



BLEDLOW-CUM-SAUNDERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Bledlow Village Hall on Thursday 2nd
November 2017 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors S Bird, M Blackwell, S Breese, J Butler, P Castle, A Lord, S Reading (Chairman) and A Sage.

Clerk: Jocelyn Cay

County and District Councillor Carl Etholen

Jacqueline Ford (Wycombe District Council)

Navin Sankersingh (Buckinghamshire Business First)

Members of the public: Philip Hayes (BANG), Bill Bendyshe-Brown, 8 further people

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Nigel Cox.

2. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 5th October 2017

Cllr Breese recommended that paragraph 7 regarding Broadband be amended to more accurately reflect the views he presented at the meeting. It was agreed that Cllr Breese would supply alternative wording and that the minutes would be re-circulated before being signed off at the December meeting.

Action: Cllr Breese & Clerk

3. Election of Vice-Chair

Cllr Reading stated that in May 2017, after five years as Chairman, Cllr Breese had stood down but had accepted the position of vice-chairman for a limited period of six months to ensure a smooth transition for the new Chairman. As six months has now passed, Cllr Breese has resigned as Vice-Chairman and a new candidate is required. Cllr Breese nominated Cllr Sage for the position and Cllr Reading seconded the nomination. Cllr Sage confirmed he was willing to take on the role and, with no other nominations, was confirmed as Vice-Chairman.

4. Planning matters

4.1. Current applications were discussed and responses approved.

4.2. Cllr Castle, having referred to his previously declared interest, raised the case of the "Land between The Orchards and Crofters" at Bledlow Ridge as the planning application had been approved by Wycombe District Council (WDC) despite the Parish Council and several other individuals with in-depth knowledge of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) objecting to the proposal. Cllr Castle asked what the point of the NP was if it had been ignored. Cllr Blackwell expressed concern that the councillors were now being asked to vet every planning application against the NP when they do not have the expert knowledge required. A lengthy discussion ensued and it was concluded that in this instance WDC had determined the application to be in line with the NP and that planning was often a grey area open to interpretation. It had been encouraging that WDC had initiated a dialogue with the parish council regarding the application and it is hoped that this will continue. Cllr Sage added that WDC had confirmed that they do read all comments made on planning applications and that comments would be more useful if they made suggestions as to how the applications could be improved. He also advised that, if the parish council felt that WDC had not picked up on themes suggested, it should contact the planning officers and ask why that was the case.

4.3. Following on from the presence of the Risborough Area Residents Association (RARA) at last month's meeting, Philip Hayes from the Bypass Action Group (BANG) had been invited by Cllr Reading to attend the meeting in order to present their views on the WDC Local Plan. Mr Hayes explained the history of BANG and the proposed relief road for Princes Risborough and concluded that, of all the options that had been suggested, the route published in the WDC Local Plan was the preferred route and therefore he encouraged the parish council to support this in their comments on the WDC Local Plan. The council confirmed they agreed the published route was the most preferable and that they would endorse the route in their response to the Plan.

4.4. Cllr Bird advised that responses to the WDC Local Plan were due by 27th November 2017. She offered to take charge of the response as she had compiled the comments made on the draft plan. Cllr Sage reported that he had identified an issue with the comments the parish council had made during the previous consultation in that WDC had not recorded them correctly. Cllrs Sage and Reading had written a strong letter to WDC complaining and were awaiting a response. It was agreed that Cllr Bird and Cllr Sage would work together to produce the parish council's response to be submitted in this round of consultation.

Action: Cllrs Bird and Sage

5. **Broadband**

Cllr Reading provided a summary on the history of the broadband issues in the parish stating that the poor broadband provision had long been highlighted as a major concern of residents, particularly during the consultations as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process. The parish council set up a working group in November 2016 tasked to pursue methods of ensuring all residents are provided with broadband of at least 10mbps. However the working group is not in a position to deliver broadband directly and therefore sought to work with Connected Counties. This has proven very frustrating as there has been no meaningful communication from Connected Counties and it renders the council unable to help its residents. Cllr Reading concluded that it has come to a point where the council cannot continue second guessing the plans for the current roll out and that they need some answers from Connected Counties and Wycombe District Council (WDC).

Jacqueline Ford of WDC's Corporate Policy Team and Navin Sankersingh, project manager for Connected Counties addressed the meeting stating that they understood the frustrations and that the District Council themselves had only know the full scale and scope of the project since the summer. Ms Ford explained that the partnership with Connected Counties was across the whole of Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire and that WDC had only got involved in 2014. WDC provided an initial £460,000 to broadband in their district which had been match-funded by the government and laast year a further £400,000, also match-funded, was also invested giving a total of £1.72m allocated to the project. This additional investment had resulted in a re-mapping of the project which had taken time to complete.

Ms Ford presented a map to the meeting indicating which areas of the Wycombe District were scheduled to be part of the upgrading project. She also provided anticipated timescales stretching until December 2019 but stressed the huge scale of the project and therefore the possibility that timelines may slip once each areas had been assessed and it was understood exactly what work was required.

There ensued a lengthy and detailed discussion about the precise work that would be carried out with Cllr Breese emphasising the need to know details down to 7-digit postcode level and whether work would be carried out just to cabinets or if properties beyond the normal range of 'superfast broadband' would benefit from further enhancements to the network. Without this level of information the parish council would be unable to help by filling in the gaps left by WDC and Connected Counties. Ms Ford confirmed that each area would be individually assessed in turn to provide detailed mappings and that work would then be undertaken as necessary which could include upgrading cabinets, providing new additional cabinets or installing Fibre to the Premises.

Cllr Reading asked if the council could have an electronic copy of the map. Ms Ford advised that the map does not provide enough detail, but that the council can have a full list of which postcodes will be included in which phases as long as the information is not published. Ms Ford also confirmed that the Connected Counties website had also been updated with that level of information so that residents would be able to look up when work is likely to be undertaken in their area and therefore if they need to make interim broadband arrangements.

Cllr Reading suggested that Ms Ford and Mr Sankersingh attend the next meeting of the Broadband Working Group (BWG) so that the postcode-level information can be cross-matched with the data the BWG have already gathered. Cllr Reading also stated his concerns that there will still be some premises in the parish that will not be part of the Connected Counties project and that they will need to be identified so that alternative provisions can be made. Ms Ford confirmed that they would attend the BWG meeting and that the premises currently out of scope could be identified.

Cllr Reading thanked Ms Ford and Mr Sankersingh for the information and for attending the meeting.

6. Members of the public

Bill Bendyshe-Brown thanked the council for arranging for the verges at the top end of West Lane, Bledlow to be cleared stating that it had made a huge difference to the road. He asked if it would now be possible for clearance to also be done further down the road, past the railway bridge. The clerk will see if this can be arranged.

Action: Clerk

Mr Bendyshe-Brown also enquired as to progress with protecting Bledlow Cross. The clerk reported that Historic England had sent the paperwork in order for it to be registered as "at risk" and that the Carington Estate had committed to clearing the cross to make sure it was not damaged. It was decided that there was no need at the moment to register the cross as "at risk" and that perhaps an annual community clearance would be a good compromise. The clerk will put forward the idea to the Carington Estate.

Action: Clerk

(Cllr Etholen left the meeting at 9pm)

7. Application for grants

None had been received.

8. Authorisation of payments

The following payments were unanimously agreed following proposal by Cllr Breese, seconded by Cllr Bird:

Cheque No.	Payee	Description	Net Amount	VAT	Total
100704	Jocelyn Cay	Salary – October 2017	£458.33		£458.33
100705	Jocelyn Cay	Expenses	£79.44	£1.40	£80.84
100706	Stephen Reading	Broadband WG –4G antennae	£97.44	£15.49	£112.93
100707	Mazaars LLP	Annual Audit	£200.00	£40.00	£240.00
100708	TBS Hygiene Ltd	Bin emptying	£33.50	£6.70	£40.20
100709	Princes Risborough Town Council	Grass cutting	£180.00	£36.00	£216.00
	Total for month		£1,048.71	£99.59	£1,148.30

9. Quarterly Financial Review

The clerk presented the council with the financial results as at the end of September 2017. Cllr Castle will now complete his quarterly bank reconciliation.

Action: Cllr Castle

10. 2018/2019 Budget

Initial budget figures were discussed, in particular allocation of the high reserves the council is currently holding. Suggestions included broadband infrastructure, further improvements to the village halls, extension of the burial ground and SpeedWatch. Based on these discussions the clerk will work with Cllr Reading and Cllr Sage to present a more detailed budget at the December meeting.

Action: Clerk, Cllrs Reading & Sage

11. Correspondence, reports and issues from councillors and clerk

11.1. The clerk updated the council on discussions she had had with Bucks County Council (BCC) regarding the use of YISI devices. Currently the devices are not approved however BCC have stated that they are open to amending their policy if it can be shown that the devices are effective in reducing speeding. It was agreed that the clerk would liaise with the manufacturer and also with local parish councils who already have some devices to see if they have evidence of their efficacy that can be forwarded on to BCC. The clerk also reported that BCC had advised of the process whereby the current VAS devices situated on Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge could be adjusted to operate more effectively. The clerk will follow up on this with BCC.

Action: Clerk

11.2. Cllr Lord reported that SpeedWatch had been on hold recently as PC Lee Turnham had temporarily moved roles however there may be the opportunity to continue the programme with some PCSOs that have taken over SpeedWatch in PC Turnham's absence. Cllr Lord will monitor the situation and advise as necessary.

Action: Cllr Lord

11.3. The clerk advised that a consultation is currently being run by BCC on Mobile library services. The clerk will distribute the information to all councillors via email for their opinions and will also include the information in this month's newsletters.

Action: Clerk

11.4. Cllr Reading reported that the LAF had recently announced that they will be reviewing their local priorities in December and that they are running a consultation to gain the views of councillors and residents. The clerk will forward on the details to all councillors so they can submit their suggestions.

Action: Clerk & Councillors

11.5. Cllr Butler informed the council that she will be attending Rights of Way training on 19th November.

11.6. Cllr Butler updated the council with regards to the concrete bin currently being held by John Lawrence. Cllr Butler and Cllr Cox had identified a possible location on Haw Lane, Bledlow Ridge however the clerk is currently liaising with WDC regarding the implications of an extra bin on collection services.

Action: Clerk

12. Next meeting

It was confirmed that the next meeting will be held at Bledlow Ridge Village Hall on Thursday 7th December 2017 at 7.30pm.

Signed.....

Date.....