

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Portbury Residents
held in the Village Hall, High Street, Portbury
on Tuesday 10th May 2016**

Present: Cllr Weekes Cllr Langdon Cllr Romanski Cllr Randall

Chairman: Cllr Phipps

Clerk: Cllr Hale - Minutes taken by Sara Thompson

Others: Fifty six members of the public
Mr Summerfield – ROW Representative

1. **Introduction** – Councillor Phipps welcomed residents and explained the purpose of the meeting. He also introduced Councillors individually and explained their role within the Council. Residents were requested to turn-off mobile devices and advised of emergency exit locations.
2. **Convening of Meeting** – Cllr Phipps read the Notice to Convene the meeting and was accepted as Chairman for the proceedings.
3. **Minutes of previous Annual Parish Meeting held 24th March 2015** – The Minutes were signed as a correct record of the proceedings.
4. **Statement of Parish Accounts 2015/16**
Cllr Langdon presented the end of year accounts. Income received totalled £20916.50, expenditure totalled £16643.38, leaving a balance of £4273.12. As at 31st March 2016, closing bank balances were £29450.94 including a ring fenced amount of £8991 which has been reserved for the parish plan development, play scheme, St Mary's Church, planning consultant, village defibrillator and Village Green improvements.

He also advised that the Notice of date of commencement of period for the exercise of public rights had been placed, and that residents could view the relevant financial documents and annual return year ended 31.03.16 between 03.06.16 and 14.07.16 at the Council's offices.

A full set of financial statements would be available to view on the parish website.

5. Portbury Parish Council Chairman's Report

Your Council has been pretty busy throughout the year dealing with a significant number of Planning matters, road traffic and related matters as well as picking up the Neighbourhood Plan work begun during the Pylon fight.

Our Finances are healthy, with little significant funds having been committed, and this leaves us capable of tackling a number of things going forward, in particular the Village Green. Our precept hasn't changed in several years, this we may review depending upon what residents want to see us tackle in the future. We continue to support the Church with modest allocations of funds from time to time, in the face of massive need for repairs. We will endeavour to support the Village Hall too as and when it needs help, significant funds were allocated to the lounge refurbishment several years ago.

We are extremely lucky to have our Lengthsman, Councillor Weekes, who along with his wife, Phyl, do a sterling job keeping the village tidy and generally keeping an eye out for problems, eg drainage. A lot of this happens without the Council needing to get involved; residents are well served by this arrangement and we plan to continue it.

We have 7 councillors currently and I am very grateful for their commitment to the Parish. One Councillor stood down this year due to work demands and thus we have a vacancy. It would very good if a member of the Parish came forward, we can co-opt someone onto our Council since the vacancy which has been duly advertised in the village has received no applicants.

There have been a number of initiatives that are worth reporting specifically to you.

1. Communication – we have instigated a 3monthly newsletter which has been well received. We also use Facebook to keep in touch with live issues and for onward communication when appropriate. We have updated our webpage to make it quicker to access information.
2. Pylons – most of the work was done during the previous Council but key meetings were attended which “rounded off” our efforts.
3. The Village Green – started by the previous council, treatment of the green has continued to good effect. Ideas have already been generated for ways to enhance the green and also the War Memorial.
4. Roads – the main roads in the Village have been resurfaced following much lobbying by previous Council and continued efforts by this one.
5. Traffic calming – a scheme has been agreed in principle that will provide a 20mph traffic calmed zone in the main village. This will be lobbied for in the coming budget year.
6. Planning – we have objected to inappropriate development on the A369, Portbury Hundred, which would have created a building which would have been a blight,

additionally there would have been major traffic dangers due to access and egress. NSC refused the application.

We have been, and will continue to be, generally supportive of most residential development schemes which have been mainly extensions and adaptations of existing buildings. We have had no new builds to consider and thus have had no conflict with green belt policies.

Where planning consents have been achieved however we have been resolute in trying to ensure that the terms of the consent are adhered to. On several occasions we have contacted enforcement in order to prevent planning consent details being changed or ignored.

We have been watching carefully any developments outside of the residential areas but that might have an impact upon us, most notably at the docks. We aim to continue to liaise with the docks in order to maintain what degree of influence we can on developments.

7. Recycling, Green Bags – we have failed to influence North Somerset in their search for a change to the handling arrangements for green waste. In 2017 the arrangements are likely to change to a single green wheelie bin.

8. Neighbourhood Plan – we have used the questionnaire circulated in 2014 as a basis for developing a plan for the Village. This has now been publicised as a first draft for all residents and businesses in the Parish. It will take a further 12 months to refine this prior to an eventual referendum probably in 2017/8.

9. Portbury Wharf Nature Reserve – we have been tracking the progress and development of the new arrangements for the reserve. Whilst we remain hopeful that there will be a seamless change from previous management, Avon Wildlife Trust, to North Somerset, we await a final report on the matter. Your Council was instrumental in getting this important green space created in the first place, we remain committed to preserving it whilst seeking to avoid to being drawn into a war in the press.

10. Allotments - we have listened to allotment holders and allowed the principle of plot sharing if this helps to attract more holders. A new lease has been formulated with this in mind and will hopefully be well received. There is no waiting list currently for plots, please let us know if you would like to be considered for one in the future.

11. Devolution – the Westminster Government is considering devolving more power to the West of England Region, this being Bristol, BANES, North Somerset and South Gloucester Councils. The proposal suggested will see an elected Mayor for this area. Your Council is viewing this with some trepidation as it may herald in another, inefficient, layer of Government, possibly based in Bristol, which has been tried before (Avon) and failed. We don't have sufficient knowledge to be able to determine whether we should oppose this, if we can, and so we are writing to North Somerset to let them know that we have misgivings, particularly if this means that we will be governed by an essentially urban organisation which may mean that we possess little influence over policy and financial priorities in the future. We continue to monitor the situation'.

Following on from the above report, Cllr Phipps then gave a power point presentation on selected items; traffic calming/restrictions, the Neighbourhood Plan and the Village Green.

Traffic Calming/Restrictions – PPC were currently in discussion with NSC regarding the implementation of a 20mph speed zone within the village. Budget figures had been received from NSC and the scheme would cost in the region of £20k - £30k. On this basis, PPC would make an official request to NSC that the proposed scheme be included for consideration in their future asset management budgets. Support would also be sought from Cllr Ashton NSC.

Residents may also wish to consider the implementation of time restricted parking zones on roads which are often congested with parked vehicles. Cllr Phipps asked for feedback on this matter via either direct contact or through the Portbury Village Notice board on Facebook.

Due to a change in NSC's H Bar road marking policy, all properties could now qualify for Keep Clear Markings. Certain criteria would still need to be met but the decision for permission being granted (or refused) would now be made by the Parish Council. A standard fee of £95 would be applicable.

Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Phipps gave an overview of the contents and importance of a Neighbourhood Plan. The plan was a document that reflects residents' priorities and wishes as to how they would like to see their parish develop over the next twenty years, whether that be through controlled development or sustainable growth etc.

The basis of the plan was drawn from feedback provided by the Residents Questionnaire which was circulated to all households in 2014.

Planning – An adopted Neighbourhood Plan can be used as an effective tool in influencing future planning application decisions. This is particularly pertinent in view of NSC's 2015 'Call for Sites', to which four sites within Portbury Parish were proposed as being suitable for future housing development.

During the next twelve months, consultation meetings would be held so that residents could be involved with the Plan's development; Cllr Phipps stressed the importance of attending these meetings as the Plan was a parish document and not that solely of the Council. He also indicated that residents can comment at any time on an area of the plan by either direct contact or by the Village Notice Board. He also indicated if residents feel that there is anything missing from the plan they should similarly make contact with the Parish Council.

When finalised, a referendum would be held so that residents could vote on whether the Plan should be adopted or not. It would take up to 2 years to get to this point.

Village Green - As the heart of the village, it was acknowledged that the Green would, and is, benefitting from an improved maintenance schedule. Weed killing treatments had commenced and improvements seen. Cllr Phipps requested that thought be given as to how the path could be improved and whether or not a planting scheme

(trees/shrubs/flowers) should be introduced. They Green may also benefit from additional seating.

The War Memorial – Would residents like to see any changes in this area? Perhaps a seating area for reflection or the addition of artwork to the rear of the memorial?

Information Boards – Portbury Village has an interesting history and several areas of importance which people might consider to be of interest. Do residents think that the installation of an information board would be beneficial?

Feedback from residents on the above, and any other subject not mentioned, is always welcomed by the Council. PPC can be contacted by email, telephone, Facebook or via their website.

6. Open Forum – Q & As

Cllr Phipps opened a question and answer session, topics included; the removal of the barriers from the M5 footbridge, bus timetable issues and the village defibrillator.

Footbridge barriers – PPC had had several discussions with NSC regarding the reinstatement of the barriers which had been removed by Highways England (HE) without warning. Although not 100% effective in prohibiting motorcycles using the bridge illegally, the previous barriers had hampered the speed at which the bikes crossed. NSC had designed replacements but without the permission of HE to locate them on the bridge the scheme was unable to proceed. Both NSC and PPC were actively pursuing HE for permission.

Bus Timetables X2 and X3 – Several residents who rely on public transport were finding the revised timetable problematic. It was also noted that if the X3 were to be re-routed away from Sheepway on the way into Bristol then commuters might miss a bus if it didn't arrive at the allotted time. The X2 and X3 stops might need to be in the same place en route to Bristol, namely on the Portbury Hundred. PPC would make enquiries on their behalf.

Village Defibrillator – The donations received from RPD and PPC covered fifty percent of the cost for a defibrillator to be located within the village. The balance was currently being raised by Portishead Lions through sponsorships and events etc. Once received, the unit would be fitted to an exterior wall at the Village Hall.

Cllr Phipps thanked residents for attending and the meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed as a true record of proceedings;

Name:

Position:

Date: