

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

The meeting commenced with a public discussion of the ongoing closure of Bradford Bridge (item 6 on the scheduled agenda). Given the number of members of the public present, it was decided to take this item first and then continue with the remainder of the meeting.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Members present: | Parish Cllr A Bristol (Chair) |
|  | Parish Cllr H Best (Deputy Chair)Parish Cllr R Chew |
|  | Parish Cllr M FoxParish Cllr M Wood |
| Apologies: | Cllr P Elms (RVBC)Cllr B Hilton (RVBC) |
| Members of the public present: | Estimated at around 80 |
| LCC representative: | Mr David HurfordBridges & Structures Manager, Lancashire County Council |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 6 | **Extended closure of Bradford Bridge**The Chair welcomed Mr Hurford and all local residents in attendance to the meeting. |  |
|  | On being invited to comment on the ongoing closure of the bridge from the County Council’s perspective, Mr Hurford considered the reasons why the bridge had been damaged with such regularity. He noted that the bridge had been damaged on 16 occasions in the 44 months between 2009 and 2013; the majority of these incidents were caused by HGVs, which tended to use the route in order to avoid the height restrictions on the Waddington Rd bridge. LCC research at that time had identified a number of potential solutions to the situation, but none of these were ideal:1. Use signage to divert traffic onto a different route (although no better route had been identified);
2. Advance warning signs had been erected in April 2013, and the use of traffic lights on the bridge had been considered (although the approach on the village side as felt to be too narrow for this to work);
3. Place road markings on the bridge as a designated “track” for HGVs to follow (again the bridge was considered too narrow for this);
4. Place a weight or width restriction on the bridge (a weight restriction could only be placed if the bridge was too weak to support larger vehicles, and a width restriction may be inappropriate given that there was only an accident every 2400 passages by HGVs);
5. The erection of CCTV may be useful in pursuing a compensation claim against drivers who damaged the bridge (but would not prevent accidents taking place);
6. Widen the road (this would cost c£400k today, and this cost was the reason why warning signage had been deployed first); and
7. Widen the bridge itself (this would result in increased traffic passing through the village).

Since the introduction of advance signage in 2013, the number of HGV journeys over the bridge had reduced to 45 per week, with one incident of damage every 7 weeks. It was therefore felt that the advance signage had had a positive impact. |  |
|  | The Chair then sought questions from the floor and the following points were made:Impact of the bridge closure on village life:* The financial impact on residents due to the road closure had been considerable, with vulnerable residents (such as pensioners) having to spend more on taxi fares. Closure over the festive period had also impacted on local businesses such as the 3 Millstones and Xmas tree suppliers – whilst the reason given for emergency closure had been public safety, the suggestion that the bridge side “wobbled” when pushed was challenged;
* This problem had been compounded by the slow rate of progress with the current damage repair work. People reported that work often started late and finished early, and the need to do the work in winter time (when cold weather also impacted on progress) was questioned;
* The closure of the bridge had caused extra traffic in other nearby areas, with a resulting effect on the highway – for instance the road surface was now in very poor condition on the alternative route via Waddington. In addition, the extra traffic forced to pass Waddington and West Bradford School in the morning and particularly in the afternoon was a real road safety hazard.

The nature of the problem:* People were of the opinion that the principal problem is HGVs approaching the bridge from the direction of West Bradford;
* In addition, vehicles from Waddington Fell Quarry use the route through West Bradford and over Bradford Bridge, in contravention of the quarry's planning permission; and
* HGV trailers tend to slide sideways on the steep camber on the approach to the bridge from West Bradford. It was said that historically LCC would not alter the camber due to the impact on motorcyclists.

Whilst the bridge was now scheduled to re-open on 16 February, there was a strong feeling that – unless further preventative action was taken immediately – it was a question of time before the bridge suffered further damage and residents further inconvenience. Residents wished to look forward and sought reassurances that this message would be reported back to County Hall. In order to assist the County Council, the following potential solutions were put forward:Signage:* If signage had been a success (as Mr Hurford had indicated), should the introduction of more signage not be considered? This was especially relevant given the relatively low cost of installing improved signage;
* The advanced warning signs now in situ should be larger, they should be illuminated and there should be placed so to give more advance warning of the bridge (possibly as remote as the A59);
* It was suggested that the signs were not illuminated to save cost;
* Signs should be deployed which restricted the length of vehicles using the bridge. The example was quoted of signs in the village of York, associated with the hair-pin bend on Whalley Old Road; and
* At the junction of Chapel Lane and Grindleton Road, HGVs should be re-directed away from the bridge

Other possible traffic / enforcement solutions:* An 11'6" height restriction should be implemented to restrict which HGVs could use the bridge. However, other contributors felt that this would be an impediment to local farm traffic; and
* The County Council could enter a joint venture with the Police to deploy safety cameras and automatic number plate recognition could be used to enforce restrictions.

Physical alterations to the bridge:* A fender could be installed to protect the vulnerable north east corner of the bridge; and
* a high friction surface could be laid in the road to prevent vehicles slipping due to the camber on the bend.

Other general points made:* The high frequency of damages prior to April 2013 was due to increased HGV traffic serving the development at Stocks Reservoir and that the subsequent reduced incidents of damage were due to the reduction in HGV traffic now that development is complete; and
* Would a petition or letter of support from the Parish Council help the matter to be taken more seriously in County Hall?

Wider consequences of improving access to the village via the bridge:* improving Bradford Bridge could result in West Bradford becoming the preferred route for HGV traffic into and out of Waddington Fell and the Trough of Bowland. In this case various other bridges in the village may require improvement with a consequent negative impact on the nature of village life, which could fundamentally change as a result; and
* Some people were in favour of restricting HGV traffic using the village and the bridge but others were concerned that this would be an impediment to local farms and businesses as well as for deliveries to local properties.

  |  |
|  | A number of residents with professional experience of transportation matters offered to work with the County Council if this were felt to be of assistance. Mr Hurford offered to report the views of residents back to the County Council (including colleagues in the Highways Section) as a matter of priority – he would then report back to the Clerk who would be in a position to circulate the County Council’s stance to residents.  |  |
|  | At around 8.30pm the Chair then thanked Mr Hurford and residents for their attendance. The Parish Council agreed that - after a short break – it would proceed to the remaining business on the agenda.  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Members present: | Parish Cllr A Bristol (Chair) |
|  | Parish Cllr H Best (Deputy Chair)Parish Cllr R Chew |
|  | Parish Cllr M FoxParish Cllr M Wood |
| Apologies: | Cllr P Elms (RVBC)Cllr B Hilton (RVBC) |
| Members of the public present: | 0 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | **Disclosure of interest:**None received |  |
| 2. | **Minutes of the Last Meeting (29 November 2017):**The minutes were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting. (There had been no meeting in December 2017).Proposed by: Cllr M Wood Seconded by: Cllr H Best |  |
| 3. | **Public questions, comments or representations:**None |  |
| 4. | **Update from Ward Councillors present:**None |  |
| 5.a | **Overview of financial position:****Monthly accounts – November and December 2017**The Clerk submitted details of income and expenditure for the months of November and December 2017 (there having been no meeting in December) for approval by the Council and signing-off by the Chair.**Resolved****That the records for November and December 2017 as presented would be signed off** | **Chair** |
| b | **Budget Monitoring – 3rd quarter**Members were advised of the outcome of the latest quarterly budget monitoring exercise carried out by the Clerk. This showed the Parish Council’s finances to be in an acceptable position with no particular concerns about the adequacy of resources.  |  |
| c | **Concurrent Functions Grant Application**Members noted that this application had been made in December 2017 and it was anticipated that the monies would be received during Q4. |  |
| 6. | **Planning applications considered**Members were reminded that there were a number of current applications relating to the village, but none were considered in detail at the meeting. |  |
| 7. | **Governance arrangements****VAT / HMRC**Members noted the correspondence from HMRC on 8 December 2017, which confirmed that HMRC had no power to compel the Parish Council to re-pay any monies which may have been claimed in error. Members considered the position carefully and resolved that (given all the circumstances, including the previous correspondence between the previous Clerk and HMRC on this point) it would not be appropriate to make any voluntary repayment. Members noted that no new claims for VAT refunds had been submitted for over 12 months. It was agreed that – in light of HMRC’s correspondence on 8 December - it would now be appropriate for such claims to re-commence; these claims would include the £190 legitimate VAT refund claim deducted from the amount potentially owed to HMRC (as set out in previous correspondence with that body). The Chair of the Playing Fields Committee had previously expressed his thanks for the resolution of the discussions with HMRC, and these were noted. Members agreed that it would be appropriate for the Playing Fields Committee to be asked to make a donation to the War Memorial project, and the two Parish Council representatives on the Playing Fields Committee were asked to pursue this request.**Resolved****Clerk to re-claim VAT from HMRC on recent transactions (including the £190 referred to above)****Parish Council representatives to approach the Playing Fields Committee at its next meeting with a request for a financial contribution to the cost of the War Memorial project**  | **Clerk****MF****MW** |
| 8.a | **War Memorial / centenary celebrations****Outcome of Cllr Rigby’s visit**Members noted that the donation from Cllr Rigby had now been received.**Resolved****Members agreed that the Clerk should write a formal thank you to Cllr Rigby and repeat the offer to invite him to any launch event.**  | **Clerk** |
| b | **Approaches to local businesses for funding**Members were encouraged to continue to approach local businesses for funding. It was noted that a further written approach had been made to Travis Perkins through Cllr Fox. |  |
| c | **New funding bids**Members noted that a donation had now been received from Chatburn and District Royal British Legion, which had been received with thanks. |  |
| d | **Trapp Forge**There had been no further developments on this matter. |  |
| e | **Royal Forest Masonic Lodge**The Clerk reported that he had had further correspondence with the Lodge’s representative, who had indicated that the funding bid was on track and a formal response could be expected after a meeting in Feb/March.  |  |
| f | **Timeline**The Clerk presented the latest timeline which had been developed to capture all relevant deadlines and now formed the basis of an Action Plan for the remainder of the project. Members noted that the groundworks for the site were due to commence in February and asked the Clerk to check with the builder as to whether this would still be proceeding as agreed.Members felt that it was now time for further discussion to take place on the project, and agreed that a separate meeting should be convened. It was considered that 7.30pm on Monday 12 February would be a good time, and the Clerk was asked to check on room availability (as well as whether the Chair of the Playing Fields Committee could attend).**Resolved****Clerk to approach Sam Conmee for update****Clerk to arrange meeting on 12 February** | **Clerk****Clerk** |
| 9 | **Newsletter** Members considered the draft newsletter, which had been compiled by the Clerk, Cllr Best and a local resident (Mr David Wilson). With minor amendments, members approved the draft and asked the Clerk to arrange for printing of the document so that it could be distributed during the month of February.**Resolved****Cllr Best to finalise the draft with Mr Wilson****Clerk to arrange for printing of the amended draft****Clerk to write and thank Mr Wilson for his efforts**  | **HB****Clerk****Clerk** |
| 10a | **Potholes / wall adjacent to Clitheroe Rd****Potholes**Members noted the correspondence with LCC’s Portfolio Holder in December 2017, in which it was confirmed that the County Council acknolwedged the need for repairs to Grindleton Rd.  |  |
| b | **Dry stone wall**Members noted the response from Cllr Atkinson dated 8 November. It was agreed that Cllr Best would seek further clarification of the ownership issues from the family previously involved in a collison with the wall (and who may be able to confirm whether the County Council then made a claim from its insurers).**Resolved****Cllr Best to pursue** | **HB** |
| 11 | **Defibrillator**Members noted the ongoing correspondence with the Community Heartbeat Trust (CHT) and, after considering potential implications for the Parish Council, agreed that adoption of the phone box should proceed via the completion of all appropriate WebNos / CHT documentation.**Resolved****Clerk to complete and submit all appropiate documentation.** | **Clerk** |
| 12 | **Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition 2018**Members expressed an interest in entering the Small Village category during 2018. In doing so, it would be helpful to receive feedback on the 2017 entry. Members also acknowledged the need for a lengthsman to be appointed, and Cllr Wood indicated that she had been made aware of a possible candidate.**Resolved****Clerk to complete and submit entry forms for 2018****Clerk to seek feedback on the village’s 2017 entry from the event organisers****Clerk to contact the potential candidate for the lengthsman’s role and see if he would be interested in an initial meeting to discuss the position.** | **Clerk****Clerk****Clerk** |
| 13 | **Reports from sub-committees / other meetings attended*** Playing Field / Village Hall – it was noted that the AGM would be held on 14 February 2018.
* Parish Council Liaison Committee – 25 January 2018 (no attendees)
* Lancashire Association of Local Councils – no update
* Hanson Cement –next meeting will be on 27 March 2018.
* Lengths-man scheme – need for new lengthsman discussed under Best Kept Village item.
 |  |
| 14a | **Correspondence / requests received****SpID for sale**The Council noted the sale of equipment by Mawdesley PC but resolved not to pursue this matter further. |  |
| b | **Lighting pillar – Coronation Gardens**Members noted the imminent removal of the meter as a precursor to closure of the account with EON.  |  |
| c | **Great British Spring Clean**Members noted the information. |  |
| 15a | **Any Other Business****Bench on Clitheroe Rd**Cllr Wood reported that the roadside bench on Clitheroe Rd had been damaged and was in need of repair.**Resolved****Cllr Fox to explore whether the bench could be welded** | **MF** |
| b | **Xmas tree**It was reported that there had been some negative feedback from local residents about the size / quality of the village’s Xmas tree this year. Members were quick to point out that this was entirely due to the large increase in cost (with quotes of up to £240 for a tree similar to that of previous years being obtained). It was considered that a message explaining the situation should be sent to residents using the village email distribution list.Cllr Fox indicated that a grant for new Xmas lights may be available from the Borough Council. **Resolved****Clerk to draft and seek Chair’s agreement prior to circulation****Clerk to seek clarification on whether grant funding is available for Xmas lights (and any other matters)** | **Clerk****Clerk** |
| c | **Hedge**Cllr Wood expressed concern at the hedge near to Waddington and West Bradford School, which she felt had not been cut now for 2 years.**Resolved****Cllr Wood to report the matter to LCC** | **MW** |
| k | **Date / time of next meeting:**The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 28 February 2018 at West Bradford Village Hall.  |  |

**The meeting closed at 9.25pm.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signed by: |  |
|  | Date:28.2.18 | Cllr A BristolChair |