

BULKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs F A Price 1 The Croft Urchfont Devizes SN10 4RT

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council
held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on Wednesday 20 November 2013

Present: Cllr R G Elliott, in the Chair in place of Cllr Mrs S Oliphant
Cllrs S Barratt, Mrs C Crawford, Mrs J Flynn and C Ogilvie

Apologies from: Cllr Mrs S Oliphant, Cllr Mrs A Read

2 Members of the public

Clerk Mrs F A Price in attendance

The Meeting opened at 7.35 with the **OPEN FORUM**,

but as no questions were raised Cllr Elliott proceeded immediately to the main Agenda

1. Apologies:

Received and accepted from the Chairman Mrs Oliphant – delayed at work, and Cllr Mrs A Read – unexpected clash of engagements

2. Declarations of Interest: Cllrs Mrs Crawford and C Ogilvie for the Playing Field

3. Minutes of 18 September Meeting:

Accepted as a true record and signed by Cllr Elliott

4. War Memorial, Copper Beech Trees:

The re-pointed base is to remain covered up until the new mortar has “cured”; it will then be rubbed back to level with the stones – progress is being checked weekly. Two quotations have been received for work on the trees by the Memorial and those on the “Pond” area by the Bus Shelter.

Cllr Ogilvie is pursuing Wiltshire Council to establish who is responsible for these trees; he has confirmed that there are no Conservation Area or Tree Preservation Order issues.

Cllr Mrs Oliphant has offered to arrange contact with the tree surgeon who will be working on the trees by her house which were damaged in the recent high winds.

Mr and Mrs Baillie have most generously agreed to pay the whole cost of works on the Memorial – the Parish Council will put up a plaque acknowledging this, and the Chairman will write a letter of thanks on behalf of the P C and the village.

The plan to plant 2 Copper Beech trees at either end of the village is in hand, with the Chairman and Cllr Mrs Flynn organising.

5. Emergency Planning, Flooding:

Cllr Ogilvie said that the next meeting on the Emergency Plan will be in early January, and then reported the latest Wiltshire Council plans for flood precautions, under which Parish Councils will have initial responsibility – *legally* – for getting drains in their area in good condition.

He considers this excessive and suggests that the PC should say it is prepared to keep an eye on the condition of the drains and the general situation, and report as necessary.

He stressed that the risk of flooding increases daily.

Cllr Barratt pointed out implications for householders' insurance, and Cllr Mrs Crawford agreed that the PC cannot be placed in the position of being legally responsible for the upkeep of drainage. Cllr Ogilvie said he feels that Wiltshire Council is not keeping to its legal duties but is trying to pass them on to Parish Councils. The legal situation is very confused.

After some discussion it was agreed that Cllr Ogilvie write to Wiltshire Council saying that Bulkington Parish Council will continue to keep a “watching brief” and report any problems to Wiltshire Council, but is not prepared to accept a legal responsibility for action.

All in favour.

6. Reports on Matters in the Minutes: None other than those covered above.

7. Correspondence: relevant emails already forwarded to Cllr[s] concerned.

- i Wiltshire Council: Grant Options: Still considering what (if any) “top-up” grant to give to offset effects of localisation of certain payments on Council Tax and therefore Precepts - last year's payment to Bulkington was about £165 which the PC simply added to the already decided Precept request. Documents on various calculation methods for the next few years are far from clear, and Town and Parish Councils' responses to consultation were mixed, indeed confused. Decision will not be final until 17 December Cabinet Meeting – but all PC Precepts must be set before 24 January 2014, in Bulkington's case at Mtg on 8 January. **See 11. Finance**
- ii Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service: Public Safety Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17.
- iii Entry form for Prince of Wales Award, intended for “ Community Organisations who are looking to improve the lives of others through sustainable activities”. Leaflet implies that what qualifies might be such things as provision of allotments or open spaces for recreation.
- iv Enquiry from Kennet Beekeeping Club about support by providing sites for “out apiaries” - Cllrs felt Bulkington has no suitable land.
- v Keevil PC Minutes for 11 November:
 - advertising boards have been removed – reminder that permission must be obtained
 - dog fouling – reminder that all dogs will have to be “chipped” by the end of 2016. Keevil considering holding an information event and offering free chipping, also
 - Pilot area where dogs must be on lead, in force from 1 January 2014 – signs to be put up, to show area includes footpath from Martins Road to the Playing Field and path skirting Playing Field.
 - Meetings to discuss plans for developing Playing Field
 - Complaints about heavy tractors and trailers – Keevil Clerk to contact CP Awdry Contracting
 - AW Services charged over £1,250 inc VAT for PF maintenance in 2013 – an alarming rise.

8. Planning: No new Application to consider.

APP/Y3940/D/13/2203518 - Tudor Cottage Appeal to Planning Inspectorate – REFUSED.

9. William Breach Centenary Playing Field – Report.

Cllr Mrs Crawford reported a very good attendance at the 22 September Maintenance Day – much work done, especially on the Willow structure and the Sensory Garden.

The Mini Olympics were a great success.

New Committee members produced a lot of good ideas.

Fireworks display, postponed because of the weather, but a good attendance in the circumstances.

Food made small loss, but £300 was taken at the gate and overall profit over £300.

Plenty was learned for future events – for instance both the original and postponed dates should have been reported to Community First for Insurance purposes, but all is OK now.

Committee AGM will be in December.

Fund-raising is concentrating on play equipment for younger children – RoSPA's latest report pointed out minor problems with existing swings.

10. Section 137 LGA 1972:

Payment to Royal British Legion for Remembrance Day wreath plus Donation to total £50:

Proposed: Cllr Ogilvie

Seconded: Cllr Barratt

Agreed unanimously

see 11. Finance

11. Finance:

The Clerk distributed a summary of the PC's financial position to help Cllrs with deciding the Precept request at the Meeting on 8 January.

The latest information on the Tax Base - the number of Band D equivalent houses – shows a fall from 118.2 to 117.01, which in turn means a roughly 1% rise in Band D tax, from £38.07 to £38.46 for an unchanged Precept of £4,500. Cllrs had no questions.

Received since last Meeting:	<i>estimated</i> Interest on Lloyds A/c 27214460			£0.80
Paid since last Meeting:		£	+ VAT £	£
14 Oct	Playsafety Ltd (RoSPA safety check)	101.00	20.20	121.20
	Seend PCC No1 A/c (<u>Spotlight</u>)	50.00	S.137	50.00
24 Oct	Roses the Ironmongers (Fireworks)	374.98	75.02	450.00
Authorised at this Meeting:		£	+ VAT £	£
	Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	50.00	S.137	50.00
	Society of Local Council Clerks (2014 sub)	64.00	-	64.00

When billed: Balfour Beatty: PF and Pond grasscutting £750 or possibly more – enquire about billing arrangements, through Stuart Renfrew at Wiltshire Council? **Clerk**

The Clerk reminded the PF Cttee that the ex-VAT cost of Fireworks - £374.98 – has not yet been reimbursed.

Bank Balances <i>estimated</i> after payments above and £1,000 transfer to cover grasscutting	
Lloyds Treasurer's (Current) A/c 27213368	£978.76
Lloyds BUS Instant Access (Deposit) A/c 27214460	£6,663.41

HSBC Account now **closed** – remaining £11.97 paid to PF account with Lloyds on 14 October, chq 100601
This cheque cleared on 28 October and October Statement shows **zero balance**.

There was some discussion of the PF contribution to increased Insurance costs – it was a condition of the Grant that the new equipment be insured against all risks for the first 5 years, and this resulted in a rise in the PC's insurance costs.

The Clerk said that in 2012/13 the PF Cttee paid £182.40 (50%) and she suggested reducing the payment to £60 for 2013/14 (Year 3) and the remaining 2 years.

The Cttee can then decide what level of insurance is appropriate.

Cllr Mrs Crawford asked for more information, and the Clerk promised to check figures for the last few years and email them to her as soon as possible. **Clerk**

12. Any Other Business:

- Cllr Ogilvie reported that the host of the Village Website has changed hands, and he feared the site might be lost, so he has bought the domain name bulkington.org.uk for £96.82 for 10 years. All approved of this action – reimbursement to be arranged at the January Meeting.
- Cllr Barratt queried the lack of the promised superfast broadband in the village – Cllr Ogilvie said that BT appears to have taken the money made available by Wiltshire Council without providing a service beyond towns and larger villages. Cllr Mrs Crawford said that presumably there is not enough business in the village. Cllr Ogilvie said the matter should be raised with Cllr Seed at the next Meeting – and perhaps the Clerk could enquire by email.
- Cllr Mrs Flynn said that the nursery school talked about at the last Meeting has fallen through as the suggested site was not available. Permission has been obtained to build on Steeple Ashton's Playing Field, sharing costs with the Guides. Plans will be circulated in due course.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 9 pm

Next Meeting, to include Precept Setting, 8 January 2014