

BODENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE SIWARD JAMES CENTRE
at 7.30 pm on Monday, 1st February 2016**

Present: Cllr Roger Austin, Cllr Alec Avery, Cllr Stan Davis, Cllr Dennis Jackson, Pam James-Moore (Chair), Cllr Richard Layton, Cllr Tony Mitcheson, Cllr David Tilford.

District Councillor Bruce Baker was also in attendance.

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

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jim Crane.
2. **Declarations of Interest.** No declarations of interest were made.
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting.** The previous Minutes were accepted as a correct record and the decisions of the previous inquorate meeting were ratified (Proposer; Cllr Tilford: Seconder; Cllr Mitcheson).
4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes.**
 - 4.1 **Minute 4.1.** The Clerk reported that he had arranged a meeting with Mr Robert Parker to discuss the exact specifications for the installation of slabs at the Orchard Close bus stop and that he would obtain a second quotation thereafter. **ACTION: CS**
 - 4.2 **Minute 4.2.** The Clerk reported that he had arranged a meeting with the Locality Steward to discuss the tree inspection and other matters.
 - 4.3 **Minute 4.3.** The Clerk reported that he had written to the dog owners in and around Orchard Close. Mrs Ann Stevens said that the situation had not improved. Cllr Tilford noted that under the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act of 2005 parish councils can impose a fixed penalty notice, if an offence has been committed under a dog control order.
 - 4.4 **Minute 4.4. Solar Farm Payments.** See Minute 12 below.
 - 4.5 **Minutes 5.1 and 5.2.** The Clerk reported that the Lengthsman had cleared the grips and reinstated the verges in Chapel Lane and that the householder had cut back the hedge on the corner of 1, Millcroft Road.
 - 4.6 **Minute 11. Proposal from Mrs Karilyn Collins.** Cllr James-Moore reported that she had contacted Hampton Court Estate and had been told that all matters such as Mrs Collins' proposal were in abeyance until the sale of the Estate had been completed.
 - 4.7 **Minute 16.1.** The Clerk reported that he had written to the owner of the house on the corner of Wood House Lane to request that the hedge be cut back.
 - 4.8 **Minute 16.4. Road Safety.** See Minute 14 below.
5. **Opportunity for Members of the Public to Address the Parish Council.**
 - 5.1 A member of the public said that the hedge alongside the footpath between England's Gate Inn and Saffrons Garage was obstructing the pavement, which, also, was slippery by the bridge. The Clerk was instructed to contact the Locality Steward about the matter. **ACTION: CS**
 - 5.2 A member of the public said that dog fouling continues to be a problem: the village green and the grass area outside the Surgery have been affected. Cllr Tilford said that there is no easy solution and suggested that the Clerk should ask Herefordshire Council to supply notices to be displayed around the village. This was agreed. **ACTION: CS**
 - 5.3 Mrs Liz Davies said that the hedge along the C1125 between the Surgery and Millcroft Road needs to be cut back in places. The Clerk said that the matter had been identified on the Parish Walk and that the Locality Steward had said that she would contact the property

owners in Brockington Road about the hedges behind their properties. (The hedge by the Surgery belongs to Herefordshire Council). The Clerk was instructed to contact the Locality Steward about the matter. **ACTION: CS**

5.4 Mr Tony Clark reported that the verge at the first passing place in Ketch Lane has been pushed in by vehicles. The Clerk was instructed to report the matter. **ACTION: CS**

5.5 Mr Clark requested that the grass growing in the play area be reported to the Lengthsman. The Clerk was instructed to do this. **ACTION: CS**

5.6 Mr Clark mentioned that a new long distance footpath had been opened between Kington and Broadway and this passes through Bodenham.

5.7 Mrs Liz Davies reported that there were potholes on the A417 in Bodenham. The Clerk was instructed to report this. **ACTION: CS**

6. **Footpath Officer's Report.** Mr Mike Darley gave a report, which is included as Annex A. He recommended that the temporarily repaired stile on BM24 be replaced by a kissing gate. Cllr Mitcheson proposed and Cllr Tilford seconded that Mr Darley should do this together with the other two jobs mentioned in his Report.
7. **Election of Parish Hall Representative.** Cllr James-Moore proposed that Cllr Richard Layton should be the Parish Council representative on the Parish Hall Management Committee. Cllr Layton accepted the post.
8. **Planning Sub-Committee Membership.** Cllr Mitcheson proposed and Cllr Austin seconded that Cllr Crane should join the planning sub-committee. This was agreed unanimously.
9. **Additional Bank Signatory.** Cllr Mitcheson proposed and Cllr Austin seconded that Cllr Tilford should become the third signatory on the bank account. This was agreed unanimously.
10. **'Clean for The Queen' Keep Britain Tidy Event.** The Clerk reported that arrangements had been made with Balfour Beatty for the provision of equipment of the litter pick on Saturday, 5th March and for the disposal of the rubbish collected.
11. **Car Park Registration.** The Clerk reported that Mrs Sue Newbould had completed the registration of the car park. It was agreed that her recommendation that the deeds be retained by OkellsFrancisLaw should be accepted. The Clerk was instructed to inform Mrs Newbould of this decision and to thank her for her work in resolving the matter of the registration of the car park. **ACTION: CS**
12. **Solar Farm Payments.** The Clerk reported that Marden Parish Council continued to insist that the solar farm payments be divided on a 70%/30% basis between Marden and Bodenham respectively. Cllr Tilford proposed that the Clerk should contact Marden Parish Council to say that Bodenham Parish Council did not wish to discuss any other option than a 50%/50% division. Cllr Tilford commented on the disruption being caused by the construction phase of the project by the heavy traffic to and from the site and the noise of the construction process. Cllr Davis said that a bus had been held up for 20 minutes by vehicles connected with the site and had eventually been forced to reverse and take another route. **ACTION: CS**
13. **St Michael's School: Proposed Academy Status.** Cllr Tilford asked whether the School's finances would be adversely affected by the decision to seek academy status. Cllr Mitcheson noted that the School would be joining an established, large academy trust. It was agreed, at Cllr Mitcheson's suggestion, that the Parish Council should support the proposal and that the Clerk should inform the School of this and wish the School well. **ACTION: CS**
14. **Road Safety.** Cllr Mitcheson gave a report on a meeting held at Bodenham Parish Hall between himself, Cllr Baker, the Clerk and representatives of Herefordshire Council (Balfour

Beatty). The Report is attached as Annex B. Cllr Tilford commented that Herefordshire Council's behaviour had been appalling and that their suggestion that information about the criteria for speed indicator devices, vehicle activated systems and 'gates' was easily accessible on their website did not stand up to scrutiny. He said that he had easily found such information on the websites of, for example, both Oxfordshire County Council and Buckinghamshire County Council. Cllr Mitcheson said that Balfour Beatty had subsequently sent him information about gates and that gates seemed to be the only remaining option open to the Parish Council for improving road safety on the A417. He noted that a trial project had seen one village in Herefordshire - Bosbury - installing gates, and Herefordshire Council were keen to expand the use of them.

15. **Finance**

15.1 **Monthly Accounts.** The monthly accounts were approved (Proposer; Cllr Tilford: Seconder; Cllr Jackson) and are attached as Annex C.

15.2 **Invoices.** Cllr Tilford proposed and Cllr Jackson seconded that the following invoices be paid and this was agreed:

- Okells FrancisLaw (car park registration fee)	£44.00
- Bodenham Parish Hall (BFPG Quiz night)	£30.00
- M Darley (Footpath Officer)	£100.00
- Bodenham ParishHall (room hire for October litter pick)	£9.50
- DC Gardening Services (Lengthsman's January invoice)	£252.00
- Clerk's expenses (stamps, printer cartridges)	£21.48

16. **Planning.**

16.1 The following planning applications were considered:

- 153753: Land east of Ashgrove Farm. Proposed installation of buried electricity cable.
- 160079: Dove Cottage. Proposal to fell yew tree.
- 160124: Tan Y Bryn. Proposed single storey extension to side and rear of property and alterations to existing building.
- 160125: Tan Y Bryn. Proposed single storey extension to side and rear of property and alterations to existing building.
- 160164: Bunhill. Proposal to remove existing single-storey extension and replace with two-storey extension.

16.2 The Parish Council made no objection to any of these applications.

17. **Updates.**

17.1 **Bodenham Flood Protection Group.** Cllr Mitcheson gave a report, which is attached as Annex D.

17.2 **Parish Hall.** The Clerk reported that Mrs Gwen Bowden had sent her apologies for this Meeting, but had provided a report on the previous meeting of the Parish Hall Management Committee, which is attached as Annex E.

17.3 **Lengthsman.** The Clerk reported that he was to attend a meeting with Balfour Beatty shortly at which Balfour Beatty's Annual Plan would be outlined and this would include an update on the future of the Lengthsman and P3 schemes.

17.4 **Neighbourhood Plan.** Cllr Mitcheson reported that progress was being made on redrafting of the Plan. He added that a letter had been received from Bovis Homes, which had been circulated. The Clerk was instructed to write to Bovis Homes to acknowledge receipt of the letter and say that it had been passed to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for consideration.

ACTION: CS

18. **Correspondence Not Previously Circulated.** Cllr James-Moore read a letter about HM The Queen's 90th Birthday, which asked whether parishes wanted to organise a celebration. Cllr James-Moore asked for volunteers, and suggested that local groups be contacted. Mrs

Liz Davies said that the Lugg Valley Cancer Group was holding an event on 11th June at Siward James.

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

19.1 Cllr Baker reported that he would contact Herefordshire Council and Cllr Guthrie about the possible breaches of planning conditions during the construction of the solar farm and about the poor quality of the information on the Herefordshire Council website (see Minute 14 above). Cllr Baker further reported that the proposal to demolish Bodenham Manor had still not been resolved and would be taken to the Herefordshire Council Planning Committee.

19.2 The Clerk was instructed to invite a representative of New Leaf/Herefordshire Wildlife Trust to a future meeting to outline changes at Queenswood Country Park and Bodenham Lake following the handover of the lease by Herefordshire Council.

ACTION: CS

19.3 The Clerk was instructed to request a copy of the Local Plan from Herefordshire Council.

ACTION: CS

20. **Date of Next Meeting.**

20.1 The next Meetings will be held on 7th March and 4th April 2016.

20.2 There being no other business, the Meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Bodenham PFO Report**Mike Darley****28/01/16**

A welcome break in the weather has seen work carried out on BM 18 & BM 26, with the installation of a new finger post and stile.

The new finger post at Maund Bryan is of a new design to aid users in low light levels. Edged in white and made of a heavy duty plastic, making it easy to replace if damaged.

It is fixed to the post with 2 screws.

Ketch Lane BM 18

The Parish Council opted for a new stile and this has been installed, along with a new cross step. The one support for the step, had rotted away, leaving the foot board dangerous, hence a new step. Fig 3 To the left of the picture, you will notice a gap between the hedge and stile. This can be filled with a post and rail filler and a lower portion of that filler can be used for dog access.

In fig 4, the finger post has been reinstated to show the correct direction of travel. Note, the stile is following a parallel line to the hedge.

The stile in Smeadal's Lane, BM 14 West side, has had the steps removed for safety reasons. The supports for the foot boards have rotted off at ground level and the lower cross bar is in a similar state. This has been fixed temporarily. Note the wire netting under the cross bar.

I strongly recommend this stile be replaced with a kissing gate, with the permission of the PC and landowner.

ROAD SAFETY ON THE A417

After some months of discussion, the Parish Council decided on 6 July 2015 to pursue traffic calming measures on the Parish's 40mph stretch of the A417 in the form of 'gateways' and/ or vehicle activated signs (VASs). This was in response to feedback from both the 2010 Parish Plan survey and the 2014 Neighbourhood Plan survey that local residents regarded road safety as a major matter of concern. (The A417 was chosen for action, rather than the C1125, because of the uncertainties created by the proposed Bell Homes and Bovis Homes developments along the latter).

Having consulted Balfour Beatty, we were told that 'gateways' would require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which would take over a year to procure and would have no certainty of success. We therefore decided to focus on procuring two VASs. Because of the dangers of working on the A417, these would be solar-powered to obviate the need to change batteries frequently. We then held an on-site meeting with Balfour Beatty to decide where these signs should be located – one North of Saffrons Cross facing towards Hope-under-Dinmore and the other opposite the entrance to Woodhouse Lane facing towards traffic approaching from the South-East.

Having considered quotes from five VAS suppliers, the decision was taken to approach Westcotec for the equipment. A second on-site meeting was then arranged with Balfour Beatty to confirm the exact locations for the signs and to mark these base positions on the roadway with white paint. However, at the start of the meeting Balfour Beatty announced that, for reasons which they were unable to adequately explain, VASs would no longer be acceptable. Nevertheless, they said, it would be possible to use speed indicator devices (SIDs) instead and they suggested employing Balfour Beatty to deploy SIDs on the Parish Council's behalf. We explained that the Parish Council had already considered this option, but rejected it because it was more expensive than purchasing and operating SIDs of its own. (It was for precisely this reason that it had already operated a SID and operated it for over five years on the C1121 and C1125).

On the basis that SIDs were acceptable, Balfour Beatty proceeded to confirm and mark the two base locations on the A417 with us. They agreed to install the bases for us at a cost of £405 plus VAT each and to obtain two heavy duty poles for us at our expense. (Stronger poles than normal were required because of the wind loading on the SID and its solar panel). The requirement that SIDs should not be continuously operated in a particular location was also discussed and it was accepted that, since it would be too dangerous for the Parish Council to deploy and redeploy such heavy equipment on the A417, the acceptable compromise would be to operate the SIDs in overt mode for 2-3 weeks at a time and leave them in covert mode or switched off in the intervening periods.

Following the meeting we contacted Westcotec and informed them that we were no longer able to procure VASs, but would be seeking two solar-powered SIDs instead. Westcotec produced new quotes for this, there being little or no price difference between the two types of equipment. We then waited for Balfour Beatty to procure the poles and install the bases. Unfortunately, however, at this point our contact at the firm retired owing to ill health and his replacements had to take over the project effectively from scratch. This led to their questioning the assurances we had previously been given by Balfour Beatty and in order to clarify the situation a meeting was held on 10 December with Mr Will Steel, the firms Network Regulation Manager. At this we were told that 'gateways' would not, after all, require a TRO – in fact, the impression was given that they would be positively encouraged. As regards the proposed SIDs, Mr Steel said that, having heard the history of the project from our point of view, he would check the official position and let us know the outcome.

We eventually received his reply a month later to the effect that only SIDs which were removed from their positions for at least two months in every three would be acceptable. In view of this Cllr Baker kindly arranged a meeting at the Parish Hall on 28 January with Mr Sean Rooney, Interim Head of Highways at Herefordshire, Mr Will Steel and other representatives of Balfour Beatty. At this Mr Rooney apologised for the Parish Council having been drawn into the present situation, but

confirmed that, despite the policy stated in Herefordshire Council's current draft Local Transport Plan ⁽¹⁾:

- a. SIDs would not be acceptable unless they were physically removed when not operating overtly.
- b. The local accident record did not justify the use of VASs.
- c. The fact that the Parish Council would be funding any measures did not affect the issue.

It was agreed that Balfour Beatty would:

- Confirm the date and outcome of the most recent traffic survey carried out on this 40mph stretch of the A417.
- Review the relevant accident data.
- Provide details of the published procedure for applying for VASs and SIDs.
- Review the Herefordshire Council website's coverage of VASs and SIDs to make the relevant information easier to find.
- Make publicly available on Herefordshire Council's website the Council's policy on where VASs and SIDs can be deployed and the criteria against which approval/ rejection of deployment will be judged.

Westcotec have been informed that we are not able to proceed with the purchase of their equipment and the reasons for this.

K.A.M.

1. "To spread limited resources widely we will prioritise the use of low cost methods to encourage speed limit compliance such as Vehicle Activated signage. We will work with communities to provide appropriate levels of support and facilitate the introduction of vehicle activated signs. In line with our approach to encourage communities to take a greater level of responsibility of their environment we will consider the introduction of physical traffic measures funded by the community.

Where there is public concern over excessive speeds in local communities but where intervention cannot be prioritised based on speed and accident data we will continue to work with local communities through their Parish Council to deploy Speed Indicating Devices (SIDs). These are a low cost and effective way of raising drivers' awareness of their speed.

Policy LTP SM 3 – Speed Limit Compliance We will work with our partners, local communities and Parish Councils to use a variety of cost effective techniques to encourage and enforce compliance with speed limits through a combination of encouragement and enforcement measures.

This will be achieved through:

- Using clear signage, including vehicle activated signs (SIDS).

January 2016 accounts**18th DECEMBER 2015: OPENING BALANCE = £21060.64**

Date Comment	Income	Expenditure	
21st December 2015		£37.84	Clerk's PAYE
31st December 2015		£151.67	Clerk's salary
5th January 2016 advertising	£99.00		Newsletter
12th January 2016 advertising	£145.00		Newsletter
7th January 2016		£30.00	Clerk's expenses
7th January 2016		£58.50	PC room hire
7th January 2016		£22.50	BFPG room hire
15th January 2016		£24.00	Lengthsman
TOTALS	£1516.84	£1952.41	

CLOSING BALANCE = (£21060.64 + £244.00 - £324.51) = £20980.13



BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP REPORT **(1 FEBRUARY 2016)**

1. **Summary of the Past Month.**

a. The flooding at the Ketch Lane junction, which I reported at the last Meeting lasted from 3 – 8 January, with the water reaching a depth of 18 inches for part of that time. So far as I am aware the only casualties were the three drivers who decided on 5 January to risk the flood and came to grief in Ketch Lane with the result that they had to be rescued by Saffrons Garage.

b. Over the past six weeks the early warning telemetry system has provided 0.5m alerts on eight occasions (26, 27 and 30 December and 2, 7, 9, 27 and 29 January). There was also a further alarm at 0.9m on 3 January, but it fell very rapidly from a peak of 0.969m. On that occasion the Millcroft Farm relief channel also operated for a few hours.

2. **Monthly Meeting.** The first monthly Meeting of 2016 was held last Tuesday (26 January) and was attended by 32 members.

3. **Annual Coffee Morning.** The Group's Annual fund-raising Coffee Morning will be held in the Siward James Centre from 10.00am to 12.00 noon on Saturday, 6 February 2016 and Parish Councillors are, of course, most welcome to attend.

K.A.M.

Bodenham Parish Hall Report

- The Hall continues to "tick along", but more bookings would always be welcome.
- When we have two quotes for the doors a decision will be made taking into consideration the cost of cutting keys.
- Gwen Bowden requested a "cigarette bin" for the outside wall and this was agreed.
- With regards to the camera, Bob Bowden's initial tests were not very promising as the images were of a poor quality. However, further test will be carried out in due course.
- The first Flicks in the Sticks was very successful with 53 attending.
- Arts Alive have asked if we would like to host a Best of British season which we have decided to do. Questionnaires will be handed out, for suggestions of films, at the next Borderline event on the 26th February at 7.30pm when "A Walk in the Woods" will be shown. For this evening we have to charge £4.50.
- Before then we have Flicks in the Sticks on the 12th February at 7.30pm showing "The Water Diviner".
- Welsh Water will be using land at the Parish Hall to store equipment etc for 20 weeks while they are working in the local area. They will not be using the main car park entrance so will not be an inconvenience to Hall users.