

**Minutes of the meeting of West Bradford Parish Council held on Wednesday 31 October 2018 at West Bradford Village Hall**

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| Members present: | Parish Cllr A Bristol (Chair)  Parish Cllr H Best  Parish Cllr R Chew (Vice Chair)  Parish Cllr M Fox  Parish Cllr M Wood  Cllr P Elms (RVBC) |
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| Apologies: | Cllr B Hilton (RVBC) |
| Members of the public present: | None |

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| 1. | **Disclosure of interest:**  None received |  |
| 2. | **Minutes of the Last Meeting (26 September 2018):**  The minutes were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.  Proposed by: Cllr R Chew  Seconded by: Cllr M Fox  Matters arising:  None |  |
| 3. | **Public questions, comments or representations:**  None |  |
| 4. | **Update from Ward Councillors present:**  Cllr Elms raised the following issues:   * no formal decision had yet been taken with regard to the re-development of the Market in Clitheroe, the plans having been referred to the Borough Council’s newly-appointed Director of Economic Development for further consideration; * the Borough Council was due to produce a new Core Strategy in 2019, this being the key document determining the extent of house building across the Borough. It was possible that this may lead to a greater emphasis on house building in the villages rather than – as had previously been the case – being focused on Clitheroe itself; and * local elections were also due to take place in 2019, with recent boundary changes seeing both West Bradford and Grindleton represented by a sole councillor covering both parishes. Parish Council elections would also be held at this time. |  |
| 5. | **Extended closure of Bradford Bridge**  Members noted that – as part of the ongoing discussion on this topic - the Clerk had been asked to seek clarification from the County Council on two issues:   * an update on whether any new signage relating to the bridge may be forthcoming (LCC had previously stated that it would “investigate further locations to erect additional signage”); and * confirmation that the swept path analyses would be provided as soon as they became available.   Members acknowledged that no response had been received to a message sent on 2 October, and in light of this asked for a further message to be sent. At Cllr Elms’ suggestion, it was agreed that the following would also be copied in to this latest message:   * Cllr Elms * County Cllr David Smith * County Cllr Keith Iddon   **Resolved**  **Clerk to re-send the message and copy in the above members** | **Clerk** |
| 6. | **Overview of financial position:** |  |
| a | **Monthly accounts – September 2018**  The Clerk submitted details of income and expenditure for the month of September 2018 for approval by the Parish Council and signing-off by the Chair.  **Resolved**  **That the record for September 2018 as presented would be signed off** | **Chair** |
| b | **VAT reclaim**  The Clerk updated members on his attempts to secure (by electronic means) a refund of a significant amount of VAT legitimately owed to the Parish Council. Whilst this process had not gone smoothly, an application had finally been submitted and the reclaimed funding of £1773 would hopefully be received before the end of October. |  |
| c | **Concurrent Function Grant (CFG) 018/19**  The Clerk confirmed that a CFG claim for 2018/19 had been compiled and totalled £1437.22; this consisted of the entire costs for the services of the Lengthsman during 2018 and also included the charge for grass cutting payable to RVBC.  Members noted that the component of the CFG formerly known as the Parish Lengthsman Scheme Grant would be paid at 100% in 2018/19 but (as reported to the Parish Council in late 2017) will taper by 25% pa from 2019/2020, until it remains at the final level of 25% of the current rate from 2021/22 and thereafter.  **Resolved**  **Members agreed that the Chair of the Parish Council should sign the CFG application form for the sum of £1437.22**  **Clerk to submit the signed document to RVBC** | **Chair**  **Clerk** |
| d | **Precept 2019/20**  Members were advised of the need to set the Parish Council’s precept for 2019/20. To aid members in their deliberations, the Clerk presented a range of financial options for members to consider. These included an uplift of 1%, 2% or 5%.  Members noted the government’s desire for parish councils to consider all options (including the use of reserves) when setting their precept, and took into account that the current rate of inflation was 2.4% (Consumer Price Index). Members engaged in a lengthy discussion in which they sought to balance the Parish Council’s need to raise income against the financial pressures to which local residents were subject. Cllr Fox proposed that the precept for 2019/20 should be set at 2.5% - this was seconded by Cllr Wood. The proposal went to a vote, the outcome of which was as follows:   * In favour – 5 * Against – 0 * Abstentions – 0   (Cllr Elms did not have a vote in his capacity as a Borough Councillor).  A rise of 2.5% would increase the current precept by £174 to £7129, equating to a cost of £19.37 for each of the 368 Band D households in the parish (a rise of 16p per Band D household).  **Resolved**  **The Chair was authorised to sign off the documentation to be submitted to RVBC**  **The Clerk was asked to formally convey the Parish Council’s decision to raise its precept by 2.5% in 2019/20 to the Borough Council by its deadline of 21 December 2018.** | **Chair**  **Clerk** |
| 7. | **Planning applications considered**  Members considered planning application 3/2018/0825 and had no objection to this application. |  |
| 8. | **Governance arrangements: External audit - Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2017/18 (AGAR)**  Members noted that the Parish Council had successfully completed its external audit, with only one minor procedural criticism being made (acknowledged and accepted by the Clerk). The Clerk pointed out that – due to ongoing technical difficulties with the Parish Council’s website – it had not proved possible to display the documentation from the external audit on line as required, although hard copies had ben placed on the village notice boards.  **Resolved**  **Members noted (i) the successful conclusion of the AGAR process for 2018/19 and (ii) the Clerk’s difficutlies in publicising the outcome of the audit online due to ongoing ICT issues.** | **All** |
| 9 | **Website**  At the September meeting, members had noted the ongoing difficulties in accessing the Parish Council’s website (although this seemed to be variable with some parties able to access it when others could not). Following her recent discussions with a local resident who had a professional ICT background, Cllr Chew had been asked to invite the resident to the October meeting in order to discuss a potential way forward. The resident had unfortunately not been able to attend the October meeting but had confirmed his willingness to come to the next meeting (scheduled for 5 December).  It was agreed that it would be helpful if Andrew Marsden could attend the December meeting in his capacity as Chair of the Village Hall Committee, with a view to a discussion on the possible merits of closer website integration being held.  **Resolved**  **Members agreed to defer consideration of this item until the December meeting**  **Cllr Chew to ask Andrew Marsden to attend the meeting on 5 December** | **All**  **RC** |
| 10.  a | **War Memorial / centenary celebrations**  Approach from journalist to Mandy Brennan (RBL)  Members were reminded that an approach had been received from a journalist at Granada Reports (Phil Gornall), who was preparing a programme on Thankful Villages (ie those where all local men who went to war returned safely) as well as those villages which were not so fortunate, such as our own. At the September meeting members had authorised the Clerk to approach Mr Gornall and confirm their initial interest in the project. This had been done, with Mr Gornall thanking the Parish Council for their interest in the project and undertaking to come back to us if he saw any merit in further collaboration. |  |
| b | Clitheroe Advertiser  The Clerk confirmed that he had approached the Advertiser and been advised that – due to an oversight – an article promoting the success of the dedication ceremony had not been published. The Clerk was assured that (belatedly) an item on the event was still possible, and Cllr Fox reported that indeed an item had now appeared in the Village News section of the publication. |  |
| c | Nigel Evans MP  In Cllr Hilton’s absence, the Clerk reported that she had been asked by Mr Evans to pass on his positive reaction to the war memorial. Mr Evans (who had seen the memorial at a recent surgery in the village) had asked that his congratulations on the initiative be passed on to all involved with it, which the Clerk had agreed to do. |  |
| 11 | **Beacon** |  |
| a | Checklist  The Clerk presented a revised document summarising preparatory activity which had been / was still to be required for the Beacon event on 11 November. Members considered the document in detail and amended it its content as appropriate. Specific issues to note included:   * Andrew Marsden and David Bristol had kindly offered to assist with stewarding on the night; * Cllr Fox offered to approach a local property to assist if they could assist further with emergency / overflow parking; * Sam Wrathall had kindly offered to provide portable lighting at the entrance to the field to ensure safe access to / departure from the site; * Cllr Fox and Andrew Marsden had the arrangements for music in hand and were due to trial the playing of music after the Parish Council meeting; * Cllr Fox and the Chair agreed to meet at 2pm on 11 November to finalise all preparations, although members did not consider any wider meeting to be necessary at this stage; * Cllr Chew confirmed that Richard Schofield was still available to take photographs of the event; and * Cllr Chew confirmed that the newly-acquired banner could be stored at St Catherine’s church to ensure its availability for future use.   **Resolved**  **Clerk to amend the working document, and the Clerk / members as appropriate to progress the identified actions prior to 11 November** | **MF**  **Clerk / all** |
| b | Banner  The Clerk confirmed that the banner had (as requested) been ordered from Mydas Touch of Whalley at a cost of £100, and would be collected by the Clerk the next day.  Members acknowledged that they had previously considered the banner should be fixed to the Millennium Stone, but on reflection it was felt that above the benches at the Coronation Gardens may be a more appropriate venue given the intention to make this site more of a focal point for the village. Cllr Fox indicated that he had bungee-type fasteners available which could be used to secure the banner. |  |
| 12 | **Lancashire Best Kept Village competition**  The Chair and Vice Chair reported that they had attended the final of the above competition held at Wrea Green on 15 October. They were delighted to report that the Parish Council’s entry for the Best Kept Village had proved successful, with first place in the “Small Villages” category being awarded. This was considered a fantastic achievement for the village, and the Chair thanked all those involved in this year’s entry.  Next year the village will therefore be competing in the Champions category, and it was noted that the new war memorial could also be entered as appropriate.  The Chair outlined other success for the village, including:   * Village Hall (highly commended in the Public Building category) * Eaves Hall (winner, Hotel / Guesthouse category) * 3 Millstones (joint 4th in the Public House section)   Members debated a number of issues arising from this success, including:   * how to build upon this success in the 2019 competition   Cllr Chew suggested that a new award scheme local to the village could be introduced in advance of the formal judging of the Best Kept Village Competition, with the aim of encouraging local residents to “buy in” to the competition and raise the overall standard across the village. Possible local categories included the Best Front Garden etc;   * it was agreed that the plaque awarded to the winning village should be displayed at the Coronation Gardens site, again with a view to developing this as a focal point for the village; and * the plaques awarded to the village on previous occasions, and currently displayed at the top of Chapel Lane, should also be relocated to the Coronation Gardens site. It was agreed that Cllr Wood would ask Bill if he was able to do this, with Sam Conmee to be approached in the event that Bill was unable to assist. Members agreed that any damage to Cllr Wood’s property arising from the removal of the plaques would be put right by the Parish Council.   **Resolved**  **Clerk to diary a discussion on Cllr Chew’s proposal in the new year**  **Cllr Wood to ask Bill if he could assist with the removal / relocation of the plaques** | **Clerk**  **MW** |
| 13 | **Priority Services Register**  Members noted the update on this matter provided by the Clerk. |  |
| 14 | **Reports from sub-committees / other meetings attended**   * Playing Field / Village Hall – the cost of rubberising the play area had been estimated at £6k. In addition, the changing rooms at the village hall were to be used for storage purposes in future; * Parish Council Liaison Committee – next meeting on 22 November;      * Lancashire Association of Local Councils – no update; * Hanson Cement – next meeting 21 March 2019; and * Lengths-man scheme – see item 15 below |  |
| 15 | **Correspondence / requests received** |  |
|  | Lengthsman  The Clerk reported that, on 10 October 2018, he had received a letter from the current lengthsman confirming his resignation. At the request of the Chair, a letter had been sent to Mr Speak thanking him for his efforts over the year and ensuring that he had been paid all monies owed to him.  Members reflected on the points made by Mr Speak in offering his resignation, namely that road safety was an issue for the lengthsman (the speed of vehicles posing a potential threat to manual workers by the roadside). Members discussed the issue of health and safety, in particular whether the Parish Council would wish to purchase signage and cones to provide extra protection, and also require a future postholder to wear hi-viz when working.  **Resolved**  **Clerk to explore the acquisition of signage and cones**  **Clerk to explore the contractual situation of requiring the postholder to wear hi-viz**  The Chair confirmed that he had a candidate in mind as a possible replacement for Mr Speak, who he believed may be willing to take on the role next year.  **Resolved**  **Clerk to invite the potential candidate to a meeting of the Parish Council in Spring 2019** | **Clerk**  **Clerk** |
| 16 | **Any Other Business** |  |
| a | Cllr Chew suggested that, as part of the Armistice commemorations, the personal histories of the village’s fallen (as compiled by Cllr Best for the war memorial dedication) could be edited; laminated; and displayed on lamp-posts in the village.  **Resolved**  **Members agreed that this was an excellent idea, and asked Cllrs Chew and Best to proceed with this proposal.** | **RC / HB** |
| b | Cllr Wood expressed concern at the growth of the hedge on Chapel Lane adjacent to the Hippings House, which was felt to impact on road safety as pedestrians were obliged to cross the road.  **Resolved**  **Clerk to write a letter to the occupants of the Hippings House asking for the hedge to be cut** | **Clerk** |
| c | Cllr Wood pointed out that the Coronation Gardens were in need of weeding prior to the Armistice commemoration on 11 November.  **Resolved**  **Cllrs Chew and Best kindly volunteered to carry this out** | **RC / HB** |
| d | Cllrs Fox and Bristol both raised the issue of the purchase of a Xmas tree.  **Resolved**  **Cllr Chew would raise this with John Foley to see if he could provide a suitable tree which could be left in the ground rather than buy a new one each year**  The Clerk felt that it may be worthwhile enquiring whether there were any grants for Xmas lights available from the Borough Council.  **Resolved**  **Clerk to explore** | **RC**  **Clerk** |
| e | Cllr Fox raised fears for the safety of dog walkers around the village, who tended to be out in hours of darkness but often did not wear clothing which was easily visible to drivers. This had resulted in a number of recent near misses. Members felt this to be a serious concern, and agreed that a message should be sent around the village email network reminding residents to take care when dog walking.  **Resolved**  **Clerk to arrange** | **Clerk** |
| f | At the suggestion of the Chair, it was agreed that the date of the January 2019 meeting should be brought forward to the 4th Wednesday (23rd).  **Resolved**  **Clerk to arrange** | **Clerk** |
| g | Cllr Elms reiterated his apologies for his difficulties in getting to Parish Council meetings; this had been caused by his work commitments. |  |
| h | The Clerk was asked to leave the room while the Chair led a discussion on the Clerk’s current salary. In order to reflect members’ satisfaction with his recent performance, it was agreed that the Clerk’s salary would be raised by 1 increment effective from 1 November.  [The Clerk would like his thanks for his gesture to be officially recorded]. |  |
|  | **Date / time of next meeting:**  The next scheduled meeting of West Bradford Parish Council will be held at 7.30pm on **Weds 5 December 2018** at West Bradford Village Hall in the lounge (this being a rescheduled date which members present agreed to). |  |

**The meeting closed at 8.40pm.**

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| Signed by: |  | |
|  | Date:  5.12.18 | Cllr A Bristol  Chair |