

BROCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 126, held at 8pm at St Bridget's Church, Chelvey on Tuesday, 26 March 2019.

Present: Linda & Paul Elliott, Michael Fishwick, Sian Gissing-McMeel, Andrea Harrison, Mary Hobbs, Liz & Tim Huscroft, Sue Hynam, Martin Jarvis, Elizabeth & Tim Lunn, Gerard McMeel, David Pike, Dr Antony Ridge, Gillian Rowcliffe, Dr Bryan Smith and three others
Dr Julian Ridge (Chairman), Deborah Yamanaka (District Councillor), Chris Barrington and Sarah Dale (Avon Bat Group), and Joanna van Tonder (Parish Clerk)

1 Apologies for absence

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

2 Minutes of the previous meeting 125 – 21 March 2017

The minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting were read out and accepted. There were no matters arising.

3 Chairman's Report

1. **Introductions:** Julian Ridge welcomed all to the 126th Annual Parish Meeting and went on to inform parishioners that there had been a parish meeting every year since 1894, the first of which, with ten in attendance, was held in the vestry of St Nicholas Church in Brockley. District Councillor, Deborah Yamanka, was welcomed.
2. **Parish Council:** Julian advised that all current councillors were intending to stand for re-election at the upcoming local elections, with the exception of Cllr Liz Lunn. Liz was thanked for her eight years' service to the community and for representing the Council so well. Special mention was made of Cllr Bryan Smith's impressive fifty years on the Parish Council (PC) that included fourteen years served as its Chair. Parishioners were reminded the Council meets every two months, either at St Nicholas Church during the summer months or St Bridget's in Winter, where time is allotted to much welcomed public participation.
3. **Planning:** Julian reported that, as a result of government pressure to address the severe shortage in housing, North Somerset Council (NSC) was expected to find sites for in excess of fifteen thousand new homes by 2036. A number of locations had been identified and listed in the *North Somerset Local Plan*, Grove Farm being the most relevant to Brockley. The proposed development would see the building of 700 houses, a new primary school and extensive upgrading of the local road network including part of Chelvey Road that would undoubtedly increase car travel and have a massive impact on the rural nature of the parish. Housing proposals for the development of land at Youngwood Lane, Nailsea, would add to this pressure. Additionally, the draft *Joint Local Transport Plan* proposed a link road from the M5 to the South Bristol Link Road, passing to the north of the parish, a multi-storey carpark and MetroBus stop at Nailsea & Backwell Station, all of which would have an irreversible and devastating impact on the parish.
4. **Bristol Airport:** Another significant impact on the parish was the proposed expansion of the airport, initially from 10 to 12 million passengers per annum, to 20 mppa. The PC had responded to the planning application consultations, consistently expressing concern that this was not the right place for this level of expansion – the wholesale destruction of a rural way of life with the inevitable damage to wildlife must be avoidable. Julian implored residents to take the time to comment on such applications and to sign up to the parish e-mail to allow the PC to keep residents informed.

5. Footpaths: Julian thanked the Woodspring Ramblers, arranged by NSC's Footpath Officer, Adrian Woolacott, for installing a new kissing gate and self-closing gate on footpath LA4/11, completing the PC's plan to replace all stiles between St Nicholas Church and the A370. All that remained was for Bristol Water to remove the temporary stiles put in place along the Southern Resilience Pipeline during its construction.
6. St Nicholas Church water project: Julian announced that, after seven years of frustration for the team, the trench through the churchyard had been dug and a pipe laid. The next step in the process of bringing water to the church involved drawing up of detailed plans for the inside of the church and inevitably, further funding would be required.
7. Traffic speed along the A370: In response to both continued requests from residents of Main Road for support and the ongoing lack of engagement on this matter by NSC, a working group had been established; the aim of which was to collect data to support the claims that the excessive speed of vehicles along the stretch of road between Backwell and the Brockley Lane crossroads was both consistent and dangerous. The evidence from the Speedwatch data, together with a list of accidents and incidents, would then be presented to NSC with a demand for a speed limit review. Alongside this, the working group would be investigating alternative speed reduction measures.
8. Highspeed Broadband: Julian reported that, while Gigaclear had been installing underground cables throughout the parish over the past months, the lack of communication from the government-funded provider meant it was unclear when connecting of properties would begin. In competition, Truespeed were making progress towards achieving the required 30% sign-up in the parish that would secure their investor funding and allow roll-out of fibre broadband making use of existing poles to carry overhead cables.
9. Replacement noticeboard: A grant of £1,060 had been received from the Bristol Airport Community Fund that had enabled the PC to purchase a noticeboard to replace the dilapidated board at Chelvey Batch.
10. Budget: Julian reminded those gathered that copies of the Budget 2019/20 were available and that the precept of £4,500 would provide a small surplus to reinforce reserves.
11. Parish Clerk: Julian announced that Joanna, Clerk to the Parish Council, was relocating to Wales in the Summer and would be missed.
12. Litterpick: Scheduled for the following Saturday, 30 March 2019 at 10am.

Julian concluded his report by thanking St Bridget's Church for permitting the use of the venue with its superior heating.

On a final note, on behalf of the other members of the Parish Council and the Clerk, Julian presented Cllr Liz Lunn with a delightful *Skimmia Japonica* in recognition of her service on the Council. Liz appreciated the mention of the plant's tolerance to pollution in light of the increase in lorry traffic in recent months outside her home!

4 Other Reports

District Councillor Deborah Yamanaka was invited to address the meeting.

1. Planning: Deborah added to Julian's points by reporting the current Bristol Airport application to increase passenger numbers to 12m ppa would only be decided by NSC after the elections and that there had been calls on the region's MPs to have the application called in by the Secretary of State. The last planning application under Bristol Airport's Master Plan was expected to be submitted later in the year.
With regards to the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP), the date for the expected public enquiry was yet to be announced.
2. Social Care: Deborah advised parishioners that government acknowledged the significant increasing cost of social care and was expected to have brought out a green paper on how this was to be funded last year. It was hoped this paper would be published in Spring.

5 Public Questions

Q1: It is noted the JSP proposes significant levels of new housing within North Somerset and NSC has recently voted to declare an environmental emergency. How are these two aims compatible?

Deborah Yamanaka agreed they were irreconcilable but, in fairness to NSC, the housing numbers had been imposed on them by government. Deborah proposed perhaps more consideration ought to be given to building within the Green Belt.

Q2: The Parish Council was informed the rabbit remains on Chelvey Road (at the A370 end) had not yet been removed.
The Clerk agreed to report it to NSC once more.

Julian then handed over to Dr Antony Ridge who welcomed and introduced the guest speaker, Chris Barrington of Avon Bat Group and his colleague, Sarah Dale.

Chris delighted the audience with a passionate and engaging talk on, not only the Greater Horseshoe bat Brockley Hall is known for, but a number of other species to be found in the area such as the Daubenton's bat found around the local waterways and the declining Serotine. Questions were asked and answered throughout the talk with everyone enthralled.

Chris suggested the resident bat that had been flying about in the eaves of the church during the meeting was, in all likelihood, a Pipistrelle. Chris took the opportunity to mention the "Bats in Churches" project that aimed to assist churches with problematic populations of bats by encouraging the animals outside.

During the presentation, Sarah reminded residents of the important document - *North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation: Guidance on Development* - that aimed to provide counsel on the impact of development on the Special Area of Conservation and mitigation thereof.

Residents of Brockley Hall present at the meeting extended a well-received invitation to Chris and Sarah to visit The Stables at the Hall to experience the Greater Horseshoe maternity roost for themselves.

Antony thanked Chris and Sarah for a most enjoyable and informative presentation that was followed with a round of applause. Everyone was invited to partake in the refreshments provided.

The meeting concluded at approximately 9:25pm.