

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF DRAKES BROUGHTON PARISH WAS HELD ON THURSDAY 25th MAY 2023 AT 7:30 PM AT DRAKES BROUGHTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: J Butterworth (Chair), R Bessant, T Pell, M Williams, R Cother, C Diston & R Marriot

IN ATTENDANCE: County Councillor L Robinson, District Councillor R Adams, District Councillor L Turier & The Parish Clerk.

1. APOLOGIES

A Crouchman, L Wild, S Boniface, M Boniface, J Murphy & R Booker.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held in May 2022 were reviewed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk read out the matters raised in 2022:

Wadborough crossroads had been addressed by WCC Highways & County Councillor.

Roadside markers and stones had been addressed with the residents by WCC Highways.

A new litter bin had been purchased by the Parish Council for Wadborough

The area outside of the shops in Drakes Broughton had been raised to the shop keepers, The area is privately owned, and all public bodies have no remit to do any work on the area. The public need to report any accidents & near misses directly to the shop keepers in order to put pressure on them to improve the area.

DBRFC match parking had been resolved.

4. REPORTS

(a) Parish Council

Mrs J Butterworth read the annual report as the Chair of the Parish Council:

REPORT FOR THE 2023 PARISH MEETINGS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The parish council is a local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in the parish and has an overall responsibility for the well-being of its local community. It is the level of government closest to the community, with the district authority above it in the hierarchy. Its work falls into three main categories:

- representing the local community
- delivering services to meet local needs
- striving to improve quality of life in the parish

Our Parish Council serves the Parishes of Drakes Broughton and Wadborough and the Parish of Pirton. The Parish Council meets each month throughout the year and as you would expect there is always plenty to discuss.

The membership of the Parish Council has changed during the year; retiring members include Amanda Tanfield (Pirton), John Yeo (Wadborough) Pip Crouchman (Wadborough) and Sheila Boniface (Drakes Broughton) and new members include Derek Skeys (Pirton) and Richard Booker (Drakes Broughton) and our recruitment campaign continues as we currently have a total of 4 vacancies for Parish Councillors.

Some things in Parish Council life seem to take an extraordinary length of time to progress but tenacity does seem to pay off and we have made good progress again on many fronts. During the year:

- We have overseen the completion and opening of the rejuvenated Village Hall in Drakes Broughton. The Parish Council secured over £300k of funding to pay for the work, and the project was delivered on time and in budget. The Parish Council is really delighted to see that Hall is being well used
- Eventually we won the battle to get the pedestrian crossing on the B4084 in Drakes Broughton working, This makes it less daunting for residents to cross the busy main road in order to access the rest of the village
- We have continued to press for changes at the ford in Walcot Lane to reduce the number of vehicles that get into trouble whilst trying to cross the ford when it's in flood.
- We have represented Parishioners views in The Boundary review consultation for council wards in Wychavon. The outcome of the review is that our Parish Council is now part of the new Drakes Broughton, Norton and Whittington Ward and are represented at Wychavon District Council by 2 District Councillors. These are newly elected District Councillors Liz Turier and Rob Adams.
- We have increased awareness of the SWDPR proposal to enable parishioners to participation in the Wychavon led consultation about the proposal to build a new town with 10,000 houses around the Worcestershire Parkway railway station. The Parish Council hosted roadshows, represented the communities' views at the Joint Parish Committee and at Wychavon Liaison meetings and made representations to the consultation on behalf of the local community.
- We have considered and responded to 27 planning applications for development in Pirton, Wadborough and Drakes Broughton
- We have secured and welcomed grants from County Councillor Linda Robinson for a new bench in Pirton and a defibrillator in Wadbrough, and from Sanctuary Housing for a community notice board in Drakes Broughton.
- We have upgraded some of the 41 Parish Council owned street lights in Drakes Broughton using community infrastructure levy money and successfully secured a 4-year fixed price deal for the electricity to power the lights.
- We have continued to consider options and take actions to ensure that services are maintained with no increase in the amount collected in Council tax on behalf of the Parish Council.

These things wouldn't happen without the people who do the work to make them happen; we are all really fortunate that they do what they do. My thanks go to our County Councillor and to our District Councillors who attend our monthly meetings and for the work they do to support our endeavours and to and to all of the Parish Councillors for everything they have done throughout this year.

My thanks also go to the people in the community who are not members of the Parish Council, but have joined our working parties and subcommittees to share some of the work load associated with making things happen locally. We are thankful.

I also have to say a big thank you to our Parish Clerk Nikki Nicholson for everything she has done to enable the Parish Council throughout this year.

We look forward to another busy year during which we will strive to represent the local community, deliver services to meet local needs and do what we can to improve quality of life in the Parishes.

(b) County Council

Worcestershire County Councillor

County Councillor Robinson gave an overview her report as follows:

"Good evening, everyone and thank you for attending your Annual parish meeting.

I am here in my capacity as your County Cllr as I reach the halfway point in my term and begin my third year representing you at WCC.

With the Cost-of-Living crisis and rising inflation I thought some of you may like to see how this has been taken into account in WCC's recent budget.

Budget update.

A five per cent rise in Worcestershire County Council's share of the Council Tax was approved last month.

The £935million budget for the year ahead will fund delivery of a wide range of essential services including services to keep the most vulnerable people in the county safe.

As part of the budget, the council will be putting in place an uplift to its Council Tax.

The 2.94 per cent rise in Council Tax will help to fund the increased costs of delivering improvements for residents and businesses while an additional two per cent uplift in the rate for the Adult Social Care levy will support vulnerable adults.

Major improvements for Worcestershire residents which includes improving roads, pavements and street lighting, in addition to funding a brand-new school in Worcester to help with school places more of that later.

County Hall will spend £268million over the next 12 months to ensure residents who need Adult Social Care support will continue to receive it.

A total of £146million has been allocated to ensure the County Council can continue to improve the lives of children and young people across the county.

£91million is being invested into supporting people to live independently for longer, through the dedicated work of the county's Public Health and Communities teams.

The budget also includes investment to maintain bus services with £3.5million invested on top of the £1.5million commitment made this year.

An additional £500,000 to enable minor highway works to be actioned more quickly such as the pruning of trees and the replacement of damaged street furniture and signage.

The council is facing similar challenges too, from both the impact of inflation on costs of materials and services to increasing demand for services, all of which adds significantly to the pressure on our budget.

"With more vulnerable people needing our support than ever before and with the cost of this care increasing significantly, our budget for next year reflects this added pressure.

We have had good news recently from Government to help support those in most need as the cost of living crisis

Household support fund

In the autumn statement 2022, the chancellor confirmed the household support fund would be extended for a further 12 months starting in April 2023, and this equates to just under £7.9 million for Worcestershire to use to support until 31st March 2024. Confirmation and guidance from the department of work and pensions was received in February 2023

The new funding from April 2023 is intended to provide assistance to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with the increase in living costs linked to energy and food. Whilst the general purpose of the fund is the same as that provided previously, there is a stronger focus on energy and supporting those vulnerable groups that may be facing additional costs, such as families on low incomes with children of all ages, pensioners, disabled people, carers, and care leavers

The proposed allocation of household support fund April 2023- march 2024 can allocate resources to the following funding areas: food, energy, district councils, advice services and management costs. District councils will be delivering local support through either direct in-house schemes or through various voluntary and community sector organisations in order to reach the most vulnerable residents in their local communities. Cabinet at County has endorsed their approach to the use of the household support fund (HSF) in2023/24

HIGHWAYS:

Highway's issues take up a large amount of my time as a County Councillor so here is some relevant information you may find interesting.

Following the recent announcement of £200m additional capital funding for highways maintenance, the Department for Transport has now published individual allocations for local authorities. This is in addition to the previous Dft funding and local additional monies already

allocated for improving roads and pavements in the budget. Worcestershire will receive £3,331,200 which should go a long way to keeping our roads as some of the best in the country.

Our road surface dressing season has started! Throughout spring and summer, road surfaces across the county will be restored, with over 160 sites set to be treated.

Surface dressing is a very effective way of restoring the road surface to extend the life of an existing surface, prevent deterioration and improve skid resistance. It also seals the road against water preventing potholes forming in winter. You can find out more, including a list of sites included in the 2023 programme here: <http://worcestershire.gov.uk/surfacedressing>



If you spot a Highways maintenance issue including potholes you can contact me or report it yourself on line to www.worcestershire.gov.uk/reportit with a precise location or do both and also send a picture if possible.

This new Report -it function went live last August and since then circa 5,000 reports have been received which equates to about 16,000 enquiries each year. 89% of enquiries since then have been completed. The top four enquiry types are still Roads/ footpaths, grass cutting, drainage and potholes.



Our gritters have travelled 3 times around the world this winter!

The winter season has now come to an end but since October last year, we have carried out an impressive 54 gritting runs, spreading over 5,000 tonnes of salt, keeping our roads moving and safe for motorists.

Nearly 70,000 miles were covered, which is the equivalent of three times around the circumference of our planet, from the six depots across Worcestershire.

For more info: <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/news/successful-busy-winter-season-comes-end-worcestershire>

Update from the Acute Trust at Worcs. Royal

ALL non-emergency operations will be moved away from the city's hospital in an attempt to cut the huge backlog for treatment and cut long waiting times.

The county's health bosses have agreed to a plan which will see only emergency and vascular operations performed at Worcestershire Royal Hospital in Worcester with the rest moved to the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch and Kidderminster Hospital by the end of May.

NHS England has tasked the county's hospital trust with cutting the longest waiting times – which includes 18-month delays and two-plus-year waits – for all 'planned' hospital appointments and treatment.

The ever-mounting wait for care has built up since the Covid-19 pandemic when a decision was made to pause all non-emergency care – with hospital staff told to focus only on treating the virus, most planned operations and cancer treatment.

A 'recovery' plan, which was published by the NHS in February last year, called for all two-year waits for care to be "eliminated" within six months, 18-month waits to be removed by April this year and year-long waits to be wiped out by March 2025.

The target before the Covid-19 pandemic for GP referral to treatment was 18 weeks but astonishingly the hospital is now having to battle to make sure people are seen within a year for some treatments.

Matthew Hopkins, the chief executive of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, said two-year waits had been "largely eliminated" last September and the trust is currently focusing on cutting 78-week-plus waits before attention shifts to cutting 65-week and then year-long waits.

Mr Hopkins, who has revealed the trust's biggest priority was cutting waiting times even if this came at the expense of balancing the hospital's budget, said the biggest challenges to cutting wait times were staff shortages as well as previous and pending strikes by hospital staff.

The acute trust boss said recent industrial action – which saw junior doctors strike for 72 hours straight earlier this month – had caused "significant problems."

Junior doctors went out on strike for four days as part of a 96-hour walkout between April 11 and 15.

"To be honest the main constraints are our theatre nurses because there is a challenge," Mr Hopkins told Worcestershire County Council's health and overview scrutiny committee on March 13.

"As the NHS looks to gear up elective capacity, theatre staff will be the group that becomes the sought-after nurses and allied health professionals... We have done quite well with overseas recruitment into theatres, that is going to be a particular challenge if we are increasing the actual quantum of operating theatres and lists.

"We're going to need more staff."

Bosses are looking overseas to fill the gap with the vacancy rates for nurses at the trust at around eight per cent – up from five per cent after more posts were created – and a recruitment drive in the Philippines is said to be "going well."

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust is also building two more operating theatres at the Alex to add to the seven theatres already in place. A further four theatres will eventually be built in Redditch with a completion date so far unknown.

The trust said its plan to separate its care in this way was in line with best practice guidance and would lead to shorter waiting times and reduce the risk of cancellation.

It would also help the recovery from the impact of the pandemic and ease pressure on urgent and emergency care, the trust said.

On a personal note, my husband was admitted to the Royal last recently with acute pancreatitis and the care he received over seven days from being rushed into A & E on the first day of the Doctor's strike was exemplary.

My only criticism is the total lack of parking available on site which leads to unacceptable delays for relatives trying to visit patients.

Thank you. Please feel free to ask any me any questions you may have. I am more than happy for you to contact me at any time if I can be of help with any issues or if not signpost you in the direction of those who can.

5.ANY MATTER AN ELECTOR WISHES TO RAISE

Wadborough Crossroads visibility and height of the hedge: A resident raised that once again the hedge was overgrown and visibility on the Stoulton approach was very poor. County Councillor Robinson agreed to go and visit the resident.

5. REPORTS FROM DRAKES BROUGHTON DBRFC

Richard Marriott introduced himself as DBRFC's Welfare Officer and introduced Craig, the Chair. Richard advised the meeting that they had a very active 'mini kickers' section for under 7's and this was growing all the time, the club had a team or two for each age group and are currently looking into an adult team for those who have been coming up through DBRFC and finding there is nowhere to progress to at 18. The club has 130-140 players and to ensure fair use of the pitches at Drakes Broughton and avoid overuse, the club practice and play, at Norton, Pinvin and Peopleton as well, although Drakes Broughton remains their home. Richard advised that the club's ethos and values were to be inclusive and affordable, all players get to play no matter skills and quality. The purpose is to build resilience, help with exercise and mental health for young people.

There is active information sharing and shared working with the Village Hall Management committee and the Parish Council.

Due to lack of residents in attendance and apologies received from the representatives reports from Village Hall, Open Space & Wadborough Village Committee were not heard.

There was a general discussion about how to improve attendance at this Parish meeting, the Community needed to be informed as to it being a community meeting, a chance for the residents to raise and drive the Parish Councils objectives for the year. A thought was to maybe have the meeting during the day or near, prior or after the Coffee & Cake session on Friday as this was very well attended.

Mrs J Butterworth thanked all for attending.

The Meeting closed at 9:30 p.m.