



**MINUTES OF THE TIMSBURY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
held on  
Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016 at 7.30pm in the Conygre Hall

1. **The Chairman of Timsbury Parish Council, Councillor Veronica Packham**, welcomed all present to the meeting.

She explained that the Clerk to the council, Kirstie Green, is unable to attend the meeting and the minutes are therefore being taken by Judith Plucknett.

2. **Apologies for absence** were received from Doug Deacon, Peter Buchanan, Christine Bateman and Peter Bradshaw.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015.**

It was proposed by David Collett and agreed by those present that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. **Chairman's Report**

Councillor Packham reported that there are thirteen available seats on the council and at the present time there are twelve serving members. Councillors contribute a range of talents, experience and interests to the work of the council and carry out their responsibilities conscientiously.

The council meets monthly, usually on the first Monday of the month, and all meetings are open to the public. Agendas and minutes are displayed on the council's notice board but the council is keen to further develop and improve communications with residents.

Over 100 residents attended consultation events to view Bath & North East Somerset Council's (B&NES) proposals for a 20mph speed limit in the village. The proposals first put forward have been considerably scaled back and will now comprise a scheme of lines and signs with no traffic calming measures. The final consultation phase is currently in progress and any comments must be submitted to B&NES by 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

Action has now been taken to address the traffic congestion and difficulties caused when deliveries are made to the shops in North Road. A loading bay, designated for use at certain times of the day, has been created and some no waiting restrictions implemented. It is hoped these measures will improve traffic flow and safety for road users and pedestrians. It is important that the waiting restrictions put in place are observed by the public. The Chairman conveyed the thanks of the parish council to the Timsbury Road Safety Group for their assistance in lobbying B&NES to take action.

A second consultation event, attended by nearly 100 residents, took place when the B&NES Draft Core Strategy document was published. The document details which sites are being recommended for future development, in order to fulfil the requirement for land to be allocated for the building of about 50 houses in the village. The sites designated are the former Wheelers land and the western part of the field by Lansdown View. Subject to further examination it is expected that the draft will make up part of B&NES formal planning policies by the end of 2016. The parish council hopes soon to be in the position to make further progress on the Neighbourhood Plan for Timsbury.

Work is in progress on the preparation of a Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) for the West of England (B&NES, N. Somerset, S Gloucestershire and Bristol). The JSP is focused on the housing need and appropriate infrastructure for the whole area until 2036. Representatives of the parish council were invited to be involved in the process and she and David Collett have been taking an active interest in how plans could impact on the village in the future. In relation to the devolution of powers from central government to the West of England a vote is being held in June to determine whether a Metro Mayor should be appointed for the area. However only the district/unitary councils of the four authorities will be able to vote.

With regard to planning matters in Timsbury the council has considered 33 applications of which 5 were for works to trees. The council is disappointed that outline planning consent has been granted for the demolition of some recently constructed garages at the bottom of Greenvale to enable the building of some houses. The council has also objected to the proposed construction of 4 dwellings near the top of Greenvale - the members consider this to be overdevelopment of the site and out of keeping with the nearby housing.

An application for outline planning consent has been submitted for the building of 45 dwellings on land opposite the Cheshire Home. The council has strongly objected to this application as the land is outside the housing development boundary and the land is not included in the B&NES Draft Core Strategy.

Residents and the council have been concerned about plans to relocate the Post Office from the High Street to North Road. The post master however wants to develop another business from his premises and no longer run a Post Office. There is only one retail establishment in the village willing to provide Post Office facilities and the move therefore has had to be accepted or lose a Post Office in Timsbury. The Chairman conveyed her thanks to Sanjeev, the post master, for serving the parish well and assisting the council, particularly during the Placemaking Options consultation.

The council has been anxious to protect the Seven Stars, the last remaining pub in the village, and is pleased that it is now listed as an Asset of Community Value. This means that the premises cannot be sold and the current business terminated unless the local community has first been given a six month opportunity to consider whether and how to keep the business going.

The council has been pleased to continue supporting St Mary's Primary School by funding the annual visit of the Life Skills Team and also the village's annual Christmas celebration in the Miners' Garden. The council continues to provide financial support to the Conygre Trust and for the maintenance of the cemetery.

The council is replacing the worn out flower planters in the village with containers which require less maintenance and watering and the butterfly shaped planter which was located by the school entrance has been repaired and, with the permission of Curo, is going to be placed at the entrance to Conygre Green. The appearance of the village has also been improved by the work carried out by the Community Payback Team. This has included litter picking, weed clearance, bulb planting and tidying the cemetery. Suggestions for further tasks for the team will be appreciated.

The Chairman conveyed her thanks and congratulations to Peter Bradshaw, Larry Cunningham and Sue Fraser for preparing a set of leaflets detailing walks around Timsbury. The leaflets quickly sold out and a revised set, with two additional walks, is now available.

The Chairman reported that the council is very sorry that Kirstie Green has resigned as Parish Clerk as she is moving to Cornwall. She has held the post for three years, has been a pleasure to work with and has always been ready to use her considerable talents to serve the community. The council hopes to have a new Clerk in post very soon.

Councillor Packham concluded her report by thanking all those who either through their work or as volunteers care about Timsbury and the people who live in the parish. Today, the 23<sup>rd</sup>

April, is the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of our much respected monarch and later in the evening, as in many other places in Britain, a beacon will be lit in Timsbury.

**Questions from the floor:**

- Does the council have a view on the proposed appointment of a Metro Mayor? The Chairman responded that the matter is being discussed at the next council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May and councillors would like to hear the views of parishioners prior to this discussion.

## 5. Financial Statement

In the absence of the Clerk the financial statement for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 was presented by the Chairman. She reported that a parish grant of £2,910 had been received from B&NES in 2015/16 but it is unlikely that any further parish grants will be received. The balance of funds held by the parish council at the year-end totalled £55,879. It is likely that B&NES will be seeking to hand over some of the services they currently provide to parish councils and Timsbury Parish Council therefore wants to ensure that the funds held by the council are adequate to fund these services to ensure they are retained.

**Questions from the floor:**

- Does the council have any outstanding or approved projects that require funding? The Chairman responded that funds have been allocated by the council for the maintenance of the website; to upgrade and maintain the play equipment and to fund work on the Neighbourhood Plan.

The financial statement was then approved by the meeting.

## 6. Conygre Trust Report

A report on the Conygre Trust prepared by Peter Buchanan was read by the Treasurer Matt Bramley. The Trust is a registered charity which is responsible for the management of the Conygre Hall and Timsbury Recreation Field. Fourteen trustees served in the past year: two were nominated by the parish council, two elected at the 2015 Annual Parish Meeting, nine nominated by village organisations specified in the Trust Deed and one co-opted. Some new members will be very welcome and as the Trust has the power to co-opt, if anyone present would like to become a Trustee it can be arranged!

**Recreation Field.** The field and play area are very well used by a large number of people from Timsbury and the nearby villages. The grass cutting and other field maintenance is carried out by Crocombe Services, a Timsbury firm run by Martin Stevens. The Trust has a two year contract with the company and tenders will be invited towards the end of 2016 for a new contract, beginning in April 2017. The Trust would like to thank Martin for his excellent work (which is much appreciated by the football and cricket clubs) and also Les Robbins, for playground inspections and litter removal.

Extra maintenance costs have recently been incurred as the field was vandalised in the early hours of New Year's Day by a 4 x 4 being driven across the area. The perpetrator has been charged with criminal damage and is shortly due to appear in court. It is hoped that the repair costs can be reclaimed from the perpetrator's insurance company.

The Trust is reimbursed by the parish council for the routine maintenance of the grass, trees, hedges and other work which is for the general good and not related to the specific requirements of the sports clubs. The parish council also reimburses the Trust for maintenance work on the play area. The play area is regularly inspected by B&NES and this service has been free of charge but from April 2016 a charge is being raised by B&NES which the parish council has agreed to fund. Thanks were conveyed to the parish council for their support.

The Trust is about to research the possibility of resurfacing the tennis court to make it suitable for a variety of sports. This would be a major project and require grant funding. The installation of a piece of adult exercise equipment is also being considered.

Dog fouling at the recreation ground has been a concern for several years and after some discussion the Trust decided to ask owners to keep their dogs on leads. The signs have been in place now for several weeks and initial reports are that the amount of dog mess has reduced.

**Conygre Hall.** The hall receives no public money and is entirely funded by letting income, occasional grants and rent from the cricket and snooker clubs. The hall is very well used by a wide range of village groups, by public bodies such as the police and many casual hirers. Malcolm Tucker is an excellent booking officer and there couldn't be a better hall manager than Jeff Sluggett. As a trustee Jeff is unpaid but is entitled to claim some allowances.

The Trust continues to make improvements to the fabric and facilities of the hall. A new ceiling was installed in the kitchen last summer, complete with LED panel lights and more recently the main hall's lighting has been upgraded to LED panels. Consideration is being given to installing LED lighting in the foyer and bowls court. The trustees also expect to start replacing the old square tables with folding tables - these are more versatile and easier to store.

A long term preventative maintenance plan for the hall has been developed in order to avoid large unexpected repair bills, as far as possible. The condition of the fascia boards and guttering is a current concern.

A lottery grant £10,000 has very recently been awarded to the Trust for the major refurbishment of the stage area. All the backcloths, lights and other stage apparatus are currently suspended from the roof trusses but with this grant it will be possible to install a steel grid supported on the load bearing walls, making it safer and easier to hang the equipment. The project will be supported financially and practically by Timsbury Theatre Group, one of whose members, Peter Crooke, prepared the bid. The Trust is very grateful to Peter for his thorough and time-consuming work.

Thanks were conveyed to Malcolm Tucker, Jeff Sluggett and all the trustees for their hard work and support in the past year. Also to the village organisations and other users of the hall and field for their continued support.

**Financial Report.** Matt Bramley, Treasurer, presented his report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. The total income for the year was £49,761 and expenditure £40,931. The funds held in the current account at the year-end were £33,155 and in the reserve account £16,309. The hall benefits from free management provided by Jeff Sluggett which equates to approximately £5,500. In April 2015 an electricity rebate of £1,517 was received which also distorts the true picture of surplus income over expenditure.

There is an on-going plan for refurbishments to keep the hall in great condition and there is also the inevitability that, as in 2015 when repairs to the roof cost £5,974, other large repairs will be required for items such as the boiler.

#### **Questions from the floor:**

- As Jeff Sluggett works very hard managing the hall is there any way that he can be paid? Mr Bramley responded that charity laws clearly state that trustees cannot be paid.
- In response to a question about insurance Mr Bramley advised that no insurance claims were made last year. The Conygre Trust has public liability insurance of £5m and the policy includes cover for the buildings and contents, public and employer's liabilities and indemnity for the trustees.

**Election of Trustees.** Mr Jeff Sluggett and Mrs Jan Merchant were proposed by Bill ??? and unanimously re-elected to serve as trustees for the year 2016-17.

## **7. District Councillor's Report**

In the absence of Councillor Deacon his report was read by the Chairman. Mr Deacon's report noted that Hayeswood Road has been resurfaced; bus shelters in North Road and Lansdown

Crescent are to be upgraded with raised kerbs to allow for wheelchair access; Southlands Drive is to be resurfaced during this financial year; the bad road surfaces in Rectory Lane and Mill Lane have been raised with Highways; blocked drains at Timsbury Bottom are being investigated; new street lighting is to be provided in St John's Road and road traffic accidents in Bloomfield Road are being investigated to ascertain whether any highway improvements can be made to make the road safer.

The report also noted that a new waste bin has been provided at South Road and Mr Deacon hopes to get further waste bins replaced in the future. He has contacted Curo following complaints from residents about an overgrown footpath at Greenvale – this has now been cut back to allow pedestrian access.

Mr Deacon was happy to make representations to B&NES and support the application for the Seven Stars to be listed as an Asset of Community Value.

## **8. Timsbury Road Safety Group**

Sheila Clark presented a report on behalf of the Timsbury Road Safety Group. She explained that members of the group are village residents who share a concern for road safety in the village. The group is open to anyone to join and is non-funded and non-political.

In the past year the group has worked closely with the parish council by gathering ideas on how road safety might be improved, sharing the group's research data on road safety issues and by acting as a voice for village residents who have a road safety concern.

Mrs Clarke explained that as part of the traffic management plan for North Road a loading bay outside McColl's has been installed to reduce the number of times the delivery vehicles have to travel through the village. The double yellow lines have created spaces to provide passing places and clearer lines of sight for drivers but if drivers continue to park in the restricted places the traffic congestion will continue and will only increase when the Post Office relocates to McColl's. All residents are asked to assist and observe the restrictions.

A white line is to be painted in front of the Seven Stars. This should encourage drivers to keep clear of the footway and hopefully reduce the number of incidents of pedestrians being clipped by the wing mirrors of passing vehicles.

As part of the plan for North Road a raised crossing was going to be installed by the end of Chapel Walk. However, B&NES officers have now advised that a crossing is not necessary as there have been no accidents at this point – this view will be challenged.

The group has been working with the parish council and B&NES on the implementation of a 20mph scheme and it is hoped that this will be instigated soon.

In response to concerns raised by residents about the planning application for 45 dwellings on South Road the group has written to B&NES about the detrimental impact the development could have on road safety in the village.

The issue of gritting along South Road has not been resolved but the group has not given up on this matter. A future activity of the group will be to support proposed government legislation with regard to parking on footways.

**Questions from the floor:**

- Concern was raised about the number of pedestrians being clipped by wing mirrors outside the Seven Stars. Mrs Clarke responded stating that there is no record of numbers but the group would like people to report incidents as B&NES will only respond when there is a problem confirmed by hospitalisation and police records.
- A parishioner asked if Councillor Deacon takes an interest in road safety issues in the village. Mrs Clarke advised that he is forwarded copies of all emails etc. that are sent to B&NES and she will press him to actively assist.
- A resident questioned whether the introduction of a 20mph speed limit will be effective and observed. The Chairman said that B&NES will assess the impact of the scheme after it has been in place for a period of time. Her view is that although drivers may not drive at 20mph it is likely that the overall speed of traffic will be reduced.

**9. Environment Group**

A member of the group, Deborah Griffin, advised the meeting that many residents do not know that there is a thriving cycling club in Timsbury. The group organises rides that leave the Conygre Hall on Sunday mornings at usually at 7.30. The Environment Group has been considering how it can encourage cycling and in response two secure cycle racks have been installed at the Conygre Hall by B&NES and one outside Our Plaice chip shop.

Sue Walker then explained that the Environment Group had talked about the idea of holding a food event in the village and as a result of these discussions a 'Taste of Timsbury' festival is being organised. The festival is being held on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2016 and will showcase local produce. A grant for £500 has been received from the Curo Community Scheme and the festival is also being supported by the parish council. During the event there will be food tastings, talks and demonstrations and it will also create the opportunity for individuals (not businesses) to sell their excess produce.

**10. Items raised by parishioners**

**Cemetery.** Reverend Martin Blewett explained that the cemetery in The Avenue is owned by St Mary's Parish Church and he thanked the parish council for their contribution to the maintenance of the burial ground. He advised that there is now a limited capacity before the cemetery is full and when this does happen it will become a closed churchyard and the responsibility of B&NES. Rev Blewett would like residents to be aware of this matter and also to understand that when the cemetery is full there will be nowhere for burials in Timsbury.

The Chairman responded that the parish council has been aware of this situation for some time but members do not know of any land in the parish that could be used for burial purposes in the future. B&NES will not consider creating any new cemeteries and it is likely that when the cemetery in Timsbury is full the main cemetery for Timsbury residents will be Haycombe, Bath.

**Timsbury Scarecrow Trail.** It was noted that following the success of last year's event the Timsbury Scarecrow Trail is being held again on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2016. Residents are being encouraged to take part and display a scarecrow.

**Big Lunch.** To celebrate the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday a Big Lunch is being held on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at noon in the Conygre Hall and Recreation Field. Residents are encouraged to come and take part and bring their own picnic.

- 11. The Chairman concluded** the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and taking part in the meeting which had been very interesting and informative. She invited residents to remain in the hall for post-meeting drinks.

*Approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting:*

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: