

English Bicknor Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4th April 2022 at English Bicknor Village Hall.

Those present were as follows:

Councillor Mrs P. Drinkall – Chairman
Councillor Mr D. Gunter

Councillor Mr K. Braithwaite - vice-chairman
Councillor Mrs A. Bowen

Councillor Mr J. Carrick
County Councillor Mr T. Hale

Councillor Mr P. Warden

Also present were three members of the public.

125. Apologies and welcome

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs D. Owen and District Cllr Mr T. Gwilliam.

126. Public Forum

Representatives from several organisations within the Parish had attended the meeting to express their concerns at the proposed site for a new children's play area on the playing fields. All those present felt a play area would be a benefit to the Parish, their concerns related to the specific site proposed by the Village Hall Committee. It was reported that the Football Club thought that the Parish Council, as owners of the land, had already approved this site, but the chairman stated that a formal request from the Village Hall Committee had only been received that day. The Parish Council would look at the site proposed later in the meeting, when all concerns would be taken into account. Questions were also asked as to whether a survey of the site had been carried out.

127. Reading and confirmation of the minutes of the last Parish Council meeting

The minutes of the bi-monthly Parish Council meeting held on 7th February 2022, were proposed, seconded and agreed by a majority of those present, following which they were signed by the chairman. There was some discussion as to whether the names of those who proposed, seconded and voted for each motion should be recorded. It was agreed that this will be investigated further and discussed again at the next meeting.

128. Matters arising from the minutes of the last bi-monthly meeting

87. Village Hall Committee and Football Club An e-mail had been received from Mr P. Gwilliam regarding the report in the December minutes. The clerk has responded.

754.1 Speeding in Hillersland There is no further data from the speed camera, as it was damaged beyond repair by a fire engine on 6th March. This incident, to which there was a witness, was reported both to the Parish Council insurance company and to the fire service, who are pursuing their own enquiries. The clerk will forward a quote for a replacement speed camera to Mr R. Lockyer of the Fire Service. It was suggested that a claim should also be included for the time spent on this matter by the clerk.

Mr D. Holland of Gloucestershire Police Road Safety & Traffic Management Department, has indicated that the Camera Enforcement Team need to find a suitable parking site in Hillersland to carry out enforcement. . Cllr Terry Hale has spoken with Mr Holland and will meet with Mr A. Middlecote to hopefully find a suitable location on the side of the road.

Speed sign in English Bicknor It was reported that cars are still parking on the bends by the school, but only for a few minutes in the mornings and afternoons. Concern was expressed that cars are passing the parked cars at speed; this will be reported to the PCSO. A short explanation of the rules relating to placing of speed cameras was included in the parish magazine.

951.2 Speed limit approaching Symonds Yat Rock Mr A Middlecote of County Highways has confirmed he will look into a warning sign for the approach to the car park at Symonds Yat Rock.

26.4 Lime Kilns County Cllr Hale will ask whether the top and steps of the Lime Kilns can be sprayed from his budget.

492. Footpaths in the Parish The PROW officer has confirmed that this tree trunk will be removed in the next financial year.

50 The Definitive Map The Definitive Map can be viewed in Shire Hall, but as it is a very old, delicate, map, cannot be removed. However, an A2 version of the map was forwarded to the clerk, which seemed to show all the same footpaths as those on the map used by the Parish Council.

82.1 Verge near Dove Cottage Although County Highways again confirmed in March this verge has been repaired, it was not felt that a suitable repair has been carried out and County Cllr T Hale will ask Highways to look at it again.

84.1 Dead Oak Tree trunk near Cowmeadow Farm This dead trunk has now been removed.

84.3 Road Name Signs The new road name sign for Redhouse Lane is still not in place. The clerk will contact the District Council.

84.5 Designation of Redhouse Lane County Highways have confirmed that the road is on the list for a site visit.

106 Oak Trees near Sterts Farm Highways have confirmed that the Tree Inspector has looked at these trees and says that they are safe, with no imminent danger from hanging limbs, decay or obstructions.

106.8 Ditch along Bicknor Street County Highways confirmed on 25th March that to date this work has not been carried out, but their Inspector will soon be meeting with Gigaclear, at which time this matter will be discussed.

106.9 Man-hole cover in playing field Mr A. Middlecote has confirmed that Highways have been unable to locate the man-hole cover. Cllr Gunter will speak to someone who has a metal detector which can be used to try to locate the man-hole cover. If this is successful, County Highways will be asked if they can uncover the metal cover.

107 Swanpool Lane (REB18/1) The PROW Officer has looked at the railings fronting this lane and agrees that the gap is too narrow. He has suggested that they be replaced with a kissing gate. This work would be done out of his budget for the coming financial year. Cllr Mrs Drinkall will speak to the owners of the hedges on either side of the lane.

110. Defibrillator A resume of the procedure for activating the defibrillator has been put in the Parish magazine. These instructions have also been put on the notice board in the village hall, along with the defibrillator access code and the post code for the village hall.

111. Date of meetings in 2022 The date of the Parish Assembly has been confirmed as 23rd May.

116.1 Build Back Better Fund The paperwork has been completed so that English Bicknor & District Gardening Club can obtain a small grant from this fund, with the money being paid into the Parish Council account and then forwarded on to the Garden Club. The Parish Council has confirmed to the Build Back Better Fund that this course of action was agreed by the Parish Council.

116.2 Speeding in Bicknor Street Following complaints of speeding, County Cllr T. Hale and Cllr Braithwaite will place four '20 is Plenty' signs along Bicknor Street.

117. Local Plan A letter has been received from the District Council relating to the Local Plan. The clerk will confirm to the District Council that there are no areas of land which the Parish Council wish to put forward for future development.

121 Footpaths The PROW Officer has promised to check footpath REB10/1 on the Heritage Trail as soon as he can.

123.1 Playground for under 5s on Playing Fields A formal request for this development was received from the Village Hall Committee on 4th April 2022. Although this was felt to be a benefit to the community, there were also concerns that it would mean a lot of money spent on very few children, as this play area will be limited to those aged under 5 years. The site originally proposed by the Village Hall Committee was moved due to drainage problems, but the site now proposed encroaches on any extension to the car park. This is a concern for both the Football Club

and the W.I. It was confirmed that there will be a barrier all around the play area. A third option was suggested, underneath the trees parallel with Ross Road. It was agreed that if the drainage issue can be resolved, then the original site is the preferred option for all parties. A reply will be forwarded to the Village Hall Committee including the above points.

123.2 Litter pick A litter pick was requested, with the backing and support of District Cllr T. Gwilliam, and was carried out at the end of February.

129. Report of the County Councillor

County Cllr T. Hale has reported a sunken drain outside Whitehouse to County Highways. From his budget, he has put £1000 into Public Rights of Way. The Care Home at Westbury is due to close, as, due to infection control, en-suite rooms are now considered necessary.

130. Planning Matters

Application P1825/21/FUL for a change of use of existing utility, barn and old dairy to small scale rural pottery at Eastbach Farmhouse, was granted full permission on 16th February.

131. Accounts for payment:

Miss W. Lawrence – clerk's wages and expenses £349.16

HMRC – income tax on clerk's wages - £85.04

GAPTC – annual subscription - £113.03

Community Heartbeat – annual support cost for the defibrillator - £162.00

A copy of the overview of finances had previously been circulated, while the latest bank statement was available to view at the meeting. The Certificate of Exemption for the Annual Audit was agreed by all and signed by the chairman. The clerk had previously circulated details of a pay rise for clerks. Acceptance of the accounts, payments and the clerk's wage increase was proposed, seconded, and agreed by all present.

132. Highway Matters

The list of outstanding highway matters was updated. It was noted that a lot of silt has been coming off the field and along Bicknor Street since the ditch was filled in by Gigaclear.

133. Footpaths in the Parish

On the side of Ross Road, the post and flag of REB29/1 is leaning and may have been partially uprooted.

134. Correspondence received since last meeting

1. Information had been received and circulated from the Forest Climate Group of an event called 'Local Leaders for Climate Action' to be held at Lydney Town Hall on Saturday 5th March. No councillors were able to attend.

2. A meeting of Parish and Town Councils is to be held at the District Council offices on Monday 25th April. Cllr Mrs Drinkall will try to attend.

3. An e-mail has been received from a local resident following a motor cycle event held on land at Dryslade Farm recently. The resident's concern related to large motorhomes accessing the event via Bicknor Street, at times blocking this narrow road. It was pointed out that there was no signage advising motorists to ignore SATNAV systems, as Bicknor Street is not suitable for large vehicles. The clerk will contact the owner of Dryslade Farm to ask that organisers of future events advise those attending not to use Bicknor Street.

4. An invitation has been received to attend the GAPTC Annual General Meeting at Highnam on Saturday 23rd July. The clerk will send apologies as no councillors are able to attend.

5 Gloucestershire County Council has a tree officer who is interested in working with communities and local organisations to build a Tree Planting Network Group to increase tree cover

in the county.

135. Any other matters affecting the Parish Council

1. The Lucy Machen Charity have asked what the Parish Council is doing about extending the car parking at the school. It had been explained that a representative is needed from the Village Hall Committee to help move this forward.
2. During the high winds in February, a very large limb came off a tree on land owned by the Parish Council on the corner of Redhouse Lane. A nearby resident, with the consent of the Parish Council, sawed up the fallen limb and took it away. Since then, the trees at this location have been checked by Mr D. Maxfield and found to be in need of some maintenance. Mr Maxfield has submitted a quote for £125 to do the necessary work on the trees. Councillors agreed to ask him to go ahead with the work.

136. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be the annual meeting, to be held at 6.30pm on Monday 16th May, with the Parish Assembly being held at 7pm on Monday 23rd May. The next bi-monthly meeting will be held on Monday 6th June at 7pm.