

Village Meeting.

Thursday 4th October, 2018.

In attendance: Neil MacDougall (Chairman)
Christian Lange (Deputy Chairman)
Bill Hiscock (Treasurer)
Kate Wood (Village Secretary)

Guests: Carol Slater (Till Valley Link scheme)

Total in attendance: 42

Summary of issues discussed and decisions made

1. Welcome & Introduction – Chairman

Action

The chairman opened the meeting at 7pm and extended a warm welcome to Alecia Parker (Caring Cottage), Ann Emerson (Magna House), and our guest Carol Slater from the Till Valley Link Scheme. He wished goodbye to the Mulvees and expressed the hope that they would come back to visit.

2. Apologies for Absence were received from Olivia & Tim Marchant, Tim Upward, Jane Lock-Smith, Barbara Last, Mary MacDermot, Henry Colthurst, Peter & Ann Day, Brian & Wendy Armstrong, Clive & Marie Perry and Julian & Kate Glynn-Owen.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The new speed sign is now up and working and is noticeably reducing the speed of traffic entering the village. As the sign is effective in reducing entry speeds at the northern end of the village, the Community Speed Watch team intend to programme some sessions in the middle of the village at the bus shelter and opposite the church.

Mike Riding proposed a change to the wording of Item 8a from 'all **outstanding** financial commitments would be covered including the SID', to all '**forecast** financial commitments' etc.. Additionally, it had previously been agreed in principle that 10% of the net profits (£450) would be paid to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance and Neil asked for a vote to be taken to confirm this figure.

- proposed by James Hardy and seconded by Bob Drake, all agreed.

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed unanimously to be a true reflection of the meeting – proposed by Ian Gibb, seconded by Mike Riding.

4. **Open Gardens 2018 Review**

Action

Neil thanked all involved for their great efforts toward what proved to be a very enjoyable and successful event, a good profit of just under £5,500 was achieved and the expenses had proved less than for the Open gardens in 2015. Slides and photographs of the event were shown and Neil gave a brief outline of how people had heard about the event and where they had come from.

5. **Division of Boundaries** – Christian Lange

Christian Lange explained the division of the boundaries in 20 community areas in Wiltshire and showed various slides to demonstrate, our area is Amesbury. Each area has a Community Area Board and our area has 6 Councillors, each looking after 1 area – Darren Henry looks after the Till & Wyle Valley area. Boundaries may change due to changes in population, new housing etc but need to suit the area, for example due to rural or urban identity, Berwick St James is unlikely to change. A 10 week consultation period on the subject will close on 5th November 2018 and a draft will be published by February 2019, anyone wishing to comment on the division of boundaries can follow the link on the village website – <http://www.lgbce.org.uk>.

All

6. **A303/ Stonehenge – Legacy and Benefits** - Greville Bibby

Greville Bibby and Anika Lange had attended a meeting by Highways England regarding the legacy & benefits of the A303 development. Highways England informed all present (approximately 70 people) that funds are available (up to £900m) to spend on good causes which are tied to road construction and development across the country, such as bridges, footpaths, cycle ways and other environmental improvements as may be required. Suggestions were welcome from the public and a proposal was made that any interested volunteers should meet and discuss possibilities for environmental improvements in such areas as community, heritage or transport etc, required in their area, and present them at the next Highways England Workshop.

All

7. **Till Valley Link scheme** - Carol Slater

The Till Valley Link Scheme provides free transport to those in need of assistance wherever they may need to go, such as hospital visits or social needs. The service is provided by volunteers and in this area supports Shrewton, Tillshead, Berwick St James and Orcheston. At present there are 1748 volunteers in total – 45 in Wiltshire but new ones are always required and Carol extended a warm welcome to anyone who may be interested. Pamphlets were available after the meeting or tel: 01980 620525 – email enquiries@communityfirst.org.uk

8. **Village Diary** - Nicky Street

Nicky presented a slide of past and future village events and announced that the Macmillan Coffee Morning which was held at Berwick farm Shop on Sunday 30th Sept had raised a total of £938 for the charity and that the winner of the quiz was Gavin

Stephenson. The Art Appreciation evenings, presented by Brian Armstrong had proved to be a success and were popular and well attended, the next one will be on 11th October and further presentations will continue into the new year, together with a talk by Nigel Rodgers and regular film nights. A full list of up & coming events is available on the village website.

9. Allocation of Profits from the Open Gardens 2018 - Chairman

Neil explained there would be a sequence of speakers regarding the division of the profits from the Open gardens event – Christian Lange would describe why we have and need the Community fund, Bill Hiscock would present the current financial statement, Nicky Street would speak on behalf of the Reading Room and Stephen Bush on behalf of St James church. Finally Neil would present the options to the meeting.

Community Fund - Christian Lange

Christian gave a brief explanation of the history of the Community Fund and the ways in which it benefits the village – it underwrites a number of village events, enables the village to pay up front for events which, in turn, creates further funds being raised and it also attracts match funding for various events/projects. A number of slides were shown detailing the various events/projects, causes and equipment that the community fund has supported. Christian said the present balance of the Community fund is £372 and there followed some discussion on at what level the balance should be kept.

Current Financial Statement - Bill Hiscock

Bill presented a slide of the village accounts and outlined the present financial position, showing also the costs and charges for the village over the past 12 months. The annual Precept is presently set at £1,250 and the balance of the account as of 30 September 2018 is £493.59.

Reading Room - Nicky Street

Nicky presented the costs of maintaining the Reading Room and informed the meeting that the cost of repairing the thatch to the roof when necessary was £8000. Additionally, the cost of moving the position of the Reading Room entrance door will amount to £9,000 of which half has been received from Wiltshire county Council as match funding, and the other £4,500 would need to be found out of existing Reading Room funds. She highlighted the fact that the Reading Room held fundraising events to help cover these costs and stressed its importance as an amenity for the community and the various events held in the village.

Village Church - Stephen Bush

Stephen read out a letter to the meeting from Henry Colthurst (Church Treasurer) explaining the costs of running and maintaining the church and an outline of present funds available. The Church has 2 funds available; one is the **Fabric Fund** which covers the cost of maintenance and repair to the building. Over the past 6 years more than £50,000 has been spent on the church roof and organ from that fund and the other is the **General Fund** which pays for routine expenses and produces a small profit of

approximately £125 a year but also pays the annual Diocesan Quota of £7000. To Action cover the cost of this Quota in addition to the costs of the normal upkeep and running of the building, the church relies on donations and standing orders from generous villagers, plus tax refunds; however there remains a shortfall of £2000 which needs to be met from other sources and the largest contributor so far to bridge the gap has been money from fundraising events in the village. In closing his letter Henry stated his fears that if the gap in the general finances could not be bridged, the long term result may be the closure of the church. Stephen's stated requirement to replace the waterpipe and the costs involved were discussed in some detail and he stressed the importance of the Church to the village community.

Options for division of Open Gardens profits - Chairman

After the residents had been given the opportunity to express their views, Neil presented the meeting with 3 possible options for the division of the profits from the Open Gardens, a total amount of £3,956, and welcomed any other suggestions. Stephen Bush conveyed Henry Colthurst's suggestion as a **4th option**, and finally Greville Bibby suggested that perhaps the Church's present requirement for funds was greater than the Reading Room, Mike Riding therefore suggested a **5th Option** to address this disparity.

£3,596	Options for Division of Open Gardens '18 Profits	Options	Votes
Option 1	£1,318 to each (33% / 33% / 33%)	Initial Options	7
Option 2	£1,582 (church - 40%) / £1,582 (Reading Room - 40%) / £791 (CF - 20%)		0
Option 3	£1,450 (church) / £1,450 (Reading Room) / £1,056 (CF)		0
Option 4	£1,725 (church) / £1,725 (Reading Room) / £500 (CF)	Henry Colthurst	0
Option 5	Option 3 - £1,900 (church) / £1,000 (Reading Room) / £1,056 (CF)	Mike Riding	26

Option 5 was agreed by a large majority.

Any other Business

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 9pm.

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday 10th January 2019.**

10. Neil MacDougall

Chairman Berwick Village Meetings.

