

**Westfield Annual Parish Meeting**  
**Minutes of the Westfield Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March**  
**2015 at 7pm at the Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Wells Rd, Westfield**

Present:: Cllr Geoff Fuller, Chair of Westfield Parish Council  
Cllr Robin Moss, Westfield Parish Councillor and Westfield Councillor  
for Bath and North East Somerset Council.  
Parish Councillors: Cllrs Andrew Butcher, Diana Cooper, Sue  
Hamilton, Bryan Wallbridge.  
18 Members of the public.

Attending: Emily Merko, Finance Officer, Tracey Stephens, Admin Assistant,  
Lesley Welch, Parish Clerk

Apologies: Cllr Phil Wilkinson, Julie O'Rourke of BANES, Cllr Anne Clarke,

Absent: Cllrs Rob Appleyard, Eddie Newman, Sheena Russell

**1. Welcome and Overview of the Year and Introduction of all Councillors**

Cllr Fuller welcomed all to the meeting and gave an overview of the 4 years of the Parish Council.

Westfield Parish Council was formed in 2011 and appointed Lesley Welch as Parish Clerk. Cllr Fuller gave thanks to Lesley for being a fantastic Clerk and operating a very supportive back office for the Parish.

Norton Radstock College agreed to involve its Art and Design students in a logo competition for Westfield Parish Council. The four shortlisted logos were advertised in the Westfield Warbler and the elm tree logo was selected.

Communication with local residents being vital and the Westfield Warbler, the Parish's quarterly newsletter, was set up in December 2011. The Warbler has doubled in size since its inception and is full of local news and events. The Parish Council also has a website that is kept up to date and a source of information for the residents.

The Parish Council worked closely with Bath and North East Somerset Council in their creation of the new Jubilee Green outside the local shops in Westfield. A living Christmas Tree and time capsule commemorates the first year of the Parish Council and is a lasting landmark. Hanging baskets and jubilee flags have further established this area as the focal point of the Parish. In 2015 there will be some hard standing put around the time capsule, making it easier to attend events.

The Parish Council was awarded Quality status in October 2012, demonstrating effective management and an understanding of the needs of the community.

In June 2013 Waterside Carnival Club presented a defibrillator to the local community in recognition of all their support. The defibrillator is checked

weekly to help ensure it is always ready for use. It has been stolen recently, but is being replaced, paid for by insurance.

In 2014 work with Bath and North East Somerset Council for a smiley face speed indicator device outside Westfield Primary School came to fruition. The Fun Day returned to Westfield Recreation Ground in June of 2012. It was a great success and further success was achieved in 2013 and 2014. The event is now an established date in the calendar with more volunteers taking on roles.

Westfield's first Christmas Lights Switch on event took place at the end of November 2012 and saw local residents, churches, schools, community groups, silver band, Westfield Ladies Choir and the Parish Council come together around the newly planted living Christmas Tree for carols and the switching on of the lights. In 2013 the display was extended to include more trees around the local shops and the electrics coordinated. In 2014 Father Christmas came along to give gifts to the local children.

In 2014, after 25 years, the Fun Fair returned to Westfield and was heralded a success. It will take place again in 2015 and reviewed each year.

June 2014 saw the Open Day at Norton Hill Recreation Ground to celebrate the installation of new tarmac on the site of the former tennis court, along with a boules court, all weather table tennis table and basketball hoop. CCTV has just been installed at the Recreation Ground. This will no doubt prove to be a valuable tool, helping to reduce the amount of anti-social behaviour there.

In 2014 a new clatterbridge was installed at Westhill Recreation Ground thanks to local contractors working adjacent to the site. The Recreation Ground is kept in good condition and Council is looking at spending some money on updating it – more information to come at a future date. In 2011 Westfield was accepted as one of 15 areas in BANES to promote the new snow warden scheme. Local volunteers took to the streets to keep the pavements free of ice and snow. This was much appreciated by residents and the scheme has continued, with further gritters being purchased for use.

Supporting local organisations is vital and the Council has regularly donated funds to various groups. Funds from the Big Local are available. In January 2012 the Parish Council signed a lease for the new Waterford Park allotment site and established its overseeing role, with the day to day management being undertaken by Westfield Allotment and Garden Society. 2011/12 saw the first plots being worked on site and in 2012 the site was awarded a Prince of Wales Award due to the ethos of sustainability and accessibility on which it is based. This was a remarkable achievement for its first year.

In 2015 a new noticeboard was installed outside the local shops, funded by the Ward Councillors' Initiative Fund and created by the students of Norton Radstock College.

Noticeboards for the allotment site and the entrance to Nightingale Way were also purchased.

Parish Councillors have made a commitment to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and will work with residents over the next 18 months to put this plan in place. This plan sets out the key characteristics of the Parish and makes recommendations for use of green space and development land.

## **2. Minutes of the last meeting held 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## **3. Environment and Development in Westfield**

The Chairman introduced Cllr Bryan Wallbridge, Chair of the Parish Council's Environment and Development Committee.

Cllr Wallbridge explained the remit of the E&D committee – to scrutinise planning applications and feed back the views of residents of Westfield. He requested of residents that they let Council know if they have any opinions about planning applications as that is the only way Council can tell B&NES what parishioners think. One thing Council would like to see are more commercial developments in local area creating jobs.

There has been good work done by Cllr Butcher on the Neighbourhood Plan and the Westfield Questers are working on a community plan which is a 15 year strategic plan based on the wants and needs of the local people.

Thanks were given to Cllr Cooper for getting funding for the petanque court by the tennis court at Norton Hill.

## **4. Finance**

Vice Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committee, Cllr Robin Moss was invited to give a report on the financial management of the Parish Council.

Cllr Butcher started by saying that the precept this year will remain the same as the last couple of years.

Cllr Moss arrived at 7:20pm.

Cllr Moss advised that finances are in a good position. At the beginning of the year the reserve was £58,467 and is looking to be £57,826 by the end of the year. This is a working balance we have in case of emergencies.

There is the risk of a loss of revenue in 2016. The Parish Support Grant of £19,660 is likely to be lost.

Most parishes spend a lot on allotments but Westfield has passed the running of the allotments to the people that use them and they are doing a good job of looking after them and the finances. The rent for lease of the allotments is put back into maintenance of the site, for example in the purchase of a noticeboard.

## **5. A Neighbourhood Plan for Westfield**

Unfortunately Julie O'Rourke of BANES was unable to attend the meeting to give a presentation.

## **6. The Big Local**

Cllr Robin Moss, Chair of the Big Local Steering Group gave an update on the work of this group.

Around 5-6 years ago the £1m from the National Lottery was confirmed as available to the community and has just been confirmed. The money will be received in installments over the next five years. This has and will be used to encourage positive ideas from the local community via projects like the Dragon's Den.

## **7. Bath and North East Somerset Councillor's report**

Cllr Moss gave report that Westfield Cllrs are working to remind BaNES that money shouldn't all be spent in Bath, ignoring outside parishes. The Ward Councillors are working hard to prevent Westfield from becoming a dormitory town.

Bath is an international tourist destination and tourists should be encouraged to visit other areas of BaNES.

The future for BaNES is likely to become difficult due to Central Government cuts – there will be £16.5 m coming off their budget next year. Parish needs to be aware that Cooperatives and Social enterprises can run some things themselves (eg Allotments) and Council doesn't have to do everything.

## **8. Questions from the Public**

### **8.1 Is Westfield at saturation?**

There is too much building going on in the parish and no new playing fields. Cllr Wallbridge said that in the last few weeks the Council has identified green areas to be protected and that as far as we were aware there are no plans for more green space. We need to get together with other local parishes to protect our green space. Cllr Moss said that we are trying to make good use of the green space that we have

### **8.2 Can we have lights on the pathway from Nightingale Way down the pit path?**

Cllr Fuller said that this was a BaNES responsibility and Council would look into it.

**ACTION:** contact Highways about lights on Nightingale Way

### **8.3 What's happening with the s106 money for all the new building?**

Cllr Moss advised that there is a list and directory of what 106 money is available. He has found some available that we didn't know about. Cllr Moss is happy to make this document public. It will be put on the Council website.

**ACTION:** s106 listing to be put on the Parish Council website

### **8.4 We are being told that the properties that are being built in the parish are for local people, but there doesn't appear to be any evidence of this.**

Cllr Fuller said that he understood people's frustration but Council have been told that the definition of 'local' is those that are from within a ten mile radius.

It was suggested that he thought Curo was becoming more a business than a social housing enterprise eg they are credit rating potential residents, which goes against their ethos.

One member of the public said that he had been told by Linden Homes that 'local' meant 22 mile radius.

There is a current housing shortage in Bath of 2,000 people and in Bristol of 7,000.

### **8.5 Parking on Waterside Road**

Cllr Fuller advised that he has spoken to Traffic Management about having some yellow lines to discourage people parking. However we need to be wary of extending double yellow lines too far as no one will be able to park.

#### **8.6 Traffic lights on junction with Fosseway and Cobbler's Way are a nuisance**

Cllr Fuller said that the builders' parking of vans on the side of the road in Cobbler's Way is causing the lights to trip and that it should settle when construction has finished.

#### **8.7 Nightingale estate parking**

At school start/finish it is impossible to get in or out of the estate at the moment, let alone what it will be like with another 118 homes. Parking by 6<sup>th</sup> formers is bad – sometimes parking across driveways. Parents collecting children ignore yellow lines.

Cllr Fuller said that Council will contact school.

**ACTION:** contact Norton Hill school about irresponsible parking.  
Contact Highways / Police about parking on double yellow lines.

#### **8.8 The 20mph speed limit is frustrating**

Cllr Fuller wanted to make it clear that Council did not agree to the limit. The response to the consultation sent to the people was yes.

#### **8.9 Who did the snooker room on Fosseway belong to before it was demolished and the land built on?**

Cllr Moss advised that on the land registry it had private ownership – not the Miners' Trust as people thought. Council is making sure that Westhill Club doesn't suffer a similar fate and clarifying that it is Trust land and will remain so.

### **9. Summing up and closure of the meeting**

Cllr Fuller advised that anyone that is interested in attending a Council meeting is welcome to do so. He thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

A member of the public said that he would like to thank all the Councillors for all their hard work.

The meeting closed at 8pm.