

Notes of the Public Forum June 3rd 2014

Mrs Ward spoke of her concerns regarding the planning application for houses at the rear of Silver Street. As her own house is closest to the proposed development she was particularly concerned that all the windows faced her property, which she felt contradicted the original, suggested plans. The two four bed-roomed properties would be 4.5m higher than the surrounding buildings and she also expressed concerns about a loss of daylight. Mrs Ward thought that two bungalows on the site would be more appropriate and also asked that the access to Brook Street should be considered by the Planning Authority.

Mr Scott of Shillingford spoke on the proposal for 30 acres of solar units by Wessex Solar Power, a company based in Morpeth in Northumberland. They propose to construct the solar factory on farmland. During the growing months the site will be visible from all surrounding houses and in the winter months it will be completely visible at all times in a beautiful valley which is popular with tourists and is also home to a herd of deer. Mr Scott felt that a further consideration is drainage as that area turns to swamp very quickly with run-off going through Lower Rill Farmyard and into the Bathern, which has implications for Bampton as the river floods. There is no exit plan and no intention to clear and restore the site at the end of the tenure. The developers provided few answers at the public meeting held in Shillingford. The benefit of the solar site is questionable as the green energy targets for 2020 will already be met by existing or planned-for solar factories. He felt that, should these plans get permission, it would set a dangerous precedent for the local area, on top of which there are no benefits for the local community and any energy produced is simply transferred to the National Grid.

Mr Alan Loftus informed the meeting that he would like to improve the Open Day by closing some of the roads in Bampton to create a food market along one side of Brook Street and round by the Swan. He had spoken to the police about this idea but had been referred to the Town Council. He would also like to move the car boot sale up to the Station Road car park as he feels it is at too much of a distance at the moment. He told the meeting that this is his own initiative and not a suggestion from the Bampton Business Group. He had considered the difficulties of completely closing Brook Street so suggested that the width of the road be reduced and that stalls could then be placed on the pavement from the Toucan down to Bowdens Bakery.

Mrs Fagg wished to note that she felt that the Annual Town Council Meeting should have been referred to as the Annual General Meeting of the Town Council. The Clerk advised that, as she had been informed, annual general meetings were for clubs and societies and the proper term was as previously stated. Mrs Fagg felt that this could cause some confusion with the Annual Town Meeting and asked if it could be the Annual Parish Meeting? Mr Hartley felt that this was more appropriate as the Town Council does also serve Shillingford, Petton and the parishes. Cllr Colthorpe also recommended this as a working title. Due to a poor turn out at the original Annual Parish Meeting it has been rescheduled for June 24th at 7.00pm. Further details will be published, there will be information stalls and a drive for volunteers to support local groups.

Mr Edwards wished to read a letter, copies of which he said he had delivered to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman earlier in the day. The Chairman responded that he had not read the letter but was happy for Mr Edwards to read it out. Mr Edwards wished to express his concerns about how Bampton Town Council conducts and records its business. He stated that decisions were not recorded and referred to the Parish Plan. He further felt that some of the references should be anonymous and referred in this instance to the hire of the marquees. He thought the Clerk should not refer to the recordings of the meeting to check the facts when writing the minutes, as these recordings may have been tampered with. In conclusion he stated that he was of the belief that the actions of the Town Council were alienating the people and groups of Bampton.

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of Bampton Town Council
Held on Tuesday 3rd June 2014.**

1. Apologies had been received from Cllrs Gilmour and Weston.

2. There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the last meeting.

Cllr Baker raised the matter of the Clerk's expenses for the previous month having included a payment for overtime hours worked. The Clerk acknowledged that this was the fact and that Cllr Baker had written the cheque with that knowledge. However, as he does not deal with employee's salary payments the overtime payment had been acknowledged on the June payroll with appropriate adjustment made. Minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record.

4. Matters arising from those minutes.

Cllr Pitt has arranged for two more cameras to be installed at the Pump House. BTC has to register the cameras under the Data Protection Act. Clerk to Action.

Cllr Stoner felt that BTC should develop a policy regarding Data Protection to cover both CCTV and the volunteers.

Cllr Pitt advised the meeting that the insurance for the marquees is now void as the ownership is uncertain. Otherwise there was an increase in the insurance premium to £28.98 p.a. as the cover for Personal Accident had been increased to £50,000 (from £25,000).

5. Cllr Stanley informed the meeting that the Community Infrastructure Levy has been withdrawn. A new CIL is to be issued but that in the meantime the Section 106 would be used, which means that any contributions will not be made at 25% as may have been expected. Cllr Colthorpe told the meeting that there will be a Drop-in session at Bampton Library on 16th June 2014 regarding the future of the library. The report on the future of the youth service went public on the DCC website. She was not sure but thought it may allow one youth centre per district. Cllr Smith wanted to say that he felt that the care home meeting held at DCC should have been an open vote and not a political issue. Cllr Colthorpe reminded him that the meeting had been called by the Liberal Democrats, Cllr Baker thought it a great pity that none of the Conservatives had bothered to speak. Cllr Tanner thought it a great pity all round and feared for the future of Barnhaven as did many people in Bampton. Cllr Pitt noted that many people thought that Cllr Colthorpe had let Bampton down on this issue and that this would be remembered.

6. Planning.

Cllr Tanner felt that the Council should place greater importance on site visits and that the possibility of creating a sub-committee to deal with planning matters should be considered in the future.

Ref:14/00343/FULL Erection of two buildings at the rear of Silver Street. Several Councillors had already visited the site and felt it was a very small site for such big houses. The Chairman suggested a further site visit at 6pm on June 4th 2014. Clerk to contact applicant to agree visit.

7. Finance. Cllr Baker stated that BTC are subject to an Interim Audit and he felt that this was due to the increase in the Clerk's salary, as a consequence of a formal employment contract, and the decrease in council spending overall. Cllr Stoner proposed that the Interim Audit statement be approved by the Council for return to Grant Thornton and this was seconded by Cllr Tanner with three in favour. Cllr Pitt asked whether the Council were satisfied that, as required in Part 2, that all reasonable steps to ensure that there were no matters of non-compliance had been taken. He explained that he asked in relation to a letter he had been

shown by former Cllr Ward from HMRC regarding the Clerk's salary which had not been presented to the Council. No Councillors appeared to have any knowledge of this. Cllr Baker referred to the list of cheques paid at the last meeting and suggested that he would include a list of these cheques and a copy of the minutes with the audit statement.

The Clerk informed the meeting that she had finally made some headway in getting Scottish Widows to accept new signatories and new contact details. This had been made difficult by Scottish Widows having details of previous passwords and previous signatories given to them although these were not available to the current Council. A copy of the mandate in the minutes of September 2012 to be included in the response to Scottish Widows.

The car park takings for May 2014 were £211.18 giving a total of £598.02 so far this year.

May receipts.

7 th May	Riverside Hall	£371.38
7 th May	Car parks	£392.00
9 th May	MDDC creditors p/c contribution	£3,696.17
28 th May	Car parks	£204.00
28 th May	Scottish Widows interest	£179.01

Two cheques not presented @ 22nd May 2014

7th Jan No 101915 HMRC £2.56

6th May No 101961 N.Carder £30

Cheque to Nash and Co for £420 has been destroyed.

Bank statements at 22nd May 2014

HSBC £43292.51 cr Scottish Widows £36710.40 cr

June payments due.

D/d MDDC Bridge Terrace. Old toilets.	32.00
D/d MDDC Tolls of Fairs	47.00
J. Eyre Clerks salary	694.52
M.Morgan Toilet cleaning	310.00
Community First Insurance	824.65
Five Star Security Filing cabinet locks	80.40
N. Carder Hollett Garden	20.00
HMRC Tax & NI	51.10
MJF Contractors Grass cutting	418.72
Riverside Hall AGM meeting	10.00
J.Eyre Clerk's expenses	43.00

8.a. Minutes of the meeting of April 8th 2014. Cllr Pitt asked who had altered the content of the minutes on the Bampton website? The minutes having been removed completely were returned with a large section had been removed so that they no longer tied up with the agenda, or with the approved draft minutes. Cllr Smith said that he had asked for them to be removed from the public domain in the first place but did not know who had altered them. Action: Clerk to ask Mr Berridge the Webmaster who had asked him to reinstate the minutes with alterations.

Regarding the notices placed in the recent edition of signpost; the Chairman acknowledged that the draft minutes of the April meeting had been circulated by the Clerk to the Council, as was the norm, and subsequently approved by the Council for publication in Signpost and elsewhere. Having then re-read them he felt they should not be published. It was proposed by Cllr Smith that the minutes continue to be circulated to the Councillors by the Clerk prior to publication to

the public, with Councillors responding with any adjustments. This was seconded by Cllr Baker with all in favour.

b. The EGM. The Chairman stated that he and five other Councillors had called an EGM following a vote at the Annual Town Meeting. Having been obliged to change the agenda it was then reissued and two Councillors and the Clerk being finally given notice of the meeting too late for it to be a legal meeting. The Monitoring Officer stated the meeting should be cancelled as it would be unlawful and that the matters raised should be part of an ordinary meeting.

c. The generous offer of a donation of £300 had been received from Mrs Kenny at Castle Grove towards the Moutray Read Memorial Paving Stone. Cllr Stoner agreed to look into the actual price of the stone and to ask the family for their approval. He will report to next month's meeting with his findings.

d. Further to a letter from Mr Rice of Shillingford detailing recent development in the matter of the Shillingford Play Park and the extra costs associated with this, it was agreed to establish whether there is a covenant governing and maintaining the use of the land as a play park. Cllr Pitt to make enquiries. The Clerk to update Steve Densham at MDDC and provide a copy of Mr Rice's letter for information.

e. The Clerk had met with Mr Luxton, a contractor recommended by MDDC, regarding the obligatory repairs required at the Rec and Station Road play park. The repairs were quoted at £2,417.50 for both sites. Cllr Tanner proposed that these works should go ahead and was seconded by Cllr Pope with all in favour.

The Clerk had also arranged for a new rubbish bin to be sited outside the gate to the Rec. with the existing dog bin to be moved to Scott's following complaints about waste being left there by dog owners. The removal of the trees alongside the Station Road play park, being under an order from DCC are to be removed. The Town Clerk had negotiated with Western Power and Hi-Line about the work resulting in an agreement from Western Power to close down the power to allow the work to be done plus a contribution of £300 towards to final bill. Hi-Line then quoted a final total of £420 to remove one tree and reduce another and clear the site. Or, to remove all three trees on the bank, £1,500 with the site cleared and left tidy. Cllr Tanner proposed to accept the quote to remove all three trees, this was seconded by Cllr Pitt with all in favour.

f. The cost of a picnic bench and seating at the Millennium Green was discussed. The price for an ordinary bench and seat for four people ranged from £250 - £300. However Cllr Pope informed the meeting that an ex-display eight seater was currently available at Kings for approximately £300. Cllrs Smith and Tanner to inspect with a view to purchase.

g. Following the visit of English Heritage earlier in the year a representative of the Devon Hedge Group had inspected the site with Clerk to discuss what could be done. The Hedge group are very keen to lay the hedges around the site, which will be a massive improvement. However, there is a significant amount of scrub and bramble clearance required to allow access to the hedges. Heather Harley, who is also an officer of Exmoor National Parks, recommended contact with a lady who has a herd of goats which she transports around Devon and Somerset for such work. Clerk to make contact and arrange a site meeting.

h. The Clerk advised the meeting that, having taken advice on the matter, the marquees must be considered to be the property of BTC as committees of the Council cannot own anything as such as they do not exist as an entity outside of the Council's domain. Further to this it should be noted that any committee of the Council should be re-elected annually and the minutes of their meetings should be submitted to BTC for approval. Cllr Tanner suggested that the marquees are the property of Bampton Town Council and are held as a community asset for the use of Bampton organisations and application to use them should be made in writing. Following on from this point Cllr Smith signed the insurance agreement to include the marquees, buildings and personal accident. The agenda next month will contain a point to formulate a loan agreement for anyone from a Bampton organisation wishing to use the marquees.

i. Proposal to improve Open Day. As per the Public Forum, it was agreed to contact Highways at DCC as it was believed that an element of liability would fall to BTC. This may require marshalls, police, car parking etc to be supplied and insurance cover that would otherwise fall to the organisers of Bampton Open Day. Cllr Stoner suggested the creation of an infrastructure committee of four to work with Mr Loftus to create a food market. Cllrs Smith, Baker, Pope and Tanner agreed to do this. Cllr Stoner proposed that those Councillors create the Infrastructure Committee, seconded by Cllr Pope and agreed by all except Cllr Pitt who felt that this would bring extra costs and insurance liability to the Bampton taxpayer. Action: Clerk to contact Highways.

j. Councillors were circulated with information from MDDC regarding sourcing personnel support from the local authority.

k. Mr Duncan manning of the Bampton Allotment Association had met with the Clerk and delivered the £1.00 peppercorn rent due to Mr Colin Rowland. Cllr Stoner agreed to visit Mr Rowland to deliver the rent payment and to check on the terms of the agreement in place between the two parties.

l. The Clerk informed the meeting that a new, specific telephone number would be required for the use of the Town Council. Following a discussion she agreed to investigate the options. It was also agreed to purchase literature from the Society of Local Council Clerks regarding the governance of town and parish councils.

m. Further to the resignation of Mr Jack Ward the Clerk was awaiting paperwork from Ms Stoneman of MDDC regarding the election or co-option of a new Councillor.

n. Cllr Tanner proposed adding to the stock of Christmas lights on a year on year basis to improve the general stock over time. He felt that an initial amount of £200 would be appropriate, this was seconded by Cllr Baker with five in favour. Christmas tree brackets are available to householders wishing to purchase them for £40 each plus VAT.

Correspondence.

Jessie Harvey had written to request the use of the marquees for the school fete on June 21st 2014. The Council agreed the loan but must be given the names of two people nominated to deal with the putting up and packing away as well as insurance for the marquees on the day.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday July 8th 2014.