

MINUTES OF BANWELL PARISH ASSEMBLY

HELD ON MONDAY 23rd APRIL 2018 AT BANWELL VILLAGE HALL

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Paul Harding (Vice-Chairman of Banwell Parish Council).

Present: 19 members of the public, 7 Parish Councillors, District Councillor Ann Harley and the minutes were taken by the Clerk Liz Shayler.

1. **APOLOGIES** (Agenda item 1)

Apologies were received from Parish Councillors Paul Bateman, Jim Weston &, District Cllr Jerry O'Brien.

2. **MINUTES OF LAST PARISH ASSEMBLY** (Agenda item 2)

The minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 19th May 2017 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Cllr Harding.

3. **BANWELL PARISH COUNCIL – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** (Agenda item 3)

The Vice Chairman, Paul Harding, gave the following report;

Good evening ladies, gentlemen & Councillors. Welcome to Banwell Parish Assembly for 2018.

Unfortunately, our Chairman Jim offers his apologies and is unable to make tonight, so you have me instead. How he could choose a hot and sunny Spain over a blustery and soggy Banwell and the cute and cuddly Layla I do not know. I know where I would rather be. In case you are wondering - Layla is a new born lamb Liz is looking after whilst Jim is away, mind you it was BBQ weather on Saturday so

This time last year Jim and Jane were looking forward to representing the people of Banwell at a Queens garden party. We have seen the photographs and he does scrub up well. If you want to see any of the pictures I am sure Liz can put some on the web site.

It has been a busy year for the Parish Council. This last year we have lost three Councillors, Mike Poole, Jo Arnold and Angela Haden. May I offer our thanks to them for their contribution to the Parish. As three left, we welcomed Maggie McCarthy and Phil Adams. We still have three councillor vacancies. If you are interested in becoming a councillor, get in quick and speak to Liz as they really are queuing out of the door to join us. If you miss out, there will be elections in May 2019.

What has happened then:

1. Firstly - We got the lights to work on the Christmas tree. We will do better this year as we now have four bags of big baubles to go on it.
2. We didn't get the Banwell Action Club Christmas display this year, but I am hopeful that Pete, ably assisted by some new volunteers, will put on a grand display this year.

3. Banwell Action Club put on the Duck Race and for those of us who went, what a fabulous event the Banwell Olympics turned out to be. Both events raised funds for local charities, and it was sunny, do we remember the sun?
4. Not forgetting Banwell Football Club also put on a fun day last July.
5. The long saga of the cemetery wall has been solved and the graves restored.
6. We have a new web site and there is provision for community pages for those with no web site. If you would like a page which you can edit and have control over – speak to Liz.
7. We also have a Facebook page – slowly but surely we are dragging the Parish Council into the 21st century. If you have any suggestions as to how we can reach more in the community – yet again speak to Liz.
8. Liz has been confirmed as our clerk – what a gem – I can say no more.
9. In June we supported the Big Community Picnic. This year it will be on 2nd June on The Rec. Come and join your community for games and a chance to socialise, and yes, alcohol is allowed (in moderation of course).
10. On 14th April seventeen of us took part in the Banwell Spring Clean, weeding and litter picking. More would have attended but were prevented by being involved in BAD and other community events.
11. We have instigated a number of initiatives to reduce speeding in the village. We have provided road facing properties with wheelie bin stickers, restarted the community speed watch team, and most importantly purchased a portable speed detection sign, which is currently on Castle Hill. I don't have any figures yet, but you may be interested to learn that last year when we borrowed one, in the first two weeks of the portable sign being deployed on Knightcott Road, 27,000, and yes I did say 27,000, drivers have been noted as exceeding the speed limit.
12. We have welcomed Katharines Village Coffee Shop and Stanley's Fish Bar into the heart of the village., along with White Dove Photography and The Baby Company.
13. Banwell in Bloom has excelled again with the floral displays in the village.
14. The Kathleen Jones Trust has obtained planning permission for a new building to replace the Scout hut. What a wonderful gift, and we will be working with all parties to assist in this project.
15. BAD put on a show over the weekend – an Evening of One Act Comedies – it was fab. If you didn't get to go, I recommend you go to the next one.
16. We continue to fund and support Banwell Youth Club. As always, new members are welcome.
17. During the year we have made grants over and above the £10,000 we had budgeted for to local charities and groups. We may not be able to be so generous this year for reasons I will go into shortly.
18. This year sees the introduction of The Banwell Volunteer Award. This award is in recognition of service to our community. Banwell is a community not just a traffic jam. A good slogan for a car bumper sticker. Anyway, there were many applications and we had great difficulty in making our choice. I will announce the winner in a short while – I haven't finished my speech yet, and if we don't save the best to last, you will all go home.

Moving on - there are many organisations within the village and I have only mentioned a few. We have Banwell Buddies, Banwell Bowling Club, Banwell Bell Ringers, Twinning Society, Gardening Club, Scouting, Guides, Bone Caves, Guides, Brownies, Archaeological Society, Banwell Volunteer Fire Brigade, WI, Art Group, New Creation, Allotment Society and the British Legion to mention a few more. If I have forgotten any one, which I am sure I have, then I apologise. These organisations need you to support them.

The Parish Assembly is an opportunity for our organisations to say what they have achieved so you will hear from some shortly. I offer my thanks to these organisations and hope they grow and continue to prosper in the next year.

Similarly, no doubt there are other businesses who have started or expanded in the last year. We support you and hope you also prosper in the next year.

After spending a few hours with Maggie litter picking, I am ignorant of the vast archaeological history of Banwell, so my wife and I will be joining the Archaeological Society to learn more, and hopefully a dig.

On the subject of Banwell history, I knew about the mosaics, but I only recently learned of the Wint Hill Bowl – one of the finest Roman Glass Bowls found in the Country right here in Banwell. It is on display at the Ashmolean Museum – now on my list to visit. Banwell is an ancient village, of significant archaeological importance to the region, steeped in history, not just a traffic jam – a bit long for a bumper sticker that one.

That's the good points over.

Over the last year we have seen speculative planning applications for developments in Banwell. Dr Taylors Field will have 44 houses – appropriately named Quantock Heights – I shall say no more on the title.

There is a pre-application for 63 houses on Wolverhill Road – the Malvern Marshes perhaps, and further approaches to North Somerset Council for a development off William Daws Close – the Himalayan Lowlands may be. NSC have rejected 35 houses at Boulters, and of course in 2016 Paul, Phil and Liz assisted by many residents, helped NSC at the planning appeal which Gladmans appeal being rejected. The good news here is NSC are confident they have met their five-year plan, so hopefully, Banwell will be protected from speculative developments until the road issue, I almost said bypass there, is resolved.

Speaking of bypass, most are aware that reluctantly Banwell Parish Council supported the West of England Joint Spatial Strategy which, if fully implemented, will see a new Junction 21A and 1,900 new Banwell garden village. A bit misleading perhaps as the village of Banwell has about 1,300 homes, however, if all goes to plan, Banwell will get its bypass. The funding application has passed its first stage, and the so we shall wait and see. If it happens, we will be having a street party on it, not only to celebrate its opening, but the commemorate the 100th anniversary of it being proposed. Commemorative mugs and tea towels will be provided by the Parish Council.

One of the biggest challenges we face is the withdrawal of non-mandatory services by North Somerset Council. We have agreed to pay for a lollipop crossing (still waiting for one to be recruited), we are cutting Gollings lane, weed spraying, paying for sign posts, and potentially the most expensive of all, is NSC withdrawing from Banwell Children's Centre. This is potentially going to place significant financial pressures on the Parish Council.

We are working with NSC and I am confident that we will continue to provide support to children and vulnerable families from the centre.

Every cloud has a silver lining, and although in my books that means its still cloudy, this is a golden opportunity to fully utilise this building for the community that it should be serving. Contrary to popular belief, the building will not be closing. Banwell Parish Council own this

building; therefore, you own it. Any reasonable suggestions for its continued use will be considered. Guess who you should speak to.

It's not just NSC, following the withdrawal of the A2 (delayed to July I believe), we are soon to be left with the 126, that's one bus an hour, which whilst Wells is a lovely place, it does not go to Bristol. This is not acceptable, and we will support any pressure group to provide adequate, affordable public transport.

Finally, at last I hear, 2018 marks the centenary of the end of the First World War. In conjunction with the Royal British Legion and local groups, we are honouring our fallen by lighting a Battles Over beacon on the hill on the 11th November. This will be accompanied by events in the village. Watch this space for further information.

I shall hand you over to Liz to talk about our finances in a moment, and then the village organisations can have their say, prior to the awarding of the Community Volunteer of the Year Award.

As I finish, you are no doubt surprised that I have managed to avoid mentioning dog bins that Parish Councils are famed for constantly talking about, but I am not going to. All I have left to say is thank you for attending, and don't forget, you are cordially invited to partake of cheese and wine at the end of the evening.

4. **FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE 2017/18 FINANCIAL YEAR** (Agenda item 4)

The Clerk presented the statement of accounts for the Parish Council for the last financial year and highlighted the healthy level of reserves, including the earmarked reserve for an extension to the cemetery. She reported that there was 2.3% increase in the parish precept for 2018/19 due to the continued annual reduction of North Somerset's Council Tax support Grant.

The Clerk invited the Assembly to seek clarification of any issues. There were no queries raised.

5. **NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL – WARD COUNCILLORS' REPORT** (Agenda item 5)

Cllr Harley gave the Ward Councillors report, which is available from the Clerk upon request.

6. **AVON & SOMERSET CONSTABULARY** (Agenda item 6)

No police were present, but a report was read on their behalf which is available from the Clerk upon request.

7. **VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD** (Agenda item 7)

Cllr Harding introduced the award explaining it was the first year the Parish Council had made such an award. This year there had been a lot of nominations and it had been difficult to choose. He was therefore pleased to announce it had been awarded to two people;

Nancy Hobbs was awarded it for

Kath Edwards was awarded it for

8. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** (Agenda item 8)

No questions were asked.

9. **REPORTS BY VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS** (Agenda item 9)

Reports were presented by the following in respect of the work of village organisations over the past year.

1st Banwell Scouts* – Brian Redden

Banwell School* – Claire Pocock & Malcolm Davey

Banwell Youth Club* – Mike Jordan

Banwell Caves Heritage Group* – John Haynes

New Creation Churches* – Denis Cruze

Banwell Bowls Club – Alan Vickery

Banwell Amateur Dramatics* – Jacki Parkinson

Banwell Royal British Legion* – Tom Couch

Banwell Archaeological Society* – Steve Davies

Banwell Bell Ringers* – Steve Davies

Banwell Gardening Club* – Steve Parkinson

Banwell Allotment Society* – Jerry Corfield

Banwell WI* – read by Paul Harding on behalf of Lara Roberts

Banwell Action Club – Paul Harding

(*Copies of these written reports are held by Banwell Parish Council and may be inspected by making application to the Parish Clerk)

10. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF ELECTORS** – Monday 22nd April 2019

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.00 p.m. and thanked all those who had attended.

..... Chairman

..... Date