

# Minutes of Berwick St James Village Meeting Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2015

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In attendance: Neil MacDougall (Chairman)

Olivia Marchant (Deputy Chair)

Bill Hiscocks (Treasurer)

Helen Riding (Parish Clerk)

Guests: Cllr Ian West.

Total in attendance: 33

## Summary of issues discussed and decisions made

1. **Introduction and Apologies For Absence – Chairman** **Action**  
The Chairman welcomed Cllr Ian West, and new residents Peter and Ani Stockford.
  
2. **Apologies for absence**  
Received from John Coleman, Sally Hiscock, Henry Colthurst, Jane Campbell-Johnston, Sarah & Toby Humphreys, Jacky Webb and Ian and Jacky Fisher. The chairman sent best wishes to Ian Fisher and his family on behalf of the village: Ian has been in hospital in Torquay over Christmas and hopes to return home shortly.
  
3. **Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising**
  - a. Bus shelter: The work will be done either late January or beginning February by Chris Brain. The money has already been allocated.
  - b. The BT box on the corner going towards Stapleford is in need of refixing to its base – Neil has spoken to BT several times; they have promised to do something about it. Chairman

The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the last meeting.

Proposed: Richard Brasher. Seconded: Charlie Street.

## 4. **Council and A303 Update – Ian West**

### A303

Ian has spoken to the Council's Highways Transport representative. There is cross-party support for the tunnel at Stonehenge. It will possibly start near the strawberry seller near Amesbury and come above ground again around 200 yards from the Longbarrow roundabout. Many people still do not think this is the solution to the traffic problems on the A303 at Stonehenge. The Highways department has been told to draw up plans but the upcoming elections may impact on progress. No start dates have been mentioned yet.

### Army Rebasing

The rebasing of army personnel is being very well organised. There should be public consultations towards the end of January. There will be new houses at Larkhill. Transport, health and education infrastructures are being looked at.

## Council Tax

The police commissioner has announced a possible small increase in the annual council tax.

### **5. Precept – Bill Hiscocks**

The precept needs to be set for the coming year. It has been £1250 for the last 2 years. In the last year, expenses exceeded income by a small amount so the balance has gone down slightly. Bill's proposal is to keep the precept at the same amount for the coming year. The current auditors do not charge a fee so that will reduce expenses slightly. £500 goes to the Reading Room and to the Church for insurance and upkeep of the graveyard respectively, and both appreciate the money received from the village. Due to a reduction in government funding, the precept part of Council tax will be slightly increasing by, for example, approximately 11p per annum for band C houses.

Proposed by Nicky Street, seconded by Stephen Bush. All in favour.

### **6. Reviews and Updates**

#### **a. Speedwatch – Marie Perry**

Speedwatch has been running for 1 year now and none of the volunteers has dropped out. There is 1 new volunteer currently waiting for training. There have been 67 sessions with 2684 vehicles through the village and 202 of those were speeding. There were 14 "excessive speeders" – over 45 miles per hour. Unfortunately most excessive speeders tend to be out of county drivers and not much can be done to chase them up.

A new site has been approved at the bus shelter opposite Langford Lane. It is hoped that the new site will both slow drivers down and discourage them from speeding up again as the speedwatch volunteers will still be visible to them.

The speedwatch sign has still not come but Marie keeps chasing the authorities.

It has been noticed that there is an increase of heavy vehicles going through the village, despite the weight restriction. Ian West suggested taking down the company name from the side of the truck as well as the licence plate number and phoning the company, which in his experience had proved effective. Marie made the point that we are not allowed to report the lorries to the police as part of speedwatch as that is outside our mandate.

#### **b. Village Diary/Reading Room Update – Nicky Street**

The dates for the next few film nights are

January 22nd: The Grand Budapest Hotel

February 26th: Blue Jasmine

March 26th: Belle.

The annual Christmas Bazaar in the Reading Room in December had been successful and raised £370.60.

Nigel Rodgers will give a talk on 10th March: "Trees – who needs them?"

Howard's talk on Ebola was very interesting and Nicky thanked him for an informative evening.

#### **c. Young Residents' Association - Chairman**

This is an unofficial group that has been started by Neil to provide relevant information to the youth of the village (20 years and under). Claire Whatley has kindly agreed to coordinate the group.

**d. Flood Watch – James Hardy**

A flood watch letter was sent out recently. James had nothing new to add to that but suggested that people keep an eye on drains for clogging etc, and clear them out when necessary.

**e. Campsite – Chairman**

The owner of the campsite has applied to the Council to expand the period allowed for camping only. The village had been asked by the chairman to forward any objections or comments to him by 28<sup>th</sup> January. As none had been received, a letter stating No Objection was sent to the Council on behalf of the village. Cllr West is working on objecting on a public licence basis, but said it looks likely that the application for extended opening days will be granted.

**7. Money raising events for 2015 - Chairman**

At the last meeting, residents discussed the pros and cons of a Summer Fete or an Open Gardens weekend, and unofficially voted for the latter. An official vote needed to be taken so that preparations can begin on whichever event is chosen. Using a show of hands vote, 2 voted in favour of a Fete and 16 voted in favour of an Open Gardens weekend. The date has been moved by 1 week to the weekend of 20th/21st June 2015. Jane Campbell-Johnston will donate wine to be sold; other suggestions for activities include a BBQ, the Duck Race, a plant sale and a raffle. Neil will chair the committee organising the weekend and asked for volunteers to assist him.

Stephen Bush suggested that the people who are not opening their gardens should volunteer on the committee as those who are opening their gardens will be tied to their gardens and not able to help with general needs.

**8 Any Other Business**

The provisional date for the next Village Meeting is 19th March.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.

**Neil MacDougall**

**Chairman Berwick Parish Meetings**