

Minutes of Berwick St. James Village Meeting Monday, 16th January, 2017.

In attendance: Neil MacDougall (Chairman)

Olivia Marchant (Deputy Chair)

Bill Hiscocks (Treasurer)

Helen Riding (Parish Clerk)

Total in attendance: 59

Summary of issues discussed and decisions made

1. Welcome & Introduction – Chairman

Action

The chairman opened the meeting at 7pm and welcomed everyone.

New residents were also welcomed to the village – Brian and Wendy Armstrong who have moved into Jackie Webb's house.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Nicky Street, Sophie Colthurst, Ailsa Bush, Michael Mertens Dominic & Hannah Bush, Barbara Last, Jane Rowe,

3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

- a. The cricket pitch issues have been deferred to the next meeting.
- b. Neighbourhood Watch has nothing extra to add
- c. A new grill has been installed on the main drainage ditch on Langford Lane. It is up to everyone in the village to keep it clear, particularly those living in the centre of the village.

4. Accounts Update – Bill Hiscocks

The Community Fund balance is £1841.39 with no more expenses expected this year.

The Open Gardens weekend in 2015 generated enough money to fund the village for 2 years. We were able to pay the Reading Room and the Church Graveyard fund each £1250 last year. However there is not enough money in the Community Fund to give the same level of support to both organisations this year unless we have a fundraising event.

Bill listed the regulations required for the handling of village funds.

Action

1. Withdrawal of funds for village requirements of up to £100 from either fund can be made without prior approval from the village. However the reason(s) for the expenditure and the specific costs must be given and minuted at the next meeting.
2. Approval for the withdrawal of funds exceeding £100 but less than £500 from either fund must be given by the community at a Village Meeting. However there should be no requirement for the applicant to give any warning of the request before the meeting.
3. (As proposed by Christian Lange and approved on 12 Jan '12) Payments over £500 should be approved by the community at a Village Meeting and that the applicants for funds exceeding £500 should give warning of the request no less than 10 days before a meeting.

5. Funding event for 2017 - Chairman

Approximately 27 people attending the meeting said there needed to be a fundraising event this year. Sarah Humphries said the Reading Room would be appreciative of £600-£800. Henry Colthurst said the Church would need as much as the village could give, as they need a minimum of £1 500 to cover basic costs. A volunteer to plan and organise an event would need to be found by the next Village Meeting in March at the latest if Berwick was to hold a fund raising event this year.

Everyone

6. Planning Requirement – Marie Perry

Marie and Clive Perry wish to make some improvements to their house, Greendrake, by raising the level of the pitch at the front of the house to make it possible for the master bedroom upstairs to have an en suite.

There were no objections and with all in favour, the motion was passed.

7a. Duck Street sign

This disappeared during the Open Gardens weekend in 2015. The Council has said we need to pay for the cost of replacement ourselves. Historically, the street was not named Duck Street but Asserton Lane and the residents of the street and Asserton do not want the sign replaced. All at the meeting were in favour of it not being replaced.

7b. Parish Steward

The parish steward, Simon Simms, comes to the village every month and can do whatever we want as long as Neil asks in advance. If we see anything that needs doing, tell Neil so that it can be done at the next visit. Three points were raised – the branches on the bridge near Mill House need cutting, and potholes outside the Fishers house, Woodsprings, need repairing. There is also a build-up of leaves on the pavement and in the gutter outside the church.

Chairman

8. **A303 – Chairman**

Action

Neil presented a map showing the proposed northern and southern routes of the Stonehenge tunnel and Winterbourne bypass. A significant number of residents had attended the Saturday Public Consultation at the Manor Barn in Winterbourne and had read the booklet provided. It was generally felt not to be an accurate or fair representation of the situation and surrounding issues. The choice of route is a major concern for Berwick. It is essential that everyone completes and sends in their questionnaires by 5th March. Neil would like to have an Open day at the Reading Room at a weekend to assist people with the form filling. It is important to have objective responses and coherent supportive arguments from all affected villages.

Chairman

Key Priorities – Henry Colthurst

Objectivity – we need to be pro Northern route ie positive, rather than anti Southern route i.e. negative.

Legacy – for the living at either end of the tunnel

Focus – be consistent and persistent

Plan of Action

- Arguments need to be put forward ideally during Jan/Feb to build early momentum but in any event no later than 5th March
- Consensus and protest would be sought Feb/Mar
- Research needs to be completed during Feb/Apr
- Briefings during Apr/June

Impact Points

- the Northern route is the better route on balance
- avoids destruction of historical communities which run south not north
- avoids a big ecological impact to the south (under developed SSSI assessment)
- reduces obvious noise and air pollution for Winterbourne Stoke given prevailing winds
- reduces light pollution for nocturnal wildlife which is richer in southern valley
- reduces disproportionate impact on communities in the south
- probably allows for easier landscaping
- avoids potential damage to local businesses affected by the southern route
- avoids major disruption and damage to rural footpaths and bridleways-

Areas needing research on Southern option

- noise
- air pollution
- ecology
- housing
- landscaping
- economics
- potential but unresearched archaeological damage

Back to Impact Points

The junction with A360 could be moved south and eastwards to reduce risk of rat run and fit better with existing path of A360.

Plans showing the Northern and Southern routes are not thought to be of even height. This could be to make the southern route more attractive. Could the northern route viaduct be lowered to make it less than a mile per minute route, more trees planted and therefore made more attractive?

The viaduct is raised well above ground level. Where would the water from the road go? Presumably into the Till river? Being dirty water, this would be an environmental issue. Drainage ponds would be needed to allow the water to settle before being fed back into the river. However that raises the issue of where the ponds might be located.

Is information on the southern route being suppressed? Most of the information at the forum on Saturday was on the northern route. The fact of any information suppression should be disclosed and with the Freedom of Information Act, we can ask for any information that is being suppressed. To avoid possible charges, we should coordinate requests and split the amount being requested between residents to make the volume of each request smaller.

The A36 will need upgrading in the future. Has this been taken into consideration together with the new tunnel and bypass routing?

John Glenn has spoken to the Secretary of State who says decisions should be made based on the strength of local feeling.

Gail asked about STAG representing Berwick's point of view. Both Neil and Henry feel that it is important to know what the other villages think. Gail should continue to liaise with STAG but approval would be needed before STAG could express any opinions on Berwick's behalf.

Gail

The Guinness Estate and the campsite both need to be included in our actions.

We need to emphasize that Berwick supports the construction of the tunnel and that it is only the choice of bypass route that is being discussed.

The following positions on the Steering Committee were filled:

Administration Neil MacDougall

Fundraiser Mike Riding

Spokesperson Anika Lange

Coordinator (with outside organisations re research etc) Carolyn MacDougall

Many of the Berwick residents have knowledge and skills that would be extremely helpful – please come forward and help!

Anika suggested going to other village forums and asking residents what their views and opinions are. It was also suggested that a closed Facebook page for the Berwick Action Group be set up, possibly by David Street.

Everyone

The Steering Committee will meet at Henry's home on Sunday 21st Jan at 10am.

David Street
Henry

Any other business

There was no other business

The next meeting will be in February 2017. The date will be decided soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42pm.

Neil MacDougall

Chairman Berwick Parish Meetings