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| The Annual Meeting of **Biddestone & Slaughterford Parish Council** took place on Tuesday 13th April 2021 at 7.00pm at Biddestone Village Hall. The following members participated:  **IN THE CHAIR:** Cllr. A.Walton  **PRESENT: Cllrs:** G Brown (GB), A.Kelsall (AK), M.Crystal (MC), D.Webb (DW), A.Short (AS), J.Franklin-Willis,(JFW) and J.Baxter (JB)  In attendance: G.A,Gill (GG) Clerk/RFO, Nick Botterill (Wilts Council), R.Tonge (Ind. Scrutineer), J Walton (Steward) and 10 members of the public. | | |
| 1  2  3  4  5  5.1  5.2  5.3  5.4  5.5  5.6  5.7  6  6.1  6.2  6.3  7.  8.  9.  10.  11.  11.1  11.2  11.3  12.  13.  14.  15.  16  17  18  19  20  20.1  20.1  21  22  23  24  25  25.1  25.2  26 | To Elect the Chairman of the Council and to receive the Chairman’s Declaration of Office – Cllr A.Walton was elected as Chairman and made and signed his declaration at the end of the meeting. AW announced his intention to step aside at item 15 and, should it be found that the Parish Council, and in particular he himself, were found derelict in the performance of their duty to conduct fairly the consultation on Biddestone Public Convenience, would resign said office.  To Elect the Vice Chairman of the Council and to receive the Vice Chairman’s Declaration of Office – Cllr A.Short was elected as Vice-Chairman and made and signed their declaration at the end of the meeting.  To Receive & Approve Apologies for Absence - None  To Receive any Declaration of Interest from Members - None  To Receive Appoint Lead Councillor to the following:  Highways (Parish Steward) - DW  Planning - GB  Assets (Register/Risk Assessments) - GB  IT/Communications (Website/Zoom) - JFW  Governance (Policies & Procedures) - AW  Community (Resilience Plan/ Covid-19) - JB  Finance (Precept/Salaries/Funding) - AS  HR (Clerk) - GB  To Appoint Members for Representation on:  Chippenham Rural Forum - DW  Chippenham and Corsham Area Boards - AW  Chippenham Area Transport Group - AK  To Receive and Adopt Biddestone& Slaughterford Parish Council Inventory and Assets Register - **ADOPTED**  To Receive and Approve Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22 – Meeting to be held the second Tuesday of the month excluding January. - **APPROVED**  To Adopt new Code of Conduct in line with Local Government Association (LGA) New Model Code of Conduct 2020/21 - **ADOPTED**  To Receive and Adopt current Biddestone & Slaughterford Corporate Plan and Agree date for Working Party to update Plan to 2023/2024 – **ADOPTED** Working Party to be determined and date agreed at June meeting.  To Adopt Existing:,  Financial Regulations, **ADOPTED**  Standing Orders **ADOPTED**  Policies and Procedures **ADOPTED**  To Receive & Adopt Power of General Competence - **ADOPTED**  To Appoint an Internal Auditor – Karen Sayer Ltd were **APPOINTED**  To Receive Chairman's Report for 2019/20 & 2020/21 - AW read a synopsis of the retired Chairman Simon Bruce’s Report. **Addendum #1**  **AW stood down and AS took over as Chairman.**  Public Question Time – Clerk reported she had been not been notified of any questions prior to the meeting. A member of the public requested that item 18 be brought forward as this would impact on any questions from the floor and this was **AGREED** AS made a personal statement on his disappointment with the comments that had appeared on social media before presenting Cllr Dick Tonge to report on the Consultation..  Cllr Dick Tonge, Vice Chairman of Colerne Parish Council introduced himself and explained that he had been contacted by the Clerk on the 13th May and asked if he would act as an independent scrutineer on the Consultation on the future of the Public Conveniences in Biddestone. His view was that the file had been well prepared and thorough and the results of the consultation were:   1. There were 5 void votes as the respondees were not on the Register of Electors or the update of the Register on Tuesday 4th May. 2. The votes up to and including 30th April were: For Retaining: 35 For Selling: 25 3. The votes up to and including 14th May were: For Retaining: 16 For Selling: 18 4. Total votes: For Retaining: 51 For Selling: 43   Questions received:   1. What is the running cost of the public conveniences? 2. What is the precept? 3. Why had no maintenance had been carried out whilst they had been closed? 4. When will they be re-opened? 5. Why no mention of D.Cooper’s offer to maintain in February minutes? 6. Lack of communication, a need for a better structured format to communicate with residents. 7. Was the article in the Broadsheet a balance article? 8. Facebook conversation was not a serious allegation but a personal remark.   Responses given:   1. GB presented figures on annual costs and explained he had produced a forecast which showed that   it would be necessary to increase the precept from 2022 to retain the public conveniences.   1. The precept is the local tax the Parish Council receives from Wiltshire Council 2. In February the roof had been inspected and found to need a small section of the felt aqua-sealed. Locks need addressing. The flushing mechanism in the Gents needed attention. 3. They will remain closed until Covid restrictions are lifted are lifted as the Parish Council cannot afford to clean them daily. 4. An amendment notice will be place in these minutes. 5. JFW agreed to look at the present Parish Council Communications Strategy and its current arrangements with the Broadsheet, Honeycomb, Village facebook, PC website and use of Parish noticeboards and to bring his recommendation to a future meeting. 6. AW explained that he had written the article and it had been approved for publication by the Chairman, Simon Bruce. AS explained that the Parish Plan, some two years earlier, had not included any financial implications to the Precept once the grant from Wiltshire Council expired and so it was important to get this across to residents of the parish.. 7. AW believed the criticisms made on social media were serious allegations against the Parish Council and he felt that his integrity had been questioned in its conduct of the consultation. The resident with whom he had been in facebook correspondence with said this was not the case and it had just been a personal remark.   AW made a personal statement on his response to the comments that had appeared on social media regarding the Public Conveniences consultation, and why this necessitated an independent review of the consultation process.  **As there were no further questioned AW resumed as Chairman:**  To Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13th April 2021 – Proposed by DW as a true record and **APPROVED** andsigned and dated by Chairman  To Receive & Act Upon Rolling Action List –  Biddestone Gateways – Site meeting with Wiltshire Council engineer and Textprint representative took place on 4th May. On the patterns it was clear that the choice was limited for the ‘gateways’ to the ‘brick’ pattern due to the straight lines and the process of cutting in clearly the surface impressed Textprint roundel signage. (cobble effect or others inclined to create wavy lines) Cobble pattern for footpath areas only.  Colour samples were inspected, a day time meeting to be arranged and an additional custom sample request submitted re tones of Cotswold Stone.  Initial Road re-surfacing will happen on the 18th & 19th May.  Textprint are scheduled to come in on the w/c 14th June and will be working in the following order:  14/6 The Green  15/6 Yatton Road  16/6 Cuttle Lane  17/6 Hartham Lane  These will be under a road closure.  On Fri 18th, they will lay Textprint on the footway area under 3 way signals.  On Sat 19th and Sun 20th, they will return to lay the roundels at each gateway site, using 2 way signals. This will be approximately half a day at each gateway.  To Receive Outcome of Public Vote in Respect of the Retention or Sale of the Public Conveniences and Agree Further Actions: See item 15 above  To Receive Update on Combined Parish/Parish Council Website: Mock up of front page has been received for comment. MC questioned the cost of the website but was assured by other members that the sum of £1500 was a reasonable cost as the design company were combining several websites into one. JFW to join Working Group.  Finance – documents circulated prior to meeting  To Receive Statement of Accounts for Approval. **Addendum #2**  To Approve payments for April & May 2021 - Clerk requested an additional expense of £60 for Fly Tipping signage be accepted. Overtime payment for Clerk was **AGREED**. Proposed for payment by MC and **APPROVED**  To Receive Notification of Planning Applications Determined: None received  To Receive Notification of Planning Applications Received:  The former Biddestone Arms, The Green, Biddestone, SN14 7DG  Proposal: Conversion and part demolition of former public house to form 1 No. dwelling, Erection of 3 No. dwellings, and associated landscaping and access works.  **NO OBJECTIONS Council notes the significant amendments to the plans, which now much better reflect the views of the community as expressed during consultations.**  Gigaclear – Box on The Green - A site meeting had taken place with Gigaclear and a proposal to re-site the box next to the wall (made by the owner of the property) is being considered. The Common Land deeds show the green box to be sited on Parish land and as such the Parish Council understands Gigaclear would require a wayleave for it to remain there. Gigaclear’s legal department are now looking into this.  Little Challow Common & Tree Update – Common Land application still in final stages of approval. Clerk to contact G.Corp regarding danger from dead ash trees on his land that overhang the highway or could fall onto the highway. Photographic evidence taken.  Clerks Report  Councillor’s Induction and Training: Seven virtual workshops are being held during May and June for all new councillors and those wishing to refresh their knowledge. Clerk to make the bookings on councillors behalf.  Councillor vacancy. Advert to be place in Broadsheet for applications for Co-opted Council Member, submissions to the Clerk giving short bio and reason for wishing to join the Parish Council and the skills/knowledge they would bring.  Amendment to Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th February 2021 Minute Ref: 20/22/263 - To be inserted - D.Cooper offered his help, free of charge, in the maintenance of the Public Conveniences.  There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.42pm  **The next Parish Council meeting will be on 8th June 2021 at 7.00 at Biddestone Village Hall** | JFW  GG  AW |