BROAD CHALKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 1041st Meeting of the

Broad Chalke Parish Council

held at Broad Chalke Village Hall

Wednesday 13 October 2021 at 7.00pm

ATTENDANCE

Mr T Hitchings (Chairman)

Mrs E Richter

Mr M Pickford

Mr T Cave-Gibbs

Mr C Sylvan

Mr S Carter

Mr J Allison

Councillor Nabil Najjar attended the meeting.

The Clerk, Mr C Rothwell was in attendance.

Mr Chris Littlemore, Churchwarden and member of the PCC attended the meeting for item 4.

**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. **War Memorial Lime Trees**. It was not possible to undertake tree inspections due to it being dark. The Clerk and Groundsman will continue to monitor and record the condition over the winter period**.**
2. **To receive apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Mr S Dawes and Mr E Fry.
3. **To record declarations of interest from Members regarding items on the Agenda.**

There were none.

1. **Chairman’s Announcements**.

The Chairman introduced Mr Littlemore who addressed the meeting on the PCC’s discussions about relocating the flagpole from All Saints church due to health and safety and access concerns. The PCC wish to engage with the Council as to its views and possible options for relocating. A number of possible sites were mentioned including: the churchyard; the war memorial; the village green; on the gable of the village hall; in the church car park.

The Council expressed the view that ideally the flagpole should be located on a high point, visible from all parts of the village. There was discussion on the occasions on which the flag is flown.

One thought could be relocation onto the external aspect of the church tower with a pulley operated from ground level.

Depending on the location there are issues of responsibility and maintenance that would need to be considered.

The Council to consider further at its November meeting and revert to the PCC.

Mr Littlemore also advised the Council that the PCC were in discussions with NetCS in connection with locating mobile boosters at the church.

1. **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 September 2021 as a true and accurate record**. Agreed
2. **Matters Arising from the September 2021 Minutes**.

The Chairman advised the Council that he had spoken with the owners on The Plough, Mount Sorrell in connection with the Paragraph 3.67 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the type of support that the Council could offer, which did not include direct funding but support to get appropriate listing of the building.

The Clerk advised that an application has been made to Wiltshire Council for funding towards a replacement fingerpost at the junction of South Street/Causeway.

1. **To receive report from Wiltshire Councillor Nabil Najjar.**

A copy of the report is attached to these Minutes.

The Meeting discussed in some detail the issue of traffic speeding in the village and in particular the issue at the top of the High Road where the speed limit drops from 60mph to 20mph with no step down. Councillor Najjar commented that he would be happy to take this up with the Highways Department. It was agreed the Clerk draft a letter to be sent from the Chairman.

1. **To discuss Neighbourhood Plan actions**

**Low Lane Footpath**: The Clerk advised the Meeting of communications with interested parties. It had not yet been possible to arrange a further site meeting with Wiltshire Council’s Rights of Way Officer, Mr Truluck and the Chairman. This would be to consider the NP Teams views and weight of opinion about pathway improvements that the Council have considered but feel marginal when matched against other funding pressures.

Mr Truluck has indicated there is access to some funding for path improvements based on it being a highways safety initiative.

Mr A Jeans has confirmed their ‘interest’ in the land.

1. **Parish Council Priorities.**

The Meeting undertook a brief review and update on Priorities.

Of note were:

* Mr Sylvan to attend the Wiltshire Council forum on fibre connectivity on 20 October.
* Mrs Richter updated the Meeting on Wiltshire Council’s Climate Change Strategy consultation that ends this week and encouraged the Council to respond individually. Mrs Richter will respond on behalf of the Council emphasising the priorities for Broad Chalke around reducing carbon emissions by improving public transport, providing subsidies for home heating using solar and air/ground source heat pumps. Generally, a push to reduce emissions by encouraging less use of utilities in the home, lowering car usage, and encouraging Wiltshire Council to promote ‘Switching Off’.
* Mr Carter reported on his work with Cranborne Chase AONB on the Crystal Clear Ebble and the survey app. An article will be in the Broad Sheet next month.
* The Clerk reported on the International Dark Skies work following the event in August at the Sports Centre. He has undertaken online training with the AONB Team and is now a Dark Skies Custodian. One task is to take regular darkness readings to try and plot and demonstrate improvements over coming years. A mini campaign has also been coordinated across Parish Councils encouraging greater awareness of poor lighting. This links well with the Climate Change strategy.
* The Chairman encouraged completion of the footpaths surveys that he is coordinating.
* Mr Cave-Gibbs updated on the position on playground repairs and that still seeking completion of the work requested of Mr Parker to make safe a couple of items of equipment.

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

The Clerk had circulated spreadsheet showing previous years spend; budget and spend to date for current year; projected year end position; first draft of requirements for 2022 2023 for Council discussion.

The Chairman reminded the meeting on the work over the last couple of years to build a budget around the true costs, having had the luxury of support from commercial businesses in the administration of the Councils affairs over a number of years. The budget has now been stabilised to reflect the costs that the Council incurs on behalf of Broad Chalke and in discharging parish council responsibilities.

There were various questions from the Council. The Clerk advised that the timetable is set by Wiltshire Council and usually requires submission of final Precept form by mid-January, but no information yet received. The Clerk would like the Council to consider and finalise a budget by December meeting.

The Clerk briefed the Council, in view if a number of new councillors, that the purpose of the precept is to meet the funding requirements of the Parish Council’s budget. The Council’s role is not to make a ‘profit’ each year but to run a budget that provides the funding for the demands placed upon the Council, and for the priorities the Council has set having been elected by the community to do so. Budget setting is therefore an opportunity to allocate appropriate level of funding to meet these needs and aspirations. There was discussion as to future funding of the playground; the need to provide insurance cover for the Defibrillator; whether additions should be made to the Grants budget to help local organisations; to provide additional funding into the grounds maintenance budget as there are known additional works, including around the defibrillator kiosk and land at Sun cottage.

The Clerk also advised the Council of the External Audit requirements on spending above £25,000.

The Chairman instructed the Meeting to consider the budget and the areas of work they are responsible for and to feed these into the Clerk prior to the next meeting so papers can be prepared for discussion then.

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

Balance at Lloyds Bank £13,433.17. Payments since last meeting made for grounds maintenance.

The Clerk advised the Meeting of the repairs undertaken to the bus shelter by the Hub and these had been done by Mr Robert Page for no charge. It was agreed that a small thank you gift should be bought to show our appreciation.

1. **To discuss Remembrance Sunday arrangements**

The Clerk advised of dialogue with the vicar as to the Church’s plans that have not yet been finalised.

Mr Gairdner is not available to undertake the Last Post and The Reveille and so an alternative is required.

The Clerk also requested assistance with traffic management. Mrs Richter and Mr Pickford offered.

1. **To receive planning applications**

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

* **PL/2021/09440** Orchard Bank, South Street. No objection
* **PL/2021/09003** Meadowsweet, South Street. No objection.

**14. Date of Next Meeting.**  10 November 2021

The Chairman invited the Meeting’s views on holding a village party to celebrate all that has been achieved through lockdown and coming through it. The view was that a good idea but, with potential winter disruption an event in the Spring would be the time for such.

The Meeting closed at 9.00pm

**Report of Wiltshire Councillor Nabil Najjar.**

Hi everyone,

 A few months have passed since I was elected as your Councillor and I thought I would write to you and update you on the progress I've made since I was elected.

It has been a busy few weeks! Since my last update, I have worked hard to support all 16 villages in my division, and I do my best to maintain an active presence at Parish Council meetings and other community events.

When I was first elected, I set out my key priorities, one of which was a focus on speeding and road safety, and we have already made major progress on this. At the September Area Board meeting, we successfully lobbied for funding to buy and install three new speed indicator devices (SIDs) in Fovant. The SIDs will play a major role in helping us identify exactly where and when speeding through the village is at its worst, and this data can be handed over to the police to make sure we enforce the speed limits.

I have had conversations with our newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner, and he has assured me that, where we can demonstrate a speeding problem, he will make resources available to enforce the law.

I am also working with other Parishes, including Barford St Martin, to try and bring this solution to some of the other villages in the division.

By working with our Community Area Transport Group (CATG), we have funded ‘unsuitable for HGV’ signs for Sutton Mandeville and Swallowcliffe, helping keep heavy vehicles off our narrow, single-track roads, improving road safety and keeping our roads in decent condition.

I have also worked hard to make sure our fantastic community assets are well resourced, so they can continue to deliver for our residents. We were fortunate to secure almost £3,000 of funding for the Chalke Valley Sports Centre in Broad Chalke, to help them expand their local sports provision, and over £4,000 for the Fovant Youth Club, to help them improve their accessibility. I know that this will make a real difference to these two great local organisations.

I am also committed to working to protect our environment and our beautiful natural landscapes, and this month, I met with the team at Cranborne Chase AONB, to discuss their plans for the coming year. They have some particularly interesting ideas for the Dark Skies Reserve, and much more in the pipeline. I also led an Area Board discussion around eco-friendly local initiatives for parish councils, local community groups and interested residents across South West Wiltshire, and we are committed to supporting these locally-led interventions wherever we can.

Finally, as many of you will know, an independent remuneration panel recommended that the Council should adopt plans to increase our pay by around 5%, to reflect the work we do. At a time where our economy remains uncertain, and we are all having to do more with less, my colleagues and I did not feel this was fair or justifiable, and so we voted against these proposals, and instead voted to only increase our allowances in line with the pay rises we give our staff at Wiltshire Council.

There remains a lot more to do, and please feel free to get in touch if you’d like any more information on the work we’re doing, or if I can help.

Best wishes,

Nabil

**Councillor Nabil Najjar**

**Fovant and Chalke Valley division – Wiltshire Council**

**Portfolio Holder for Arts, Heritage and Tourism**