

Parish of Bourton-on-the-Water

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7pm on Wednesday 30th March 2022 in the Windrush Room, The George Moore Community Centre

Those Present: Parish Councillors Bob Hadley (Chairman), S Coventry, A Davis, L Hicks, A Roberts, L Wilkins, B Wragge. District Cllr Nick Maunder, Steve Cotton-Clean & Green Village Warden. Representatives from The Cotswold School, North Cotswold Scouts, Cotswold Wardens, WI and 12 parishioners.

In attendance: Sharon Henley, Parish Clerk and Jo Herbert, Assistant Clerk

1. Apologies for absence. Parish Cllrs M Macklin, P Millett, N Randall and B Sumner. County Cllr Paul Hodgkinson, District Cllr Richard Keeling. A representative from Bourton Primary School.
2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 29th April 2021, as approved at the Parish Council Meeting on 2nd June 2021, were noted.
3. The following reports were received:
 - a. Chairman and Committee Chairmen of the Parish Council
 - i. Cllr Bob Hadley gave a presentation on the Role of the Parish Council.
 - ii. Cllr Lynda Hicks, Chairman of the Youth & Wellbeing Committee. Support had been given to local charity Headspace, including an allotment plot. A grant would be given to the Football Club and the provision of Play Rangers' activities had continued. The Clean & Green team were working with the cubs.
 - iii. Cllr Amanda Davis who leads on Wellbeing provision thanked volunteers who helped with training provision for the community over the year. The updated Community Emergency plan had been completed by Council. Cllr Bill Wragge had mapped village defibrillators and first aid and defibrillator training was provided by Cotswold First Aid. CDC had funded the Digibus in Co-Op car park. There had been work on road safety and litter picking. Cotswolds National Landscape and Cotswold Wardens produced two new circular walks with funding from CDC. A new 'Changing Places' disabled toilet would be provided at Birdland and would be available for any members of public requiring it.
 - iv. Cllr Bill Wragge worked with the Dementia-Friendly Group and highlighted that the village was 'dementia friendly'. Businesses had been offered training to help engage with those with dementia.
 - v. Cllr Andy Roberts, Chairman of the Highways Committee: The Committee had worked on many issues, including the removal of the redundant bus shelter in Meadow Way and A-boards outside business premises and installation of bollards at Rissington Road with GCC funding. New patrolling hours for civil enforcement officers were doubled to cover estate roads and the village centre. The increase to be repeated this year and it was hoped that the Tourist Levy would help to fund this. The Speedwatch group had 8 regular volunteers. The Accessibility Audit highlighted many highways issues for follow-up with GCC. The Committee was assessing the need for residents parking and problems with traffic through Lansdowne and working with the TAG group to look at the potential for improvement.
 - vi. Cllr Amanda Davis, Chairman of the Planning Committee: The Committee had been looking at strategy as well planning applications and commented on the CDC Local Plan update and SHELAA with concerns about affordability of homes, levels of tourism, holiday lets/second homes. There had been a visit to the Thames Water sewage treatment works and the committee was seeking answers from Thames on capacity issues.
 - vii. Cllr Andy Roberts, Vice Chairman of Village Environment Committee: The Committee was working to protect the village's green spaces, despite high levels of tourist footfall. The Village Green railings would be removed for the summer on 4th April and hanging baskets and planters

would be installed. There would be a standardisation of finger signs. There would be a new tree survey following identification of a large number of trees that the Parish Council were responsible for. A new area was being cleared at Springvale allotments and the Len Hill Memorial in the Churchyard required removal, work was in progress to repair. Bin styles in the centre of the village were being rationalised with help from CDC. Additional burial space was being investigated.

viii. Cllr Bryan Sumner, Chairman of the GMCC Committee sent a report, read by the Clerk. The roof works were complete and it was hoped that no additional maintenance would be required for many years. The oil/gas chimney has been removed and it was planned to remove the redundant central heating boilers in the basement. There had been a loss of income from room hire during Covid but this had been offset by savings in other areas and public booking numbers were returning to pre-Covid levels.

Commercial lettings had continued almost unaltered with all leases having been renewed within the last 12 months and lease agreement documents updated, although rent increases were kept to a minimum. A new tenant, Zena the Barber, had been welcomed to The Old Chapel.

Work was in hand to address matters raised in the Fire Safety Audit, although all major deficiencies had been resolved. The completion of the registered title of the building was still ongoing following repeated attempts to rectify the situation with the official bodies but the situation was now being resolved by the UK Land Registry. The office staff and committee were thanked for their hard work over the last 12 months.

b. County and Ward District Councillors

i. County Cllr Paul Hodgkinson's report was read out by the Chairman. There had been a sharp rise in Covid cases and all were urged to take care and get fully vaccinated.

Cllr Hodgkinson is part of a task group looking at river pollution which has impacted the on the River Windrush. Police had been asked to conduct extra patrols around the village due to tourists parking in residential roads. The Tourism Action Group and Parish Council were investigating ways to better manage the traffic flow around the village at peak times and deter parking in residential streets. GCC Highways and Parking and residents to be consulted prior to developing ideas. The parish has been supported with grants, including for play equipment, the village event last September and the Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

Anyone interested in providing a home to a Ukrainian refugee should go to:

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/communities-and-leisure/support-for-communities/ukraine-support/>

ii. Nick Maunder, District Cllr for Bourton Village: Two sites had been proposed for housing development in the CDC Local Plan update consultation; the old Countrywide site and Bourton Chase. It was hoped that there would be provision for affordable housing and local residents. The Tourist Levy at Rissington Road car park had raised over £55k in the past year and this was set aside for community and Parish Council initiatives to address the impacts of tourism. It had funded the Clean and Green Village Warden, larger litter and recycling bins in village centre, co-funded bollards in Rissington Road and supported the Accessibility Audit. Residents were urged to take part in future consultation on projects for funding from this source. Accessible walks and new play equipment also received CDC funding. A climate change grant was funding upgrades for the leisure centres in Bourton and Cirencester. The energy audit at the GMCC had looked at reducing emissions.

c. The Police were unable to attend.

d. Clean and Green Village Warden, Steve Cotton started in October for the benefit of residents as well as tourism. Projects included planting of wildflowers and tidying up of overgrown areas and litter picks. He would be working four days per week for the summer months from the following week.

- e. North Cotswold Scouts: There are currently five Scout groups; Chipping Campden, Moreton, Bourton, Northleach and Sevenhampton but Northleach had closed and hoped to re-open after Easter. Bourton Scouts, Explorer and Beaver sections had to close due to lack of leaders, although the Cubs have a strong section and Beavers will re-start after Easter. A new section called Squirrels for ages 4-5 has started and may open in Bourton. Volunteers are always needed for all sections, including leaders, helpers, Executive Committee members and the Baden Powell Hall Management Committee. Training is provided so please get in contact if you can help.
- f. Cotswold Wardens: This is the voluntary arm of the old AONB, now Cotswolds National Landscape and covers 29 parishes in Gloucestershire. Main warden activities are working parties, walk leading and education. Much work is in response to Gloucestershire Rights of Way team but the Wardens also assist the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust at Greystones and the National Trust at Sherborne. The aim is for each parish to have a Parish Warden to patrol, maintain rights of way and report problems. Cotswold Wardens have recently been involved in the creation of two circular walks around Bourton. These will be waymarked and a map and walk details available, for completion in the next month.
- g. Bourton WI: The new president of Bourton WI advised that the group meet on the second Tuesday of every month in the Victoria Hall. The organisation is a social group who also campaign on women's health, wellbeing and equality. They met on-line during Covid but were now back to face-to-face meetings and celebrated their centenary last October. They have speakers booked for the rest of the year, a skittles competition, craft sales and are helping with afternoon tea for the Platinum Jubilee party. There is an annual fete in July to raise money for the local community and a garden party in August. The next meeting is on 12th April to hear a talk on Recycling with a Difference. Ladies are welcome to attend as a visitor.
- h. The Cotswold School's Deputy Head Teacher reported a challenging few years but they had kept open through lockdown, although all restrictions were now lifted. There were still some Covid-safe systems in place. They received funding for a new English block, two new science rooms and a clean and redecoration throughout the school. There was a new multi-use games area and part of the sports centre was extended with a new gym. They had received donations enabling them to open a new library after Easter. There were links with local organisations and some disadvantaged students were going out to local businesses. They received donations of laptops for disadvantaged students learning at home. They supported the local charity Headspace and drama students raised over £750. They opened a car park in field during the holidays for fundraising and charities were allowed 50% of takings if they volunteered. There are various after hours clubs and events and the school would like to start adult education and host a senior citizens' Christmas party. The students created a Code of Conduct 'Cotswold Charter'. Over £2,000 had been raised for the Ukraine. Parts of the Platinum Jubilee event would be held on the school fields.
- i. A representative from the Platinum Jubilee Committee highlighted the amazing group of volunteers and a large amount of event information was in the Bourton Browser for April. Any volunteers were welcome, please contact the Parish Clerk.
- j. Chairman's Report on Community Matters: These had been covered earlier in the meeting.
- k. Questions from the Electors:
 - i. A resident was concerned about the rise in the Parish Council's precept for 2022-23. From 1st April there would be a rise of around 6% and other parish councils locally had much lower increases. In particular there had been a steep rise over the past 4 years and some households were struggling. The Chairman advised that several budget meetings had taken place but the rises were necessary to funds items such as a burial consultant and new election charges by CDC. The actual increase for a Band D property was 56p per month and there was currently no cap on Parish Council precepts, only for district and county councils. The resident urged the

Parish Council to consult with residents before making decisions on a burial ground and this was noted.

- ii. A resident asked a question about acronyms used in the Chairman's presentation for organisations that the PC belonged to, and these were explained. BTAG is the Bourton Tourist Action Group.
- iii. A resident asked whether the old Countrywide site in CDC's Local Plan Consultation was proposed to be used solely for housing. The Chairman advised that it may be a mixture of housing and retail.
- iv. A resident raised that in previous Parish Council minutes District Cllr Nick Maunder had been looking to investigate the parish council/CDC attaining the site for the local community. Cllr Maunder responded that unfortunately CDC and the PC would not be able to complete with offers from commercial organisations and the district council were capped at a 2% rise in precept, so would be unable to subsidise this venture.
- v. A resident asked whether the parish would have any input into the numbers of affordable housing on the above site. The Chairman was unaware of that possibility, but the PC had met with a potential purchaser and the PC discussed putting in covenants on who could live in the properties. The resident asked if the Parish Council could investigate whether there was a precedent on this as they believed that parishes had previously had a say in affordable housing.
- vi. A resident asked whether it was planned to restrict traffic into Lansdowne and divert it into Station Road as there were concerns that this would gridlock traffic in Station Road. Cllr Roberts was putting a plan together with GCC Highways Manager for consultation with residents, but this type of change would require a TRO which would take several years. Cllr Davis added that planning rules had been relaxed during Covid leading to additional temporary car parks being available and exacerbating traffic queues in the village, but the rules would return to normal this year.

The meeting closed at 20.33 hours.