

## **MINUTES OF THE BROMPTON REGIS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT BROMPTON REGIS VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2017**

### **101 PRESENT**

Miss S. Newton (Chairman), Mr. I. Abel, Mr. J Andrews, Mrs T. Jones, , Mr. P. Page, Mrs J. Scott, and Mrs. S. Buchanan (Clerk).

Four members of the public: Mrs. D. Headley, Mr. M. Headley, Mr. I. Nelder and Mr. K. Steer.

### **102 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Mr. S. Coates and Cllr. F. Nicholson.

### **103 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **104 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

Councillors were invited to comment on the draft minutes, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. No comments were made and the minutes were unanimously **APPROVED** as a correct record and signed as such.

The Chairman referred the meeting to agenda item 8 and reported that while the community website is not functioning a copy of the minutes of the last meeting would be displayed on the Parish Council noticeboard and confirmed that agenda for meetings will continue to be displayed there.

### **105 MATTERS ARISING**

#### **105.1 Access to recycling centre**

Cllr. Nicholson is investigating the matter of restrictions on domestic vehicles that are classified as commercial vehicles.

From the floor Mr. Steer noted that the restriction also applies to trailers.

**ACTION: Clerk** to pass this information to Cllr. Nicholson.

#### **105.2 Bessom Bridge parking**

The Chairman reported that stakes have been placed near the lake shore to prevent vehicular access and that there appears to be no further progress with regard to improved car parking signage. The Wimbleball Lake manager and the community police officer has asked the Parish Council to address the suggestion, considered some years ago, that yellow (no parking) lines be painted on Bessom Bridge. After full discussion the meeting confirmed its earlier view that on the following grounds yellow lines would not be effective.

- Anticipated lack of enforcement
- Increased car parking on verges approaching the Bridge
- Negative visual impact in an area designated for quiet enjoyment and natural beauty.

**ACTION:** The Chairman and Clerk to write to SW Lakes Trust and the community police officer setting out these views and asking that signage to and at the car park entrance be improved.

## **106 CORRESPONDENCE**

### **106.1 Letter from Mr. Rees re funds for Brompton Regis church**

This letter having been previously circulated to Councillors was discussed at length. The Chairman noted that in 2016 a regular donation to the PCC, as with other organisations, had been rejected by the Council (minute 1031, meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016) and Mr. Andrews confirmed the importance of this position for all local organisations.

The Chairman advised the meeting that, in light of the letter received, Mr. Coates, as Chairman of Brompton Regis Show, had contacted Mr. Rees to discuss the Church's funding needs and the founding principles of the Show as a source of funds for Brompton Regis Church. On behalf of Mr. Coates she reported that the PCC was seeking funds of £750 toward churchyard maintenance costs and that she understood that Mr. Rees would approach the Show for funds.

Mrs. Jones noted that £325 of the Ironman grant had been donated to Brompton Regis church and she and Mr. Page recognised the value to small organisations of regular funding.

After full discussion of the situation it was **AGREED** that, at this point, funds would not be allocated to Brompton Regis church and that the decision not to enter into regular funding arrangements with organisations should continue.

## **107. UPDATES FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

On behalf of Cllr. Nicholson the Chairman reported that she is looking into access to recycling centres by domestic vehicles, as noted at minute 105.1.

## **108. PLANNING**

### **108.1 Consultation on the Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan**

In discussion of the content and purpose of this document the following points were noted.

- Control of forestry tracks and GDOs
- Deer congregating rather than moving across the moor
- Shooting, including negative impacts on the landscape and the quiet enjoyment of the area
- The presence of kestrels.

**ACTION:** Clerk to advise ENPA of the local presence of kestrels in different parts of the National Park.

### **108.2 Application 6/3/17/115**

After full discussion of the nature and likely visual impact of this application it was **AGREED** that it be supported on grounds of renewable energy use, and apparent lack of long term visual impact.

**ACTION:** Clerk to submit the Council's response.

## **109. FINANCE**

### **109.1 Precept receipt**

The Clerk reported that this has been received.

### **109.2 Audit update**

The Clerk reported that the External Auditor's report had been received and had made three comments:

- That the statement that petty cash was managed well was incorrect because the Council does not operate petty cash. This was noted for future years.
- That the period for the public to view the accounts was one day longer than the required time. This was noted for future years.
- That the Clerk had not signed the accounting statements prior to their approval. The Clerk advised that this was incorrect, that the forms submitted showed the date of her signing, and that she had therefore asked the Auditors to issue a new report, and had provided minutes of meetings to support the Council's position. In view of this it was **AGREED** that pending the Auditor's response the report should not be published.

### **109.2 Mid-year 2017-18 budget and 2018-19 projection**

These documents having been previously circulated were shared in paper form. The Chairman highlighted that compared to the projection considered in 2016 it was recommended that expenditure in year include a new website and a laminator.

The Clerk reported that Mr. Routledge, who developed and manages the community website as a volunteer, has found that the software used to populate the community website is not functioning and that the website therefore cannot be updated.

The Chairman reminded Councillors that the Transparency Code requires Parish Councils to regularly publish certain of their documents on free to access websites.

The meeting noted with thanks the expertise and commitment which Mr. Routledge has brought to the community website and reviewed and confirmed the Parish Council's support for a community website which meets the requirements on the Parish Council and wider needs and that other options (such as a Facebook page or publishing documents on the West Somerset District Council website) are neither suited to the needs of the community as a whole or a long term option for the Parish Council.

From the floor Mr. Headley asked for further information and the Clerk advised that Mr. Routledge and she would define what the website needed to do and that options for a new site would be explored and an update and quotes brought to a future meeting.

**ACTION:** Mr. Routledge be asked to pursue options for a new website, with the Clerk as appropriate.

The meeting discussed the effects that a lack of a cover on the noticeboard at Bury had on display of information there. It was **AGREED** that a laminator would address the problem in the immediate term.

**ACTION:** Clerk to purchase a suitable laminator and supplies and ensure that public notices are displayed on the Bury noticeboard.

The meeting discussed the Parish Council's reserves and the effect of this on expenditure priorities and Precept. The Chairman suggested that at its next meeting Councillors consider funding items of benefit to the community, such as items of adult fitness equipment which could enable local residents to improve their health.

**ACTION:** Councillors bring suggestions to the next Parish Council meeting.

Mr. Page asked, and it was **AGREED**, that the entry for contingencies be moved from expenditure to reserves and that totals be adjusted accordingly.

**ACTION:** Clerk to amend the mid year projection.

### **109.3 Insurance for the Millennium Green**

Mr. Page, as Chairman of the Millennium Green Trust, requested that the Parish Council pay the annual premium of £183.91. Mrs Scott proposed, Mr Abell seconded and the proposal that this be paid was unanimously **AGREED**.

## **110. HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

### **110.1 Winter services meeting**

On behalf of the Parish Council Mr. Abell and the Parish Highways Warden, Mrs. M. Abell, had attended the Highways Winter Services meeting. He reported that:

- gritting routes will continue as in 2016
- in addition to the 2016 distribution of grit and salt two additional bags will be placed in the parish (Cophole and Lower Woolcotts)
- where hedge overgrowth obstructs a highway, the Parish Council should write to the landowner and if no action follows should forward the letter and information to the Highways Authority
- that the Highways Authority will clear hedge overgrowth that conceals some highways signs.

The meeting thanked Mr. and Mrs. Abell for attending the meeting, welcomed the information and **AGREED** that clarity on the final point above is required and noted the benefits if advisory signs, including direction signs, are included.

#### **ACTIONS:**

- The Clerk to contact the Highways Authority and seek clarity as to whether guidance signs are affected or only mandatory signs.
- The Chairman to ask the ENPA Historic Signposts project if clearance around these fingerposts is included.

### **110.2 Road closures**

The Chairman reported the incident of road closure and diversion signs at Beech Tree Cross diverting delivery and other vehicles for the shop and pub to the Eastern end of the village, and that this had been addressed by a request that a 'Businesses open as usual' sign be placed at Beech Tree Cross.

The imminent closure of the same lane into the village had caused concerns of a repeat situation and the Clerk has contacted the Highways Authority to request that information signs are placed with the diversion and road closure signs.

**110.3 Blocked drains**

Councillors reported the following:

- East side of Bryants Bridge, water flowing down the steep hill
- Woolcotts, water flooding the road
- Ruggs Hill to Upton, top of the hill
- Venn, the new drain on the route to Cuckolds Combe.

Councillors requested a update on Sanctuary Lane blocked drains and the result of clearance of drains into Wimbleball Lake.

**ACTION:** Clerk to contact the Highways Authority on the above matters.

**111. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**111.1 Vandalism**

The Chairman informed the meeting of an escalation of vandalism at Combeland. Mr. Andrews voiced concern re the safety of straw stored there.

**ACTION:** Clerk to ask the community police officer to visit local schools to raise awareness of the dangers of vandalism.

**111.2 Local housing need**

Mr. Abell outlined the situation facing local people who are not able to afford local rents or raise sufficient mortgages to buy a house in the Parish or National Park. The Chairman in invited Mr. Nelder from the floor to outline his position. Councillors discussed the dual pressures of low wages and high house prices and the negative effects this situation has on the make-up of the local population.

Having considered Mr. Nelder’s circumstances it was **AGREED** that the Parish Council would raise the matter with Cllr. Nicholson and write a letter of support for Mr. Nelder in his application to purchase an affordable home in the National Park.

**ACTION:** Clerk to write to Cllr Nicholson and the ENPA on this matter.

**DATE AND TIME OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Starting at 7.30.pm at Brompton Regis Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Signed:.....Chairman, Brompton Regis Parish Council

Date:.....