

# Blunsdon Parish Assembly

**ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY** of Blunsdon Parish, held on **Thursday 22nd May 2025**, at the village hall, at 7:00 p.m.

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| <b>Draft Minutes</b>                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Attendees:</b> Cllrs Ian Jankinson, Jim Tayler, Sandra Keates & Martin Nash, Clerk Debbie Braiden, PC Ben Lambert, PCSA Vicky Townsend & 17 Members of the Public |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Minute Ref No.</b>                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>2505/1</b>                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Introductions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | The Chairman welcomed everyone, and he was pleased to see so many members of the public in attendance. Introductions were made for attending Councillors and staff. He also welcomed two past colleagues, one from the NHP and an ex-PC Chairman who were in attendance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>2505/2</b>                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Apologies</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Apologies were received from Cllrs Compton, Hughes, Weston & Poulton.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>2505/3</b>                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Minutes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | <p><b>1</b> The draft minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p><b>2</b> There were no action points.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>2505/4</b>                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Reports</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | <p><b>2</b> As the two PCs were on duty and could be called out, the Chairman asked them to make their report first. So, item 2 was actioned prior to item 1.</p> <p>PC Lambert and PCSO Townsend introduced themselves as cover for this area and surrounding villages this side of the A419. They presented three months stats to the Clerk and is attached as Appendix Two. They confirmed very little crime has been reported to the police and encouraged everyone to report theft etc. otherwise they do not have a true record for crime in the area. The most common reports are theft to vehicles and criminal damage.</p> <p>Q – In the last three months there appears to be a spate of burglaries, is there any resolution.<br/>A – It depends on what type of premises. We know they are not locals.</p> <p>Brian introduced himself as involved with the Speedwatch for Blunsdon and he confirmed that the Speedwatch group were well supported by Scott Garcia and the results were published in the local monthly magazine.</p> <p>Awareness was raised of how dangerous the route to the local surgery and 3 schools is if you want to walk or cycle. The Chairman confirmed that Hills</p> |

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the developer still owned the land and has not been adopted by SBC as it is still classed as a construction access.

Q – Sams Lane is being used for racing along, Broadbush also bad during the evening. Brian confirmed the team need somewhere to safely set up to catch in 20 MPH. Mini motorbikes with no helmets, no lights. PC Lambert confirmed they are aware, but it is catching them in the act as the Police are not allowed to pursue if they are not wearing helmets and we rely on facial recognition rather than a chase.

Brian asked for more Speedwatch volunteers to assist in sharing the load. He said they currently share a camera with Stratton so rely on timings with them. PC Lambert said he would look to see if there was a budget for this.

PCs left at 19:22 hours.

1 The Chairman provided a summary of his annual report for Blunsdon Parish Council. This past year we have had staffing changes and a restructure following the retirement of Tracey Judd, with Debbie taking on the role of Clerk as well as Finance Officer. Debbie has a new Clerk's Assistant in Claire Boles, who joined us earlier in the year. We have new systems replacing old ones with Lemon Booking being the most prominent for the hiring of our facilities.

He expressed his gratitude to all councillors & volunteers for their time and dedication, as well as to the staff for their hard work throughout the past year. A full copy of the report and accompanying slides can be found in Appendix One. We continue to strive keeping our village clean, safe & beautiful. Parishes are having to take on much more work and responsibility locally, which are services that SBC should be doing. For example, the Parish council relented and cut back bushes on Sams Lane along the Highway, the path at the top of High Street and in front of Skylark. We find we are doing more and more of SBC's work.

Q – Does this get taken off from the Council Tax charged by SBC?

A – No – if we must put our precept up to cover these extra works it is double taxation.

The Chairman continued to inform the current projects taking place such as the MUGA, the community building (café & shop). We maintain the building and last year solar panels have been added. We have the cemetery extension to do, although not being used yet. We have plans to refurbish the Pavilion at Sutton Park but looking for more funding for this to take place to make more accessible by all. So far we have carried out a

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deep clean and provided a new fridge and looking to expand the paving around the building.

The community allotment has been taken on by the pre-school children and minders.

Q – Can we have an herb garden for all the community to have?

The old tennis courts have the new MUGA being built. The school will have use of this during the day, and we will be hiring it out during evenings and weekends. It should be completed and ready by early July for use in August onwards.

Ermin street – we aim to make improvements by planting bushes, trees and wildflowers. The area will look more part of the village feel. We hope to reduce the speed limit to 30 mph from 60 mph.

## ASSETS

Our biggest asset is aging and will require major upkeep in the coming years. This year we hope to replace both front doors at an estimated cost of approximately £10k as grade II listed and we must replace like for like.

Community building – we maintain the building materials.

Allotments – check these are tidy and maintained. There are some allotments still available for rent if anyone would like to rent them, please contact Claire Boles 01793 705617.

## Planning

The Borough Council have a lot of houses still to provide with a weak local plan. Their Local Plan is out for consultation.

Q – Where will the 449 houses be built?

A – Chairman confirmed we don't know yet but if in the village there is scope behind houses on Broadbush. There is no construction traffic allowed through the village.

Q – Will there be a slip road onto the A419 at the Cold Harbour junction? If there are 449 houses to be built, serious works are required to this junction.

A - Extra lane added heading south, double lane through the lights, Turnpike Road will only have a left turn, Ermin Street will have a left turn to Broadbush.

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Q – Is the bridge still required prior to house build?

A – Bridge is still on the table – 449 houses built before bridge is in use.

The Chairman confirmed that once the Local Plan has been updated, Blunsdon will update their NHP.

We have secured free trees for planting which will be managed for 15 years for free.

The church is almost there in respect to their community spaces and will start fund raising.

Ermin Street planting – this has halted due to SBC having no licence protocol in place for the PC to do work along the Highways. This stall will be due to Highways covering their responsibility and risks to allow the PC to continue.

3 The Finance Officer gave an overview of the finance report.

4 Committee reports have been covered in the above sections.

5 No reports were received from the Ward Councillors.

6 Reports received from other local organisations to the community.

## **Sharon – Secretary to Blunsdon Colts**

Sharon explained that the football clubs were very much volunteered led with participants of varying ages from 4 years old to adult. We have the younger teams, 4 adult teams and the ladies' teams. She confirmed they use the 3 pitches at the Pavilion for which they help to maintain, improving the grassed areas with weedkilling and seeding every year, we even have our own mower. We have free use of pitches at Blunsdon House Hotel with 9 teams having to play outside of Blunsdon to keep finances down.

### **Sponsors are always welcome!**

Sharon showed an interest in using the school premises if this indeed becomes available for hire soon. She is also interested in using the MUGA during the winter months for training if there are floodlights. Overall, we have 270 adults & children playing football and at least 50% of them being locals.

## **Rhae – Bootcamp**

Bootcamp sessions have been running since 2017. In 2021, Bootcamp in Blunsdon has steadily progressed in numbers. It was to improve health and sprits following Covid. There are now 35 ladies twice weekly taking part

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|               | <p>and we use the Village Hall during winter when we aren't able to use the Recreation field. We have all made new connections around the village through exercise, it is a social event, and we support each other when needed and it has become more of a community group/family. The exercise benefits mental and physical health with women feeling comfortable of all experiences. As a group we have raised lots of money for charities as a side line. Bootcamp brings us together!</p> <p><b>Laura – Zumba</b><br/>My class is run every Wednesday at the Village Hall 5pm until 6pm and <b>all ages and abilities</b> are very welcome to join in the fun class.</p> <p><b>Julia – Yoga</b><br/>I have practiced yoga for many years and my first ever yoga class was held at the Blunsdon Village Hall in 2020. I have continued to train I am now an advanced yoga teacher. My class runs on a Wednesday at 6:20pm. We currently <b>don't have any men participating</b> and I would welcome them to come and have a go. Yoga is so good for both your mental and physical health.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>2505/5</b> | <b>Public Recess</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|               | <p>The Chairman welcome questions to the floor.</p> <p>Q – Where will the parking be for the new MUGA?</p> <p>A – There will be 12 new spaces in a new car park on site together with 2 disabled &amp; 2 EV Charging spaces.</p> <p>Q – Will the MUGA be booked online like the Village Hall?</p> <p>A – Yes through lemon booking. It is envisaged it will be open 17:00 to 21.30 hrs. The gates will be locked and there will be some kind of entry system installed maybe through an App or keyless access.</p> <p>Q – I note the field has not had an appeal for the Plymouth Brethren church – maybe the Football club could have a conversation?</p> <p>Q – Following the presentation of Rivan to the PC, the Rivan slides are not on the PC's website can we view them?</p> <p>A – Clerk offered apologies and will follow up and publish on the PCs website.</p> <p>Q – Rivan – How do we register our concerns going forward?</p> <p>A – If there is no current avenue to register concerns as a planning application has not been received and until there is something concrete, we need to wait. You can continue to complain to Rivan or the standards agency for their validity.</p> <p>It was noted that following all the presentations, they are now privy to the resident's concerns.</p> |

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|        | <p>Martin – not for or against but looked at processes and found them credible. From an engineering standpoint and taking a view based on facts, funding was credible. There would be a thorough protocol to follow, meeting rigid criteria involving gas connection. IJ confirmed that facts were important as currently we are speculating until an application is in.</p> <p>Q – I felt Rivan couldn't give an answer, I feel we are not told the truth. It all needs to be substantiated. If it goes ahead, it will damage the countryside and what then if it all fails? A ruined countryside.</p> <p>Q – Can I have the details as I have not heard about this?</p> <p>A – It has been on the PC website, consultations at the PC meeting and Blunsdon House Hotel, in our minutes. ACTION: to send Brian &amp; Steph copies.</p> <p>Q – Allotments – rules and enforcement. There is a plot next to me who has let it run wild with weeds can you do something?</p> <p>A – JT agreed that the same was happening at Minerva Heights but confirmed that he was looking into it and the PC were on the case to make this better for all.</p> <p>It was noted that the tenant felt the fees were very high for allotments compared to other Swindon plots.</p> |                                                                      |
| 2505/6 | Close                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | With no further questions the Chairman closed the meeting. 20:20 hrs |

All reports will be on the PC website. Any questions can be emailed to the PC via – [debbiebraiden@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk](mailto:debbiebraiden@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk)

Signed The Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_