

BROUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 13th APRIL 2023

Present: Cllr E James (Chairman), Cllr G Elliott (Vice Chairman), Cllr J Hodgson (Vice Chairman), Cllr J Dumper, Cllr P Boulton, Cllr J Mann, Cllr B Keane, Cllr K McAlister, Cllr B Robson & Cllr J Morrison.

In attendance: Heather Bourner-Clerk
HCC David Drew
TVBC Alison Johnston
PCSO Spiros Mouzakitis
12 Members of public

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence

1) There were no apologies for absence.

2) Annual report from Chairman & Vice Chairman.

Cllr James addressed the meeting his report follows-

A warm welcome to Parishioners, Representatives of the Village School, the Broughton Charities, the police and Councillors including our Borough and County Councillor.

An annual Parish assembly is an opportunity for the Parish to hear from groups that have impact on our local community, to be updated on the last year and hear of potential plans moving forward, I'm sure all our speakers are happy to take questions from those present once they have finished presenting.

We are very lucky over the last term of 4 years to have had 6 new Councillors serving the Broughton giving the Council fresh new eyes, ears and voices. In the fourth coming election for the Parish to be held in the first week of May it has been confirmed that it is an uncontested election, we will have another new Councillor joining in May and a further position to be co-opted as and when the Council agrees.

Your Parish Council has been busy as ever helping the community behind the scenes to protect and enhance our lovely village, we have responsibility to oversee and look after, Parish Footpaths and Right of ways, Fripps Acre, the Centenary Garden, The Cemetery, Broughton Allotments, The Well House, street lights and Roads and Highways to a certain degree. We also have responsibility over the Village Hall and the Sports field, with regards to the latter two in this fantastic community we have a wonderful Village Hall committee who oversee the Hall and the newly formed Broughton Sports field Committee who look after the field and Pavilion, the Council's thanks goes out to both committees who give up their time to look after them.

We thank the Village Hall for working towards a community electric car charging facility for the community, hopefully soon to be installed and the enhanced CCTV at the front of the Hall to aid their security and that of the Village.

I will hand over to the Vice Chair to update the community on the progress of the potential New Pavilion amongst other matters when I have finished.

Every year we review and agree our standing orders, financial regulations, codes of conduct and our audited accounts which are available to view on our website. These are all prepared and advised on by our brilliant Clerk and Financial officer, along with pretty much everything else we do, The Council would like to thank Heather for her expert advice over the year and all her hard work, we would be lost without her.

This year the council decided to conduct, with assistance from Test Valley Borough Council a Housing needs survey in the community the results are on our website, with the potential of creating a Neighbourhood Plan, this work has started with the help of Councillors and members of the community.

A Neighbourhood Plan gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new

homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs and where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area, it is strongly advised, and the one document that gives the community a strong say on potential and further development with the planning Department. We held an open meeting in the community on the matter, it was unanimously agreed by all those present that we should proceed with a neighbourhood plan.

Please look out for updates as development of the plan progresses, this is in the very capable hands of Cllr Mann, our thanks to him.

On advice from a parishioner the two vintage signs in the Village have been reconditioned, our thanks go to the member of the public that repainted one of them.

The Village celebrated the Late Queen's Jubilee in classic Broughton style, over 900 people joined the village on the High St for a very memorable 'Tea Party'. Members of the community and Village Hall committee organised a tremendous event, aided by the Parish Council, kind donations came from our Borough and County Council to help the organisation, I'm sure the community is looking forward to King Charles the 3rd's coronation. An event is being organised by the Village Hall Committee.

Over the last year The Parish Council and members of the community have formed BERG (Broughton emergency response Group). A plan and procedures are being worked on. We were successful in applying for a £20,000 grant from SEN energy supplier, this will enable us to purchase emergency equipment when needed in the community, a large generator has recently been purchased and installed at the Village Hall enabling it to act as a stand-alone hub in the event of a major power outage, for the community to keep warm, charge electrics and also has the benefit of keeping the Broughton Community Shop freezers and fridges going. We have just obtained an emergency telephone number for BERG and this and more information will soon be published to the Village, thanks to Cllr Morrison for working so hard on this.

The Council has met with a representative of the Broughton Doctors surgery and are happy for them to create a walk-through path between the School Lane carpark and the surgery carpark, we await the progress they make on this and to agree the final location.

In September we requested the possibility of a grant to aid with the creation of a warm hub in the Village Hall in the winter due to the sharp rise of energy costs, Test Valley Borough Council responded with financial help as well as a Parishioner, we would like to thank them both for their assistance. The warm hub headed up by Cllr McAllister was opened across January and February, although its use was limited, we were pleased with the ability to offer this service. Thank you to all those from the Village that offered their time to manage the facility.

On-going repairs are taking place in the playground and we thank Cllr Dumper for the time he has put into this project.

Through the course of the year the Council are kindly asked by the Planning Authority to comment as a consultant on all planning applications in the Parish. There have been many, as ever. It's important the community understand we are only asked to comment as a consultant and the Parish Council have no control over the final decision.

In October we commented on a Planning application for an extension to the solar farm at Gander Down. We requested if any community benefit might be available for the Broughton, the applicant has confirmed that after planning is granted and construction, the community will receive £15,000.

The Chair was concerned that we have been over charged for the cemetery rates the Clerk kindly investigated and we have received a refund of almost £2,400.

Recently the before mentioned BERG produced a report on the potential flooding issues in Broughton, this was sent to Hampshire County Council and on Tuesday of this week the Council accompanied by our County

Councillor David Drew and the Hampshire Highways engineer Johnathan Bambridge conducted a very useful and constructive 'walk round' to assess the issues. We await the results and to see what action will be taken by HCC.

The Council would like to thank Cllr Alison Johnston and Cllr David Drew from Teat Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council for giving so much of their time to Broughton and the many meetings they attend as well as their help and assistance on multiple matters.

Two Parish Councillors have decided not to stand for re-election in May we are very sad to lose Geoff Elliot for over 5 years he has been a fantastic Vice Chair, with great knowledge and tack he has assisted the Council and the Chair, through a number of tricky issues and served the community in many ways, we are so very grateful for his time and dedication.

Peter Boulton is also leaving the Parish Council. It seems that there has never been a time when Peter has not been serving the community, in fact over 50 year he's been a councillor since the early 70's. Initial involvement with the football club and the scouts led him to the Parish Council

He was instrumental in the building of the current Sports Pavilion and over saw the original extension to the Village Hall, while securing its future at the centre of the Village. Peter championed social housing, one of his major achievements was the building of Whiteshoot. This was achieved despite opposition from the Planning authority and was one of the first of its kind in the Test valley to include rental and shared ownership.

Peter helped to establish the Village conservation area, the Village design statement and Parish Plan. He was instrumental in setting up the village twinning with Sauve in France.

In 1999 he become a Borough Councillor and remained so for 20 years, he Chaired the southern planning and Planning control committees, he was the lead member for Environmental services and oversaw the introduction of wheelie Bins! In 2005 he became Mayor of Test Valley.

For all of the above and more thank seems not enough but thank you from the Parish Council and the entire community for all that you have done for Broughton and the wider community.

It would seem appropriate and the Parish Council wanted to give you the Freedom of the village award something that you instigated many years ago, but you already received that in 2007!

Behind every great individual is a supportive partner which brings me to Lynda Boulton some will know that Lynda has supported Peter and helped behind the scenes on all that he has achieved. Lynda was the driving force who started Broughton Good Neighbours, it took 18 months to set up with major fundraising, it started in 2007 and is still the major help in the community for its clients. Lynda Boulton was nominated for a personal HCC Good Neighbours Award which was presented on October 6th in The Great Hall in Winchester. She worked as the Parish Clerk for many years. Working with Peter she was one of the leading lights in the millennium celebrations.

The Council would like to thank them both for all they have done for the community.

Cllr Elliott addressed the meeting his report follows-

Footpaths and grass areas

Looking back over the year, there has been significant need for the cutting back of overgrown vegetation hampering footpath use. Some has been tackled by parish councillors and volunteers, and some by very co-operative owners of neighbouring land; thank you to all concerned. Unfortunately, one or two owners of offending vegetation have been less helpful; the result is that one or two footpaths, and especially some bridleways farther from the village, remain difficult to use. The power of enforcement rests with Hampshire Countryside, who have been kept informed but have not always acted promptly; no doubt this is due to funding restrictions. Can I take this opportunity to remind all owners of hedges that they grow bigger each year, and just cutting back annual growth does not stop this process. There is a statutory minimum width for a path, and it is better for owners to observe their responsibilities rather than deal with potential enforcement. Contracts for grass cutting and hedge trimming have been renewed with current contractors, both of whom have moderated their cost increases and have provided good service in recent years.

In January we were contacted by Hampshire Countryside who now hold S106 funds from the Hyde Farm housing development which must be used for path improvements which connect with that development. Councillors Morrison and I met on-site with the HCC team and a landowner whose property is crossed by one of the paths in question. Earlier drastic suggestions of possible 'improvements' were modified during this meeting, and HCC Countryside promised us a detailed schedule. This schedule has not yet been received but is apparently due for finalisation this week, and work is expected in July. I believe all affected landowners have been contacted. We expect improvements to Footpaths 7, 6, 20 and 9, and in the case of Footpath 7 we understand that there has been liaison over the separation of vehicles and footpath users on the section which leads east from Hyde Farm to Footpath 9. Hopefully all the changes will maintain the rural nature of the paths, make access easier where there are current restrictions, and avoid undue 'urbanisation'; absolutely no streetlights are planned.

School Lane completion

Despite the best efforts of Councillor Boulton, progress has been painfully slow since the last report. The parish council initiated a formal complaint with our solicitor, but following advice that this could delay proceedings even further this was suspended (but not withdrawn). We know that we signed and approved all relevant documents in preceding years, so it has been frustrating to say the least, to be asked to repeat the procedure. At last, we have received what appears to be an undertaking to pay over the outstanding funds, with a satisfactory explanation of the figures involved. This was only received today so not all councillors will yet have seen it, but those who have are hopeful! Once the funds have actually been received the intention is to proceed with the construction of the long-awaited MUGA on School Green, adjacent to the car park. Final ownership of the car park, School Green and Salisbury Green will then rest with the parish council, who intend to institute a more practical maintenance regime of the green areas and shrubs which will retain the 'wild' nature of Salisbury Green without the encroachment of so many undesirable weeds.

Sports Pavilion

As you will have realised, events of 2020 and 2021 seriously hampered progress with the replacement pavilion. Tenders were received in 2022, and as expected costs had risen substantially. Good progress has been made in engineering some of these costs down, and a builder has been identified who is prepared to construct the agreed design at a cost level which the Sports Club Committee considers both acceptable and the best achievable value. The planning consent expired in November, and a revised application has been submitted; this is awaiting a revised ecological survey in case bats and other creatures have radically changed their habits in the last three years. Now there is a firm handle on the project cost, a second CIL bid has been submitted to TVBC for an additional £100,000 of funding; this is due for consideration within weeks, with a decision expected this summer.

Finance

3) The Clerk gave a brief overview of the Parish Council finances including details of annual accounts. She also gave details of the level of precept and the way in which this was spent. She highlighted the funds currently held which are ringfenced for the new pavilion build costs. Finally, she invited those present to scrutinize the financial records and accounts should they wish.

Reports From local organizations

4) PCSO Spiros Mouzakis confirmed he was part of a three-man team who cover 55 villages in the Test Valley so they are very busy. He said he could be contacted by email if situations arose when his help was required.

He provided a report of crimes in the parish in the period from May 2022 to April 2023. He said most burglaries related to out buildings, sheds, barns etc. and not to dwellings. He listed the offences as follows

3 public order offences

3 anti-social behavior offences

1 dangerous dog

1 burglary of an on dwelling

Night thefts such as poaching

5 criminal damage

1 domestic assault

4 reports of suspicious activity. He urged those present to always report anything suspicious, one small piece of evidence alone may seem meaningless but collective evidence often helped to piece together a whole picture.

Cllr James asked for literature to share with community giving details of how to report anything to the police. Spiros agreed to send details to the Clerk.

A member of public raised concerns regarding speeding traffic and said speed vans seem to visit at quiet times a visit, at commuting time would be preferable. Spiro said the police can help with speed watch if it becomes a problem but resources are limited.

5) Broughton School

Dereck Smith Chair of Governors of the local school confirmed Broughton is now a federation of schools with West Tytherly. The federation has broadened opportunities for staff, and provided wider opportunities for children.

He said Broughton School thrives and is much sought after with a strong intake of pupils expected in September 23. He said the school benefits from a fantastic head set of experienced and dedicated teachers along with an active parent support group.

The recent Ofsted inspection delayed because of covid, was a one-day inspection and the school were pleased to retain their good rating. He paid tribute to the head teacher and staff for fabulous job in preparing for the inspection and gave gratitude to all volunteers who help to support the school.

6) Broughton Charities

Cllr Boulton gave a report on behalf of the Thomas Dowse Charity and United Charities. He reported that the Thomas Dowse charity has 6 trustees to help provide grants to villagers in particular with educational matters. Thanks were expressed to the secretary and treasurer for the group for all the work carried out to support the charity.

The United Charities is a smaller charity but has been able to respond with assistance to parishioners in urgent financial need. Thanks again were expressed to those who help run the committee and in particular the treasurer who deals with all the finances.

7) County and Borough Councilors' Report

HCC David Drew gave details of the HCC budget and in particular funds available for filling pot holes. He urged everyone to continue to report pot holes via the HCC report a problem site in the hope that this problem could be tackled with success.

He reminded those present that in order to vote in person in the forthcoming elections on May 4th voter photographic id would be required.

8)TVBC Cllr Johnston-

TVBC Cllr Alison Johnston reported on the collaboration between TVBC and the Parish Council and in particular grants which have been provided to the parish to help with many projects. She has given full support to the parish in relation to their attempts to build a new sports pavilion and will continue to do so. She reported on climate change initiatives at TVBC in particular an agreed change to the vehicle fleet which will become vegetable oil fuelled reducing emissions by 95%.

She provided details of all the planning applications in the parish over the last 12 months and made commitment to support appropriate planning applications to meet unmet rural housing need in the future. Finally, she gave details of the new waste management strategy and increased kerb side collections planned for 2024.

The meeting ended with those present enjoying refreshments and having the opportunity to have informal discussions with those Councillors present.