

Parish News Working Group Notes

Thursday, 22nd August 2024 at 6.00pm - Youth Club

Attendees: Cllr Jo Gower-Crane (Chairman) Cllr ID Clarke and Cllr Mary Sheppard. Gill Williams and Les Masters

1. To receive apologies for absence.
 - No absences.
2. To receive members' declarations of interest on any agenda item.
 - No declarations of interest.
3. Parish News Update notes – February 2024. These are attached for information only.
 - Noted
 - A brief review of the previous editions was undertaken
 - A request to number the pages
 - There was no consensus on what the Parish News should contain, nor what would make an acceptable article.
 - Any edition should be mindful of the fact that public money is being used to create the Parish News, and that the precept has been increasing over the years.
 - The current Parish News cost £1.6K a year (approx. 1% of last year's £145K budget) compared to previous cost of £4K (£6K minus £2K advertising income).
 - A clear lead by full council is needed as to the purpose, content and resourcing of the Parish News.
4. To consider the issue of paid for advertisements within future editions of Parish News. Any decision in this respect is reserved to the full Parish Council and the earliest any recommendation(s) could be considered would be the Parish Council meeting on 9th September 2024.
 - If adverts are to be included, who will be asked to pay, and who will be advertised for free, needs to be clearly defined, e.g. businesses, charities, community groups, advertorials, etc. The definition of 'business' will need to be clearly defined
 - If only local businesses are to be included in the Parish News, what defines 'local'? E.g. The business operates within/from the parish, or has offered/undertaken services within the parish for many years but is based outside, or has links/familial ties to the parish, etc.
 - It should be clear that inclusion of adverts in the council's newsletter doesn't automatically imply that the parish council has verified it as a 'Trusted' business
 - The Working Group attendees stated that they do not wish to undertake any potential role of 'roving reporter' for articles; only one offered to potentially take on the role to search for and chase up 'advertising'. The effect on the

- clerk's time to process invoices, and potentially chase up payment, along with the associated cost for this, would need to be considered.
- If adverts are included how many pages of the Parish News will they take up? This depends in part whether the adverts need to cover the whole cost of the Parish News.
- **Recommendations: That full council reviews the purpose, content and resourcing of future editions of the Parish News and to consider the following:**

i) BPC's Parish News only containing BPC information

ii) BPC's Parish News containing BPC information and events (as currently produced)

iii) as currently produced but include resident articles (the resourcing of this, and a clear indication of what is an acceptable article is required)

iv) as currently produced but include advertisements (the resourcing of this would need to be agreed, along with the additional time needed for the clerk to process invoices, and a clear definition of 'business' and 'local', and what adverts would be included for free)

v) alternative solutions (including ceasing the Parish News as a Bleadon Parish Council production and leaving it to private 'independent' editor to make commercially viable).

vi) consider renaming the Parish News to reflect council ownership, editorial, financing and production

5. To review printing arrangements and costs.

- Printing arrangements and costs can not be considered until item 4 has been resolved by full council. Following a full council decision, an annual review of size, colour, format, content, processes, etc. can be undertaken and costed for subsequent full council decision.

6. Date of next meeting and note any suggested agenda items (if required).

- To be arranged following full council decision, to be arranged after 1st October.