BROAD CHALKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 1042nd Meeting of the

Broad Chalke Parish Council

held at Broad Chalke Village Hall

Wednesday 10 November 2021 at 7.00pm

ATTENDANCE

Mr T Hitchings (Chairman)

Mrs E Richter

Mr M Pickford

Mr T Cave-Gibbs

Mr S Carter

Mr J Allison

Mr E Fry

Mr S Dawes

Mr A Truluck attended for the item on the Neighbourhood Plan Action - Low Lane Footpath.

The Clerk, Mr C Rothwell was in attendance.

**Introduction by the Chairman** covering meeting protocol and arrangements for enabling councillors and members of the public to speak.

Members of the public are reminded that the Council cannot make any decisions on matters that do not appear on the agenda. If members of the public have questions about matters not on the agenda, they are requested to contact the Clerk outside of the meeting.

1. **To receive apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Mr C Sylvan and Councillor Najjar.
2. **To record declarations of interest from Members regarding items on the Agenda.**

There were none.

1. **Chairman’s Announcements**.

There were none.

1. **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 October 2021 as a true and accurate record**. Agreed
2. **Matters Arising from the September 2021 Minutes**.

All items covered are in the Agenda.

1. **To discuss Neighbourhood Plan actions- Low Lane Footpath**

The Clerk summarised the position in terms of Low Lane being a Priority Project in the adopted Neighbourhood Plan and the outcome of recent site meetings with Wiltshire Council’s Footpaths Officer, Alex Howson and Mr A Jeans, Landowner together with Mr Truluck and the Clerk.

The site meeting resolved that Mr Jeans had no objection to appropriate footway improvements being carried out subject to agreement on detail and that whatever works were undertaken he would still require access with a small tractor. Mr Howson confirmed that responsibility for the surface maintenance rested with Wiltshire Council and that he was supportive of improvements been made for the reasons identified in the NP. An outline plan was proposed that involved looking at drainage improvements as a first stage followed by an appropriate surface treatment which Mr Howson considered could be achieved using road plainings that he may be able to access via Wiltshire Council.

It was agreed that this progress be reported to this meeting for discussion and decision.

Mr Truluck briefed the meeting on the NP background and on potential funding sources. Information had also recently been received from Mr Howson on outline costs that suggested a solution could be secured for around £7,000-£8,000 depending on the surface material used. It was noted however that this cost estimate did not include drainage work. A revised budget estimate of £10,000 was considered appropriate and on which funding bids should be pursued as a next step.

At the same time a brief and schedule of works to be produced against which quotes could be secured. Mr Truluck volunteered to produce an initial draft.

It was felt that, subject to funding being secured, works would need to wait until the spring when conditions would be drier to enable access for machinery.

It was also clarified that the section of footway being considered for improvement is from the point adjacent to Spring Cottage up to the kissing gate that enters into the water meadow.

The Clerk to discuss further with Mr Howson the access to WC drainage expertise; list of approved contractors (although preference is to look locally which will be subject to Parish Council Standing Orders on appointment of Contractors) and funding sources, as well as potential free materials.

1. **All Saints Church Flagpole**

The issues had been presented at the October 2021 meeting when Mr Littlemore attended. The Meeting discussed the possible locations and concluded that the best place remains on the church tower but with a new arrangement enabling the raising and lowering of flags from the ground. The Clerk to report this to Mr Littlemore.

1. **HMRC**

The Clerk reported on correspondence and Statement of Liabilities received from HMRC and the various contacts made over recent days. The Clerk briefed new Council members on the background and the historic position on remuneration.

Through 2019/2020 the Clerk had made enquiries with other councils, with WALC and with HMRC that led to the Council registering as an Employer. However, the Council had taken the decision in 2020 to maintain the status quo and had not operated or submitted a payroll record. Instead, the Clerk had self-declared for tax.

As an outcome of the recent communication with HMRC, the Clerk had now received the Employer codes required to submit on-line declarations. These had not previously been issued by HMRC as should have been the case when the Council registered as an Employer. However, on seeking to make an appropriate declaration which can only be done on-line, the system required an access code to be issued and this could only be done by HMRC posting out. To date this access code is still awaited and so not progress can be made.

The Meeting agreed that the declaration should be that no payroll has been made in 2019/2020 and 2020/2021. For 2021/2022 (current Financial Year), the meeting agreed that it should seek to put in place appropriate Payroll process. The Clerk to look into on the basis of a payroll run every 6 or 12 months if this is possible.

1. **To receive feedback from Wiltshire Council on speed limits on the High Road**

The Chairman reported on discussions with WC on introduction of reducing speed limits coming into the village from the east prior to accessing the 20MPH limit before the Hub. In summary, the position is that a formal speed limit assessment would be required to be undertaken at a cost of £2,500, 25% of which to be funded by the Parish Council. Should this recommend a reduction in the speed limit, the costs of implementation would similarly have to be met by a 25% contribution from the Parish Council.

The Meeting debated the pros and cons of the current speed limits and where a speed assessment might logically be undertaken. There was also discussion on the cost benefit.

The Meeting resolved that the issue is a much wider Chalke Valley speeding issue, and there was agreement at the Meeting that the Council should seek a ‘whole of the valley’ approach for a general reduction from the 60 mph to a safer limit. The view was that it is the speeding through 60mphe zones that leads to motorists ignoring the lower limits in other areas. It was resolved that the first action would be to formally raise this with Councillor Najjar and with the Police Crime Commissioner who has made a commitment to address traffic speeding. A note to the other parish councils in the valley would also be in order.

It was also agreed that the Chairman contact the Speed Watch Coordinators to seek to re-establish this.

1. **To discuss budget preparation and Precept setting for 2022/2023**

The Council had discussed the initial budget proposal prepared by Mr Carter and the Clerk at its October meeting ahead of the formal timetable being released by WC.

The Clerk has now received correspondence from WC giving the Tax Base for 2022/23 (315.94 compared with current year 314.21) and the Precept setting timetable and he reviewed this with the Council, providing additional information on neighbouring Parish Council positions so far as equivalent Band D precept for the current year (Broad Chalke being £30.19).

The Clerk also set out a number of budget areas that he felt the Council should consider for increase above the October Draft leading to a provisional Precept for 2022/23 of £10,652 an increase of 13.6% (Band D £33.71).

The Meeting asked the Clerk to update the draft budget spreadsheet and circulate with a view to the December Parish Council meeting agreeing the final level for submission to WC by 18 January 2022.

1. **To receive update on playground following RoSPA inspection**

Mr Cave-Gibbs briefed the Meeting on the RoSPA report received in October and the repairs that have been carried out. There are minor issues that require to be addressed and to be kept on top of through the regular inspection regime.

The Council had also received a letter from resident complaining about the broken equipment. The Clerk had replied as these repairs were in hand.

There remains the longer-term issue of replacement as equipment gets older and more repairs required. The Meeting agreed to continue with maintain and repair over the coming months and for Mr Cave-Gibbs to bring further report in the New Year when playground companies had undertaken initial site visits.

1. **To update new councillors on the Emergency Plan and to discuss the recent incident on South Street**

The Clerk advised that he had arranged to meet with Mrs N Tinkler to review the plan 18 months on and for update and reissue.

The Meeting went on to discuss the storms 10 days ago that resulted in a number of tree falls in the Valley and particularly the disruption on South Street with blocked road and power lines taken down.

The landowner had met with concerned residents whose property is in close proximity to the remaining trees and Mr Carter, Mr Fry and the Clerk had managed to arrange a short notice site meeting with WC tree officer, Mr Verinon. The outcomes of this meeting are recorded in attached email.

The Meeting discussed the issue and agreed that there is a duty of care on the Council to raise the matter further with the landowner. The Clerk to draft letter.

1. **To receive reports from Councillors on Priority Areas**

Mrs Richter presented a Draft Climate Action Strategy (Appendix 1) for the Parish Council. The Meeting fully endorsed the approach.

1. **To receive Finance Report from the Clerk**

Balance at Lloyds Bank £12,771.51. VAT yet to be claimed.

1. **To discuss Remembrance Sunday arrangements**

The Clerk reported on arrangements. Risk Assessment has been circulated.

1. **To receive planning applications**

The Clerk reminded the Meeting that all applications need to be judged against the newly adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

* **PL/2021/10226 Butlers Farm House, South St. Trees.** No objection
* **PL/2021/06074 The Plough. Amended application.** No objection.
* **PL/202110369 Gurston Farm.** Change of use. No objection

**14. Report from Wiltshire Councillor N Najjar**

In the absence of Councillor Najjar the Clerk reported that Councillor Najjar had sent his apologies and wished it to be known that he is undertaking some work on flood prevention measures.

**Date of Next Meeting.**  8 December 2021

The Meeting closed at 9.10pm

**Appendix 1**

**Climate Action Strategy Draft Plan November 2021**

1. The Parish Council to publicly declare a climate and ecological emergency. Suggested declaration:

“Broad Chalke Parish Council recognises that there is a climate and ecological emergency, caused by a rise in global temperatures. We recognise that we must act swiftly to cut emissions of greenhouse gases, take steps to achieve carbon neutrality and do more to protect the ecosystems on which we rely. We recognise that all Parish Council decisions must take into account implications for the environment and we will work with organisations and residents to help Broad Chalke become carbon neutral.”

2. Parish Council to set up an Environmental Working Group – not to be limited to Councillors but to open to local residents who would like to work with us.

3. Parish Council to make limited funds available, that the Working Group can apply for to carry out projects in response to the climate emergency

4. Parish Council to build upon the initial ecological survey carried out for the Neighbourhood Plan with a view to mapping and protecting the biodiversity of Broad Chalke.

5. Parish Council as far as possible to be a paperless organisation.

6. Parish Council to work with other Councils within the Chalke Valley as required to enable a ‘joined up’ response to the climate emergency.