

Annual Parish Meeting 122, held 8 pm at St Bridget's Church, Monday 30 March, 2015
MINUTES

Present: Andrea Harrison, Mary and Geoffrey Hobbs, Gill Iles, Liz Lunn, Jacqui and Andrew Olver, Margaret and David Pike, Conny and Antony Ridge, Julian Ridge (Chair), Bryan Smith, Joe Watt. **In attendance:** Geoff Coombs (District Councillor, Backwell Ward), Deborah Yamanaka (District Councillor, Wrington Ward), Police Community Support Officer Kate Turner (speaker), Gill Rowley (Clerk)

- 1 **Apologies** were received from Wanda Denning, Martin Jarvis, Mike Fishwick, Rupert and Blanche Ridge, and Liza Ridge.
- 2 **Minutes** of the 2014 annual parish meeting were read out and accepted. There were no matters arising.
- 3 **Chairman's report**
 - 3.1 **Ward boundaries** Julian Ridge reminded parishioners that ward boundaries would be changing in May 2015 and we would be joining Wrington Ward. We were sorry to say goodbye to District Councillors Geoff Coombs and Karen Barclay, who had served us well. District Councillor Deborah Yamanaka, the current Wrington Councillor, would be standing again.
 - 3.2 **North Somerset Core Strategy** This had been on hold for some time, following an objection by Bristol University to the planning policy. The planning inspector had now submitted his report, which hopefully would clear the way for North Somerset to have a strategic plan for new housing provision. The main changes to the earlier plan were: the required housing supply 2006-26 had gone up to 20,985; the identification of sites would be applied on the basis of the requirement of the forthcoming Joint Strategic Plan; the policy was to be reviewed in 2018.
 - 3.3 **Footpaths** Annual maintenance had been carried out and these were in good order. The new path created by the Ramblers Association in Brockley Woods from the Deer Park entrance on the A370 to the Bowling Green was being well used.
 - 3.4 **Gullies and drainage** The long-running problem in Brockley Hall had been resolved, thanks to the lawn's owner replacing a section of collapsed pipe and help from North Somerset Council's jetting team. An attempt was being made to instigate regular maintenance of our roadside gullies, and we would keep up the pressure.
 - 3.5 **Wall along the footway on the A370** This had many gaps and we had been in discussion with the owner and with the district council, who are responsible for it below footway level. We hoped to apply for a grant from the Airport Community Fund: the cost would be over £15,000 but we felt there was a strong heritage argument for restoration. The road was built nearly 200 years ago when the turnpike road replaced Chelvey Batch as the main route from Bristol to the rapidly growing Weston-super-Mare.
 - 3.6 **Safety road marking and Slow signs** This work on either side of Chelvey Church had been completed, paid for by the Airport Fund.
 - 3.7 **Backwell West Town sign on the A370** This sign had been placed a considerable way inside our parish. After lengthy negotiations with Backwell Parish Council and North Somerset Council, who had erected it, the sign had been removed. We intended also to manage the wide grass verges in this area in a more nature-friendly way instead of having it mown like a bowling green.
 - 3.8 **Water supply to Brockley Church** Antony Ridge was having great difficulty in getting the numerous parties to agree to a plan.
 - 3.9 **Litter** Recently the district council had committed to clearing the Combe twice a year: this had just been done, but within days, litter had begun to reappear. Dr Ridge thanked parishioners who had given up their time a few days previously to pick up litter throughout the parish. Mike Fishwick, who had co-ordinated the arrangements, had reported a large amount of alcoholic drinks cans in the verges, raising concerns over drink driving.
 - 3.10 **Elections** Only five of the six parish councillors planned to stand again, so there would be a vacancy. All households had received a flier telling parishioners how to stand. David Pike had been a councillor since 1991, contributing much to the work of the council and in particular taking responsibility for liaison with Bristol Airport: he would be missed.

- 4 Budget** Copies of the 2015-16 budget had been distributed with the agenda. The precept had been raised by £200 to minimise the call on reserves. There were no queries or objections.
- 5 District councillor's report**
- 5.1 Boundary Review** Geoff Coombs said that this had been triggered by a 20 per cent reduction in the number of district councillors.
- 5.2 North Somerset Council tax** This had been frozen again for 2015-16, enabling the district council to take advantage of a central government grant.
- 5.3 South Bristol Link Road** Preparatory work had begun in February on Highridge Common.
- 5.4 Bristol Airport** Airport-funded work to install traffic lights and remove the footbridge at the Downside Road/A38 junction were part of the existing planning agreement, and had been triggered by the airport hitting forecast passenger numbers.
- 5.5 Core Strategy** There had been a rash of applications in Yatton, Congresbury and Weston-super-Mare, but the Green Belt – a very significant part of our parish – was currently being protected both by central government and the district council. Policy should start to settle and be clearer.
- 6 Parishioners' questions and comments**
- Jacqui Olver asked whether the new link road would become a new boundary for developers, weakening protection of the Green Belt. A counter-argument was put that if the link road became a new city boundary, this would strengthen the Green Belt. Antony Ridge was concerned that Bristol would have insufficient available housing sites towards the end of the planning period: it emerged that although the city had land for its planned housing numbers, much of it was brown-field, and there would be pressure ahead from developers looking for 'easier' areas. Mrs Olver said the Green Belt was vulnerable also if proposed developments were small and aimed at providing affordable housing. Mr Coombs said there was scope for development on the Green Belt if very special circumstances could be demonstrated, though in general North Somerset Council had been standing firm, with over-riding consideration being given to sustainability.
- 7 Any other business** There were no other comments or questions, and business ended.

Antony Ridge then introduced the guest speaker, Police Community Support Officer Kate Turner, who was the new local beat officer covering the parish. Kate spoke on domestic security and answered a number of questions, following which the meeting ended.