

BAUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY 15th MAY 2023 @ 7.00P.M.

In the Church of St Mary Magdalene, Baunton

Present:

Cllr. Peter Davies - Chairman

Cllr. John Milner

Cllr. Adrian Potter

Cllr. Peter Moran

Cllr. Marie Whiteman – Clerk

Cllr. Paul Hodgkinson – from 7.15

1. Apologies Cllr. Alan Rees, Cllr. Dave Walton and Cllr Joe Harris

Cllr. Peter Davies welcomed everyone to the meeting; he then vacated the chair for the election of Chairman.

2. Election of Chairman

Cllr. Peter Davies was elected as Chairman, nominated by Cllr. Adrian Potter and seconded by Cllr. John Milner.

3. Election of Vice-chairman

Cllr. Alan Rees was elected as Vice-Chairman in his absence, nominated by Cllr. Adrian Potter seconded by Cllr. Peter Moran.

4 Responsible Finance Officer Report

Cllr. Adrian Potter was elected as the Responsible Finance officer for the next four years. Proposed by Cllr. Peter Moran and seconded by Cllr. Marie Whiteman.

The report from Cllr. Adrian Potter was as follows:

Income:

The Precept was increased from the previous year to take account of the possible expenses involved if there was to be an election for Local Councillors.

Expenditure:

This mainly ran to budget except for the follow items:

Marketing - We entered into a three-year contract with a new Internet Service Provider costing c£144 compared with the budgeted £20.

Maintenance - Replacement of defibrillator battery, following its use, at a cost of £318 compared with the general budget of £100.

Village events - budgeted £100 not used.

Miscellaneous - budgeted £400 for election expenses not used.

Other matters:

The Council applied for a grant of £1,500 from GCC on behalf of the Baunton Social Committee £1,200 and Baunton Parochial Church Council £300. These were to be used for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration and the opening of the re-ordered Church as a social space, respectively.

Because the grant did not represent income or expenditure for the Council itself, the transfer in and transfers out are not reflected in these accounts, but can be clearly seen as bank transactions, if any member of the Parish would like to inspect them please contact Cllr. Potter..

5. Chairman's Annual Report

The Chairman's Annual Report is attached at the end of the minutes.

6. Address by Cllr. Paul Hodgkinson CDC Ward member for Chedworth and the Churn Valley

Cllr. Hodgkinson said how happy he was to be representing the Chedworth and Churn Valley Ward again and thanked people for voting for him. The first meeting of CDC Council takes place on 24th May when the new Cabinet will be announced.

Cllr. Hodgkinson said he will do his utmost to represent the concerns of our Parish, especially any issues with Refuse Collection, Flooding, Planning and Highways Maintenance. A discussion took place about the Potholes in the village and across the county and the country. Cllr. Hodgkinson will do his best to get the village potholes repaired.

A resident raised the issue of the grass on the Triangle at the top of the Hill. It has grown considerably in the last two/three weeks and is obstructing the view when turning right out of the village onto the Cheltenham Road.

ACTION: Cllr Hodgkinson will check when the next cut is due in our area. If it's not soon the Parish Council need to look at getting it done privately.

8. Dates of meetings for 2023/2024

14th August 2023, 13th November 2023, 12th February 2024 and 13th May 2024

BAUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's report – May 2023

This is my second report as Chairman since I took over from Elaine Drayton.

As you will know the Parish Council was up for election earlier this month. However, as the number of candidates matched the number of vacancies all candidates were appointed unopposed. After many years of service to the Parish, Elaine decided to stand down at the recent election. On behalf of the Parish Council and all of the residents of the village past and present I would like to thank her for all her hard work. However, we do have a new Parish Councillor, Dave Walton, who lives in The Paddocks. We welcome Dave and look forward to working with him over the coming years.

Since the last AGM on 21 June 2022, the Parish Council has held three ordinary meetings on 15 August, 14 November and 6 March. We have discussed local issues with the Ward and County Councillors, and shared information from CDC, GCC and other statutory organisations. Minutes of the meetings and the accounts can be seen on our website at <https://baunton.org.uk>

Planning

During the past year the Parish Council has considered four planning applications all of which were supported. Cotswold District Council (CDC) has approved them all

- Extension to existing main Water Treatment Works building to house filtration plant Baunton Water Treatment Works Cheltenham Road –
- Maple Tree House, Baunton – Single storey lean-to roof extension, side porch and associated works – Approved
- Gateways, Baunton Lane - Erection of detached garage - Approved
- Greensleeves, Baunton Lane - Compliance with Conditions on surface water drainage, sample materials etc. for new dwelling - Approved

In last year's report I noted that CDC had refused a controversial application for the provision of a new secure roadside truck stop facility, including associated HGV and car parking, drivers' facilities building, vehicular access, service yard and landscaping at land at Gloucester Road, which is just inside our parish boundary. The Parish Council had lodged its objection to the application in March 2021.

During 2022 the applicant issued an appeal, which is currently being heard. The Parish Council again submitted its objections to the application.

Community Governance Review – Baunton Parish Boundary

Last year I reported on the CDC Community Governance Review (CGR) which proposed changing the boundaries to move all the properties on the north side of Baunton Lane from Baunton Parish into Cirencester Town, Stratton Ward.

The Parish Council had two concerns with the proposal: firstly that the views of residents should be fully taken into account and secondly that the reduction in the population of Baunton that would result in the change could make the Parish unviable as the minimum number of electors

required to elect a Parish Council is 150. The proposal would see the number of electors in Baunton Parish reduce from 236 to 165.

Following a consultation by Baunton Parish Council of the residents of the north side of Baunton Lane, in which 19 responses from those 31 properties were against the change, the Parish Council had submitted its views to the CGR.

However, CDC took the decision to move the houses in Baunton Lane from Baunton Parish to Cirencester Town. CDC noted in the minutes of its meeting that “the residents of the properties currently paid precept payments to Baunton Parish Council and, should the move be approved, Cirencester Town Council had agreed to pay a grant equal to the amount of precept that would be lost (around £750 per year) for a period of 4 years, to enable Baunton Parish Council to adjust to the lost income.”

Following discussions, Cirencester Town Council has agreed to pay Baunton Parish Council £750 a year for the four years commencing 2023. In return Baunton Parish Council will maintain the bus stop (which is owned by the Parish Council but used by residents of both Baunton village and Baunton Lane) on the Cheltenham Road – something the Parish Council already does.

As these discussions were not completed until after the level of the Council Tax precept had to be set, the Parish Council agreed to increase the level of the precept. Unfortunately this meant that the precept for Baunton Parish was raised by 11% so we would have the funds for a possible election and to replace the income we have lost from Baunton Lane.

Electoral Commission Review – Parliamentary Constituencies

Last year I reported that the Electoral Commission is currently undertaking a review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries across the country. Their initial proposal would see the existing Cotswold constituency split into two, with Cirencester becoming part of a new “Cirencester and North Wiltshire” constituency, while Baunton would be part of the new re-shaped “Cotswolds” constituency.

The Parish Council takes the view that many of our local interests are tied with Cirencester and as such we should be included in whichever constituency Cirencester ends up being in. We submitted our views to the Electoral Commission accordingly.

Later in 2022 the Electoral Commission published revised proposals for consultation but these would still see Baunton in a different Parliamentary Constituency from Cirencester. The Parish Council has repeated its views to the latest consultation. The final outcome of the review is expected to be known later this year.

Potholes

Potholes remain an issue in the Parish, as they do across the rest of the county and the country as a whole. We were pleased to see a stretch of the road through the village at the bottom of Westlake Hill was resurfaced in March 2023, but it is disappointing that other areas (particularly

the stretch from Priors Court to the Village Green) were not also resurfaced at the same time. The Parish Council would like to thank Roger Clark for his tenacity in pushing GCC to take action.

Dog Waste Bin

It has been suggested that the amount of dog waste being left on paths and verges in the village has increased in recent times and that an additional dog waste bin should be provided somewhere on Church Lane. The Parish Council investigated the possibility but CDC, which provides such facilities, said no further funding is available. If the Parish Council wishes to provide one it must do so and arrange to have it emptied at its own expense.

Some people at the last Parish Council meeting questioned the need for an additional bin and so the Parish Council issued a questionnaire to all villagers to gauge support. There was very little response to the questionnaire but overall the results were mixed. The issue will be discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

Tree in churchyard

The Parochial Church Council asked the Parish Council for its views (and potential funding for) removal of the maple tree by the wall in the churchyard. The tree has now grown to a considerable size but is still only half its potential eventual size and, although it has previously been cut back, there is concern that it may interfere with graves and overhead BT cables. The Parish Council asked residents for their views. The result of the questionnaire has been passed to the Parochial Church Council whose decision it will be whether to remove the tree or not.

Parish Plan

The 2015 Parish Plan noted a lot of interest in for developing the Church into a community meeting place. Thanks to a lot of work by the Parochial Church Council that aim has now been realised and the project was completed during the year with the installation of a toilet behind the church and a kitchen in the rear corner of the church. The Parish Council would like to thank John Milner for managing the project, Charles Perkins for his work on obtaining grants and all those involved for their hard work in making this a reality. A number of events have already been held in the church including coffee mornings and a communal viewing session for the Coronation.

Other issues raised by the 2015 Parish Plan for Baunton, which remain are:

- Reduction in noise from the A417 - Sadly, the Government has extended the working life of such concrete roads from 30 to 40 years and so it is unlikely that the road will be resurfaced before around 2037
- Flood prevention – Despite a very wet March fortunately no properties in the village were flooded. It was also noted that somebody had put grass cuttings in the river. However riparian owners are again reminded to maintain their part of the river and that disposing of any material in the river is illegal and likely to cause blockages downstream.

Village Green

As I reported last year in May 2021 the Parish Council applied to have the Village Green formally registered under the Commons Act 2006. Registration is not about ownership or responsibility to maintain the land – the Parish Council has no wish to own the land - but registration will protect the land for the free use of future generations.

This campaign was initiated over 20 years ago and led by Elaine Drayton. In the summer of 2022 Gloucestershire County Council (whose decision it is) published a formal consultation on the application as they are required to do. The consultation closed on 9 September 2022. We await the GCC decision.

Thank you

Thank you to everyone in the Parish who has contributed to village life and our community over the last year.

Particular thanks go to the Baunton Social Committee and everyone who helped to organize the very successful Jubilee Big Lunch Street Party last June, it was a wonderful day and enjoyed by everyone. A lot of organizing and hard work went into the day and thankfully the rain held off until the end. We would also like to thank Gloucestershire County Council for the grant they gave us towards the celebration recognizing all the hard work and fund raising that went into the reordering of the Church.

A successful village lunch was held at The Golf Club on 12th March, and everyone who attended enjoyed lunch and a Quiz, which was great fun and again organized by the Social Committee, thank you.

On Coronation day several residents watched the Coronation on a large screen in the Church. A good time was had by all.

Unfortunately the planned litter pick and churchyard weeding for the Big Help Out Day on Monday 8 May had to be cancelled due to the rain.

There is a box in the church porch for donations to the foodbank and I'm happy to say this has been well supported. The foodbank are very grateful for the donations and hope you can continue to donate as the need is even greater at the moment.

We are of course looking forward to the return of the annual hog roast on 24th June and hope to see many of you there.

Finally, thank you to everyone in the Parish, we have a close community of good neighbours who watch out for each other and take on roles and help organize events for our mutual benefit. Thank you.

Dates of Baunton Parish Council's future meetings:

August 14th, November 13th, February 12th 2024 and May 13th 2024.

Cllr. Peter Davies