BROAD CHALKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 1040th Meeting of the

Broad Chalke Parish Council

held at Broad Chalke Village Hall

Wednesday 8 September 2021 at 7.00pm

ATTENDANCE

Mr T Hitchings (Chairman)

Mr E Fry

Mr S Dawes

Mrs E Richter

Mr M Pickford

Mr T Cave-Gibbs

Mr C Sylvan

The Clerk, Mr C Rothwell was in attendance.

The Vice Chairman conducted a site meeting of councillors present to review Low Lane footpath prior to consideration in the main Meeting.

It was noted that the site visit was undertaken after a period of prolonged dry weather and so was easily passable on foot. Councillors were able to comment on personal experience using the footpath that, in places during wet weather it does get very muddy.

The site visit observed that the drainage ditch on the northern side of the footpath was very congested.

**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.** A visual inspection was undertaken by the Clerk prior to the Meeting and recorded.
2. **To receive apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Mr J Allison, Mr S Carter and Wiltshire Councillor Mr N Najjar.
3. **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 11 August 2021 as a true and accurate record**. Agreed
2. **Matters Arising from the August 2021 Minutes**.

**Neighbourhood Plan:** The Clerk reminded the Council that there needs to be established effective mechanisms for progressing, monitoring and reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan.

1. **To discuss Neighbourhood Plan actions**
2. **Outcome of Site Visit of Low Lane Footpath**: The NP Action Plan (page 99) states ‘*Priority will be given to improving Low Lane (thus providing access to houses on High Lane which has no room for a pathway) …’*

Following the site visit noted in these Minutes above, the Council recognised the issue with no footway on High Lane, as is the case in many other parts of the village, and that Low Lane footpath provided a safe alternative route into the village centre, particularly for residents in properties that have a rear access onto the footpath. The Council noted, and was able to benefit from the personal knowledge of councillors, that because of its low-lying nature and proximity to the river, it is quite badly affected by standing water and mud in periods of bad weather. This can make it difficult for less physically able users, and it is this point that has led to this footpath being specifically highlighted in the NP.

In the Council’s deliberations at the Meeting the following points were considered:

* Ownership of the path
* Responsibility for maintenance
* Appropriateness of any improvement works to a rural footpath and guarding against ’urbanisation’.
* The type of improvements, the practicality and effectiveness of any work, and end outcome.
* Availability of finance (the Parish Council do not hold budget for such work)
* The level of priority and community benefit attached to improvements

 After significant discussion, the Council resolved to:

* Contact the Rights of Way Officer at Wiltshire Council to investigate what, if any, assistance they can offer.
* Raise maintenance with the Parish Steward
* Raise with the landowner, particularly the condition of the blocked drainage ditch.
1. **Buildings at Risk- Enquiry raised by owner of the barn adjacent to The Plough, Mount Sorrel.**

Page 62 paragraph 3.67 of the NP talks about the ‘disused farm building’ at the South Western gateway to the village*, ‘…it being a good example of Wiltshire rural vernacular with cob walls.’*

The current owners have approached the Council seeking advice on what assistance the Council can provide, in light of the NP entry.

The Chairman was able to brief the Meeting that the barn is in current use as an engineering workshop and so is not disused.

The Meeting agreed that the barn is an important building and support to the current owners should be a priority for the Council. However, as the Council does not have the legal powers to offer financial support, the Council’s priority should be to provide assistance in the form of formal support to secure appropriate ‘listing’ of the barn. In this way the owners might be able to access grants/funding from agencies responsible for providing this type of financial support.

It was resolved that the Chairman write to the owners setting out the Council’s position and to Wiltshire Council to highlight this.

1. **Parish Council Priorities.**

The Meeting undertook a brief review and update on Priorities.

Of particular note were:

* The Clerk has updated the Priorities schedule to Version 1.3 to include Neighbourhood Plan Action Projects.
* Priority 4: Flood Plan. Mr Pickford reported that still awaiting opportunity to meet up with Wiltshire Council for training and briefing. No meetings have taken place through the pandemic.
* Priority 5: FTTP. Mr Sylvan reported on his further investigations into FTTP and the Voucher Scheme and on the C4lke mobile Project. Improving internet connectivity and capacity to the entire village remains technically slow, and culturally complex. There are three options available to enhancing the internet capacity within the village: 5G backhaul (Chalk Mobile), UHF shot (Wessex Internet), Satellite (Oneweb / Starlink), FTTP via blown fibre along the existing network (traditional FTTP).

From a financial perspective, the grants available through the rural connection schemes at county and national level remain in place, but require interest levels above what has been previously demonstrated by those living within Broad Chalke.

This means that although a low interest and desire exists for the FTTP to be implemented, the time line (12-18months) for installing, would likely be superseded by already implementable solutions (5G backhaul or UHF) or by near horizon technical solutions that are already being utlilsed locally (Starlink). Low levels of interest, coupled by relatively inexpensive developing solutions, will likely demonstrate a better allocation of resource (time / effort) than attempting to advocate for the village to implement a disruptive FTTP install, of what could be assessed as legacy technology.

* Priority 7: Playground. Mr T Cave-Gibbs reported on recent inspections; that one piece of equipment has had to be taken out of action because of a rotted main support but that repairs had been requested, and still awaited, via Mr L Parker. The ROSPA Playground inspection is also due.
* Priority 8: Highways and road drainage. Mr Fry reported that the Parish Steward will be undertaking gulley clearance and requested from Councillors any known blockages. Mr Pickford raised the blocked gulley on The High Road east of the village and west of the Courtyard barns. Also, the drainage gulley adjacent to the bus shelter at Stoke Farthing. It was noted that it will be interesting to see if the works that WC undertook with the vactor tank at Longbridge 6 weeks ago has had any effect.
* Priority 8: Finance, Assets and Risk Register. In Mr S Carters absence, he had reported to the Clerk that bus shelter inspections had commenced. Also, that we are coming to the annual cycle of budget setting ahead of the Precept being established so the Council need to consider funding priorities for 2022/23.
* Priority 15; ROW. The Chairman updated the Meeting on the bi-annual ROW inspections and the Meeting agreed a schedule of inspections by each councillor for the Chairman then to review and record. It was also reported that an application for funding under Wiltshire council’s Finger Post scheme is to be made.
* Priority 18: War Memorial Lime Trees. To note on-going monthly inspections and no apparent deterioration.
* Priority 20: Crystal Clear Ebble. In the absence of Mr S Carter, he had advised the Clerk that some information has been prepared ready for publication.

Priority 22: Defibrillator. Mr T Cave-Gibbs reported on recent replacement of the defibrillator pads. The next major expense will be in 2023 when both pads and battery will require replacement.

* Priority 23: Chalke Valley Sports Centre: To note purchase of equipment and the Council to reclaim VAT.
1. **To receive Finance Report from the Clerk**

Balance at Lloyds Bank £13,464.85.

Payments since last meeting: ICO £35; Community First- insurance £1039.34

1. **To receive any Planning applications.**

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

* **PL/2021/08388** Kings Old Rectory tree works. No objection
* **PL/2021/08358** Cerney Rise, High Lane tree works. No objection.

**- PL/2021/06074** Listed as Mead End House. It was noted that the title of this outline application is incorrect and refers to The Plough, Mount Sorrel. This is a property that has remained vacant for a number of years. It occupies a prominent roadside position. The BCNP seeks to encourage vacant/derelict properties back into use. This outline application is for demolition of existing and new build on similar road frontage footprint but slightly deeper into the land not visible from the road. The Council resolved to support the application.

- **PL/2021/08188** Willow House, High Lane. This is for the construction of a garage and workshop in the front garden/drive of one of the new build houses on High Lane.

A number of councillors expressed concern over this application and potential over development of the site. It was also felt that the plans looked misleading in connection with site layout, particularly the space between the new properties and the frontage to the houses and space available. As some of the Council had not had opportunity to look at the development it was resolved that the Meeting defer decision pending feedback from those councillors present that were not familiar with the site. The Chairman to coordinate feedback and to circulate the Council with outcome.

**11. Date of Next Meeting.**  13 October 2021

The Meeting closed at 8.50pm