

BODENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of BODENHAM PARISH COUNCIL held on
Monday, 2nd December 2013 at the Seward James Centre at 7.30 p.m.**

Present: Cllr Bob Clarke (Chair), Cllr Roger Austin, Cllr Alec Avery, Cllr Stan Davis, Cllr Dennis Jackson, Cllr Pam James-Moore, Cllr Tony Mitcheson, Cllr Jeff Pollard, Cllr Rhian Powell.

Nine members of the public were present at the start of the Meeting.

CSO Steph Annette was present at the start of the Meeting.

Introduction

CSO Annette reported that a rogue trader selling tarmac had been seen in the area and she advised residents to report any approach from the trader. She added that CSOs and Special Constables are working together across Herefordshire in December and are focussing on speeding. Cllr Avery reported that a mobility scooter driver has been seen on the roads around Marden who constitutes a hazard to other road users. CSO Annette said that she would report this to the Area Constable. Mrs Liz Davies said that congestion was often caused by the number of cars parked around the post office in Bodenham, and this also constituted a hazard to other drivers. Mrs Davies asked whether temporary 'Slow Down' signs could be put in place. CSO Annette said that this would not be possible. Cllr Clarke offered to contact Mr Tony Troia to request that cones are not placed across the entrance to Baches Bargains premises.

ACTION: BC

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Robin Knott and District Cllr Jeremy Millar.
2. **Declarations of Interest.** Cllr Powell declared an interest in Item 15 on the Agenda.
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting.** The Minutes of the previous Meeting were accepted as a correct record (Proposer: Cllr James-Moore; Seconder: Cllr Austin).
4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes.**
 - 4.1 **Minute 4.2: Signage to Bodenham School.** Cllr Clarke reported that, at a meeting between himself, the Head Teacher, a School Governor and a representative of Balfour Beatty, the Balfour Beatty representative had said that the installation on the C1121 near the War Memorial of flashing lights and a 'Slow' sign on the road had been included in the budget for 2014.
 - 4.2 **Minute 4.3: Litter Pick.** The Clerk reported that he had placed an item about the litter pick in the *Newsletter*, as instructed.
 - 4.3 **Minute 4.4: Speed Camera Warning Sign on the A417.** The Clerk confirmed that he had reported the obscured speed camera warning sign on the A417 and that the sign was now clearly visible.
 - 4.4 **Minute 4.8: Dog Bin at the End of Orchard Close.** Cllr Clarke said that he had not yet asked the residents of Orchard Close about the installation of a dog bin. **ACTION: BC**
 - 4.5 **Minute 4.9: Winter Maintenance Scheme.** The Clerk reported that the Lengthsman had moved some salt to the car park at the Seward James Centre.
 - 4.6 **Minute 4.15: Ditches in Ketch Lane.** The Clerk reported that he had asked the Lengthsman to strim the edges of the ditches in Ketch Lane.
 - 4.7 **Minute 5.1: Playground Puddle.** The Clerk reported that he had mentioned to the Lengthsman that the chippings under the swings at the playground needed to be raked.
 - 4.8 **Minute 5.2: Trees on the Village Green.** See Item 14 below.
 - 4.9 **Minute 5.3: Out-of-Date Notices.** The Clerk reported that he had placed an item about removing out-of-date notices in the *Newsletter*, as instructed.
 - 4.10 **Minute 5.4: Blocked Drain.** The Clerk confirmed that he had reported the blocked drain at the car park opposite the School.
 - 4.11 **Minute 5.6: Incorrectly Recorded Response to Planning Application 132141/FH.** The Clerk reported that he had contacted Herefordshire Council about the Parish Council's response to this planning application, which had been incorrectly recorded on the Herefordshire Council website. The Clerk said that the correct response was now shown on the website.
 - 4.12 **Minute 5.7: Tyres Dumped in Chapel Lane.** The Clerk said that he had reported the dumping of tyres in Chapel Lane. Mr Tony Clark said that the tyres were still there. The Clerk was instructed to report the matter again. **ACTION: CS**

4.13 **Minutes 8.1 and 8.2: Noticeboards.** The Clerk reported that he had obtained a quotation of £1300 for a new metal noticeboard. Cllr Pollard reported that he had obtained an approximate quotation of £350-400 for a wooden noticeboard. The matter was deferred until Cllr Pollard obtained a precise quotation for, and drawing of, the noticeboard. **ACTION: JP**

5. **Issues Raised by Members of the Public.**

5.1 Mrs Liz Davies thanked the members of the Parish Council for all their hard work during the past year and wished them all a Merry Christmas.

6. **Parish Plan Reports.**

6.1 **Health.** Cllr Powell reported that she had had a meeting with the local Carer's Group and had circulated a report on the meeting (which is attached as Annex A). She asked about a Herefordshire Council scheme, under which local farmers clear snow from roads to maintain access for, and to, vulnerable people, but no councillors were aware of such a scheme. Cllr Mitcheson said that the BFPG has a 'buddy' system and a flood action emergency plan, which might provide the basis for such a scheme. Mrs Babs Mitcheson added that she is in the process of obtaining through her contacts in the Environment Agency a copy of the general emergency plan in use in another village and this might also serve as a model.

6.2 **Road Safety.** Cllr Clarke said that road safety matters had been covered earlier (see Minute 4.1 above). Cllr Powell said that she had been given two pieces of debris, which seemed likely to have come from speeding cars. Cllr Clarke asked for any other such debris - especially from Chapel Lane - to be passed on to Cllr Powell, together with photographic evidence, if possible. The Clerk was instructed to keep a record of any such evidence. **ACTION: CS**

7. **Local History Group Archive.**

7.1 Cllr Clarke said that he was meeting a person from the Public Record Office on 3rd December to examine the Archive and to recommend options for digitizing it. Cllr Davis said that he was to meet with Mrs Margaret Andrews and Mrs Veronica Howell after Christmas to check for duplication between the Archive and material in his own possession.

8. **Footpath to Chapel Lane Bus Shelter.**

8.1 Cllr Clarke explained that there was a need for a footpath between the road and the bus shelter for safety reasons. Cllr Mitcheson asked about the ownership of the land at the bus shelter. The Clerk was instructed to ask Balfour Beatty about the ownership of the land and to request Balfour Beatty to install a footpath similar to the one at the England's Gate bus shelter. **ACTION: CS**

9. **Footpath to England's Gate.**

9.1 The Clerk was instructed to place an item in the *Newsletter* about using Brockington Road and Millcroft Road as an alternative route between Ash Grove Road and England's Gate. **ACTION: CS**

10. **Citizens Advice Bureau Grant.**

10.1 Cllr Clarke explained that the Citizens' Advice Bureau had written to request a grant. It was agreed, at Cllr Mitcheson's suggestion, that discussion be deferred until the meeting to be held on 11th December to discuss the precept.

11. **War Memorial.**

11.1 Cllr Clarke said that he would check whether Bodenham was included in the online database of war memorials and would investigate whether the Parish Council should join or donate to the War Memorials Trust. **ACTION: BC**

12. **Bodenham Newsletter.**

12.1 Cllr Clarke reminded Councillors that he had written some time ago to Mrs Susan Haworth about the Bodenham Newsletter website. The site had now been removed and the Clerk was instructed to write to Mrs Haworth to thank her for attending to the matter. **ACTION: CS**

13. **Kerbstones.**

13.1 Cllr Clarke explained that there were some missing kerbstones opposite The Forge, which constituted a hazard. The Clerk was instructed to ask Balfour Beatty to reinstate the kerbstones in some way, after first ascertaining from them what form the reinstatement might take. **ACTION: CS**

14. **Trees on the Village Green.**

14.1 The Clerk reported that he had discussed the trees on the village green in Bodenham Moor with Mr Adrian Hope, who had recommended a management plan costing £95 + VAT based on

biennial inspections. It was agreed to accept Mr Hope's quotation. (Proposer: Cllr Davis; Seconder: Cllr Powell).

15. **Finance.**

- 15.1 In Cllr Knott's absence the monthly accounts were deferred until the next meeting.
- 15.2 The Clerk reported that a request had been received from Bodenham Church for a grant of £1,000 towards the upkeep of the churchyard. The grant was approved. (Proposer: Cllr Pollard; Seconder: Cllr Powell).
- 15.3 The following invoices were approved for payment:
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| - DC Gardening Services (Lengthsman's invoice) | £115.00 |
| - Alpha Web Design and Consultancy Ltd (Website hosting) | £200.00 |
| - Clerk's expenses (cartridges) | £52.00 |
| - Grant to Parish Hall | £1200.00 |
| - Leominster Community Resource Centre (September and November <i>Newsletters</i>) | £338.20 |
- 15.4 The invoices were approved for payment. (Proposer: Cllr Mitcheson; Seconder: Cllr Austin).

16. **Planning.**

- 16.1 **132967/F: Land adjacent to Hill View: Erection of Agricultural Worker's Dwelling with Garage and new Vehicular Access.** Cllr Powell said that the application listed three possible sites for the proposed dwelling, two of which had been rejected by the applicants as unsuitable. She felt that the site adjacent to Gritt Farm - rejected by the applicants - was the most suitable, because the other sites were some distance away from the farm and the applicants had stated the need for a worker to be housed near to the farm. Cllr Mitcheson supported this view. Cllr James-Moore said that the site favoured by the applicants was outside the settlement boundary and that the access was difficult and dangerous. Cllr Mitcheson commented that the proposal to build on the site favoured by the applicants promoted ribbon development and would be setting a precedent which ought to be avoided. Mr David Marriott said that he assumed that a settlement boundary was a boundary, outside which no development was usually permitted. He added that the proposal was outside the settlement boundary and was on a sharp bend on a narrow, busy lane. Mrs Marianne Percival said that the application proposed building on a site which was outside the settlement boundary, was linear development, and was stated as being for an agricultural worker who was needed to be close to the farm at all times, while the proposed dwelling would be more than 350 metres from the farm. Mrs Percival added that the drawing of the location of the proposed dwelling did not accurately represent the sharpness of the bend in the road. It was agreed that the Parish Council should object to the application. (Proposer: Cllr James-Moore; Seconder: Cllr Powell).
- 16.2 **133022/FH: Stone House: Proposed Two Storey Side Extension and Single Storey Rear Extension and Replacement Garage.** Cllr Clarke noted that there were errors on the application, which had made the location of Stone House hard to find. He said that the post code given was incorrect and Cllr Mitcheson added that the grid reference was also incorrect. The Clerk was instructed to write to the Planning Officer - Mrs Alison Reed - about these errors. After discussion, the application was supported. (Proposer: Cllr James-Moore; Seconder: Cllr Jackson). **ACTION: CS**
- 16.3 **Letter from Bovis Homes.** Cllr Clarke reported that a letter had been received from Bovis Homes proposing the development of a site opposite Eastfields Farm for housing. He noted that there were problems with building houses in this location, including inadequate drainage, the poor sewage system in that area and the close proximity to the slurry tank at the farm opposite. Cllr Mitcheson said that the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group had already decided not to include the site within the proposed future settlement boundary. In the busy run-up to Christmas, this was not a good time to consider the proposal further and the Clerk was instructed to write to Bovis Homes postponing discussion of their proposal until a suitable time in 2014. **ACTION: CS**

17. **Updates.**

- 17.1 **Bodenham Flood Protection Group.** Cllr Mitcheson gave a report, which is attached as Annex B.
- 17.2 **Neighbourhood Plan.** Cllr Mitcheson reported that the Steering Group had met twice in November and, after considerable discussion, had decided on their proposed change to the settlement boundary in Bodenham Moor, as well as the proposed new settlement boundary in the Bodenham Conservation Area. Both of these had been published in the December/ January edition of the *Newsletter* and the latest draft of the complete Neighbourhood Plan had recently been posted on the Parish Website.

17.3 **Parish Hall.** Cllr Clarke reported that the new kitchen is functioning well and is a useful asset. He further reported that the event featuring The Harmonettes had been a great success.

17.4 **Lengthsman.** The Clerk said that he had received a request for the grips and ditches in Rowberry Lane in the vicinity of Blue Cedar Cottage to be cleared. After he and the Lengthsman had inspected the problem, the Lengthsman had quoted in writing a figure of £300 for the hire of a mini-digger and labour for one day, which would include some time spent attending to the ditches in Chapel Lane. The quotation was accepted. The Clerk further reported that the Lengthsman had asked whether there was a plan in place for salting the pavements with the salt stored at the Seward James Centre and the Parish Hall. It was agreed that the first priority was the pavements around the village green in Bodenham Moor and from the green to the bus stop, then Brockington Road and Ash Grove Road - in particular in the vicinity of the Surgery. The Clerk was instructed to ask whether Bodenham School would like salt for the pavements around the School, if the School could arrange for the salt to be spread. **ACTION: CS**

18. **Correspondence.**

18.1 The Clerk reported that no correspondence had been received, which had not already been circulated.

19. **Other Business (including District Councillor's Comments).**

19.1 Cllr Davis asked whether any progress had been made with reference to footpath BM13. Cllr James-Moore said that the matter was currently with solicitors.

20. **Date of Next Meeting.**

20.1 There being no other business, the Meeting ended at 9.30pm.

20.2 The next Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday, 6th January 2014 at 7.30pm.

I attended the November meeting of the Care Group at Seward James on behalf of the P.C., at the invitation of Margaret James (health lead for the Parish Plan). The meeting was quite well attended, having been quite widely promoted and having been given a focus on Herefordshire's finance plans and consultation. (I made clear that I am not a representative of Herefordshire Council and could therefore not answer on the Council's behalf in any discussions of the plans, but said I could take back any potential issues to the P.C. for discussion).

Health issues of relevance to the P.C. raised by those attending were:

- the possibility of having a defibrillator within the village;
- having a First Responder voluntary service, such as Hope-under-Dinmore and Withington already have. (I understand The Ambulance Service co-ordinate First Responder services, and provide necessary training. As each service covers a 3 mile radius, it could be that parts of Bodenham potentially come under the Hope-under-Dinmore service, and this may be worth exploring).

Margaret has agreed to investigate the issues associated with providing a defibrillator, which I believe could be part funded by the British Heart Foundation. (I understand no training is needed, but location would obviously be an important issue).

In outlining the functions of the P.C. I briefly covered the BFPG, and also the potential role (currently with Tony, I believe) of co-ordinating a crisis response to situations such heavy drifting snow, or bird flu. We discussed the possibility of identifying residents who are vulnerable for reasons other than potential flooding (*e.g.* elderly and/or disabled and living alone), and having a list for proactive contact in case of potential need. Signing up to this would obviously have to be voluntary.

One parishioner, a carer for a severely disabled relative, raised a significant concern about being unable to get out from her property, in the event of severe weathers. She needs to do so to support her relative as part of the 24 hour care package on which the latter is totally dependent. The carer has in the past had to walk from her isolated property through heavy snow and floods. She is particularly concerned about the risk of being cut off over the Christmas period, when she needs to be on duty for longer periods and other carers would not be available.

Chris tells me that Herefordshire still has an emergency scheme for farmers to clear minor roads on their behalf. Does anyone know if this is in place in Bodenham, and would we be able to call on it? (I have the parishioner's details, and would like to be able to ensure there is a reliable system in place, or at least an individualised system for her before Christmas).

On transport, the risk to the 426 bus service between Bodenham and Leominster was raised, particularly as parishioners are increasingly being asked to travel to Leominster for services such as physiotherapy.

The organiser of the meeting brought printed copies of Herefordshire's proposal and questionnaire (since these are only accessible on-line, unless printed copies are specifically requested); and she strongly encouraged participants to complete the questionnaire.

BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP REPORT
(2 DECEMBER 2013)

1. **Water Levels.** The water level in the Millcroft Brook has been very low throughout the past month.
2. **Monthly Meeting.**
 - a. Our most recent Meeting was on 26 November with 33 members present. There is no meeting in December, so this was the last for 2013 and we followed it with a 'drinks and nibbles' party to celebrate the end of another successful year.
 - b. Our next Meeting will be on Tuesday, 28 January 2014.
3. **High Visibility Jackets.** The high visibility jackets which the Environment Agency have generously donated to us finally arrived last Monday (25 November). Clearly marked "Flood Group", they will help to identify the Group's Area Representatives when they call at houses in the Village and, being highly reflective, will provide the Representatives with added protection by making them clearly visible both in daylight and especially at night when emergencies often seem to occur. They were presented by Mr Daniel Trewin, the Environment Agency's Team Leader for Flood Resilience for the West Midlands at a short meeting at Millcroft Farm. Also present were Cllr Jeremy Millar, our District Councillor for Hampton Court Ward, and fifteen members of the Group. A report on the presentation, together with photographs, has been sent to the Environment Agency and to *The Hereford Times* in the hope that the donation will be given some deserved publicity.
4. **Environment Agency – Research into Volunteering.** Having already completed an on-line questionnaire on volunteering, we were approached by Dr Bianca Ambrose-Oji of Forest Research, the Social and Economic Research Group tasked by the Environment Agency (EA) to look into the working relationship between the EA and voluntary workers and groups working with, or for, the Agency. She was especially keen to find out why, after some 5 years, the Group was still in existence and active, why members had volunteered in the first place, and what they got from being a volunteer. She visited Bodenham last Tuesday (26 November). After interviewing the Chairman and Secretary at some length, she attended the BFPG's monthly Meeting and at the conclusion of business she took the opportunity to hold a question and answer session about volunteering with the members present. She then joined members for the 'drinks and nibbles' party and was able to discuss volunteering with members individually and informally.
5. **Sandbags.** We are currently still waiting for Balfour Beatty to deliver the 200 empty sandbags which we requested a couple of months ago. The Parish Clerk is chasing these up for us.
6. **Annual Coffee Morning.** The Group's next social event is the annual Coffee Morning which will be held on Saturday, 8 February in the Siward James Centre and, as always, feature a display of BFPG photographs, as well as a cake stall, raffle and tombola to raise funds to support the Group's activities.

K.A.M.