

Present		Apologies
Vikki Slade (VS) Chair	Wendy Perry (WP)	Louise Dalrymple (LD)
Chris Walton (CW) Vice Chair	John Lodge (JL)	David Williams (DW)
Richard Hudson (RH) Treasurer	Allan Jeans (AJ)	Colin Merrett (CM)
Chris Burt (CB) Secretary		

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1	<p>Minutes of the last Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting were accepted and approved.</p> <p>Proposed: VS Seconded: RH Vote: Unanimous</p>	
2	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>There were no matters arising</p>	
3	<p>Action Log Review</p> <p>Open actions were reviewed and status/progress updates applied.</p>	
4	<p>Secretary's Report</p>	
4.1	<p>PAT Testing</p> <p>Sharlands Hall had recently sent a request for all portable appliances used on the premises to be subjected to testing. CB confirmed the Committee was not affected.</p>	
4.2	<p>2024 Committee Meeting Dates</p> <p>CB asked that as several bi-monthly Committee meetings this year had clashed with those of BCP Council resulting in the Chair's absence, whether it was appropriate to change from the first Tuesday to an alternative day.</p> <p>After discussion and reference to the Chair's council diary it was accepted to change to the second Tuesday of each relevant month with the exception of January which due to various commitments was agreed as the 16th.</p> <p>Action: Arrange agreed dates with Sharlands Hall Booking Secretary</p>	
4.3	<p>Future of BNW Newsletter</p> <p>CB said that the Watch is finding it difficult to sustain Newsletter deliveries to all members of the Watch due to losing volunteers for various reasons such as ill health, moving away. Although both VS and WP regularly call for volunteers in the</p>	<p>CB 1123/01</p>

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Newsletter and, in some cases, personal contact, but all had been in vain. The result was that some existing volunteers were overloaded – CB was delivering to 50 properties alone – and/or deliveries were not made to some roads at all. CB had prior to the meeting circulated a paper detailing the issue and proposing possible solutions which included:

- reducing the newsletter frequency to quarterly
- persuading members to adopt the e-mail newsletter
- publishing the newsletter only on the Website and Facebook.
- resurrecting the army of volunteers that had delivered the newsletter during the pandemic.

He had set out the pros and cons, benefits and disbenefits of each and although the intention was to consider the matter tonight it was deferred owing to the absence of CM, the Editor.

VS considered the ‘volunteer army’ a non-starter as it was a one-off because people had volunteered solely as a way to cope with lockdown by getting out and doing something.

This was part of a wider issue involving what direction BNW needed to go in the future. Questions such as what outcomes did the Watch want to see? What does its success look like? And should it be holding more public meetings and reaching out to the Community as a whole? Do we need to look at what other Watches do? BNW currently has no connectivity with other Watches. BNW needed to think carefully about its own priorities.

VS believed the newsletter is still a trusted source of information and advice for residents, but given the lower number of incidents there is a question about how much of it is time sensitive. She found the crime numbers reassuring, but she knew some found them frustrating and so it is worth a conversation about the benefit of a monthly publication if it is about data that is already 3 months old. From the emails VS sees, there is usually more than enough to fill each newsletter so dropping it to quarterly might just make this worse. However, if BNW’s income reduction makes a monthly newsletter less affordable a reduction is worth thinking about.

VS remained committed to BNW as a force for good, and a force for reassurance but she is mindful that now it is not operating such a proactive recruitment policy, or having its Contacts reaching out to their neighbours in the way that predecessors did, the organisation is likely to shrink back. If Broadstone ever gets a Town Council it may be that some of the work the Watch does will be scooped up into a sub-committee or those who are not coming forward to help now, present themselves because the civic centre of Broadstone is opening up. VS does think BNW needs to seriously consider how it moves forward.

The Committee did spend some time last year looking at a different model in terms of the purpose of the Watch.

Subject to Committee Officers submitting brief reports the January meeting would be reserved for a full discussion on a future business model for the Watch.

Action: Arrange for bulk of January meeting agenda to allow for a full discussion on how the Watch moves forward Reports

**CB
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4.4

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CW asked that Committee Officers' reports in future be sent to all Committee members prior to meetings. This was agreed unanimously.

Action: Officers reports to be circulated to all Committee members prior to meetings

**Committee's
1123/03**

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Chairman's Report

5.1

Commitments

VS started by thanking those members of the Committee who have worked hard over the last few months to progress a number of areas of work. Although the Watch has not been able to meet since the summer, the work that takes place every month to produce the newsletter and to keep the organisation running is recognised and valued.

She was sorry that her own commitments have limited her scope of involvement during this time, but she has been using her wider roles to engage with the police on more strategic matters and engaging through the Poole Team on matters relating to the police and anti-social behaviour.

The Chairman's commitments have included a conference on Keeping Young People Safe (focusing on domestic abuse, county lines, mental health and knife crime), boosting the Bournemouth Town Team, considering the issues around the late-night economy, Travel Safety, the new PSPO for our beaches and open spaces, parking and speeding matters, the serious violence duty and violence against women and girls. Thankfully, Broadstone comes up very rarely indeed on any of these issues.

5.2

Crime and Policing in Broadstone

With an average monthly reported crime of 30 – down from 34 last year and looking at the similar period in 2021 Broadstone was at 37. Analysis of a random sample of other months, this does not look like a one-off and while VS realises that some crimes are not recorded (cyber/fraud) through the Dorset Police system and some people choose not to report crime this must be welcomed and The Watch must continue to reassure our residents that Broadstone is a very safe place to live.

It does make it quite difficult though to make the case that some people want – ie to have a more visible level of policing in the community and unless something dramatic changes (and she would not want this to be the case) she thinks everyone should come to terms with the fact that policing in Broadstone will remain response based. This was reinforced by the report that CW kindly shared following his attendance at the Police Advice Surgery earlier this month.

The sort of issues that come up in Broadstone and exercise residents score very low on 'threat-risk-harm' and simply will not get a response from the police.

5.3

Shoplifting

One area that is definitely on the increase is shoplifting, but this is not within the remit of the Neighbourhood Watch. Going back as long as VS can remember, the traditional Neighbourhood Watch model has been focused on the residential model,

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Shop Watch was considered as part of the Chamber of Trade in the very early days of this century and ruled as not viable as there would be costs for those businesses wanting to be involved and limited police response.

It is now normal practice for businesses to have CCTV within their shops – it will reduce their insurance costs, or sometimes be a requirement of cover – and there are good processes in place for business to use this to report and recover goods. From the discussions she has had, many of those businesses do not think it is a good use of their time to complete paperwork and go through the reporting process, but in her view that is their responsibility.

The police require evidence and if businesses cannot commit their time to follow procedure, they cannot expect organisations like BNW to do this for them. It is now normal for witnesses and victims of crime to prepare much of their statement and have the final stages supported by the PCSI's or Victim Support. Again, if people want to return to a Police Constable sitting over a cup of tea writing long reports then as individuals they probably need to expect to pay a lot more for the service. VS would wager that most people would not think it unreasonable to be more proactive and that the capacity of police could probably be best served by focusing on those who are more vulnerable.

Most of the shoplifting that is taking place is being done by the same people, the CCTV collected is often used to prosecute dozens or even scores of offences and in the same way that the Watch asks householders to send in evidence to help form a pattern it is incumbent on businesses and retailers to do the same. The police have confirmed that they will attend shop thefts, but again its based on threat-risk-harm so they are unlikely to do for a low value, non violent theft than for an aggravated incident. If our businesses in Broadstone wish to set up a shop watch or other event, then VS considers it is incumbent on the Broadstone Business Group to lead on this, not BNW.

5.4

Parking in Tudor Road

Complaint received about two Motorhomes particularly that are always there of which one is causing a traffic hazard. Both are taxed and MOT'd although the smaller vehicle is an eyesore and acts as a dumping area for the owner. The complainant queried the parking rules and residents parking permits as it does appear Tudor Road does have a scheme for certain properties according to the BCP website.

VS said she would check regarding parking permits and/or schemes with the relevant BCP department.

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Action: To check the existence of parking permits/schemes in Tudor Road.

6.1

Treasurer's Report

Accounts

BNW's accounts for the eight months ended 30th November 2023 show that members have donated £5,343 towards the Watch's expenses, an increase of almost 50% on full year receipts of £3,617 in 2019, the last year in which BNW collected funds. The main driver behind this result has been the increase in the requested donation from £1 to £2. The make-up of BNW's expenditure remains the same, in that

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6.2

the cost of producing the monthly newsletter is by far the biggest expense; at £1,048 for the eight months, it was 85% of total administrative expenses of £1,234. Taking into account donations income, expenses and a donation of £50 to the Royal British Legion, the surplus for the period was £4,059.

Donations

The success of the donations campaign this summer has restored BNW's finances, after three years of decline: the Watch has £6,713 in its bank account at the end of November, compared with £2,614 at its financial year end of 31st March 2023. BNW now has roughly three years' administrative expenses in reserve, which represents a strong financial position.

This year, members had the option of paying a donation directly to BNW's bank account, which brought in £1,092, 20% of the total. Collections by Coordinators and Contacts remained the main source of income, at £4,251, 80% of the total. All supporters of BNW are grateful for these efforts.

6.3

However, a major downside this year, in contrast to previous years, is that for a variety of reasons, a significant number of Coordinators and Contacts have declined to collect donations, or have collected less than the amount expected from their patch. In some cases, a disinclination to collect donations has been the prompt for resignation from post. As a consequence of this trend, RH estimates that, at the very least, 750 members (22% of a total of about 3,400) have not made a donation to BNW this year, which has resulted in an opportunity income loss to BNW of c. £1,500. Generally speaking, it's not that these members are unwilling to donate £2; nobody has knocked on the door to ask them for the money.

Cancellation of Membership

6.4

There is no case for cancelling these memberships or stopping their newsletter. The rescinding of 'unpaid' memberships (with subsequent reinstatement if payment is made the following year) would involve a lot administrative work. Also, cancelling unpaid memberships would contravene the policy set by the national body for Neighbourhood Watches, to the effect that payment should not be a condition of Watch membership.

The Future

The outlook for BNW's finances is mixed. The income from member donations this summer bodes well for future campaigns. Conversely, reluctance to collect donations on the part of some Coordinators and Contacts is probably a trend that is more likely to accelerate than go into reverse, with the consequence of diminishing returns from future campaigns, and the continuing disparity of a large rump of 'unpaid' members.

In light of the above, The Committee have to take even more care in the management of BNW's finances. In this context, RH has three recommendations for the Committee's consideration:

- BNW should not conduct a donations campaign in 2024. Given its very adequate bank balance and reserves, this would risk forfeiting the goodwill of members, Coordinators and Contacts. Any members wanting to make a

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donation could still do so by means of a direct payment to BNW's bank account.

- As general policy, BNW should discontinue making any donations in support of Community bodies or initiatives. Any exception to this rule would have to be very much a special case, and very directly related to the prevention and detection of crime and anti social behaviour in Broadstone.
- At a future meeting, the Committee should review the Newsletter's content, frequency of publication and means of distribution, to ensure there is sound strategic justification for a cost that represents roughly 85% of BNW's administrative expenses. CB's suggested discussion points would provide a good basis for such a review.

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7.1

Membership Officer's Report

Numbers

7.2

BNW has gained a few new members (mainly when houses have changed hands) and lost others..

Co-ordinators and Contacts

Seven new Coordinator/Contacts and four new Contacts have been appointed since April. One group has been split between 2 of the new Coordinators. In addition six Contacts have taken on extra deliveries. As a result some groups are now very large (eg 40 in Yellow 5).

7.3

There are still vacancies in West Way, Lytchett Drive and Portmore Close. The Coordinator/Contact in Green 3 (68 households) has said that he will not continue into next year and is currently trying to find someone who will take over his role. WP would normally expect to have up to six resignations in a year which are due to house moves and infirmity and has always managed to fill them. There is no doubt that, despite efforts to make things less onerous, asking people to collect subscriptions has precipitated resignations.

Newsletter

As regards the ongoing question of the future of BNW's monthly Newsletter (Item 4.3) WP has received, interestingly, comments like "I put it straight into recycling." And, "I just have a quick glance and then throw it away."

7.4

WP suspects this reflects the fact that people have busy lives and tend to just want information in "bite size" form nowadays. She wonders if there would be more impact if the paper Newsletter only came out every other month (could BNW possibly put a brief version online in the alternate month?) The OurWatch monthly newsletter is freely available online and if people search for 'Neighbourhood Watch' then that's what they find. It's colourful and informative - but not local, of course.

E-Mail Membership

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Email numbers are rising steadily (394), but WP appreciates that not everyone has access to the internet and so suggests that as the Watch has moved away from a subscription model it could make paper copies freely available, like The Link, at central locations eg Library, Broadway newsagents and eateries.

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Editor's Report

Newsletters

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These have continued to be produced on time each month. CM agrees that the Committee really need to review the Newsletter's future content, frequency and medium.

Police Surgery

CW attended the 4 November event in the company of PCSO Pete Raymond who was agreeable to BNW's presence. The idea was

- to explore if it would be beneficial from the point of view of being useful to the public
- whether it would be a useful method of developing a better contact between ordinary Committee members and Police.

An obvious problem is that without proper briefing and appropriate seating arrangements the ever-helpful Library staff noticing people waiting automatically assumed, on seeing a BNW person talking to the PCSO, that he was engaged and made customers wait. BCP councillors were holding a surgery simultaneously and CW suggests the Police surgery operates in the same way to overcome this problem.

As regards better contact there are inherent difficulties due to:

- stretched police resources that now include Wildlife/Harbour policing
- neighbourhood policing model changing away from a regular beat presence
- police directed to trouble hotspots as identified by trend spotting built up from reported crimes
- 999 calls scored on a Threat/Risk/Harm basis.
- Bournemouth town centre scoring higher than Broadstone Broadway

Consequently, it is understandable police no longer have the time to attend BNW Committee meetings.

The PCSO did not consider even holding Committee meetings at the Police Station would provide BNW with better access.

Only three customers were received during the surgery's two hours with only the one customer, who complained about parked cars blocking his drive, was relevant to BNW. However, the Watch would probably not engage if it is principally involved with more serious crime reduction. The police would give the matter a low grading as long as the complainant could exit in the event of a medical emergency.

CW recommends trying it again with a different Committee member to see if it is thought worth spending the time on.

Action: Liaise with PCSO Pete Raymond to ascertain date of next surgery

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10.1

Media Officer's Report

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10.2

Separate Telephone

The purchase of a separate phone to be passed around was discussed and the Committee agreed instead to adopt JL's personal Skype number (see Action Log 0723/05)

Social Media

Social Media continues to be useful in communicating with the members. Numbers remain around the 650, however, although people are not followers JL is seeing more interaction with posts.

10.3

The Email continues to work as does the use of Skype for communications, but the Website is proving to be a problem due to size allocated to BNW owing to its present package which will need discussion at the next meeting. JL's paper dated 13 November circulated to Committee refers.

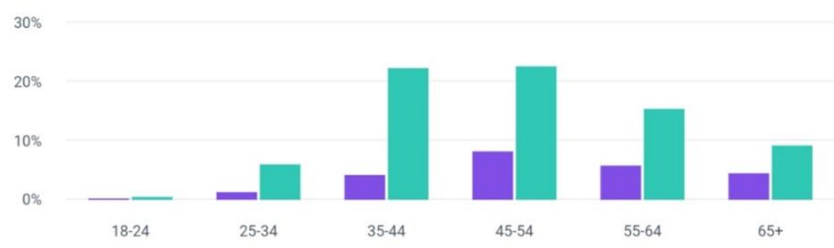
Action: Include Media Review Way Forward on January Agenda

Stats

BNW's biggest audience on Facebook continues to be Females at 75% with Males still at 24%, but it should be noted that BNW's demographic is now across the complete age spectrum something JL needs to develop. Bar graph below.

Age and gender

Men 24.10%
Women 75.90%



10.4

The 18-24 audience popped up for the first time, never having featured previously.

Continuity

JL personally believes the Committee needs to look at BNW's continuity plans in the event of people leaving/loss of data etc, These should cover aspects such as:

- what happens in JL's absence
- what data etc does the Committee want people to see
- who does the Committee want to see it
- is a repository (ie BNW's own cloud required)
- only one system in place that all the Committee could learn and use.

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JL is happy to take the lead on this subject.

**CB
1123/06**

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AOB

There were no other items of business.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.50 hours

Date of Next Meeting:

16th January 2024

Minutes taken by:

Chris Burt

Minutes issued on:

5th December 2023