

# **GREAT BEDWYN PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Great Bedwyn Memorial Hall, Frog Lane, Great Bedwyn

Thursday 12th April 2018 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Howell, Cllr Barry, Cllr Stone, Cllr Clack, Cllr Nicholson, John Sheerin, Adrian Brunskill and 11 members of the public.

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Received from Cllr Bushby, Sue Kershaw and Elise Younger.

### **2. Minutes of APM held on 27 April 2017**

These were agreed as a true record of the previous meeting.

### **3. Chairman's Report – Cllr. Charles Howell**

Positive achievements over the last year:

- New shed fence erected.
- Refurbishment of Great Bedwyn phone box to go ahead.
- Great Bedwyn won Best Kept Village Competition.

Other items of note over the year:

- Neighbourhood plan progress has been made but has slowed recently following the lack of suitable sites for affordable housing.
- Extension of Bedwyn siding to allow larger and faster trains to Reading and London Paddington has been approved.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) of circa £5000 received following the development of the British Legion site. Potential large CIL due following Tottenham House development.
- Tottenham House development as a private residence may provide an opportunity to conserve the house and provide job opportunities however concerns exist over development traffic and probable future plan alterations.

Review of the PC Year:

- In the May 2017 uncontested election Patrick Pease, Jane Perry and Roger Durie stood down as councillors and Jan Thornton was elected. Cllr Bushby and David Williams were co-opted shortly thereafter.

- Dissent led to resignation of our Vice Chair Karen Gardner and clerk Joanna Pike in autumn 2017. David Williams and then Jan Thornton stood down a few months later.
- 4 new councillors (Sue Kershaw, John Sheerin, Adrian Brunskill and Elise Younger) were co-opted in March 2018 and applications have been received for the remaining space.

My thanks go to past Councillors. The saddest thing over the year was losing our very capable clerk. We have been operating on a lock down basis since. Some new applications have been received recently.

We must reflect on our role and the public should be aware of our limited powers. We maintain the village and the allotments. We are a small cog in communication to Wiltshire Council on a number of matters including planning and neighbourhood development. We do not make any important decisions alone and should represent the parish as a whole. As Wiltshire Council cuts services we are able provide short term support a number of local organisations e.g. Youth Group, Great Bedwyn Pre-school (application pending).

For the Future:

- Any progress on parking has stopped which is regrettable.
- The replacement of the fence round War Memorial on the playing field continues to be an issue.
- A small number of parishioners can use a disproportionate amount of Council time as we face vexatious requests and complaints. We must protect our future clerk from the most difficult and challenging correspondence.

This is a wonderful parish and very nice place to live. I am encouraged by the new councillors and the year ahead.

#### **4. Wiltshire Council Update – Cllr. Wheeler**

Concerns about rural roads regarding potholes. Apologies for Highways Team who are doing their best considering recent weather.

Braeside and Oxenwood Activity Centre closures will be delayed for a short while to see if other alternatives could be found. Concerned about this and more pressure will be applied to try and keep these open.

Extension of Bedwyn siding (and re-routing of footpath) has been approved by Wiltshire.

Questions about village speeding were raised and community speed-watch was recommended as the best approach.

## **5. Reports from local Organisations**

### **Great Bedwyn Pre School – Alex Wyatt (Treasurer)**

Located in Village Hall. 19 children on the role at the moment. 4 are joining in April, 10 leaving in September. So 14 children on the role from September 2018.

New regulations provide 30 hours free child care for the vast majority of parents. All parents are permitted 15 hours. Great Bedwyn Preschool from Sept 2017 is open 5 days a week between 08:30-15:30.

Largest revenue item is currently circa £4,000 pcm from Wiltshire Council (for providing free childcare). Largest outgoings are staff at circa £4,000 pcm (3 semi full time members of staff and a book-keeper) and rent at circa £600 pcm. £10,000 annual fund-raising required to break-even. Seeking donation from Great Bedwyn Parish Council.

### **Bruce Trust – Patrick Pease**

Providing holidays afloat for disabled, elderly, disadvantaged people and community organisations on the Kennet & Avon Canal. Also offering day trips for up to 12 people at a time of any age and ability for a reasonable sum – skipper and crew included.

Recently joined Kennet & Avon Canal Trust to ensure long-term scalability. Looking for more recruits. Lots of events running for fundraising.

Meeting ended 8.35pm.

The next Parish Council meeting is on 10 May 2018 in the Great Bedwyn Memorial Hall.