

Minutes of Berwick St. James Village Meeting Thursday, 14th January, 2016.

In attendance: Neil MacDougall (Chairman)

Bill Hiscocks (Treasurer)

Helen Riding (Parish Clerk)

Guests: PC Ivor Noyce

Total in attendance: 36

Summary of issues discussed and decisions made

1. Introduction – Chairman

Action

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, including new residents Stuart and Sarah Larter, Greville and Gillian Bibby, and Ian Mackinder and Mena Wyllie. All were welcomed into the Berwick St James community. A special welcome was extended to PC Ivor Noyce.

2. Apologies For Absence

Apologies were received from Veronica Sumner, Barbara Last, Henry Colthurst, Gill and Richard Brasher, Jane Lock-Smith, Toby and Sarah Humphreys, Mary McDermott and Olivia Marchant. Cllr Ian West was at a Salisbury Council planning meeting and unable to attend our meeting.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

- a. Insurance for the Reading Room has been secured at lower rates than previously.
- b. The £500 donation to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance has been made. The letter of thanks has gone to Berwick St John unfortunately!
- c. James Hardy will be bringing out a flood report shortly.
- d. An update on the oil theft will be given by Ivor later in the meeting.

The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the last meeting.

Proposed: John Stephenson. Seconded: Mike Riding. All in favour.

4. Precept 2016 – Bill Hiscocks

The precept has previously been set at £1,250. The charge for a Band D house is £16.14. The balance of the precept account at 31 March 2015 was £864.94. The current balance is £809.90. Bill proposed that the precept for 2016 should remain at £1,250.

Proposed: Stephen Bush. Seconded: Ian Fisher. All in favour.

Bill also proposed that £500 be given for graveyard maintenance, and £500 to the Reading Room.

Proposed: Jane Campbell-Johnson. Seconded: James Hardy.

5. Superfast Broadband – Chairman

The DSLAM box for the Superfast Broadband was installed in May 2014. However, for it to work, a power source is needed. Three proposals were put forward: one option was for the power line to go through Michael Mertens' land, the other 2 options across Robin

Richards' land. Michael reported that it is being said he is holding up the working of broadband. He said he won't be forced, and that plans, agreements and proposals are needed but Michael hasn't had any letter from the power company or Openreach. He is using an agent who is dealing with it all but the companies don't reply to correspondence. Michael is willing to negotiate but the company hasn't got back to him. When he hears, he will let us know.
There are alternatives if the first option doesn't work out.

Action

M.
Mertens

6. Planning Applications - Chairman

There are currently 2 planning applications for Berwick St James. The first is for James Hardy to have a non-indigenous tree in his garden taken down. Unless it is removed, it may damage the cob wall.

No Objection - Proposed: Ian Gibb. Seconded: Bob Drake. All in favour.

The second application is for a flat-roofed extension to Michael Mertens' house on the south side. A comment was made that the original porch would be lost which would be a pity.

No Objection - Proposed: John Stephenson. Seconded: Bob Drake. All in favour.

7. Update on proposed Village Playground - Chairman

The suggestion is to put a new playground in the unused land behind the pub. Part of that land would be used as a car park extension and part for the playground. Wadworth Brewery needs to agree. It is hoped to raise money from Amesbury Board, R2 money, the lottery and our own village funds for the equipment and that the Brewery would pay for the playground base. Neil showed a proposed idea for the equipment. The question was asked what would happen to the old playground. Would there be a need for insurance for 2 playgrounds? The Boot is a listed building and is in a heritage area – need to wait and see if the Brewery likes the suggestion.

The bright colouring of the playground equipment was commented on. Other options will be investigated (more natural wood, sympathetic to the village).

Neil and Cathy will be discussing things with the Brewery in the next few weeks and will report back at the next village meeting.

Chairman
C.
Dickinson

8. 2016 Communal/Fundraising event – Chairman

There are 3 alternatives: no event; a fete; a Street Party similar to the Queen's 90th birthday party with the option to hold the event in the Marchants' grounds.

Olivia has already offered their grounds as a venue if that is the option chosen.

As the village is considering the installation of a new playground, it was suggested that we have a fundraising event. Through a show of hands, the preferred option was to hold a street party. However, there were no offers to organise the event! If no one comes forward to organise it before the next village meeting in March, it will be cancelled.

Tim has offered his garden for an Apple Pressing event in September. Neil will organise this.

All
Residents

Chairman

9. Village Diary – Nicky Street

Thursday 21st January - sale of Neal's Yard products at the Farm Shop from 10:30am

Thursday 21st January - 7pm film night at the Reading Room "Far from the Madding Crowd". The next film, "Mr Holmes", will probably be on 25th February.

The Boot kitchen will be closed from 1st – 14th Feb. The bar will be open as usual.

29th January - Burns Night, details from the Boot Inn.

10. Speedwatch – Marie Perry

Fifty-six sessions have been held to date. During the sessions, 229 speeders have been recorded, which is 8% of vehicles through the village.

We now have our Speedwatch signs, thanks to the help of Christian Lange. There has

been a 15% reduction in speeding in villages which take part in the scheme. There are 103 schemes in Wiltshire. Volvo has donated a vehicle to the scheme. It is marked as a police vehicle and parked close to the Speedwatch volunteers. This has been very effective in Shrewton. Berwick had it over Christmas and will have it again in February to see if it works for us.

There are 30mph signs that can be put on wheelie bins. Marie is going to investigate the legality of this. A suggestion was made that they could be put elsewhere and possibly the community fund could help with purchasing the signs.

Ivor Noyce then explained that tractor speed is limited to 25mph. The speed limit is determined by chassis size and brake equipment. He also updated us on the oil theft at the Guide Centre. They were spooked by a local farmer but had already cut the pipe so the oil drained away into the ground. It couldn't be proved who the culprits were. The Guides now have a new safety system.

There were hare coursers near Berwick this week. Unfortunately there wasn't enough evidence to prosecute.

Policing in the area – Chris Lange

Funding has dropped significantly and there has been much reorganising. Many departments are being merged so there will no longer be one dedicated officer per area but a group of 5 officers will cover the area and follow through. An officer will come to a village meeting if there is a special need and a request is made.

There has been hare coursing and deer poaching in the area. If anyone sees something suspicious, we are asked to phone 999 first and then the local farmer but to keep our distance.

All
Residents

11. Any Other Business

Greville said how much they appreciated the warm welcome they have received and how nice it is to be in Berwick.

Bus Service:

Neil has sent out an email about a bus service survey. The Council runs the No. 2 bus which goes from Salisbury to Devizes, via Berwick. The service does not make any money. The danger is that the service will disappear if there is not enough support, in which case it would be very unlikely that we would ever get it back. We are all urged to complete the survey and return it, including the young and the elderly and to spread it to those who don't have a computer.

All
Residents

A303:

Neil had sent an email out about the A303 upgrade. John Coleman had sent a letter to John Glen (and copied Neil) and after a number of replies back and forth, John Glen is going to raise the matter in Parliament today.

Flood reporting:

Wiltshire Council wants us to use their app to email reports of flooding, fly-tipping etc. It will then be better recorded.

The date of the next village meeting will be 17th March.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm.

Neil MacDougall
Chairman Berwick Parish Meetings