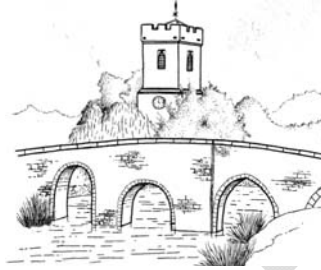


BIDFORD ON AVON PARISH COUNCIL

In the County of Warwickshire



Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 15th April 2013 at 7.30 p.m. at The Parish Meeting Room, Bramley Way, Bidford-on-Avon

ATTENDANCE

Cllrs. Gerrard (Chairman), Atkins, Fleming, Harvey, Hiscocks, Mrs Randell Spiers and Squires

District Cllrs. Howse and Pemberton

Mrs. E. Uggerløse Clerk to the Parish Council

Also present: 8 members of the public.

Invited speakers

- Ron Ball, Police Commissioner
- Fred Hiscocks, Member of the Perkins Trust
- Rob Williams, Chairman of the Crawford Memorial Hall Committee
- Elisabeth Uggerloese, Director of Bidford Community Library Ltd

Cllr. Gerrard Chairman of the Parish Council, chaired the meeting

He welcomed all present to the Annual Parish Meeting

1. The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 2012 were approved and signed by the Chairman
2. Chairman's Report 2012/13: this was read out by the Chairman and is attached hereto.
3. The Chairman introduced the first guest speaker: Ron Ball, Police Commissioner for Warwickshire

Police Commissioner Ball introduced himself and gave a brief history of his background, which included many years as a pilot.

He decided to stand for the post of Police commissioner, after extensive consultation with people he trusted, and to stand as an Independent, as he does not believe it should be a political party position.

He also believes his years as a Magistrate in Stratford-upon-Avon (5), as School Governor in Welford (7) and in the Pilot's Association, will all stand him in good stead.

He then continued to give a brief description of the job:

- Budget of £100 million per annum
- It replaces the 17 member Police Authority, which was considered not have enough democratic accountability as no-one knew who they were or how to contact them
- One, elected, individual can be removed every 4 years at the ballot box.
- Must be able to influence the Police and has the power to dismiss the Police Constable. However, Mr. Ball assured us that this was not the case in Warwickshire, where the Police constables is effective and on the same page as the commissioner
- He holds the Chief Constable to account by meeting him every Monday morning for an hour or so and, every 2 months, he meets with him in public: the last time was a recent public meeting held in Stratford upon Avon.
- The Police Commissioner is himself held to account by a body of 12 persons – 10 councillors and 2 independent.
It is important that both parties work well together and that all are kept well informed. He was happy to add that Warwickshire had a good team and a good working tradition.
- Due to the late elections (November 2012) the budget had to be produced within a month, with a 5 year plan also the put in place
- The Police Authority had done a good job with the finances, reducing the number of officers by 200 whilst the crime figures continued to be reduced.
- Mr. Ball re-affirmed the alliance with West Mercia Police which means that for operational purposes, it functions as one force – this has allowed both forces to keep up its numbers.
- There are 3 things he is concentrating on:
 - Community Safety Department:
 - ✓ ensures that crimes continues to reduce.
 - ✓ Same funding as for 2012/13 – but more funds could be made available if innovative projects are put forward
 - Community Safety Ambassadors
 - Community Safety

- Community Safety Ambassadors
 - ✓ Recruiting 30 people to represent the Commissioner at Community Forums
 - ✓ To be the eyes and ears of the Commissioner
 - ✓ They will be paid an allowance of £875 plus travelling – a total of £30,000
- Special Constables
 - ✓ Number of full time officers will not be reduced further – it will remain at 800
 - ✓ PCSOs – Chief Constable and Police Commissioner agree that the number should be no lower than 100
 - ✓ Aim is to recruit larger numbers of Special Constables, who have the same powers as officers, once they have been fully trained.
- Reserves – these stand at £24 million and will be down to £9 million by the end of this fiscal year.
The cost of 20 new officers is approx. £1million p.a. and they will serve a minimum of 30 years – this is considered too high a cost in the current economic climate – hence the increase in the recruiting of Special Constables.
- The new Police Commissioners are formed an association, and Mr. Ball is a member and, due to his background as a pilot, is Chair of the Police Air Board as the government is encouraging the formation of a National Air Police.

Mr. Ball then said he would take questions:

- What is the role of a Special Constable?
 - They must be committed to work at least 4 hours every week.
 - It is up to the Police Constable as to where and when they are deployed
 - Should result in more police visibility

Member of the audience added that Specials can become disillusioned if they feel they are not used in a proper manner and the Police must ensure they are used well.

Another member added that it must be remembered that Specials are volunteers, not employed and they wish to work on their own terms not those imposed by the Police.

- What is the future of Stratford-upon-Avon Police Station? Is it being closed?
Stratford upon Avon Police station is not being closed although other functions are under discussion at present.
Cover still comes from Leamington Spa
- Where do the main patrol come from?
there followed a discussion as to what the issue was being raised. Patrols are no longer sitting at a station but are moving around and will attend

when required..

The member of the public was more concerned about what would happen in the event Warwickshire Police had to attend an incident across the border (West Mercia) who would then cover Bidford?

Mr Ball reiterated that patrols are mobile and would attend where necessary.

The member of the public continued to express concern that the majority of the 800p officers would be concentrating on the urban areas leaving the rural areas to suffer – the real answer is more Bobbies on the Beat

The Chairman thanked Mr. Ball who then left the meeting.

4. Verbal Report from the Perkins Trust

This was delivered by Fred Hiscocks, Member of the Perkins Trust

- It is an educational trust which gives grants for higher education to local young people to the age of 25
- Funds come from a number of properties the trust owns in Stratford upon Avon
Regrettably, some long leases are at a very low rent.
- The trust gives out grants to a value of approx.. £10,000 every year.
Regrettably, no apprentices have applied lately, and the trust would like to encourage this in future years
- The grants are for the duration of the education, not a one off, provided the recipient writes to the trust thanking them for the grant.

5. Verbal Report from the Crawford Memorial Hall

This was delivered by the Chairman of the Management Committee, Rob Williams

- The Crawford Memorial Hall is the Bidford on Avon Village Hall
- It is used by many local associations and is the venue of Bidford Rural Cinema
- The 2012 accounts show a small surplus,, mostly due to the rural cinema. Since the Baptist Church relocated to The Barn, it has left a small financial hole as they were regular users and payers.
- The hall has great facilities in place and is available to hire for all type of events.
- The Management Committee is currently looking for a new Booking Secretary/Caretaker as Peter Warwick, who has done a sterling job over the past 30 years, has finally decided to resign

6. Report from Bidford community Library Ltd.

This was delivered by Elisabeth Uggerloese, Director
Copy is attached hereto

7. Open Forum

Annual Parish Meeting 2012

- Rubbish is being tipped onto the Big Meadow by residents of The Paddocks, Honeybourne Road
- Dogs have been seen chasing swans and geese along the river Avon on the Big Meadow – this is a danger to children as well as the birds and dog owners should be encouraged to prevent it happening
- Dog Fouling – this continues to be an issue across the village. It was brought up at the last Community forum and there is a project in place to work together with Bidford Primary School to produce some striking posters to be placed throughout the village
- Social Media – whilst recognising the many advantages of this communication method, its disadvantages were brought up. A facebook page “Bidfordspotted” has many unsavoury comments and photos on it and should be avoided.
- Grafton Lane – concerns about the proposed social housing were raised and the Chairman was asked if there was a need for them?
A Housing Survey was carried out in 2012 by the Parish Council which clearly established the need for over 30 social houses within the parish. The highways concerns would be addressed once the planning application was received
- Request that the Parish Council cease to spend any more money on the Big Meadow, which had now been fully refurbished, but should concentrate in supporting local businesses.

The Chairman thanked all present and closed the meeting at approx.. 9.05 pm

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Bidford Community Library Ltd

Bramley Way
Bidford on Avon
Warwickshire
B50 4QG



Bidford Community Library Ltd. first opened on 2nd April 2012 – a year later and we are delighted to say that we are not only still here, but going strong.

A tremendous amount is owed to our volunteers – of which there are in excess of 50! – and we are proud to be able to say that the only ones that have left was due to moving out of the area, and we are still recruiting. The volunteers are of all ages from well into their 80s to our youngest who is 13. And it must be said, without them, there would be no library for the communities of Bidford-on-Avon and surrounding villages.

BCL Ltd must also thank Warwickshire County Council whose continued support is invaluable and a good example of collaboration for the benefit of the local community. Volunteers know that can always get assistance by contacting the Helpline, and we have been advised that this will continue for a further 12 months at least.

WCC came to see some of the Directors on Monday 8th April to carry out an annual review, and we are happy to be able to say that they will be sending a good report back to Councillors. They were particularly impressed by the level of volunteers and the good service we are able to offer.

We have also been able to establish what are the costs involved in running the library/community hub, which amount to just under £10,000 per annum. However, we are still too dependent on grants as part of the income. However, now that we are one year old, we are in a better position to dedicate more of our time in thinking of ways to raise funds. The current income is devised from:

- Grants from Bidford-on-Avon, Salford Priors and Wixford Parish Councils
- Grants from Awards for All – though this is for specific projects and promotion
- Friends of BCL – membership is £5 per annum and allows you to vote at the AGM
- DVDs
- Book requests and fines

- Computers
- Lettings

The number of users has remained constant, but we would like to encourage new members: a library is more than just books, although they are important. It is also a great place to meet people, read the press, participate in a Book Club, rent a DVD. Are you aware that we also have audio books, and that they can be downloaded so you can read whilst walking? And, if you are a proud owner of an iPad or tablet, you are also able to download eBooks direct from the WCC website. So there is a “virtual” library for you to tap into as well – all you need is a membership card and if you come to the library, our staff of volunteers will help you with that.

You can find the Citizen’s Advice Bureau at the library every first and third Friday of the month, between 10.00 am and 1.00 pm – by appointment only. In these difficult economic times, they have been very busy and are a welcome addition to the services BCL wish to offer its communities.

We are also aware of the many changes that are occurring in the Tax Benefit Systems so, if you need advice, you can contact Stratford-on-Avon District Council direct from the library via the Customer Access Terminal (CAT): this works like Skype, so you will not only be able to talk to someone, but also see them (and they can see you) You are also able to make payments, scan and send documents etc. and all without having to go the Elizabeth House in Stratford. Privacy is guaranteed, as the terminal is situated in a small room with a door!

As we start our second year of service to the community, we would ask for your continued support. A library is an important social facility and we don’t want to lose ours, as has been proven by the large number of volunteers willing to work to keep it open. So, here is to our second year and, hopefully, many more to come.