

BROCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 124, held at 8pm at St Bridget's Church, Chelvey on Tuesday, 21 March 2017.

Present: Alex Ammar, Paul and Linda Elliott, Mike Fishwick, Andrea Harrison, Martin Jarvis, Tim and Liz Lunn, Andrew and Jacqui Olver, Stephen and Penny Parsons, Antony Ridge, Julian Ridge (Chairman), Gillian Rowcliffe, Bryan Smith, Joe Watt, Bill Wright and one other
Deborah Yamanaka (District Councillor), John Wilkinson (NSC, Parish Liaison Officer), Rob Ellis and Natasha Clarke (Bristol Water), Jamie Edwards and Grace Budge (Kier) and Joanna van Tonder (Parish Clerk)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Gill Iles, Liza Ridge, Blanche Ridge and Conny Ridge.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting 123 – 15 March 2016

The minutes of the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting were read out and accepted. There were no matters arising.

3 Chairman's Report

1. Introductions: Julian Ridge thanked parishioners for turning out and especially thanked John Wilkinson and Deborah Yamanaka for making the effort to attend.
2. Parish Council: Julian reminded everyone that parishioners were always welcome to meetings of the Parish Council, held every two months in St Nicholas' Church, Brockley, and thanked councillors for their loyal attendance as well as the essential contributions made by Deborah and John. Minutes of all meetings are available on the website, brockleypc.org, and are displayed on the parish noticeboards.
3. Planning: The adoption of NSC's Core Strategy that provides the planning framework for the District until 2026 was outlined. Julian told the meeting that the West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) looking at providing 105,000 new dwellings to 2036 was still being formulated and may well result in a review of the Green Belt.
Of more local concern are the plans in and around Nailsea that could see an additional 865 new homes in the vicinity. While there has been interest in Youngwood Lane in the past year, it appears more likely that Engine Lane will be the favoured location for new development. Julian reiterated the Parish Council's objection to any development in Nailsea that would increase the traffic burden on Brockley and Chelvey's rural lanes without providing mitigating infrastructure.
4. Footpaths & PROW: Julian reported that parish footpaths are in good condition and are kept clear of vegetation at the expense of the Parish Council. It is the PC's intention to replace three stiles with self-closing pedestrian gates and one further stile with a kissing gate at a total cost of £150. This would improve the accessibility of these two well used footpaths (LA4/4 / LA4/11 and LA4/6).
5. Bristol Water Southern Resilience pipeline: Most of the pipes for the new water main have been laid with some of the road crossings still outstanding. Brockley Lane is to be closed from 24 April for up to three weeks while pipes are laid near Brockley Hall Lodge.
6. St Nicholas Church water project: Progress has been slow on the plan to connect water to the church. Brockley Court has been on the market a number of times, making negotiations for the route for supply difficult. A potential buyer is currently in negotiations and there is hope that a desirable outcome will be achieved soon.
7. Chelvey noticeboard: The PC has purchased a new noticeboard to replace the small wooden board that has served that end of the parish well for many years but is now showing its age.
8. Warning sign at Brockley Hall: Following a number of near misses and a collision with a cyclist, the PC has decided to erect a new warning sign that should be more visible.

9. Verge cutting in Chelvey Lane: NSC has assured the PC that the verges along Chelvey Lane will only be cut once a year in Autumn in order to avoid a repeat of last year where the magnificent display of wild garlic along the north side was prematurely flailed.
10. Litter pick: Scheduled for 10am, Saturday, 25 March.
11. Budget: Julian reminded those gathered that copies of the Budget 2017/18 were available and that the precept had increased marginally to £4,300 in order to maintain a reasonable reserve.

4 Other Reports

District Councillor Deborah Yamanaka was invited to address the meeting.

1. Planning: Deborah explained that a weak 5 year supply of housing was providing uncertainty when it came to deciding planning applications.
2. NSC Budget: Council Tax had increased last year by 2% whereas this year would see increases of 3% to cover the cost of social care plus an additional 1.75% to alleviate other financial pressures. Deborah explained that adult social care requirements, numbers of children looked after by the Council and waste costs had all increased significantly. Government cuts to the Revenue Support Grant was also affecting Council budgets.
3. Schools: All North Somerset schools were looking to become Academies in an effort to increase their flexibility to spend on areas where NSC had been forced to make funding cuts.
4. Gully maintenance: Cuts of £150,000 to the gullies budget have meant the Council has been forced to adopt a risk based approach to gully maintenance.
5. Recycling: Deborah advised that the new waste contract had begun on 1 March and included the introduction of green waste wheelie bins on subscription. Residents could now recycle a greater range of items. It was noted that Backwell Recycling Centre was now closed on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

5 Public Questions

Alex Ammar identified himself as a resident on Main Road with a young family. He asked if it was possible to put up signage warning drivers leaving Backwell along the A370 and entering the 50mph speed zone, of concealed driveways along the left hand side. Alternatively, he asked if NSC would consider a reduction in the speed limit as there had been a number of near misses for residents attempting to exit their properties.

The possibility of erecting a "Welcome to Brockley" sign that would identify the space between Backwell and Cleeve as a parish was considered. It was agreed a Vehicle Activated Sign positioned at the start of the row of houses could prove effective and Deborah Yamanaka suggested funds could be applied for from the Bristol Airport Community Fund.

When asked if the Parish Council had supported North Somerset Council's decision to reject the Devolution Deal offered to the four West of England authorities, Julian confirmed that it had, believing an elected Metro Mayor would add an unnecessary extra layer of bureaucracy.

Julian Ridge then handed over to Antony Ridge who introduced the guest speakers, Rob Ellis and Natasha Clarke of Bristol Water and Jamie Edwards and Grace Budge of Kier.

Bristol Water presentation

The Bristol Water / Kier team of environmental specialists delivered a presentation to the meeting.

1. Overview: The new 30km long strategic main pipeline, costing in the region of £27 million, was expected to be completed by the end of March 2018 and would ensure a more secure water supply to the region.
2. Design: The route had been chosen to avoid major environmental features in the landscape and would also allow BW to make use of gravity to transfer water limiting the need to pump, thus reducing energy consumption and associated costs.
3. Biodiversity Index Score: This was explained as the measure BW use to rate the quality of biodiversity on its sites. It is their intention to make use of this measure along the entire length of the pipeline and to improve the status of any stretch that is replaced following pipeline works. Discussions were taking place with landowners who were being encouraged to adopt more ecologically beneficial practices.

4. Archaeology: Trial holes have been dug in a number of spots along the route. Evidence has been uncovered of a small Roman settlement in Sandford.
5. Trees and Hedgerows: 200 hedgerow crossings, each approximately seven meters wide, are to be replaced with the same or better hedgerow mixed species in line with BW's biodiversity policy (see 3. above). Most mature trees along the route have been avoided.
6. Protected and Important Species: The Protected Species are great crested newts, dormice, bats and badgers; Important Species of interest along the route are cave spiders and bee orchids. Dormice have been found in a total of 24 hedges.
7. Invasive plants: There have been an abundance of invasive plant species and BW were committed to removing where possible.
8. Enhancements: Areas and projects where BW are hoping to add value include:
 - * Southern Strategic Support Main Owl Project
 - * Nest boxes
 - * Newt habitat enhancements
 - * Bee orchid transplantation
 - * Cave spider protection
 - * Habitat improvement
 - * Spawn to be Wild
 - * One Tree Project
 - * involvement with local schools and charities

Antony Ridge thanked the team for their very interesting presentation and the meeting was concluded.