BROAD CHALKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 1032nd Meeting of the

Broad Chalke Parish Council

held remotely via Zoom Pro

Wednesday 10 February 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Mr T Hitchings (Chairman)

Mr M Pickford (Vice Chairman)

Mt D Gilbert

Mr E Fry

Mr J Allison

Mrs E Richter

Mr T Moss

Mr S Dawes

Mrs J Green

Mr A Truluck was in attendance for item 5. 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.

If a vote is required, those attending by video will be asked to raise their hand until they have been advised that their vote has been recorded. Any members attending by telephone will be asked to express their vote vocally.

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 T Cave-Gibbs and Mr J Dutson.
2. **To record declarations of interest from Members regarding items on the Agenda.**

Mr Justin Allison declared Pecuniary Interest in Item 12- Groundsman’s Proposals.

1. **Chairman’s Announcements**.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Truluck to the meeting and gave Mr C Sylvan’s apologies.

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

**Neighbourhood Plan:** Mr Truluck updated the meeting on progress with the NP consultation that ends later this month, and with the appointment of an Inspector. The Plan Referendum is hoped to take place on 6 May 2021, the day of Local Government elections. A decision on this is due on 22 February.

The Chairman asked about Settlement boundaries identified in Map 4 of the Plan. Mr Truluck had spoken with Wiltshire Council and was able to confirm that a settlement is 2 or more properties. Individual (isolated) properties are nor ‘red-lined’ and are not treated as ‘settlements’, but by nature of their location are most unlikely to be subject to development pressure on bordering land.

Mr Truluck advised the Meeting that:

- ‘red-lined’ settlement areas signify where development might be allowed in the future. Outside the ‘settlement’ boundaries, there would have to be an extremely good case for any development.

- the practice of drawing a red line through large gardens has ceased so permitted development could take place as infill within gardens, if approved.

Councillor Green advised the Meeting that the Local Plan review is proposing to include a 100 meters buffer around settlements to guard against infill development.

Mr Dawes asked what progress with the issue raised by residents of the Knighton Road bungalows? Mr Truluck has spoken with a representative and the plan is to have a socially distanced meeting later this month to resolve any remaining concerns. The Chairman volunteered to be part of the meeting.

It was agreed that Mr Truluck would write formally to Wiltshire Council to place on record the facts of ‘red-line’ settlement areas.

**Willow Trees, Longbridge.** The Clerk had written to Mr Rob Wilkins at the Terry Pratchett Foundation (letter of 14 January 2021) and has received email from Mr Wilkins confirming action to be taken and planning permission not required. The works have been delayed a couple of weeks due to the condition of the meadow being extremely wet.

**Weebly website**. The Clerk confirmed that annual website subscription renewal payment has been made. Cost £72.69.

**Mobile Project (Tis The Future):** The Clerk has discussed with the Chairman of the Hub that the PC support the principle but not at the cost of loss of business to the Hub. Derek Brown raising with the CVCH Board and will then respond directly to the Project. PC to keep a watching brief.

1. **To receive report from Wiltshire Councillor Jose Green.**

A summary is attached to these Minutes

1. **Parish Council Communication:**

The Chairman introduced this item by acknowledging that there had been some difficulties in getting on top of PC communications and that we remain behind the times so far as use of social media with reliance on the monthly Broadsheet and notice boards and website. There are many opportunities we should look at and bring the Council up to date and more accessible and visible to Council taxpayers and residents.

**Report on website review from Mr Tim Moss.** Mr Moss updated the meeting on approach to a new Council website. It had not been possible to hold face to face meeting of the Project Committee and so current emphasis is to make the existing site more accessible now that the Weebly annual subscription has been paid. The long-term approach is as discussed at the January 2021 meeting.

It was agreed that a face-to-face meeting be held as soon as it is practical to do so and the Clerk, Mr Moss and Mr Dawes take this forward.

**Future Meetings and use of IT.** Mr Dawes presented a report on Microsoft Teams as a possible IT solution for future remote meetings and management of Council information. This was presented through screen sharing and the Meeting was able to look at the ‘live’ Teams profile Mr Dawes had ‘mocked-up’ for the Council and to look at its functionality.

Mr Dawes advised the meeting of many benefits of using MS Teams that included: accessible to all councillors; visitors can be given link to access meetings; meeting organisation can be set up by anyone that is authorised by the Council and not just the owner of the application as Zoom is; sharing of and library for Council documents (a significant positive so far as GDPR); a chat and message function.

There is facility for a voting system through ‘Polly’ on MS Teams.

Another significant benefit is that we are able to set up Council emails within MS Teams and move away from use of personal emails and storage of data on personal devices (another major positive in GDPR compliance). Just require a Windows live account and set up email address using G-mail.

Mr Dawes advised that there is currently free access to MS Teams, including 10GB storage during the pandemic.

 The Meeting unanimously agreed to move forward with this approach.

 The agreed process being that the Council is up and running using MS Teams for its April 2021 meeting and that councillors have a MS Teams linked and dedicated Council email address on which all future PC business is transacted. The March meeting would remain via Zoom and Mrs Richter would set this up.

Mr Dawes to assist councillors in setting up emails. All councillors to contact him directly at the earliest opportunity to progress this.

**Parish Council e-mails and GDPR.** The above discussion had dealt with this matter but for reference see parish councils fact sheet on use of own devices attached to these Minutes that had been circulated to all councillors.

**Social Media Policy.** Mr Dawes reported on the benefits of Social Media to the Council’s communications approach and picks up on the Chairman’s opening remarks on this. Mr Dawes set out what the Council is currently doing; its limitations and the risks the Council is open to where individuals disseminate information using their personal emails or using their own personal details.

The Parish Council is a ‘Corporate Body’ and no one councillor can act independent of it so moving forward there needs to be an agreed approach and Policy to deal with how the Council communicates and what media it uses. This is the purpose of a Social Media Policy for the Council.

A draft Policy had been circulated with the Agenda and Mr Dawes and The Clerk had commented on the draft and were looking at other councils approaches to gain the benefit of their experience.

The Meeting agreed that use of appropriate social media should be part of how the Council communicates and asked Mr Dawes and the Clerk to develop the draft Policy into an approach the Council could adopt and for this to be brought to the March 2021 Meeting.

1. **To receive a report from the Clerk on the 2021 local elections and the requirements and implications for the Council.**

The Clerk advised the Meeting that Local Government elections are still planned for 6 May 2021, but a decision is expected from Government later this month. If elections go ahead then all councillors will require to stand for re-election.

The Clerk had circulated a summary of the elections timetable with the Agenda and this is attached to these Minutes**.**

The Clerk also reported that WC had deferred any action about recharging parish councils the costs of the Wiltshire Council local elections. Parish Council elections, if required, would still be a cost to the Parish Council.

**Annual Meeting of the Council and Annual Parish Meeting**

The Meeting also noted that theAnnual Meeting of the Council, to elect Chairman, has to be held between 10 May and 24 May. The Council’s May Meeting is scheduled for 12 May.

 The Annual Parish Meeting has to be held between 1 March and 1 June and so a decision on arrangements will need to be made once there is clarity on the Local Government elections and any legislation on Annual Meetings.

**Promotion of postal voting**

With Covid-19, we have a role to encourage sign up for postal voting that can be done on Wiltshire Council Website.

1. **To receive an update on the Census 2021.**

The Clerk provided an update on the Census timetable. Census day is 21 March 2021. 22 Feb-3 March- households receive postcard telling them that the Census is happening.

3-13 March – Every household receives a pack telling them how to take part. It is online but can request paper copy and alternate formats.

1. **To receive update on Fibre to the Property (FTTP) from Mrs E Richter**

Mrs Richter had had conversations with Mr C Sylvan (village resident with an interest in securing FTTP) about the position with Openreach and access to FTTP. This needs more clarity as, when last reported to the Council, it appeared that Openreach had accessible fibre to all households in the village, but this may not be correct.

Mrs Richter advised the Council that it may still have a role to play if there was sufficient interest from within the village as Openreach required to progress a Community FTTP proposal through a legal entity, not through individual householders. In this way access to the voucher scheme and funding for FTTP might be accessed. Mrs Green advised that advise could be obtained from Marie Nash at Wiltshire Council.

There was also reference to Ch4lke Mobile at the Meeting and it was felt that there needs to be clarity on what this project might provide to residents.

It was agreed that Mrs Richter would discuss further with Mr C Sylvan and investigate further with a report back to March 2021 Meeting.

1. **To review Councillor responsibilities for Parish Council Key Business areas following circulation of further detail by the Clerk after the January meeting**

The Chairman sort approval from the Meeting to defer this item and this was agreed.

1. **To receive Finance Report from Clerk**
* **Balance in Bank account** £10,399.49
* **Spend since last meeting:** £80 on SLCC membership;£72.69 on Weebly renewal; £113.78 Groundsman costs for January.
* **Chalke Valley Sports Centre**: Mr Fry advised the meeting of the costs of repairing the gang-mowers at £2100 and asked the Council to pick up the VAT on this work as it is a Council asset that is being maintained. The Council agreed to this.
* **Section 137 Grants**. The Chairman sought approval from the Meeting to make a donation to the village Hall as the Council had not been able to hire for meetings. A £150 donation was unanimously agreed.

**To receive and consider proposals for additional grounds and maintenance works in 2021/22 from Mr J Allison.**

The Clerk had received proposals from Mr Allison and had circulated these together with the Clerks observations on the proposals with the Agenda.

Mr Allison presented the proposals to the meeting (attached as part of these Minutes).

The Chairman thanked Mr Allison for the proposals and for the work that he was currently undertaking for the Council to keep the village in good order.

The Chairman advised that the budget has been set for 2021/22 with an increase in the Grounds budget of £200 to £1700 and this year we have a budget of £1500 and a spend to 31 January 2021 of £1612.59, recognising addition of grounds works missed off the specification after budget setting and one-off maintenance carried out, so the overspend this year would be funded from Reserves.

The Chairman directed the Meeting that, whist there may be items in the proposals that would be of benefit, there is a need to maintain the village areas within the budget available and so there is a need to explore what could be done to achieve this.

**The Meeting agreed that:**

- Grounds maintenance should be undertaken in 2021/22 within the agreed £1700 budget and to do so some savings would be required from within existing areas.

- one-off maintenance items should be dealt with as one-off’s and should not be included withing the Grounds maintenance budget.

- items like the playground bin be funded from the New Equipment budget.

- the specification and frequency of grass cutting be amended to make savings to divert to other areas if required (The Clerk notes that this might be achieved by reducing playground mowing in Quarters 1 and 2 from 3 times a month to twice a month; and playground strimming from monthly to every 2 months in Quarters 1 and 2).

- gritting of footpaths whilst of obvious benefit, the Council simply does not have the resource to do this, and nor does Wiltshire Council Highways that have the responsibility for these areas.

- more use should be made of the Wiltshire Parish Steward and that some areas of grounds maintenance could be undertaken by the Steward including the small green at Sun Cottage and the footpath between South Street and The Causeway. This would then allow funds allocated to these two areas to be diverted to fund other areas proposed by Mr Allison.

- The wildflower meadow at the war memorial should be maintained, but it is dependent on savings being achieved in other areas.

- War memorial benches. These do require attention and should be dealt with as one-offs on a bi-annual cycle within the Maintenance and Repairs budget. For now, this item should be deferred until the new financial year.

- War Memorial Limes. These do need more management as they increase in age. Mr Fry commented that the Wiltshire Council Arboricultural Officer might be approached to get further opinion before decision on way forward.

- Bonfire. There is a need to dispose of arisings affectively and sensitively. This could be done as a bi-annual process as was the case this year. To be monitored.

It was agreed that Mr Fry would explore the relevant above items with the Parish Steward and to introduce at the earliest opportunity with a report back to March Meeting.

1. **To receive report on highways and drainage matters from Councillor Fry**

Mr Fry reported on updated Parish Steward schedule.

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

The Council agreed the following

* 21/00719/TCA College House, Knapp Hill: No Objection.
* 20/11345/FUL Clock Cottage, South Street: Support the application.
* 21/00702/FUL 3, Butlers Yard. Replacement Porch: No Objection
* 21/01381/TCA Ash Meadow, The Causeway: No Objection
1. **Date of Next Meeting. 10 March 2021** To be confirmed.

**Provisional dates for Parish Council Meetings in 2021 all at 6.30pm**

14 April; 12 May (provisional APM subject to ability to hold a public meeting); 9 June; 14 July; 11 August; 8 September; 13 October; 10 November; 8 December.

**The Meeting closed at 8.27pm**

**REPORT OF WILTSHIRE COUNCILLOR JOSE GREEN- FEBRUARY 2021**

Wiltshire Council [WC] is still encouraging residents to download the NHS Test and Trace App’ onto your phone particularly with regard to the Covid 19 variants. Although the situation changes almost on a daily basis do answer a call if it is from 0300 456 0100 as it is the contact trace team.

We are inclined to forget that it is business as usual for WC; for examples, Highways are still working hard and recently over 58km of roadway has been resurfaced, numerous potholes filled, 520 bridges inspected for safety, many fallen tree works cleared up after the storms, 164 tonnes of silt and debris removed from drainage systems and the Bin Collections reliably picked up.

Staff have had to self-isolate and 127 staff have been redeployed, 35 to hospitals. Other staff have been demobilised to the vaccine centres, the Wellbeing Hub and the testing stations. With the elections due on May 6th, 300 Polling stations need to be made Covid 19 safe, so there is plenty going on.

Although numbers are now slowly dropping there had been a sharp rise per 100,000 across Wiltshire; up to last week the total number of deaths reached 528 and sadly rising. It is hoping all schools will be reopened on March 8th although 10 thousand children of key workers and children with special needs are attending school, a big increase from the last lockdown.

As the clock is ticking towards my retirement the volume of work remains much the same, working virtually cuts down so much travelling time; the planning committee works very well and the voting on Teams appear to be very efficient, it is a shame that site visits are still unable to happen due to the restrictions.

The ‘virtual’ public consultation meetings of the **Local Plan Review ‘Empowering Local Communities** ‘, 1300 people joined the events held across Wiltshire. The document will cover all aspects of planning policy until 2036. The assessed housing needs for the whole of Wiltshire, set by Government is 45,600- not only homes but employment needs are also required- it’s been recognised that sustaining our Communities and managing rural development, -whether homes for local people, affordable, type and in the right location is something we all want to achieve. The option to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan, such as Broad Chalke has done, remains for the village residents to decide, it doesn’t have to be a huge volume of work or size but enthusiasm is required so that the aspirations for the future years can be documented.

Other key parts of the Local Plan are addressing **Climate Change and the Gypsy and Travellers Strategy**where sites are required to meet their future needs.

**WC has a target to be carbon neutral by 2030**, how is that to be achieved? LED Street lighting, planting trees, wild flower trials along highway verges and amenity land, ensuring public buildings are energy efficient, Council housing insulation improvements, wind turbines, solar panels, encouraging waste reuse and recycling, battery storage, installation of electric charging points is to name but a few. It is hoped that this year alone could see a reduction of the carbon footprint by 80%. No doubt the reduction of car journeys has helped!!

**The Budget will be set at Full Council on the 23rd February.**Unfortunately WC’s share of the Council Tax is likely to rise by 1.99% with a further Levy of 3% for Adult Social Care. I say this as it is the highest financial demand on a household. Together with the Police, Fire and Rescue and Parish Council’s expected increases it is a hefty outlay. WC’s priorities have always been to maintain the services they provide. Although it is a balanced budget this year, [mainly due to the vast sums that have been sent down by Central Government ] the future years will require careful decisions and efficiencies  post pandemic as the demand for services will surely rise. There is a Council Tax support fund for those who qualify, already there is an increase in the demand for this. £6.7m is the current figure in lost revenue through CT arrears.

As in other years Children’s Social care and those with special educational needs is a priority as is the Waste Service, Leisure facilities and many others.

The next **CATG** (Transport Group) meeting is to be held on the **17th February.**.it’s good to see Fovant has extended the 20 mph speed limits through the village.

On **March 2nd the Area Board**is hosting a mini Employment event. Apprenticeship schemes and opportunities for NEETS will be discussed.

 A brand new project is being launched to support new activities for the Youth. Funding will be available if it fits the criteria. This will be discussed at the next SWW Area Board on the 17th March.

 More next time but in the meantime stay safe.

Best wishes....Jose.

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