

BAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Held at the Gallery on Thursday 5th June 2014 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr R Wilkins (in the chair), Cllr H Rainey, Cllr R McBrien, Cllr S Taylor, D Cllr M Booty, D Cllr M Barrett, Cllr S Hoare.
Apologies: Cllr J Allinson, Cllr P Smith, Cllr J Downing, Cllr S Betty, Cllr D Hussell
Public: Mrs S Phillips, Mr D Hawkins, Mr D Pullman, Mr R Shukburgh.

Chair Person Report

Bampton PC has just finished a 4 year term of office on May 27th. The last year of the 4 year term saw some personnel changes. Our clerk, changed from Sarah Radband to Cathy Street in May 2013. Cathy has had an interesting and busy year and is managing and growing her role very capably, so we hope she will remain with the council for many years to come. The council also succeeded in obtaining the full complement of councillors (11 in total) for the last year with the addition of Sarah Betty and Ben Slater.

May 2014 was potentially an election year for Bampton PC. However less than 11 were nominated for the council and therefore no election took place. The council were sad to lose Marion Dowding who had been a member for quite a number of years. Marion, some may know, was made an MBE in the New Year's Honours list, a first for Bampton PC. Gareth Pursey decided not to stand for council. Gareth has been a particularly active member for around 3 years and organised the excellent Christmas Market that was held in December in the Village Hall. Luckily he has agreed to organise this again in 2014, so he is not entirely lost to us. Our last member of the outgoing PC that did not stand again is Ben Slater. Ben found that his increasing workload was making it difficult for him to attend meetings, but did send me an e-mail, and I quote, "The Parish councillors do lots of excellent and, for the most part unrecognised work, and I for one will make sure that residents I know appreciate the efforts made by the PC to improve their lot." We are sad to lose Ben as well. On a positive note the new council took office last night and we have 2 new members, Dave Hussell and Sally Taylor. The first meeting of a council is always a long one and I believe they withstood last night's test as it was certainly long!! The make up now of the current Parish Council is certainly far younger than I have ever known during my 28 years on the council. It is excellent that councillors have young children and bring with them a younger perspective and a breadth of interests to us 'old timers' that we may have forgotten.

The council has over the last year carried out its normal duties. We are responsible for the cemetery, War Memorial, Town Hall, Allotments, Mercury Close Play Ground and the Old School Community Centre to name a few. Councillors have specific areas of responsibility as we have found that this gives greater continuity and hopefully a better service to the parish. Councillors give a great deal of time and put in a lot of effort, none of it paid, to keep the village running, and from time to time this can seem both exhausting and very rewarding. Every time I present to the Annual meeting, I find myself listing what we do as Councillors. I know I have just briefly touched on that, but tonight I just want to focus on the largest issue to have galvanised the whole of the village for many years – the planning applications that were made for 2 sites for housing in Bampton, namely down the Aston Road and in New Road Bampton. The council organised 2 separate public meetings about these applications as we felt it was important for the parish to look at the plans and to be able to listen to each other and for the parish council to listen to people's views. Planners from WODC attended both meetings to talk about general planning principles and guidance and to inform people about how to make their comments most effectively known. BPC objected most strongly to both applications. The site in Aston Road was turned down by WODC but has subsequently gone to planning appeal. The site in New Road has been approved by WODC with certain 'time phasing' conditions. This is not the outcome we hoped for but we were not surprised by the approval of the New Road scheme. We will continue to strongly oppose the appeal for the Aston Road site and intend to submit further supporting evidence to this appeal. I suspect that WODC will continue to be 'bombarded' with planning applications for development until such a time as an approved local plan comes into force. The outcome of the assessment of housing need for the whole of Oxfordshire has raised projected numbers significantly. I think that these

numbers are still for scrutiny and hope that one of our district councillors will be able to update us further on this during his report.

Recreation Ground Report

The Bampton PC are trustees of the Recreation Ground Charity. This charity owns and manages the recreation ground and pavilion in the Buckland Road, Pembroke Place Play Park and Sandford Field. Monies are invest in Charity funds to give an income to the charity and in addition the parish council gives a grant to the Charity each year. The sporting and other recreational facilities this RG charity has are excellent and far over and above any village of similar size in West Oxfordshire so we are extremely lucky in Bampton that this charity exists. The recreation ground is used by a wide range of sports clubs all of whom support and work with the charity to keep and use the facilities well. We are also amazingly lucky that we have a diligent and hardworking RG Manager in Glenn Wright who makes the job for councillors very much easier and we thank him for his hard work and dedication year on year.

Pembroke Place playpark does get well used but also suffers vandalism from time to time and this is a disappointment to us as money would be better spent for the charity putting in new equipment and expanding facilities as opposed to putting right mindless acts of vandalism.

Sandford Field is used for the Donkey Derby and by dog walkers across the village day in, day out. Apart from mowing and some occasional minor works, it sits there largely unaltered by time and does not cause issues for the charity.

I would like to thank the councillors who have the charity as their area of responsibility, (although as trustees the whole PC bear the responsibility for it). To Richard McBrien for agreeing to Chair the Steering group and to Pauline Smith and Gareth Pursey for working with Glenn on day to day matters.

County Council Report

The budget has been challenging as there have been reductions in funding. There is secure funding for key services and there has been a subsidy of the buses across the County. West Oxfordshire has been the 'least worst' reduced.

There have been **Home to School transport** review changes. Free transport to Burford school is closing but will continue to Carterton Community College, being the closest school.

Minerals and Waste Working Group. There have been extensions to Gill Mill quarry and there looks to be no new mineral workings in the West of the County.

Operation Bullfinch has caused an internal review of vulnerable young people in care in the County with closer collaboration between Education, Social Services and the Police.

Highways. Ducklington Lane and the slip road to alleviate traffic.

County Councillor Simon Hoare had a budget of £10,000 last year and £5,000 this year. £2,000 has been given to the new classroom project and there have been £7,500 of highways repairs to The Pieces. Simon is happy to support smaller events in Bampton if any groups need support.

District Council Report

Tourism. There are nearly 5000 people in West Oxfordshire in tourism related jobs. This is around 10% of the workforce. Annual income generated has risen by 3% from £260.4M to £268.2M. The number of visitors to the district has increased by £140,000.

South Central Ambulance Services response time figures have not improved. The JR hospital has taken steps to ensure that the time taken to transfer patients into hospital is significantly reduced by increasing the number of senior nursing staff, and nursing staff to ensure ambulance crews hand over care promptly, a quick registration administration process has been introduced and additional reception staff. It appears there was an error in the way data was entered from Chipping Norton first aid unit where patients treated

are now excluded from the overall figure unless an ambulance is called to that location, which has caused a drop in performance.

Housing. There is a need for more housing, including local affordable housing. We are bound by planning policy and the NPPF. The last 2 attempts to get a local plan together were subjected to events beyond our control. Now we have the SHMAA for the numbers of housing we will have to build over the next few years. The county as a whole will need in excess of 100,000 houses for the period 2011-2031.

Aston road is at its appeal and the New Road Development was approved subject to a phased build plan. Aston Road Appeal will be subject to a Public Enquiry to be held on 28th October.

Council Tax is frozen again with no reduction in services, free parking, continuing support for voluntary organisations, planned investment in ensuring broadband facilities will be available throughout the rural area. OCC has contracted BT to ensure availability of super-fast broadband to 90% of Oxfordshire. WODC have committed £1.6 million to extend that coverage to a further 2166 properties, reaching 95% in West Oxfordshire. Work is underway to commemorate WW1 centenary.

Bampton Community Shop Report

Going from strength to strength, and at the close of the financial year we donated some £20,235 to various local causes. Total over the years is approximately £120,000. This is due to the hard work from the manager, Patrick Constable and the team of about 25 volunteer staff to whom I express my thanks, not forgetting of course the kindness of local people who kindly donate goods for resale.

This year we will be reviewing our product lines and the layout and décor of the shop.

Bampton Library Report

The Partnership Agreement between BLEST and the OCC was signed on 17th December last year, to great relief, after 3 years and a lot of hard work. Although we certainly didn't want the cuts we are grateful for the hard work and dedication shown by Jillian Southwell (old County Librarian position) and her team from Oxfordshire Library Service. They were a pleasure to work with.

The Partnership Agreement, that we four individuals on the BLEST committee have personally signed, means we pay £8,800 annually to cover 50% of the Salary costs for the Library for the next 3 years with the possibility of 2 years extension - if both sides are in agreement. The whole figure is underwritten by two local families to whom we are extremely grateful as it gave us much improved gravitas in our negotiations. Fortunately we are confident that they will not be required to contribute actual funds but they remain extremely active and helpful in our fundraising activities.

Although the Agreement comes into effect in April next year, we make our first half yearly payment of £4,400 in October this year, as we are required to pay 6 months in advance. We will also have two meetings per annum with the Oxfordshire County Council Library Staff which means we will have a regular opportunity to pass on our views as to how the scheme is working and express any worries we may have about the workings of the Library in general.

Signing the Partnership enabled us to open our own bank account and draw down the monies that had been held by the Parish Council, and we wish to take this opportunity to record our thanks to our designated 'Library' Parish Councillor Jo Downing and the Parish Council Clerk, Cathy Street for sorting this out for us.

Our bank balance is currently looking good at just over £22,870

We are especially grateful to the Parish Council for allowing the Library Fund to have £5,000 a year from the Downton Abbey payments to the village. So far we have received £10,000 of this money – (not the £20,000 the local press have unfortunately reported! This was sloppy journalism as we were extremely careful to be accurate in the information we gave them) We are also grateful to Bampton Community Shop for a Grant of £2000 this year, which means that they have generously supported the Library Fund with £6,250 to date. We

were also very touched to receive a personal anonymous donation of £1000 - which we took as an indicator of how much the Library means to Bampton people.

We have organised various fund raising events this year including: Talks and Activities; The 'Love It' Concert; The Village Wide Garage Sale; 100 Club, and we are presently running a Grand and by these we have raised £7,127.

We have more events in the pipeline, such as a grand auction, and Emma Bridgewater has offered us for free a limited edition of 500 Bridgewater Mugs, designed by her, to sell with a possible profit of around £8,000. Our aim is to raise the £50,000 needed to fulfil the Partnership requirements - that will safeguard Bampton Library's future until the year 2020 - as quickly as possible as like most volunteers we are also working hard on other things in the village.

We knew when we set out on this exercise that the Library is nothing without its professional staff, so we continue to be grateful that we have the wonderful Loraine Hall as our Library Manager, and we took it as a very good sign when her excellent relief assistant Clare Rednall was recently successful in retaining this position but now on a permanent contract. Congratulations to her!

Bampton Exhibition Foundation Report

The responsibility of the Trustees is to maintain the Old Grammar School in good order and to provide grants for the education of those under the age of 25 years in need of assistance.

Oxfordshire County Council leases the building for the Library and also Bampton Archive who use the Vesey Room for exhibitions. A new 10-year lease with Oxford County Council for the ground floor only is near completion. The Bampton Archive hopes to raise sufficient funds to lease and develop the Upper Floor.

The garden is maintained by Mr Rod Harris.

Bampton Parish Council has yet to find a site for the Jubilee Seat, which has been in the garden of the Old Grammar School for a long time and has now been refurbished.

Again the school was used as part of the Downton Abbey film set.

Bursaries totalling £1250.00 were made to assist young people of the Parish with their educational development.

The cost of building maintenance for this year was £549.58.

Due to the resignation of Mrs Sarah Radband a vacancy exists for a Bampton Parish Council representative to be appointed by the Parish Council as a Trustee of the Bampton Exhibition Foundation.

I would like to take this opportunity to place on record my grateful thanks to my fellow Trustees who unstintingly give their time and expertise to this Charity.

Bampton Welfare Trust Report

The Bampton Welfare Trust arose from the consolidation of many charitable bequests to Bampton of land, rent from land, sums of money etc, over hundreds of years. These were sold, mainly by the efforts of Major Robert Colville. The resulting funds were invested with the Charity Commission.

In 2013 the Trustees gave £3300 to local schools, playgroups and other organisations which benefit the people of the ancient parish of Bampton, (which includes Aston and Lew)

The welfare officer recommended payments of £4600, which included assistance with fuel bills for 27. Assistance was given in an increasing number of instances, including help with travelling to hospital, provision of some carpets, a cooker and washing machine, gas and electricity key payments, and a contribution to funeral expenses,. A contribution was made towards the larger expense of a forestry course for two young men.

The Trust received donations from Mrs Murray Clarke and from Mrs Gertrude Jordan's funeral. Mrs Joan Haslam retired as a trustee, after 27 years, and will be replaced by Mrs Joanne Dunning.

Bampton Primary School Report

The summer term 2013 was another period of transition for the Primary School as we prepared to take over management of the Bampton Pre-school which has served the local community for many years, operating from a building on our site. The decision was made to continue to take children from the age of 2 1/2 years although most school based nursery classes only admit children the term after their third birthday. As a school based nursery we needed to employ a qualified teacher to lead the team but we were fortunate to be able to TUPE across the remaining pre-school staff to make up the rest of the nursery team and therefore no jobs were lost. This year has been a time of transition for them as they have settled to different systems and ways of working. Also for parents there have been some changes to the way the nursery sessions are run but we have made the changes gradually over the year in order to make the transition as smooth as possible for everyone. We are really pleased with how well the first year has gone.

Since my previous report when I highlighted the outcomes of the short notice OFSTED inspection we received last spring I am pleased to be able to report that the school is moving from strength to strength. There have been improvements in our data showing that our children are attaining well and making progress. Staff have reflected on improvements that were identified and the whole team have worked hard to implement changes. Our school improvement partner from Oxfordshire County Council and the HMI who came for our interim visit are also pleased with the progress they have seen and we now await the return of OFSTED to make their judgement. However this year we have received a visit from an Early Years inspector who came to make a no notice visit to inspect the provision for our youngest children, the under threes. I am delighted with the positive report and the "good" judgement given.

This year has seen the children visit St. Mary's Church for key Christian celebrations and festivals. The highlight for me was the Experience Easter event which could only have happened with the support of the Rev. Lloyd and members of the congregation. The children visited the different stations set up around the church to experience the different parts of the Easter story. The feedback we had from the children, staff and helpers was overwhelmingly positive and we are aiming to repeat this experience next year.

The children and staff continue to value their links with Rosebank Care Home and this year again we have had a programme of events when classes visit either to lead a service, or share work and sing for the residents. This summer, after the success of last summer's visit, we have again invited residents to attend our KS2 dress rehearsal and look forward to welcoming as many as can make it to this event.

The school continues to receive much support, both financial and practical, from the community in Bampton for which we are very grateful.

This year the school council, as well as organising regular charity fundraisers, has focussed on improving playtimes. They compiled a questionnaire to gather the children's views on playtimes and are now using this information to plan improvements. One of them is to improve the equipment available and how the equipment is stored within the play pod. They approached FOBS (Friends of Bampton School) for funds and have been told that FOBS will financially support their request for new equipment. Other ideas which are coming to fruition are the development of a buddy bench area and the improved use of playground leaders.

FOBS have put a halt on fundraising for the new classroom whilst we await the outcomes of the housing development in Bampton.

September heralds the implementation of the government scheme to provide a free school meal for children in Reception and KS1 classes. I have received notification that Bampton CE Primary will have some of the Oxfordshire pot of money spent on it in order to refit our existing kitchen so hot meals can be provided for eligible children. We are hoping this will also mean we have the capacity to offer the option to purchase a hot school meal to older children who are not eligible for free school meals. It could be a busy summer if Oxfordshire County Council are to ensure we are ready September!

Bampton Flood Working Group Report

It is now almost 7 yrs since the horrendous Bampton floods on 20th July 2007. The WG that was formed in Bampton soon after the floods consisted of a rep from the PCs of 5 villages, namely - Aston, Bampton, Black Bourton, Clanfield and Brize Norton. 2 or more meetings are held in Bampton each year and are usually well attended by senior staff from WODC/OCC/Environment Agency.

The results of the WG were there for all to see during this last very wet winter, when very few Bampton dwellings were affected. Certainly, I didn't hear of anyone claiming on their Insurance policies for flood damage. Our location in Bampton has necessitated a policy of slowing down the flood water heading south from Brize Norton village and the RAF station, whilst speeding up the outflow from the village via the Shillbrook. We have had a lot of help from the 3 organisations mentioned just now, and trust that they will continue to contribute grants to achieve the WG wish list. The Bampton wish list is:

1. Improve the retention of flood water in Highmoor Meadow by repairing the banks of the Highmoor Brook and thereby stopping the flow back into the brook just above Glebelands. I await clearance by EA for this work to start shortly. Our Community Shop has kindly provided £2000 towards this project.
2. Encourage our MP to support the new agreement with the insurance industry to make flood insurance available to all.
3. Keep a close eye on the promise made by the New Rd developer to establish a fairly sophisticated flood containment package. You will recall that they hope to build a bund above the school/ several swales to direct any flood water to the eastern edge of the site/ and then hold this water in a large holding tank. All these measures have been on our wish list for some time but have not attracted funding.