

BAUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY 20th MAY 2024 @ 6.30 P.M.

In the Church of St Mary Magdalene, Baunton

Present:

Cllr. Peter Davies - Chairman
Cllr. John Milner
Cllr. Adrian Potter
Cllr. Peter Moran
Cllr. Alan Rees
Cllr. Dave Walton
Cllr. Marie Whiteman – Clerk

Cllr. Paul Hodgkinson – CDC

The Clerk welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for nominations for the role of Chairman.

1. Election of Chairman

Cllr. Peter Davies was elected as Chairman, nominated by Cllr. Peter Moran and seconded by Cllr. Dave Walton.

2. Election of Vice-chairman

Cllr. Alan Rees was elected as Vice-Chairman nominated by Cllr. Marie Whiteman and seconded by Cllr. Dave Walton.

3. Report from Cllr. Paul Hodgkinson – CDC Ward councillor

Cllr Hodgkinson informed the meeting that there had been an increase in car thefts in the area. The thieves are targeting high end cars, particularly Range Rovers and Land Rovers. They immediately change the number plates so the cars are very hard to trace. Advice was given by Cllr. Hodgkinson and PCSO Sue Fellows on how to make the thieves lives more difficult, in particular by using a steering wheel lock.

ROBIN – ON DEMAND BUS SERVICE will be coming to the South Cotswolds area including Baunton on 10th June. It is a local bookable bus service covering an area from Northleach to Tetbury. To book users should search for their required journey and book a pick up and drop off location. But the ROBIN service cannot be requested if there is already a bus service on the route required. The price is £2 per trip. The telephone number for bookings is: 0345 263 8139.

CDC held their AGM last week. Cllr. Hodgkinson is still a member of the Cabinet with responsibility for Health and Leisure. Parking has now been added to his responsibilities.

There is to be a change in the day of some of the waste collection and recycling rounds. Residents in affected parishes will be written to shortly to inform them of any change.

Members of the Parish council asked about the following issues:

- The surface of the Market Place in Cirencester is uneven in areas creating a hazard – Cllr. Hodgkinson will investigate.
- A barrier was supposed to be being installed across the entrance of Cricklade Street – Cllr Hodgkinson will investigate what has happened to the plan
- Progress on the roundabout at Kingsmeadow (Tesco) which has been partially closed due to flooding – Work on this should be finished in June
- The length of the grass at the top of Baunton Hill is obstructing the view for drivers turning onto the Cheltenham Road. This is an issue at many other road junctions in the area – Highways are expected to mow the grass in June but will come out if a particular junction is unsafe.

4. Report from Cllr. Harris

Unfortunately Cllr. Harris was unable to attend the meeting.

5. Report from PCSO Susan Fellows

PCSO Susan Fellow's area covers both sides of the A429, A435 and the A417. She spoke about the theft of cars, Fly tipping and other aspects of her role.

Her report on crime figures is attached with the minutes. The figures include the north side of Baunton Lane.

The Chairman extended thanks to Sue for attending our meeting.

6 Responsible Finance Officer Report

Income

We were able to reduce the precept this year from £2,550 in 2023 to £2,050, in the knowledge that we would receive £753.75 from Cirencester Town council as compensation for the loss of precept related to the absorption of the north side of Baunton lane into Stratton. We will receive this compensation for four years in total. In addition, we received £167 as our part of the Community Infrastructure Levy relating to the cottage NE of Mill View. The CIL is a charge that local authorities can set on new developments in order to raise funds to help pay for the infrastructure, facilities and services – such as schools or transport improvements – needed to support new homes and businesses.

Expenditure

- Insurance: £256
- AGM expenses: £19.60 – refreshments
- Marketing: £107.88 – 10 years' Domain renewal for the Baunton Website
- Maintenance: £106.74 – replacement electrodes for the Defibrillator
- Parish Church: £1,200 - £1000 grant towards the upkeep of the Church grounds and £200 for the use of the Church for Council and Planning meetings.
- Cirencester Citizens Advice: £400 – up from £200 in 2023 on the basis that there is an even greater need for this service in these difficult times.
- Cirencester Foodbank: £400 – also up by £200 for the same reason.

The summary receipts and payments account will be published on our Website at Baunton.org.uk

7. Chairman's Annual Report

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

Dates of meetings for 2024/2025

19th August 2024, 18th November 2024, 17th February 2025 and 19th May 2025

Chairman's report – May 2024

This is my third report as Chairman of the Parish Council.

Since the last AGM on 15 May 2023, the Parish Council has held three ordinary meetings on 14 August, 13 November and 12 February. 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 (one conditionally). Cotswold District Council (CDC) has approved three of them, with the fourth being withdrawn

- Millside – reduce height of Silver Birch, Conifers and Horse Chestnut – Approved
- Baunton Rise, Cheltenham Road. Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings to be replaced by a new dwelling and garage/workshop. The application was subsequently withdrawn
- The Grain House, Baunton. 10 Various trees – prune back to old pruning points (canopy reduction of approximately one third). Approved
- Manor Barn 1 Priors Court – Felling of lime tree and pruning of other trees. The Parish Council asked that CDC consult a tree expert. Approved

In addition, the Parish Council received a prior notification for the erection of an agricultural storage barn at Ermin Way Farm, Gloucester Road. Putting a building of up to 1000 sq. metres on a holding larger than 5 hectares is permitted development. CDC is able to look at the siting/design as well as the need for the building. The Parish Council agreed to keep in touch with CDC about this application.

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 concluded on 6 November 2023 with a decision by the Planning Inspector to dismiss the appeal. The inspector stated that the main issue was the effect on the character and the appearance of the area.

Baunton Parish Boundary

In April last year, following a CDC Community Governance Review, the Parish boundary was changed to remove properties in Baunton Lane from Baunton Parish and add them to Cirencester.

Following discussions, Cirencester Town Council has agreed to pay Baunton Parish Council £750 a year for the four years commencing 2023. These payments have now commenced.

Electoral Commission Review – Parliamentary Constituencies

Last year I reported that the Electoral Commission was undertaking a review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries across the country. The Parish Council argued that Baunton's interests lay with Cirencester and that we should be in the same constituency as the town. The Electoral Commission has now published its decision which is that the existing Cotswold constituency will be split into two from the next General Election, with Cirencester becoming part of a new "South Cotswolds" constituency, while Baunton will be part of the new "North Cotswolds" constituency.

Elections

In early May 2024 the election took place for the Gloucestershire Police & Crime Commissioner. For the first time the church was used as a polling station, replacing the portacabin which was previously used.

Baunton Social Committee

The Parish Council thanks Annie Perkins and the whole team at the Baunton Social Committee for their continued hard work and contribution to village life. The Committee hosts monthly coffee mornings in the church, which as well as being a chance to socialise, raise funds for other activities in the village and for other charitable causes such as Macmillan cancer support. Other events included the ever-popular hog-roast in The Paddocks (which returned after a break due to the pandemic) and lunch at the Golf Club. Sadly, the annual boules tournament on the village green was rained-off.

Forthcoming events are in the planning stage including a treasure hunt, a quiz night and a "craft and natter" afternoon, as well as the barbecue which will take place on 6th July at 3 The Paddocks, by kind permission of Amanda and Charles Woodd.

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.

Potholes

Potholes continue to be a problem on the roads in the Parish and a suggestion was made that the Parish Council should undertake repairs itself. But, on investigation, it was determined that we are not insured to do so. We will continue to report potholes to Highways and push for action to repair them and we encourage residents to report any they spot.

An issue with two drains in the village was rectified by Highways following our reporting them to GCC.

Flooding

Despite all of the rain we have had over the past year, fortunately no properties in the village were flooded.

Village Green

The campaign to register the village green to protect it for future generations was initiated over 20 years ago and led by Elaine Drayton and our formal application was submitted in May 2021. Despite regular chasing we are still awaiting a decision from Gloucestershire County Council on that application.

Thank you

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.

Cllr. Peter Davies