authority meetings such as Parish Liaison and ALCA but at the same time we must be aware of workload. Tricia Wastvedt asked about the council's non-participation in the Greenspaces Infrastructure and the Biodiversity Mapping exercises. Mrs Fossaceco was under the impression Shoscombe Wildlife Group were involved in the Biodiversity Network and we had been advised we need not complete the Greenspaces Infrastructure exercise (our protection as 'washed over by the Green Belt' and a former RA3 Village is judged as enough protection together with no bus/shop etc). With regard to the Character Assessment exercise, at a meeting with Julie O'Rourke over a year ago, a decision was reached not to move forward with a Placemaking Plan as this was deemed to risk us becoming involved with development but that the compilation of a Village/Parish Plan would enable the village to, via an informal simple survey, tell us what sorts of things they would like to see improved and the things they would like to see preserved. Julie suggested a list be compiled via a walkabout in the village of areas of outstanding beauty, of historical significance etc. These could then be included in the Plan and this would be used to inform B&NES of the areas of Shoscombe we want to preserve/improve. We have never promised to undertake a mapping exercise in the form of the formal Character Assessment (which is linked to the Placemaking Plan). There has clearly been some confusion in the last year or so but it is hoped we can get back on track after the election and be in a position to allocate areas of responsibility. This is difficult at the moment as we do not how many existing members of the PC will still be in position after the 7th May.

All PC
Members

<p><u>Village/Community Plan</u> Both Carolyn Keating and Tricia Watsvedt, joint Chairs of the Steering Committee, presented the latest progress on this plan. There are presently no Terms of Reference so Mr Cannock and Filippa Ross will look at these and, with a view to keeping it simple, put together some suggestions. A list of duties and costings were distributed with some concern raised over the total amount predicted to be spent - £6,400.00. The council feel that a simple (if feasible) one page questionnaire to capture the breadth of opinion in the village could form the basis of the Plan but both Steering Committee Chairs felt the questionnaire should be in much more depth and length which is why it is taking so long. There is also some concern that the Steering Committee have undertaken to compile a Community Plan rather a Village or Parish Plan. Despite the Chairs of the Steering Committee stating that Ms Smith had attended a meeting last May and agreed to this change, it seems Ms Smith was <i>not</i> in attendance; she had sent her apologies The new format appears to be more formal, involved and not in the remit of what was originally discussed and agreed upon. It involves the Committee working far more with B&NES and less with the PC although they are still a sub-committee of the PC. Focus groups have been set up to look at different areas and events are planned to raise the profile of this venture This alteration appears to have changed the mandate somewhat as it is now intended to include Foxcote and Hemmington and become an unboundaried Plan. While the council would wish such close neighbours to ‘have their say’ on an informal basis, they would like the Plan to remain a ‘village/parish’ one which would evolve and grow over time. A vote was taken and by a majority of 6 to 1 the council voted for keeping to the original agreement for Village or Parish Plan not a Community one as this would be far less beaucroatic. With regard to funding fro the plan , the PC was never formally consulted about applying for grants. This was discussed via emails between the Clerk and the Chair with the Steering Committee. The level of money currently being considered seems excessive to the council for such a small parish so we asked that this be reviewed.</p>	<p>CK/FR/IC</p>	
<p><u>Election</u> Parliamentary elections as well as local and parish elections will take place on the 7th May this year. Mrs Fossaceco has received nomination papers which she distributed to all councillors present and will pass to those absent. These have to completed and then delivered in person to the Returning Officer. Councillors may return them to the clerk who will take them in,</p>	<p>JF</p>	
<p><u>Financial Matters</u> Cheques were issued to David Cradock for £756.00 and £360.00 for grass cutting and repairs to the play area fence last year. A cheque was issued to the clerk for her final salary for this financial year - £337.50 and £68.00 for expenses. A cheque was issued to HMRC in payment of the clerk’s tax liability - £84.40. After discussions at the last PC meeting in January, several emails between councillors and further discussion at this meeting, the council agreed to increase the clerk’s salary to £2420.00 per annum gross. This is to cover a modest cost of living increase for the last two years and also to cover a substantial increase in hours. Over the last 12 months or so the volume of work has gradually increased significantly. This, together with meetings attended around the authority, has resulted in many more hours being undertaken.</p>		

<p><u>Village Hall Constitution</u> There is a unanimous feeling that the existing constitution is still fit for purpose and does not require re-drafting. Mrs Fossaceco will ask Mr Aiken why the Village Hall committee feel a need to re-write this.</p>	JF	
<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Hall Representative – we will discuss this at the next meeting after the election. Again, many thanks to Lisa Coles who filled this role for many years. • Fracking – Dr Chris Upton submitted a letter to the council for their consideration before the meeting and he attended this evening. There is a lot of concern across the country about this relatively new procedure for obtaining shale gas. In the Bath area, there were some fears that the Thermae baths could be affected by any drilling operations in or around the city so this has been ruled out. However, there is still concern over the Radstock area which could affect our Parish. As a former mining area, the old shafts could be explored and up to 300 wells have been identified and licences applied for. Worries include water pollution, noise levels and flaring every 500 yards at intermittent periods at all times of the day and night. While it is unlikely, to proceed, the Parish Council would like it formally recorded in the minutes that they are unanimously against any support of Fracking in the area. • Mrs Fossaceco was able to reassure the council that, following advice and discussions with B&NES, it was not felt necessary to apply for Green Spaces Designation as we are well protected with being washed over by the green belt. Also, the land near the allotments at Braysdown is not currently earmarked for development as it is outside the Housing Boundary and Peasedown have not applied to change their boundary. The Core Strategy states that no development outside the housing boundary will be allowed over the next 5 years. • There is to be a village litter picking day on Sunday 29th March beginning at the Village hall car-park 	All PC members	
<p><u>Dates of the next Meetings</u> 14th May –AGM 9th July and 10th September. Parish Liaison – 17th June and 14th October ALCA – 27th May and 23rd September Bathavon Area Forum meetings dates (formerly Parish Cluster) are yet to be announced</p>		
<p>The meeting closed at 10.30 p.m.</p>		