BROAD CHALKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 1066th Meeting of the

Broad Chalke Parish Council

held at the Village Hall, Broad Chalke on

Wednesday 14th February 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

M Pickford (Chairman)

Mr T Kimber

Mrs E Richter

Mr S Carter

Mr M Altham

The Clerk, Mr C Rothwell was also in attendance.

1. To receive apologies for absence. E Fry, T Hitchings, J Allison, S Dawes.
2. To record Declarations of Interest. None.
3. Chairman’s announcements. The Chairman informed the meeting of the resignation of Edward Fry after some 25 years of Service to the Council. The meeting felt this Service should be marked in some way and will be considered further. For now, the Chairman thanked Edward for his contributions over the years. The Council will greatly miss his advice and knowledge.

The Clerk has posted the Notice of Vacancy that runs to 7 March 2024. Councillors are encouraged to talk to friends that may be interested in contributing to the work of the Council.

The Clerk updated on the position with the Affordable Housing Planning Application which had not yet been determined, Wiltshire Council (WC) having sought further extensions of time on planning determination. Dan Richter had provided the Clerk with current position and that it is the Section 106 Agreement that is currently with WC’s lawyers. The Council has already sought to exert some pressure to get a decision but this was back in November 2023 so it may be that further pressure should be applied. The Clerk to check with Dan.

1. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 January 2024. Agreed.
2. Matters Arising. The Clerk reported that the Sports Ground Lease has now been signed by all parties and the landowners’ solicitors have circulated the document. The Council negotiated a 50% reduction in fee and has paid Trethowans £750+ VAT.

The Clerk updated on progress with Broad Chalke Community Fund Assets. An advert for the sale of Manor Farm Poor Patch will be placed once final arrangements in place with the Charity Commission.

1. Update on Neighbourhood Plan refresh.

* Project Team. It was agreed that a Project Team be established to take the work forward. It is not entirely clear at this stage how much work will be required, but the Project Team is likely to include Cllr Carter and Ashley Truluck. The Clerk to support and it was agreed this would be at additional hours to the Clerks current role. Dan Richter had expressed an interest in continuing to be involved, and some members of the previous Neighbourhood Plan Team could probably be called upon for assistance. There will be a role for Place Consultants and an application for funding will be made in the new financial year.
* Progress on the Action Plan (page 99 of the Plan). A number of actions in the current Plan have been concluded. An important component of the refresh will be updating and considering new Objectives and Actions and the Council will need to consider how best to engage with the Community to establish these. Action update to be brought to March meeting.
* Review Process. Ashley Truluck has drawn up an outline process that will first be considered by the Project Team and a report brought to March meeting.
* Village Consultation. The Annual Parish Meeting on (provisionally) 8 May 2024 to be used to secure resident input and articles to generate feedback in the Broadsheet.
* Current Plan Delivery. The Council discussed bringing forward one of the NP proposals – reinstatement of the Saxon Meeting Cross. Cllr Kimber agreed to lead this element and first to investigate making an application for a Heritage Grant to the Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership.
* Planning Checklist. The Council discussed how better to manage the process of assessing planning applications against the requirements of the NP. Cllr Richter agreed to draft a Planning Checklist as first stage. A set of standard responses would also help to simplify the process, and this can be looked at as a second stage.

1. To receive update from Wiltshire councillor Najjar. None received.
2. To receive Legal Updates from the Clerk. The Clerk reported on the following received from NALC.

Power to fund works to property relating to affairs of the church. Section 82 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 amended the Local Government Act 1894 by inserting a new section 19A that clarifies that the 1894 Act does not affect the discretionary powers of parish councils to fund church repairs or improvements held for an ecclesiastical charity.

Local Council General Powers. The Clerk advised that that Broad Chalke PC can rely on general powers to act and spend money unless they are restricted from doing so. It is Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 that the Council has powers but there are limits to expenditure it can spend in each fiscal year based on an index linked amount per head of the parish population. The Council does not have The General Power of Competence as it does not meet the prescribed criteria.

Procurement. A procurement exercise by a local council is subject to the requirements in s.135 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. There are thresholds on the value of a contract with differing requirements dependent on the contract value. These are

* Up to £30,000
* Over £30,000
* Over £214,904

These are brought to the Councils attention and in relation to the procurement by The Friends of Broad Chalke Playground for the new play area discussed below.

1. To sign off the Playground Procurement approach and receive update on progress.

**The consultation, research, design, funding, and procurement of a new play area for Broad Chalke has been undertaken by the Friends of Broad Chalke playground (FoBCP). This followed a decision by the Council to encourage the establishment of a community led organisation on the basis that the Council did not have the resources (financial or otherwise) to manage a playground replacement project. The Council had limited capital resources held in Reserves but nowhere near the level required to replace the ageing play equipment. In addition, a change by Wiltshire Council in 2023 to switch funding away from parish councils to community groups reinforced the need for the community to take the lead on this initiative as the playground was nearly at the end of its economic life.**

**Initially the Council adopted an approach of maintain and repair. This secured the play equipment for a period of time; could be managed by the Council in the short to medium term; and enabled time to consider and develop a long-term solution.**

**The FoBCP was established and then set about the various processes involved in planning a new play area supported by the Parish Council with grant aid, as pump-prime funding, and a councillor representative on the group. This is summarised in the Procurement Rationale.**

**The Rationale had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was agreed subject to some minor amendments and additional information and that it is underpinned by the various documents and processes undertaken by FoBCP including: consulting with the community, design input, market research, play area visits, initial contractor meetings and discussions, responses to invitation to submit and grant applications requirements.**

**The FoBCP had been in discussion with three shortlisted contractors and have evaluated the submissions based on a number of considerations. FoBCP have identified a clear preferred contractor, Homefront based locally in Dinton. The Council supported this view and FoBCP to advise contractors of this, subject to funding being secured.**

**Cllr Altham updated the meeting on the current position of the grant application to the National Lottery Community Fund following the Sports Ground Lease being finalised and the additional information on community benefit the Lottery had requested. The expectation is for a Panel decision later this month.**

**Cllr Altham briefed the meeting on the cash flow forecast for the project.**

1. Councillor reports on Priorities Cllr Pickford commented on localised flooding.

Cllr Richter to check on the position with the recycling initiative with the Hub and to clarify with Cllr Dawes whether this had been promoted through CV Families.

1. ****Finance Report.** Balance of funds in the bank were £20,156.92.**

**Village working Party: First meeting provisionally to take place on morning of 22 March and address ditch clearance on Low Lane footpath.**

1. Planning Applications. There was no objection to PL2024/01181. Resubmission of identical scheme following expiration of approved application. However, as the first application predated the requirements in the Neighbourhood Plan the Council wished to highlight Plan requirements particularly as regards integrating renewable energy technology; SUDS and delivery of net biodiversity gain.

There being no further business the Meeting ended at 8.55pm