

**BODENHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of BODENHAM PARISH COUNCIL  
held on Monday, 3rd February 2014 at the Siward 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 Robin Knott, Cllr Pam James-Moore, Cllr Tony Mitcheson, Cllr Jeff Pollard, Cllr Rhian Powell.

District Cllr Jeremy Millar was also present. Eleven members of the public were present at the start of the Meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** There were no apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of Interest.** Cllrs James-Moore and Powell declared an interest in Item 9 on the Agenda.
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting.** The Clerk reported that Minute 9.2 of the previous Meeting contained two incorrect references to the amount of precept requested and that the correct figure should be £14185. The minutes were then accepted as a correct record (Proposer: Cllr Avery; Seconder: Cllr Austin).
4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes.**
  - 4.1 **Minute 4.3: Noticeboards.** Cllr Pollard reported that he had received a quotation for a wooden 900mm x 600mm noticeboard. He was asked to obtain a quotation for a larger noticeboard, *i.e.* 1200mm x 600mm. Cllr Knott suggested that the Clerk and/or Cllr Clarke be authorized to accept the quotation, if it seemed reasonable. This was accepted unanimously (Proposer: Cllr Avery; Seconder: Cllr Powell).  
**ACTION: JP**
  - 4.2 **Minute 4.5: Footpath to the Chapel Lane Bus Shelter.** Cllr Clarke reported that Balfour Beatty had added installation of a path to the bus shelter at Chapel Lane to their list of minor works. The Clerk was instructed to ask for an estimate of when the work might be done.  
**ACTION: CS**
  - 4.3 **Minute 4.8: Kerbstones.** The Clerk reported that he was still awaiting a reply from Balfour Beatty.
  - 4.4 **Minute 4.11: Lengthsman.** The Clerk reported that he had not heard from Bodenham School about the Lengthsman spreading salt in the vicinity of the School. Cllr Clarke said that he would contact the School about this.  
**ACTION:BC**
  - 4.5 **Minute 5.1. Rubbish in Orchard Close.** Cllr Powell said that she had contacted Herefordshire Council about the matter and had been told that it was being pursued according to standard procedures.
  - 4.6 **Minute 5.2: Drains on C1125.** The Clerk reported that he had added the clearing of these drains to the Lengthsman's regular schedule.
  - 4.7 **Minute 5.3: Blocked Drain in Brockington Close.** The Clerk said that he had reported the drain to Balfour Beatty.
  - 4.8 **Minute 5.4: Uses for the Telephone Box.** Cllr Pollard said that he had not yet investigated the matter, but would do so. Cllr Clarke said that using the telephone box as a book exchange had been suggested, but that the box was too damp for such a use.  
**ACTION: JP**
  - 4.9 **Minute 6.5: Wildlife Projects.** This item was deferred for consideration at a more suitable time.
  - 4.10 **Minute 8: Clerk's Salary.** Cllr Clarke requested details of the job specification and remuneration scales for the Clerk. Mr David Tilford pointed out that the nature of the job had changed and said that he would email to Councillors a copy of discussions held by a sub-committee of the Parish Council some years ago on the Clerk's job.

- 4.11 **Minute 11.1: Extra Sandbags for the BFPG.** The Clerk reported that he had requested extra sandbags and flood warning signs, but none had been received. The Clerk was instructed to make another request and also to ask that flood warning signs be placed on the A49 to save drivers trying to use the C1121 as a route across to the A417 only to find that the road was impassable at the far end. Cllr Millar said that Balfour Beatty need to be kept informed about flooded roads in order to be able to take action. Cllr Mitcheson said that Herefordshire Council's website has a regularly updated 'Roads Closed' feature, but roads in Bodenham do not appear on it. The Clerk was instructed to contact Herefordshire Council about this.

**ACTION: CS**

- 4.12 **Minute 13.2: The Meals-on-Wheels Service.** Cllr Millar reported that the current Meals-on-Wheels contract ends on 31st March, but no decision has yet been taken about the new contract.

- 4.13 **Minute 13.4: Oak Posts in Church Road.** The Clerk reported that he had asked the Lengthsman about replacing any damaged oak posts. The Clerk was instructed to ask the Lengthsman to carry out the necessary repairs. The Clerk was further instructed to ask the Lengthsman to clear vegetation from the overgrown footpath between the War Memorial and the School.

**ACTION: CS**

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

- 5.1 Mrs Gwen Bowden asked about dog fouling and whether the Dog Warden could be asked to visit Bodenham. Cllr Powell said that, because there was only one dog warden for the whole of Herefordshire, it was unlikely that he would be able to visit Bodenham regularly. Cllr James-Moore said that Tarrington had reduced dog fouling by naming and shaming dog owners who allowed their dogs to transgress. The Clerk was instructed to ask the Dog Warden to visit Bodenham to discuss and advise on the issue of dog fouling. The Clerk was further instructed to put an item on dog fouling in the next *Newsletter*.

**ACTION: CS**

- 5.2 Mr Tony Clark asked about repairs to the mounting block near the Church. The Clerk reported that some time ago a quotation received for installing drainage at the playground had included repairing the mounting block, but the quotation had not been accepted. Cllr Pollard said that he had received a separate quotation for repairing the mounting block, but this had not been acted on. Cllr Knott suggested that Cllr Pollard should now accept the quotation on the Parish Council's behalf.

**ACTION: JP**

- 5.3 Mr Clark reported that he had replaced the missing reflective warning sign on the verge alongside the brook in Millcroft Road and that Balfour Beatty should be informed about this. The Clerk was instructed to do so.

**ACTION: CS**

## 6. **Parish Plan Reports.**

- 6.1 **Health.** Cllr Powell reported that a meeting of the Emergency Planning Committee had taken place, at which discussion had centred on how best to provide help for vulnerable people in major emergencies. It had been agreed that this should be structured along the same lines as Bodenham Flood Protection Group's existing plan. Cllr Powell said that she and Cllr Mitcheson were in the early stages of drafting a Parish Emergency Plan and that the two Neighbourhood Planning Open Days were going to be used as opportunities to seek input and offers of support from local residents (see Minute 11.2 below).

- 6.2 **Road Safety.** Cllr Clarke said that provision had been made in the precept for road safety improvements. The Clerk reported that he had requested dates for a meeting with Justine Heath, Senior Engineer at Balfour Beatty, to discuss road safety matters in Bodenham and had replied to her. However, the dates she had offered had now passed without her having responded. The Clerk was instructed to ask for a new list of dates.

**ACTION: CS**

## 7. **Signage.**

- 7.1 Cllr Pollard asked whether anything could be done about the unsightly signs at the A417/C1125 junction. Cllr Clarke asked whether the signs were legal. Cllr Millar said

the legality of signage was not easy to establish, but that temporary signs were probably allowable. The Clerk was instructed to ask Balfour Beatty to clarify the legal position about the signs at the A417/C1125 junction and, depending on their response, to write to Bache's Bargains asking for their signs to be tidied or removed. The Clerk was also instructed to ask Balfour Beatty to remove the brown tape on the sign on the A417.

**ACTION: CS**

8. **Litter Pick.**

8.1 Cllr Powell suggested that a litter pick be held on either Saturday 5th April or Saturday 12th April, depending on the availability of the Parish Hall.

9. **Finance.**

9.1 **Monthly Accounts.** Cllr Knott presented the monthly accounts which were accepted unanimously and are attached as Annex A. (Proposer: Cllr Avery; Seconder: Cllr Mitcheson).

9.2 The following invoices were approved for payment:

- DC Gardening Services (Lengthsman's invoice)	£360.00
- Siward James and Arkwright Trust (PC room hire)	£27.00
- Clerk's expenses (printer cartridge, stamps, envelopes)	£27.95

9.3 The invoices were approved for payment unanimously. (Proposer: Cllr Knott; Seconder: Cllr Mitcheson).

10. **Planning.**

10.1 The Clerk reported that the following planning applications had been received:

- **140063/F: Laxton Barn: Retrospective for Retention of Existing Moveable Sheep Field Shelter to be Retained in Existing Position.** Mr Cole from Laxton Barn and Mr and Mrs Griffiths from Steppes Mill, next door to Laxton Barn, were present and Cllr Clarke invited them to speak. Mr Cole said that Herefordshire Council had told him that the field shelter must be moved twice a year and that retrospective planning permission should be applied for. Mr Cole reported that the shelter had been moved in May 2013, but had not been moved since, because the ground had been too wet. He added that the location of the shelter is ideal, because it is on flat ground and is not visible from Mr and Mrs Griffith's property. Cllr Clarke circulated photographs taken by Mr David Tilford and read relevant parts of a letter from Mr and Mrs Griffiths, which he had received. Mrs Griffiths said that the shelter was visible from her property and circulated photographs to show this. Cllr Powell asked whether drainage would be an issue, if the shelter was to be located in a fixed position. Mr Cole said that the water from the shelter is collected for the use of the sheep. Cllr Clarke said that the Parish Council must consider the application on its merits and not take any account of other issues of disagreement between Mr and Mrs Cole and Mr and Mrs Griffiths of which they might be aware. Mr David Tilford reported that under normal circumstances a field shelter should not be located within 400 metres of an intensive livestock unit; however, this was not the case with this application. He said that in his opinion the planning officer would not reject the application on the grounds of its visual impact, but that a condition should be attached to the application that a solid base should never be installed under the shelter. Cllr Avery proposed and Cllr Mitcheson seconded that the Parish Council had no objection to the application subject to this condition. This was agreed by seven votes in favour and two votes against with one abstention.
- **133508/F: Maund Court: Demolition and Rebuild of Poultry House 1 with Associated Infrastructure.** Cllr James-Moore reported that a site visit had revealed that the proposed poultry house was slightly larger than the existing one. Cllr Powell said that all mitigation factors needed to be in place, given that there had been four objections to a similar previous application. It was agreed that

the Parish Council had no objection to the application, subject to the conditions attached to the previous application being applied to this application (Proposer: Cllr James-Moore; Seconder: Cllr Powell).

- **133490/F: Berrington House: Proposed Manege for Private Use Only.**

Cllr Powell reported that the proposed manege was of the standard dimensions for maneges and was fenced, had drainage and used approved porous surfacing. Cllr Powell added that the manege is for private use for dressage training. Cllr Mitcheson remarked that a similar recent application elsewhere in Bodenham had included floodlighting and he suggested that, for the avoidance of doubt, it should be made a condition that no floodlighting should be installed. It was agreed unanimously that the Parish Council had no objection to the application, subject to the condition that no floodlighting be installed (Proposer: Cllr Austin; Seconder: Cllr Mitcheson).

11. **Updates.**

11.1 **Bodenham Flood Protection Group.** Cllr Mitcheson gave a report, which is attached as Annex B. Cllr Clarke congratulated the Bodenham Flood Protection Group on behalf of the Parish Council for its successful work during the recent wet weather.

11.2 **Neighbourhood Plan.** Cllr Mitcheson reported that a public meeting of the Steering Group held at 7.00pm on Monday, 20 January in the Siward James Centre had been attended by about 95 people. Fiona Brereton, a Senior Planning Officer at Bovis Homes, had outlined Bovis' proposal for developing a site just South-East of the Chapel Lane/ C1125 junction. The Meeting had also discussed changes to the settlement boundary in Bodenham Moor and a possible new settlement boundary in Bodenham Conservation Area, during which a range of views had been expressed. Cllr Mitcheson further reported that at a Working Party meeting held on 28th January it had been agreed to hold two 'Open Days' - from 10am to 4pm on 22nd February in Bodenham School and again on 2nd March at the Siward James Centre - and that the Emergency Planning Committee would also be represented on these occasions. Mr David Tilford added that refreshments would be provided at the Open Days and that a brochure, fliers and posters would be produced. Cllr Mitcheson said that at the Working Party meeting it had been agreed that a professional planner should be employed as a consultant to comment and advise on drafts of the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Powell asked about the validity and legality of a Bodenham Neighbourhood Plan, if Herefordshire Council had not yet produced their Core Strategy and had it approved. Cllr Millar said that the Core Strategy had been submitted for inspection, but, although the inspection process might take six months or more, the validity and legality of a Bodenham Neighbourhood Plan would not be affected.

11.3 **Parish Hall.** Cllr Powell reported that the Parish Hall has been designated as an emergency collection point and that, accordingly, the first aid box has been replaced with a larger one, which is sufficient to deal with 100 people. Cllr Mitcheson said that the Emergency Planning Committee regarded the Parish Hall as the only suitable place for an emergency collection point.

11.4 **Lengthsman.** The Clerk reported that the Lengthsman had cleared ditches in Wood House Lane. Cllr Powell commented on the improvement his work had made to Rowberry Lane.

12. **Correspondence.**

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

13. **Statement by the Chairman.**

13.1 Cllr Clarke said that after a slight health warning he will stand down as Chairman of the Parish Council in May, but will remain a member of the Council.

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

- 14.1 Cllr Millar reported that from 4th June there would be a new housing allocations policy for social housing. People currently on the list for such housing would retain their place on the list as long as Herefordshire Council is informed by 17th April. He went on to say that the changes made to ward boundaries had led to a review of the location of polling stations and that a public consultation would be held. He further reported that Herefordshire Council was divesting itself of all its leisure sites, except Queenswood and Bodenham Lake, where costs would be reduced and parking charges might have to be introduced. He said that a proposal from a community group led by Mr Stan Gyford was under consideration and that a draft of the proposal was to be submitted by 31st March. He noted that Mr Gyford would be willing to talk to Bodenham Parish Council about his proposal. The Clerk was instructed to invite Mr Gyford to the next meeting. **ACTION: CS**
- 14.2 Cllr Mitcheson asked whether any arrangements had been made for the next Parish Walk. The Clerk was instructed to ask Balfour Beatty about this. Cllr Millar said that Balfour Beatty might reply to the effect that no parish walks would be held until the local stewards scheme was in operation. **ACTION: CS**
- 14.3 Cllr Avery asked about the potholes on the C1125. The Clerk was instructed to report these. **ACTION: CS**

15. **Date of Next Meeting.**

- 15.1 There being no other business, the Meeting ended at 9.35pm.
- 15.2 The next Meetings of the Parish Council will be held at 7.30pm at the Siward James Centre on:
- Monday, 3rd March 2014
  - Monday, 7th April 2014
  - Monday, 12th May 2014



	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Signs										645		
Dog bin										150		
British Legion Grant								50				
TOTAL PC Expenditure	606.31	2008.99	1570.81	734.66	753.32	568.71	598.8	2699.63	1997.33	2615.51	1531.61	1299.61
<b>PC closing Balance</b>	<b>9526.56</b>	<b>8004.99</b>	<b>6938.22</b>	<b>7444.81</b>	<b>10750.99</b>	<b>16357.62</b>	<b>15939</b>	<b>13899</b>	<b>12680</b>	<b>10254</b>	<b>8907.5</b>	<b>8576.1</b>
BFPG Open Balance	2210.27	2210.27	2113.37	2099.87	2058.88	2058.88	2058.88	2412.07	2412.07	2412.07	2412.07	2412.07
BFPG Inc				30.00			494					
BFPG Ex		96.90	13.50	70.99			140.81					
BFPG Closing Balance	2210.27	2113.37	2099.87	2058.88	2058.88	2058.88	2412.07	2412.07	2412.07	2412.07	2412.07	2412.07
Lady Close Orchard	158.00	158.00	158.00	158.00	158.00	158.00	158.00	158.00	158.00	158.00	158.00	158.00
BLHG						190.00	190.00	190.00	190.00	190.00	190.00	190.00
<b>Tot Closing Balance</b>	<b>11894.83</b>	<b>10276.36</b>	<b>9196.09</b>	<b>9661.69</b>	<b>12967.87</b>	<b>18764.50</b>	<b>18699.49</b>	<b>16658.77</b>	<b>15439.69</b>	<b>13014.18</b>	<b>11667.57</b>	<b>11336.21</b>

**BODENHAM FLOOD PROTECTION GROUP REPORT**  
**(3 FEBRUARY 2014)**

1. **Water Levels.**

a. **Fluvial.** Even though there has been a lot of rain recently, the water level in the Millcroft Brook has remained low over the past 4 weeks, only rising to 0.5m on six occasions. The highest level reached in any of these incidents was about 0.84m on 7 January and none of them caused the relief channel to operate or gave any cause for concern.

b. **Fluvial.** As I reported at the last Meeting, and as Councillors will be well aware, some flood water from the River Lugg reached the Millcroft Lane/ Ketch Lane junction over Christmas and the New Year, as it does in most Winters. The most recent episode was over 9-11 January, since when the road has been clear.

2. **Monthly Meeting.** We held our first Meeting of the year last Tuesday (28 January) and this was attended by 30 members.

3. **Sandbags and Signs.**

a. We are still waiting for Balfour Beatty to deliver the 200 empty sandbags which we requested several months ago. The Parish Clerk is chasing these up for us. Meanwhile, as previously reported, we have plenty of filled sandbags in stock.

b. We have also asked if Balfour Beatty could supply us with four 'Flood' warning signs, which we could then put out on Ketch Lane, on the C1121 in Bodenham Village and on Smeadals Lane, when necessary. (At present we only have one such sign which we put out on Millcroft Road).

4. **External Contacts.**

a. **Environment Agency Study of Volunteering.**

(1) At the Council's Meeting last December I reported that we had been visited by Dr Bianca Ambrose-Oji, a researcher from the Forestry Commission. They had been 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 wanted to find out why, after some 5 years since the 2007 floods, the Group was still functioning, why members had volunteered in the first place, and what they each got from being a volunteer.

(2) She has now drafted her report and sent us a copy for checking. It is five pages long, much of it taken up with explaining the background to the BFPG and how it works. However it goes on to discuss:

- The kind of people who get involved in the BFPG and why;
- How we make decisions;
- The nature of our relationship with the Environment Agency and how that might be improved;
- The future prospects for the Group.



b. **Defra Evidence Base on Flooding Insurance.**

(1) Early in January we were contacted by a researcher, Mr Gareth Williams, working for Brook Lyndhurst, a research consultancy based in Cambridge. They are involved in a project called Flooding Social Science Evidence Synthesis, which is bringing together a range of evidence on flooding for Defra, and trying to identify gaps in the evidence that could inform further research.

(2) Part of this work is a case study looking at flood insurance, in terms of people's attitudes and behaviours regarding it, and also people's attitudes and behaviours to property level protection in the light of flood insurance. For example, he wanted to know of anyone in the BFPG or the wider community who has had any sort of dialogue with their flood insurance company, or been refused flood insurance.

(3) He conducted two telephone interviews, one with the Chairman and a second with the Secretary, each lasting well over half an hour. Amongst other things we explained that, since the Environment Agency issued a new flood risk map showing new computer-generated mapping of both river and surface flooding, there would appear to have been a sudden increase in property insurance premiums, regardless of the property's past history. We gave him as much information as we could and we also passed him on to Mary Dhonau, whom he has also subsequently interviewed.

(4) Through the BFPG we are encouraging local residents to report any insurance issues, either the imposition of a higher excess for flood risk or just a general increase of more than 10% in premium. Obviously, the more information we are able to give to Defra and Mrs Mary Dhonau, the more ammunition they will have when talking to the insurance industry.

c. **Environment Agency Meeting.**

(1) The Environment Agency are holding a meeting in Birmingham on 5 March 2014. This is "to identify a five year programme of projects addressing science, knowledge, best practice and capacity building needs as applied to local flood risk management. The purpose is to coordinate research commissioning so that it genuinely meets user needs and is delivered more effectively and efficiently".

(2) Most of the other attendees will be individuals with official positions or with technical expertise. The Chairman and Secretary have been invited to attend as people who have knowledge and experience of local flood risk management in a community setting and who might have different insights on flooding problems.

d. **Cabinet Office Website.**

(1) Defra have also told the Cabinet Office about the BFPG and we have been contacted by Ms Rebecca Bowers, the Assistant Director, Communities Prepared, in the Civil Contingencies Secretariat at the Cabinet Office. She has been working on a new website which is "designed to support Local Resilience Fora (LRFs) and Local Authorities across the country to further develop and inspire community resilience projects and groups in their own areas. .... A substantial section ..... will be focused on flooding, an important part of which will be to illustrate a range of community based approaches, using examples of projects and flooding groups from across the country".

(2) The Cabinet Office would like to "use the excellent example of the Bodenham Flood Protection Group to illustrate how community groups coming together regularly to maintain local drainage systems and water courses can be highly

effective in reducing local flooding impacts and raising awareness amongst local residents". Ms Bowers sent us a short paragraph which will provide a link to our own BFPG section of the Parish Website and we have checked and agreed it. The Cabinet Office website will be 'live' in a couple of weeks' time.

e. **ITN News.** With all the recent flooding in the South of England, flood risk insurance is obviously a current news issue and on 14 January we received a call from a researcher from ITN News asking about flood insurance. As we did with Defra, we helped them as much as we could with information about the experiences local residents have had in their dealings with flood insurance providers.

f. **The Hereford Times.**

(1) Councillors will be aware that Bodenham featured in a *Hereford Times* article on 16 January, which reported that a lady in her 70s, accompanied by her dog, had stalled her car in the flood water at the Millcroft Road/ Ketch Lane junction and had been there for two hours before being rescued. Apparently fire crews from both Bromyard and Leominster, as well as an ambulance and 'first responders' from Bromyard equipped with specialist lines and floats were deployed. The theme of the article was that the local community is callous and uncaring because, with one exception, people drove past her without stopping to see if they could help.

(2) There are a number of puzzling aspects to the report. For example, the photograph accompanying the article indicates that the water round the car was barely ankle deep and, even if the vehicle had been stuck in the centre of the junction, the water would only have been about 12 inches deep, so the question not answered by the article is why, at the expense of getting her feet wet, the driver did not simply get out of the car. She may, of course, have been infirm, but, had she walked a few yards out of the flooded stretch, other drivers might well have stopped to assist, something they would not do when they were actually in the middle of negotiating the flood themselves. Also, presumably the local emergency services are familiar with the Ketch Lane junction and the likely conditions there, especially after a similar incident on 28 January 2013. It is therefore not clear why it was necessary to deploy two fire crews and other resources in this situation. Finally, given how much local residents do to mitigate the effects of flooding in and around the Village, to characterise them generally as being uncaring seems to be uncalled for and unfair.

5. **Annual Coffee Morning.** The Group's next social event is the annual Coffee Morning which will be held on Saturday, 8 February in the Seward James Centre and, as always, will 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.