

Batheaston Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Batheaston Parish Council at 7:15pm on Tuesday 21st January 2020

Present: Derek Greener (Vice-Chairman, chairing the meeting), Paula Day, Catherine McCarthy, Catherine Gregory, Andrew Jeffryes, Alexis Pavlou, Matt Tovey.

In attendance: Richard Maccabee (Clerk).

1. Public participation

1.1. No members of the public attended the meeting.

2. **Apologies for absence** were received from James Jeffery (Chairman), Andrew Lea, Hannah Squire and Patrick Vandesteen

3. **Declarations of interest** from councillors: Paula Day declared an interest in item 4, having an interest in Planning Application 19/05290/FUL.

4. **The following Planning Application** from B&NES were reviewed:

Application Type: Full Application

Site Location: 6 Brookside Close Batheaston Bath BA1 7HW

Description of Proposal: Erection of extension to north elevation to facilitate annexe ancillary to main dwelling. Installation of extended balcony to the south elevation.

Construction of retaining wall to form a raised terrace and installation of a garden store. (Resubmission of 19/00040/FUL)

Name of Applicant: Mr Kevil Day

Reference Number: 19/05290/FUL Case Officer: Robert Warren

It was resolved that, subject to the satisfactory resolution of the outstanding issue under investigation by the Environment Agency, there was no objection to the Planning Application.

5. The Precept for 2020/21

5.1. Catherine Gregory, who has led the Precept Working Group, introduced this item.

5.2. She outlined the significant work undertaken by the Working Group to assess the requirements for the coming year.

5.2.1. The current budget had been analysed, with a view to maximising the delivery of Residents' priorities.

5.2.2. There has been an exercise to identify further efficiencies, which has identified several areas of focus for the coming year.

5.2.3. The Parish Precept that Batheaston levies, and the increases recently, were compared with other Councils in the B&NES area, which positioned Batheaston slightly below the average.

5.3. The background to this year's exercise includes some significant changes:

5.3.1. There has been no increase in Precept for the past 3 years, despite inevitable increases in costs. The Council has been able to absorb this real terms cut, through efficiency and spending reserves, but this is no longer possible.

- 5.3.2. The Council has taken on a number of additional responsibilities, principally from B&NES, including road sweeping, lighting, riverside upkeep, grass cutting, and supporting the Youth Club.
- 5.3.3. The “Tax Base” (the number of households paying Council Tax) for 2020/21 is increasing for 2020/21 by 2%. This increases the Council’s income for a given Council Tax rate by the same amount.
- 5.3.4. Councillors are aware that many households are struggling with rising costs of living and wanted to keep any increase to a manageable level.
- 5.4. The Precept Working Group had canvassed all Councillors to understand the priorities for the coming year, with a high degree of consensus.
 - 5.4.1. The priority for recurrent spend is better communication with residents, including upgrade or replacement of the website.
 - 5.4.2. For investment, there is broad agreement around the “Green Corridor” and the replacement of the Rhymes Pavilion.
- 5.5. Councillors had been asked to state their view on the appropriate level for the Parish Precept. Using band D, which is taken as the reference point for setting all Bands, these had fallen into three groups as follows:
 - 5.5.1. A rise of about £4 a year for a band D household, as a modest step to provide the resources needed.
 - 5.5.2. Around £5 a year for a band D household, to better meet the foreseeable operational needs of the Council
 - 5.5.3. Around £6 a year for a Band D household which will give some capacity to invest in activities such as maintenance of equipment and facilities, which have been neglected in the past.
- 5.6. It was noted that the first option above, which equates to a rise of approximately 9.8%:
 - 5.6.1. equates to a rise of £3.09 p.a. for Band B households, which are the most numerous in the Parish; £3.97p.a. for Band D; and £6.62p.a. for Band G.
 - 5.6.2. results in a Precept of £50,400 for the year.
- 5.7. **It was resolved** to agree to submit a Precept of £50,400 for 2020/21.
- 5.8. The Clerk duly **signed the Precept Form**, and will submit the form to B&NES.
Clerk

Upcoming Meetings: -

7:15pm on Tuesday 11th February 2020 in the Rhymes Pavilion tbc

These are open meetings.

Members of the public are welcome to attend and may speak by invitation

Signed: -

Date