

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bradfield Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd December 2024
at 7.30pm in Bradfield Village Hall Committee Room, Bradfield Southend.**

Present: Cllr. K. Dearing (Chair)
Cllr. R. Balsdon
Cllr. K. Bishop
Cllr. A. House
Cllr. S. O'Reilly
Cllr. T. Wale
Cllr. B. Wyatt
District Cllr. MacKinnon
Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk)
Three members of the public were present.

200. **Public Forum.**
- 200.1 **Neighbourhood Issues.**
A parishioner raised issues about accessing her property, caused by her neighbour. Additionally, actions of the neighbour are resulting in rodent issues. District Cllr. MacKinnon agreed to follow up on this item with the parishioner concerned.
- 200.2 **Overgrown Roadside Hedges.**
A parishioner raised concerns about roadside hedges which are growing out over the surface of the road, resulting in vehicles only using the middle of the road.
201. **Apologies.**
Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Allnutt and Cllr. Allen.
202. **Declarations of Interest.**
There were no updates to the Register of interests.
- 202.1 **Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items.**
There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.
203. **Approval of Minutes of the BPC meeting on Tuesday 5th November 2024.**
The minutes of the BPC meeting held on Tuesday 5th November 2024 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.
204. **Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere (for information only).**
- 204.1 There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.
205. **Planning Applications**
- 205.1 **Planning Applications on which BPC has been consulted by WBC.**
- 205.2 **24/02229/FUL & 24/02230/LBC – Bradfield College.**
Installation of roof mounted solar panels.
It was agreed that BPC has **no objection** to these applications.
- 205.3 **24/02485/CERTP – 1 Stretton Close.**
Single storey rear extension and internal alterations.
It was agreed that BPC has **no comment** to make on this application.
- 205.4 **Planning Decisions taken by WBC:**
- 205.4.1 **24/02204/NONMAT – Doctor's Surgery, Cock Lane.**
Non material amendment to approval 23/00494/FUL – Refurbishment and conversion of former doctor's surgery into a detached dwelling and erection of new detached dwelling with associated parking spaces, landscaping and infrastructure. Amendment to the wording of conditions.
BPC **objected** to some of the wording changes, but the application has been **approved** by WBC.

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- 205.4.2 **24/01174/FUL – Bradfield College.**
Demolition of existing College bungalow, garage and associated boundary enclosures, erection of College Health and Wellness Centre and associated ambulance/nurse parking, drainage works, air source heat pump, hard and soft landscaping, new pedestrian footways and associated works, and temporary change of use of College car park to site compound with associated cabins, storage and enclosures for the duration of the construction works.
Amendment: additional information showing staff parking, bin store and pedestrian routes.
 BPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.
- 205.4.3 **24/02135/COND – Reservoir (covered), Tutts Clump.**
Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (Materials), 4 (Service Arrangements for Vehicular Access), 5 (Arboricultural Watching Brief), 6 (CMS), 7 (Spoil), 8 (Ground Levels), 10 (Remediation) and 14 (Bird/Bat Boxes/Bricks) of approved 22/01953/FULD – Revised application for demolition of former water pumping station reservoir, associated plant and buildings, replacement with detached 5-bed dwelling with integral garage.
 BPC made **no comments** on this application on which WBC has issued a **split decision**, approving conditions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 14, but refusing condition 10 (Remediation).
- 205.4.4 **24/02140/COND – Armstrong House, Bradfield College.**
Application for approval of details reserved by condition 4 (External Joinery Windows/Doors) of approved 24/00186/FUL – Installation of roof mounted solar PV and replacement window frames and glazing.
 BPC made **no comment** on this application, which has been **approved** by WBC.
- 205.5 Enforcement Issues.
- 205.5.1 **Applecroft, Tutts Clump.**
 WBC has closed the enforcement case about Applecroft because it believed that the garage doors have been removed. BPC believes that the doors are still in situ in the roof of the garage and only the vertical runners have been removed. District Cllr. MacKinnon agreed to look and pursue the case with WBC enforcement as necessary.
- 205.5.2 **The Traveller’s Rest.**
 The shipping container, just inside the hedge has been in-situ for more than twelve months. It was agreed this should be reported to WBC enforcement.
206. **District Councillor’s Report.**
 District Cllr. MacKinnon responded that he had not received any update from the agency carrying out surveys/reports on whether the level of mobile services being provided are inadequate and falling short of the pledged SRN performance recommendations, in relation to a question raised prior to the meeting.
 The Planning Inspector has now made his final recommendations on the draft Local Plan and following the change in Government and their doubling of the housing targets for West Berkshire, has recommended increasing the site to the West of Pounsett Gardens to 20 new homes, increasing the NE Thatcham site from 1,500 homes to 2,500 homes, and the addition of three new sites (two in Cold Ash Parish around the Regency Hotel and one at Pincents Hill). There are several groups discussing crowd funding to seek a King’s Counsel opinion and a potential Judicial Review to strike down the Local Plan.
 WBC has appointed Joseph Holmes as interim CEO following Nigel Lynn’s departure. Sarah Clarke has very recently been appointed to Joseph Holmes’s previous post.
 WBC is currently consulting on its budget proposals which included closing the Downlands Leisure Centre, turning off streetlights during the middle of the night and

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closing the mobile library. A consultation is also running on the waste strategy which is expected to see a change to a three weekly grey bin collection.
 Until 2018, there was a football pitch at Faraday Road. In 2018 it became derelict and there were plans in place to redevelop the site. The new administration at WBC has spent nearly £400,000 on restoring the Faraday Road pitch, however, only Newbury Football Club can play on it, and it is not available for members of the public to use.
 A Local Government white paper is due on the 16th December which is expected to recommend that all areas have mayors (areas being populations of between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000 people). It is also expected that the paper will recommend Unitary Authorities serving populations of approximately 500,000 people.

207. **Finances.**

207.1 **Bank Reconciliation dated 3rd December 2024.**

The Clerk had circulated a bank reconciliation dated the 3rd December 2024 prior to the meeting. This reconciled the balance to the Treasurer's Account (current account) on the 1st November 2024 with a balance of £21,429.33. Once all cheques and credits have cleared, the balance in the Treasurer's Account will be £17,746.81. The balance in the Business account on the statement dated the 27th November 2024 was £73,726.27.
 Cllr. Bishop verified the finance report against the bank statements.

207.2 **List of payments and receipts.**

The following payments have been made since the last meeting:

Salaries and chair's allowance (November 2024)	£577.85
Payroll services	£75.05
Remembrance Service Road closure signage and manning	£1,260.00
Tech365 – Lenovo laptop	£365.49
Emptying of Tactical bins (November)	£65.28

207.3 **Budget for FY25/26.**

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk circulated a draft budget, showing a general increase in costs of 5%.

There was a discussion about allocating up to £50,000 of CIL funds to the Village Hall improvements (this includes £17,643 which has already been donated to the project), particularly if there is a risk of any CIL funds being claimed back.

207.4 **Clerk's Salary.**

Payment of the Clerk's salary for December 2024 was approved.

208. **Highways.**

208.1 **Anti Speeding measures in the Parish.**

Prior to the meeting, Cllr. Allnutt reported that he had met with Cheryl Evans and Gareth Dowding at WBC and now has a better understanding of how WBC support and the limitations which apply to a partnership for speed monitoring/ intervention in Bradfield. It was confirmed that fixing the non-working Vehicle Activated Sign on Southend Road was in hand.

It was noted that two 30mph repeater signs on Southend Road have rusted off (opposite Cripps Farm and outside Cranleigh House). The Clerk will report these.

208.2 **Parking/Driving on Cock Lane at School drop off/Collection Time.**

Cllr. Bishop asked Bradfield Primary School if a message could be passed to parents requesting that they don't park in Cock Lane, but park at the Village Hall or the Queens Head Public House to drop off and collect their children.

Cllr. Dearing has emailed the school and an email is understood to have been sent out to parents.

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- PCSO Sue Nix is aware of the situation and will drive by at appropriate times to inspect the situation.
- 208.3 Closure of Ashampstead Road.
Bradfield College organised a public meeting in the Village Hall about the closures of Ashampstead Road, to which interested parties were invited.
During the working day, it is expected that the road will be completely closed. The daily closures will be longer during the construction and deconstruction of the scaffolding. Outside working hours, single lane traffic, controlled by four way traffic lights will be allowed.
209. **Environment.**
- 209.1 Phone Box/Defibrillator and WBC Members Bid.
The clerk will send a description of the project to District Cllr. MacKinnon for the application to be submitted to WBC.
- 209.2 Installation of Commemorative Plaques.
The plaques will be installed when confirmation has been received from Bradfield Village Hall Committee on the exact location where the plaques are to be installed.
- 209.3 Installation of replacement Benches.
This is waiting for Bradfield Village Hall Committee to make arrangements to transport the benches from their current location to their installation locations at the Play Area and the Village Field.
210. **Clerk's Report.**
- 210.1 Dates for 2025.
Meetings in 2025 will continue to be held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm in the Village Hall Committee Room (subject to its availability due to any potential hall improvements).
- 210.2 Annual Assembly Date and Arrangements.
It was agreed that the Annual Parish Assembly (APA) will be held on Monday 7th April at 7.30pm in Bradfield Village Hall. The main subject of the meeting will be the Village Hall Development.
- 210.3 Update on Bradfield-pc.gov.uk.
The necessary paperwork has been completed and returned to Hugofox who will provide the domain "bradfield-pc.gov.uk". Once the new domain is set up, the BPC website will be available via both the "bradfield-pc.gov.uk" domain and the original "bradfieldparish.org" domains.
211. **Bradfield Village Hall (BVH).**
- 211.1 Bradfield Village Hall Development Committee (November).
During November the Development Committee prepared for the Public Meeting on the 28th November. This included a presentation to the hall Trustees, a meeting with involvement of the Development Committee, Bradfield Village Hall Committee and BPC, and a dry run of the meeting itself to identify any issues. The meeting was planned with an interactive style and involvement of all parties to help emphasise transparency and unity of the position.
- 211.2 Update from Public Meeting (Thursday 28th November).
The Public Meeting had an attendance of approximately 50 members of the public, plus representatives of the Development Committee, Bradfield Village Hall Committee and BPC. Refreshments helped to give the evening an overall positive vibe.
In addition to representatives of the three groups, District Cllr. MacKinnon helped to lead the evening. There were three break out sessions, which aimed to gather information about peoples thoughts on the purpose of Village Halls and what people wanted to see from any improvements of Bradfield Village Hall, having been given the options.

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	<p>There were a number of questions and comments about how the project is to be funded. Whilst the majority of people in the room were in general support of a Public Works Loan, concern was raised about the increase in precept which would be required and the impact it would have on those financially struggling.</p> <p>The Clerk commented that the tax base for Bradfield is not high in relation to some other local parishes (meaning that the precept component of the council tax based on comparing the same council tax band, is actually relatively low in relation to some surrounding parishes). It was agreed that the Clerk would prepare some comparison figures for Councillors to consider for the next meeting.</p> <p>In 2016, BPC agreed that a parish referendum would have to take place for BPC to take a Public Works Loan to help fund the project. It was noted that BPC is a very different council today and it was questioned whether a referendum is still needed.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Development Committee could use the left hand side of the Parish noticeboard at the Village Hall and an A4 space on each of the other three noticeboards to communicate progress.</p>	
212.	<u>Round table comments.</u>	
212.1	<u>A-Frame.</u>	
	The Clerk will order an A-Frame.	HP
212.2	<u>Councillor Profiles.</u>	
	Councillors were reminded about submitting their profiles to go on the website.	All
212.3	<u>Flooding information from the Pang Valley Flood Forum (PVFF).</u>	
	Cllr. Balsdon reported that she had received information back from the PVFF about equipment to help people protect their property and homes from flooding. This information will be put on the website.	HP
212.4	<u>Rights of Way.</u>	
	Some Rights of Way are too muddy to walk at the moment and a number are overgrown with bracken.	
212.5	<u>Southend Road opposite Cripps Farm.</u>	
	Vodafone carried out work, digging up the road opposite Cripps Farm. In two places, the replacement surface has completely come out (in the east bound carriageway).	
212.6	<u>Cars Parked on Southend Road.</u>	
	The PCSO has reported that nothing can be done about the cars parked on Southend Road. However, it is noted that at least one vehicle is parked facing the oncoming traffic (and is therefore the wrong way round).	
212.7	<u>Drainage Issues on Southend Road.</u>	
	The drainage issues on Southend Road continue, despite the numerous attempts to identify and resolve the situation. The pipe is thought to need thermal lancing work prior to being lined.	
213.	The meeting concluded at 9.20pm. BPC meeting: Tuesday 7th January 2025 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, Bradfield Village Hall.	