BROAD CHALKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 1019th Meeting of the

Broad Chalke Parish Council

held at the Village Hall, Broad Chalke on

Wednesday 13th November 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Mr T Hitchings (Chairman)

Mr M Pickford

Mr E Fry

Mr J Allison

Mr D Gilbert

The Clerk, Mr C Rothwell and Wiltshire Councillor Mrs J Green were in attendance.

Mr M Powis was in attendance for item 6.

The Chairman, with the approval of the Council, took item 6 first but this appears in these Minutes in Agenda order.

Wiltshire Councillor Mrs J Green provided the Meeting with report from Wiltshire Council. A fuller report is appended to these Minutes.

1. Apologies for absence. These were received from Mrs R Holland, Mrs H Newman, Mr R Hitchings, Mr J Dutson and Mr T Cave-Gibbs and accepted by the Meeting.

It was with regret that the Meeting also received and accepted the resignation of Mr R Hitchings as a Parish Councillor for Broad Chalke. In Mr Hitchings absence the Chairman highlighted Mr Hitchings commitment to the village and the Parish Council over some three decades, service that will be sadly missed.

1. To record declarations of interest from Members regarding items on the Agenda.

Mr E Fry declared his interest in Item 6, as Vice Chairman of the Chalke Valley Sports Centre.

1. Chairman’s Announcements. There were none.
2. To approve the Minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record.

These were approved and signed by the Chairman.

1. Clerks Report
	1. **To update on items from the previous Meeting**
	2. ***To receive update on the Causeway flooding and Mill Mead.*** The Clerk had met with landowners and representatives from Wiltshire Council and other agencies on 14 October. The proposed approach is to instigate a regime of gulley/drain clearance via Wiltshire Council’s Gulley Service and then for the landowners to consider further measures to intercept runoff to prevent pollutants entering into the river Ebble.
	3. ***Meeting with WALC representative.*** This has been arranged for the December meeting. The Clerk encouraged members to consider questions and information they would wish to gain from this meeting. The Clerk also provided the NALC on-line access codes should Members wish to look at the resources the Council can access as a member.
	4. ***Rights of Way.***The Clerk had been in contact with the WC ROW officer for further advice. The reports from the inspections have yet to be written up.
	5. ***To receive an update on the VAT position discussed at the October Meeting.***

Having received informal advice from the Society of Local Council Clerks, in relation to the Parish Council’s VAT position, and specifically in relation to the Chalke Valley Sports Centre, the Clerk has undertaken further investigations into the historic position, lease and previous information from HMRC.

The construction of the Centre was undertaken under the direction of the Parish Council and the Lease is between the landowner and the PC. At the time of development, HMRC were advised as to the position and that an ‘arms-length’ management committee would be established to operate the centre and to receive income and make payments. HMRC advised that the PC reclaim VAT on the capital costs which was done.

The documentation put in place at the time the Centre was being developed indicates that the PC can make donations of cash, goods and services to the Sports Centre. The PC insure the Centre.

On the basis of this detail, the Centre is an asset of the Parish Council and, as such should appear on the Council’s Assets Register (yet to be compiled). Capital repairs and replacements to the Centre are therefore seen as legitimate costs to the Parish Council and on which VAT should be reclaimed. The Parish Council considered that funding for such works could be from grants, developer contributions (R2/CIL/S106) and third parties.

This position was agreed by the Meeting.

* 1. ***To consider a request for improvement of Low Lane footpath (Footpath No.18)***

The Chairman had received a letter from village resident about the condition of the above. The Meeting discussed land ownership and whether the path passes over land in private ownership or whether it is all a Right of Way.

Whilst the Parish Council has powers to undertake maintenance to ROW it does not have the funds to do so.

It was resolved that Mr Fry would speak with the Parish Steward in the first instance to see if any measures could be taken. If not, the Clerk would take it up with the WC ROW officer.

The Chairman to respond to the resident.

* 1. ***To consider direction from Wiltshire Council on the use of Speed Indicator Devices***

The Clerk had received correspondence from WC, including a Practice Note: ‘Temporary Speed Indicator Device Site Eligibility and Deployment Criteria’. This sets out a number of requirements, though it is unclear whether this is guidance or mandatory. The Clerk has discussed the Practice Note with the Clerk to Bishopstone PC and letters have been sent to Councillor Mrs B Wayman at WC expressing concern as to the Note’s requirements, particularly the requirement for SID’s to be deployed by an approved contractor with public liability insurance of £5,000,000. Small parish councils use volunteers to deploy SID’s and simply do not have the financial resources to engage private contractors to undertake this work.

The Clerk has received response back in which it is stated that ‘We (Wiltshire Council) are not about to insist on draconian measures for all parishes to follow’.

Councillor Green echoed the PC’s concerns and, whist the Practice Note may be appropriate in urban areas it did not work for rural communities.

The Chairman expressed concern that the Note has been produced and it was agreed that the Clerk would write a further letter to Councillor Wayman asking specifically for confirmation that it did not apply to Broad Chalke.

1. To consider Section 137 Grant applications

Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives powers to parish councils to make grants to local causes. The Clerk advised the Meeting that there is a Grants line in the budget for 2019/20 but no specific funding allocated, any grants given would need to come from Reserves. One donation has been made this year of £200.

The Clerk has promoted these grants in the Broadsheet and two applications have been received.

**The Broad Chalke Archives: Display cabinet for Horticultural Society trophies**

Mr M Powis was present to support the application by the Broad Chalke Archives for a display Cabinet for the Horticultural Society cups and trophies. Mr Powis was currently gathering information as to quantity of cups to be displayed and was not at this stage in a position to say what size of display case was required, nor its cost.

The Council were supportive, in principle, but first wished to have information from the Horticultural Society as to balance of funds in its accounts to see whether grant funding is actually required.

The Clerk to make enquiries.

**Chalke Valley Sports Centre for Statutory inspections and emergency lighting repairs.**

Mr Fry had declared an interest in that he is Vice Chairman of the CVSC. The Council asked Mr Fry to summarise the grant request. The five yearly electrical inspection and testing and the annual emergency lighting and portable appliance testing has recently been carried out costing £312.00. Repairs and replacements were necessary as a consequence of the inspection and these have been scheduled later this month with a cost estimate of £456.00.

The Council considered the application and in relation to the Parish Councils ownership of the Centre. It was resolved that it would be better to see if the balance of R2 funds could be allocated to this rather than a S137 grant.

The Clerk to investigate.

1. To consider the draft budget for 2020/2021

The Clerk had circulated a draft budget that had been drawn up by the Chairman and the Clerk. The Clerk briefed the Meeting on the following:

Current precept is £6,950.

Budgeted expenditure in the current year is estimated at £8377, excluding Neighbourhood Plan expenditure.

Wiltshire Council require the documentation confirming the Council’s precept to be returned by 24 January 2020.

The Meeting reviewed the draft 2020/2021 budget in detail and considered if any further reductions could be made. The Meeting concluded that, with the increase in costs that were now falling directly on the Council to fund, the Draft Budget is a realistic estimate of future costs and that it should be adopted by the Council whilst maintaining sufficient reserves to enable the Council to maintain it’s assets; provide some grant support to local organisations; and to be able to meet any unexpected costs.

The Draft budget was put to the vote and it was unanimously accepted. The Chairman asked that it be brought back to the December Meeting as an information item to enable councillors that are not present to be able to ask and questions.

 To consider Planning Applications

There were none.

There was discussion on the previous application for Maud’s Cottage and this had been dealt with by email with no objections. The consultation response had been submitted on that basis.

1. Finance and Risk Management

***To receive an update on the financial position of the Council.***

The Clerk reported on outgoings from the Nat West account of £33,550.59. This was largely transfers into the Lloyds account and Neighbourhood Plan grant transferred to Lloyds. A balance of £955.08 remains in Nat West pending clarification on one unpresented cheque.

Outgoings from the Lloyds account of £7832.22. A balance of £16,596.88 including Neighbourhood Plan grant of £7,725.00.

***To receive and agree payments since the last meeting.***

Two payments due:

Mr R Chalke for Village handyman of £365.50

Mr C Rothwell for materials for playground repairs £29.76

These were both approved.

**Risk Management**

The Clerk handed sealed envelope to the Chairman containing computer password and bank account information. This would be reviewed on 1 April 2021.

1. Playground

Following receipt of RoSPA report, Mt T Cave-Gibbs and the Clerk had met to review and produced an action plan. Repairs would be undertaken by PC and these will be undertaken by a working party on Saturday 16 November at 0930.

Mr T Cave-Gibbs has been undertaking regular inspections and these will now be formalised monthly on the RoSPA check list.

1. Councillors Code of Conduct

The Clerk advised that Wiltshire Council has updated its procedure and the Parish Council’s Code of Conduct required updating. A draft had been circulated and this will be submitted for approval to the December meeting.

The Chairman noted the requirement for written dispensations and the Meeting did not consider this appropriate and were happy to agree simple notification to the Clerk.

Clerk to amend the draft for the December meeting.

1. Standing Agenda Items

***Highways Matters***: Mr Fry reported on update meeting with Parish Steward and some pothole repairs undertaken.

1. Any business to be addressed at a future meeting

VE Day Celebrations 8 May 2020.

1. Confidential Matters

The Clerk had circulated Contract of Employment and Job Description in draft. He had also been in contact with HMRC to investigate further the Council as an employer.

No further action taken until opportunity to discuss with the WALC representative in December.

1. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 December at 7.30pm. Members are reminded that Kate Fielding from Wiltshire Association of Councils will attend to present the services of WALC and to take relevant questions.

The Meeting closed at ended at 9.22pm

**Signed as a true record by the Chairman of the Council**

**Signature:**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Short report from José Green. November 2019.**

***Jose Green’s End of Year Report. Nov/Dec 2019***

For those of you who read my updates or attend a Parish Council meeting you will notice that as I cover 15 villages there is a strong possibility you are already aware of much of what I’m going to tell you.  For that I apologise. Either way I intend to circulate this report directly to the Editors of the various Parish Magazines in the Fovant and Chalke Valley Division so that it will appear only the once.

I expect you have noticed the new headed paper of Wiltshire Council ( WC ) has changed, not only the colour, to a bright green that reflects the proactive stance WC is taking on environmental and ecology issues but also the strap line of ‘Where Everybody Matters” has been removed. These words were sometimes ridiculed but the intention was sincere.

As we prepare for the winter 24 new gritters are waiting to do their work across the major roads of Wiltshire......11,000 tonnes of salt is in stock, 726 miles of A and B roads spread 150 tonnes each time they go out. 24 drivers are on standby. I hope all your grit bins have been re-stocked in preparation?

The new **MyWiltshire** App has just been launched. I encourage anyone who is able to to download it and report anything you believe is a problem. From fly tipping, abandoned cars, potholes, signage, drainage and flooding, please be assured it is the most effective way of reporting something to which you are then issued a number and able to ‘track’ it to see what is being done about resolving what you have reported.

I have previously mentioned the successful Government funding Salisbury has received since the novichok incident, Chippenham is to receive £75 million to support various infrastructure improvements including some highway works.

The **Street LED Lighting** programme has begun at a cost of £12,295,000m over 2 years. The intention is that replacement lighting in the Salisbury and Wilton area will commence in February-April 2020.

A newly formed **Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group** has been formed. As you know WC is hoping to be carbon neutral by 2030. Can I emphasis that Wiltshire Council does not include Swindon which is a Borough Council. Part of the  Task Group’s remit is to include renewable energy use and efficiency, particularly in WC’s housing stock and buildings; Planning, Transport and Air Quality, Waste..( to improve recycling rates ) Land use, Business and Industry. The SWW Area Board is encouraging the 38 villages within it to create their own environmental/green projects. There are some hugely imaginative groups of volunteers coming up with ideas.

The campaign to reduce **Flytipping** goes on. A great proportion of dumped material is Commercial Waste. Unlimited fines and/or 5 years imprisonment, a £50k fine and/or 12 months imprisonment are all options when a court case is held. Fixed Penalty Notices are £400 and are being served proactively now. Any successful information leading to a prosecution will earn a voucher of £200 to whomever reported it.

Never rummage through tipped waste as it could be challenged if disturbed or  removed. Always take a photo and report it on the MyWilts App.

**Potholes and the state of our rural roads** remain an issue. Constantly attempting to keep up with the work is not helped by the weather conditions throughout the year. The satisfaction rates have increased though and reflects the national average but there is more to do. HGV lorries who argue they are lost or using mobile phone SATNAV is being stamped on. Weight restrictions on roads are not encouraged as there is an opinion that vehicles should be ‘spread’ across the network.

There are 4,500 km ( 2,796 miles) of roads across Wiltshire and are WC’s largest asset/liability. Social care and vulnerable people, young and older remains the highest financial commitment.

I attended the **Operational Flood Working Group** on the 13th November. There is a common thread of concerns regarding ground and surface water, the risks involved and the actions required. Representatives from Ansty, Fovant, Bishopstone, Swallowcliffe and many other villages were able to highlight their main issues. Drains and gully clearance, the river projects, build up of debris and sediment which then blocks the drains and creates standing water above the drains is the main concern. There are 4 gulley tankers to service the County.

Marvellous news that the **Cranborne Chase AONB** has been awarded the International Dark Skies Status. This is a highly prestigious award as there are 14 only across the world. Tourism is likely to increase and greater lighting control to decrease light pollution will be conditioned through the planning process.

I constantly press that we in the Fovant and Chalke Valley should have our fair share of the budget spend. Can I emphasise though, that information and support is always appreciated from the Parish Council’s (PC’s) in helping to highlight specific problems.

As the PC’s are currently setting their precept Wiltshire Councils’s share of the Council Tax is likely to go up by 2%. Yet again a further 2% will be a levy for social care. This will require ratification at Full Council.

Can I finally wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful and Healthy New Year.

José Green.