

**BAINTON AND ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING 9TH NOVEMBER 2009**

- 1. APOLOGIES** None, other than Coun. David Over may be late
- 2. PRESENT** Couns. Chris Agnew (Chair), A. Totten, J. Morrice, Z. Coles, J. Franks, A. Gowers (Parish Clerk), 11 members of the public and Coun Over (arrived during Item 4)
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** The Chairman explained that, in accordance with best practice guidelines, this item and also Item 4 would be regular inclusions on future agendas. Councillors were asked if they had any personal interests to declare in respect of any items on this agenda. Coun Agnew declared that, as a trustee of Bainton Poors, he may have an interest in the discussion on allotments should the issue of the previous alternative site be raised. Couns. Morrice and Coles also declared possible interests in discussing allotments: Coun Coles is a prospective allotment holder, and Coun. Morrice's husband also has his interest as a holder recorded.
- 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** The Chairman explained that this regular inclusion would allow members of the public to offer their views on any agenda item for councillors' consideration. The subject of the possible re-location of the bus stop was raised. Some members of the public were very unhappy about one possible option that the bus stop may be relocated to be outside Blue Boar House, and queried why there was a need to relocate at all. It was explained that a series of dangerous situations had arisen when village children had narrowly avoided being struck by vehicles undertaking others through the bus stop lay by when children were waiting for the morning school bus. This was now becoming a regular practice and parents were concerned that a serious accident may soon happen. Other members of the public were unimpressed, stating that no accident had happened thus far, that children should be properly supervised, and wondered why other possible solutions had not been investigated. It was explained that even accompanied children were in danger, as vehicles were performing their manoeuvres at speed, sometimes mounting the kerb. Some of those present explained that some parishioners would have further to walk to the bus stop; the Chairman countered by saying that compared with the safety of children, this was deemed an unfortunate necessity. Other options had been explored over an 18-month period and the position of the bus stop was one of the only options remaining. Comments raised will, however, be taken into account as the final solution is considered.
- 5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS** The minutes of the meetings of the 8th and 28th September were read and accepted subject to the following amendments to those of the 8th:

 - Item 5 Allotments: line 4- omit the word 'as'
 - line 5- omit the word 'as'
 - line 6- after 'was not prejudicial' add 'having taken advice from Ian Dewar CEO of CALC'
 - line 26- after 'Poors land' insert 'in some respects'
 - line 27 after 'Allotments Committee' delete the words 'divided approximately 50/50' and insert '100% for the Poors land at this stage'

6. MATTERS ARISING

A. HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

1. **WEIGHT RESTRICTION ORDER.** It was agreed that this initiative was very successful, with the volume of heavy traffic subsiding. Some people were now finding the road safe enough to use cycles. All those present were urged to continue to send supportive emails to Highways.
2. **ROADS AND PATHWAYS**
 - a. The glaring sign on B1443 will be inspected by the Traffic manager shortly.
 - b. Most potholes had been filled but some still exist along Tallington Rd.
 - c. The drain outside Beever House has been repaired.
 - d. Trees are still obscuring the 30mph sign on Helpston Rd.
 - e. Weeds are still evident along the B1443 footpath.
 - f. The lamppost outside 1, Meadowgate is still leaning.
 - g. The 'No Through Road' sign at the entrance to St. Mary's Close is obscured.
 - h. Barnack Road pavement needs resurfacing
3. **BUS STOP LAY BY**

The Traffic Manager is inspecting the site between 7am to 9am within the next two weeks and will consider all options to correct the problem.
4. **MOBILE VAS SIGNS**

Progress has been a little slow, with only one official presence. 34 people throughout the ward are trained- 7 in B&A- and it is intended to have planned slots for manning the signs soon. It was estimated that around 50% of traffic through the village is exceeding 30mph.
5. **STREET LIGHTING**

Despite interventions from Coun Over, this project is considered low priority and is unlikely to be done until the next budget at least.

B. ALLOTMENTS The Chairman read out a letter of thanks from the Chairman and Secretary of the Allotment Association, and then outlined the considerable progress since the last meeting. During the last 3 weeks, following the decision to use the land offered by Mr. Bratley for the allotment site, the land had been sprayed, soil delivered and leveled, drains put in and water supply ready. Fencing quotations were being considered. Coun Morrice thanked Coun Agnew for all his hard work in customizing the land. Thanks were also given to the anonymous donor, and also to G. Fletcher and R. Harris for their enthusiasm.

Coun Coles, however, read a prepared statement explaining her concerns at the handling of this issue. She was concerned firstly at the content of the information flyer which was delivered to all village households. She felt it was biased, emphasizing that the Poores trustees were duty bound to maximize rental income from the land with no appropriate mention of the cost of the Bratley paddock. There was no breakdown of lifecycle costs, no observations on the distinction of charity land vs private land regarding fund raising, nor did it compare the relative acreage sizes of each option. She felt that the

implication that the Poors land may attract travellers was also over-emphasised. She continued that the chosen venue for the 28 September meeting was inaccessible for some parishioners, and we have spent funds customizing Mr Bratley's land without a lease being signed. She also felt that proper tenders should have been requested and assessed for all the remedial work. She felt that the Parish Council had not discharged its obligations successfully and had by-passed some legal obligations. Coun Agnew defended the council's actions on these points. He stated that the flyer was passed round all councillors for comments before publication, and all suggested changes- incorporating five complete re-drafts- had been made. The venue was chosen as the only practical and available alternative for the Reading Room, which was pre-booked. Remedial work on the land had had to be completed urgently before the change in weather, and all non-quoted work had been done by Coun Agnew and Mr. Franks at no charge or less than cost price. The lease was being prepared retrospectively due to our complete faith in the land owner, Mr. Bratley. The anonymous donor was kept fully informed of all decisions at all stages and was entirely happy with the process.

7. ENVIRONMENT PROJECT GRANT Following the visit to the village from Brian Armstrong, Wildlife Officer, the Parish Council had been successful in obtaining a grant to complete a number of improvements throughout the villages. A grant of £225 has been offered against a spend of £300 and it was agreed to accept this and complete the project. It is planned to make the following improvements: firstly to construct a willow tunnel in the playground to replace the chain link fencing which has become rusty. Secondly the boxes in the playground will be filled with wildlife friendly plants, thirdly bluebell bulbs will be planted in the wash dyke area and fourthly the Reading Room garden will have appropriate planting. Coun Franks has a contact who will lead any volunteer youngsters in carrying out the planting.

8. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP FUND Coun Coles reported that there was good support for the wildlife corridors throughout the ward and a good turn out for the talk 'It's a Bug's Life.' There are plans to erect 6 more benches in the ward.

9. GRASS MAINTENANCE Following the retirement of our contractor, advertisements inviting applications to mow the village verges had seen six applicants, which had been interviewed by the Parish Clerk. A summary of the applicants had been circulated and it was agreed to choose Andy Perkins of Stamford.

10. THE RED TELEPHONE BOX The village telephone box is seeing declining usage, and following an offer from BT, it was agreed to adopt this for the sum of £1.

11. PLANNING APPLICATIONS An application to replace hen houses at Plants Eggs had been received since the last meeting. In the clerk's absence, Coun Totten had collected views from all who supplied them and sent a summary to the Planning Dept.

12. CORRESPONDENCE Two items of correspondence had been raised for discussion. Firstly the CALC AGM: Coun Totten has agreed to attend as our representative. Secondly, a letter from Legal Services offers training for clerks and chairs in the New Year. Details yet to be supplied.

13. FINANCE The RFO reported present funds at £4965.54. Following the receipt of a £2500 as a first instalment of the promised donation towards allotment costs, the following expenditure had been made: Richardsons £115, Top soil £2277, Franks Bros £264.50- total £2656.50. In view of the small overspend, it was agreed not to request the second instalment until the fencing quotes had been assessed. It was queried whether the fees for Richardsons was a legitimate use of the donation, and it was agreed to leave that decision with the donor.

14. PARISH COUNCIL LIAISON MEETING Coun Totten has attended a meeting of Neighbourhood Councils, which basically covered ground already cultivated.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS Fly tipping has occurred in Tallington Road. The hedge grant for the Bainton Poors land has been returned as these are site-specific. The paint on the Pinfold bench is blistering. The bins in the playground and the Pinfold are overflowing and need emptying.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 5th January 2010.