

BRETFORTON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th April 2021 VIA ZOOM.

PRESENT:

Cllr A Grant
Cllr R Davis
Cllr G Collins
Cllr J Cleveland
Cllr K Carter

APOLOGIES:

Cllr N Smith
Cllr A Powell
Cllr T Appleby.

PARISHIONERS:

No parishioners attended/questions raised.

MINUTES:

Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th May 2020 were read out, approved and will be signed at next available meeting. Proposed by Cllr Grant, Seconded by Cllr Cleveland. All in favour.

CHAIRMANS REPORT:

Chairman's Annual Statement 2021

Bretforton Parish Council

The last year has been complicated by the Covid pandemic but otherwise The Parish Council has continued with work as normal.

This year has seen the resignation of Councillor Alan Curry due to work pressures and the addition of Councillor Linda Hall who has returned after a lengthy break.

The planning application for housing on the field in the middle of the village by Rooftop Housing Association was refused on Open Space policy. The applicants did not consider that an appeal would be successful as they let the period for this to elapse to our relief as going through it all again would have been stressful. It does however mean that the field and the surrounding hedge and railings are now in poor repair and unlikely to be improved any time soon. The future of the site is also a concern.

Meetings have been held via Zoom for most of the year and this has proved to be a success. This will continue for a while but no doubt we will return to The Memorial Hall eventually.

The Burial Ground is in good condition and minor repairs and improvements have helped to keep it looking well. The number of burials appears to be less these days possibly due to the opening of the crematorium at Fladbury.

The Allotments are thriving and fully taken up now after a few holders having left due to moving out of the village. Tom has been providing top quality manure from the farm which helps and there have been grants from our County Councillor for the communal shed and strimmer to tackle the boundary weeds. This has also been a haven for plot holders during the two lockdowns.

Progress of Memorial Hall improvements has been held up due to Covid restrictions but John and I did manage to unpack the new chairs and put them on the trolleys before things closed down. Hopefully we will get going before too long.

Current projects include sett kerbs and enhancement of the green at The Cross which is now complete, provision of musical instrument tuition at the school and a new footpath around the Recreation Ground. These last two funded through New Homes Bonus monies obtained before the deadline for these funds provided by the District Council had passed.

Finally, our efforts are now directed to getting our new PC website up and running and making sure it is at least as good as those of our neighbouring villages (or better). This with the addition of a printed newsletter will make sure all of the village has full access to information about the Parish Council and links to village organisations.

None of this would be running so smoothly in these difficult times without the work and commitment put in by our Parish Clerk Andrea Evans so a big vote of thanks to Andrea.

Robert Davis

March 2021

COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT:

See report included in minutes for Parish Council Meeting of 12th April 2021.

DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT;

Report to the Annual Parish Meeting of Bretforton Parish Council 2021

Cllr Aaron Powell, Wychavon District Council

Death of HRH The Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh

The District Council mourns the loss of The Duke of Edinburgh. A letter of condolence has been sent to Her Majesty The Queen from the Chairman of the Council. Flags will fly at half mast until the morning after the funeral.

Covid-19

The year has been dominated, of course, by Covid. The current infection rate across the District is 39 cases per 100,000 population which is a massive reduction from January. The rate has risen slightly in recent days but this is not unexpected as restrictions are lifted. Vaccinations

are moving fast with 72,931 (as at 9th April) people in Wychavon having received their first dose. This represents 64% of the population over 16 and over 90% of all age groups from 55 upwards.

In total £45 million has now been paid out to local businesses to support them during the pandemic. We have tried very hard to contact every local business. The Restart Grant Scheme will soon go live and businesses will be encouraged to apply. In terms of individuals, £135,000 has been paid in Track and Trace self isolation payments and we have given £101,000 to local foodbanks to support the most vulnerable.

Parking in Wychavon Council's off street car parks will remain free for a few more weeks as non-essential shops reopen. We are exploring ways to continue to incentivise visitors to town centre shops and facilities as restrictions are eased further. On street parking charges continue to be enforced.

District Council activity for the year

Perhaps the most significant District Council development this year, over and above the Covid response, has been the adoption of the Intelligently Green Plan. This is a ten year carbon reduction strategy which aims to:

- Reduce the Council's greenhouse gas emissions by at least 75% by 2030
- Halve District wide carbon emissions by 2030
- Double the size of Wychavon's low carbon economy
- Treble renewable energy generation in the district
- Capture at least 500 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year by 2025

New Homes Bonus

The new homes bonus grant request for the all weather track around the recreation ground was approved at the last Executive Board meeting, following recommendations from the Communities Funding Panel. I was pleased to be able to support the submission to the panel.

Planning

The planning appeal for affordable housing on land at Station Road has still not been decided despite the hearing taking place in January.

A number of you contacted me recently regarding the comments on Facebook about measurements and survey work being undertaken at the site adjacent to the cemetery entrance on Main St. I have discussed this with officers at the District Council and can confirm that the contractors were not working on behalf of the Council.

As you know the District Councils for Wychavon, Malvern Hills and Worcester continue to work on the next iteration of the joint South Worcestershire Development Plan which is a legal requirement and without which there is greater risk of uncontrolled development. Following the Preferred Site Options consultation last year the Council may need to consider alternative sites. In doing so the officers need to determine whether any of the issues that affected previous proposed sites also affect these new sites, including drainage and access, and these investigations do sometimes require evidence from agents of landowners. I cannot confirm whether or not this is such a site.

Any sites included in the plan for publication will be subject to public consultation in the autumn according to the current timetable. The plan itself will be published for approval by the Council in August/September of this year - at which point these sites will become public. In the

meantime, any sites being considered (albeit their status might still show the pre-consultation status) including basic details such as the size of the site under consideration etc. are shown in the interactive policies map at: <http://swdp.addresscafe.com/app/exploreit/default2.aspx> (You have to search for a location on the map first to Zoom in and then Search for information on the map - using the balloon pointer in the left hand menu as a pin to drop in the map itself!). My understanding is that densities of ca. 18 properties per hectare are being considered.

Even if a site is included in the plan, before development can occur it will require planning permission and the application must satisfy the planners that issues such as access and drainage can be appropriately resolved.

Road closures

There are a number of road closures planned over the coming weeks for works on behalf of the County Council. As county councillor Alastair may be able to provide more information but alongside the works on Weston Road from Gloster Ades to the railway line, there are closures on Station Road/Birmingham Road between South Littleton and Blackminster School for a number of weeks, and a closure proposed for two weeks from 23rd April on Badsey Road between the Evesham Bypass and Village Street, Aldington. There is a risk that these closures could overlap which would result in few detour options. Alastair is looking into this and will no doubt be able to update in due course.

Resumption of Physical Meetings

The regulations that permit Council’s to hold virtual meetings expire on 7th May. Unlike other Covid regulations the Government has stated that it does intend to extend them which means that all meetings after that date must be physical meetings with social distancing between 7th May and 21st June. The government’s position is being challenged in the High Court so it may change but currently we should plan on resuming physical meetings.

BYRD & CANNING CHARITY:

Payments made 2021
29 payments at £20 making a total of £580.00 Balance £11.25
Accounts will be signed at next available meeting. Proposed by: Cllr Grant. Seconded by: Cllr Carter. To be signed by the Chairman.

NON AGENDA ITEMS

Meeting closed at 7.13pm.

Signed:

Date: