

## **BROXTON AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL**

**29<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**Commenced: 7.30 pm**

**Terminated: 9.45 pm**

**Present: Councillor Williams (Chair)  
Councillors Bell, Borman, Henshall, Houghton, Poole, Rogers, Shadbolt,  
Vaughan and Wild  
Councillor Jones (Cheshire West and Chester Councillor)**

**Mrs M Clough – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer**

**Also in attendance were 5 Members of the Public**

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received for this Meeting.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received for this Meeting.

### **3. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Councillor Vaughan reported that he had been contacted by various agencies about the condition of his livestock. All agencies claimed that their visits had been instigated by the reports from the Parish Council. This matter was discussed at a later stage of this Meeting and was recorded under Minute 16.

Councillor Henshall asked Members whether they had submitted Apologies for Absence on behalf of Councillor Vaughan at the last meeting. There was no response.

Councillor Shadbolt referred to Item 4 when Members of the Public reporting their restricted access on Reading Room Lane, and she requested that the condition of road being impassable due to potholes and blocked drains, be recorded.

### **4. PUBLIC FORUM**

#### **(i) Cheshire Wildlife Trust**

Further to Minute 16 of the last Meeting, Mr Christy Mageean attended the Meeting of the Parish Council and explained the role of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust and his role, which focussed on community engagement across cheshire. Some of the many projects discussed were the reintroduction of wildlife; working with landowners; protecting nature; advocating wildlife; teaching and educating on the value of nature; providing professional services to landowners and farmer; tackling nature's global decline; rewilding; urban conservation; cleaner healthier rivers and working with schools. He added that whilst funding was not provided by the Trust for projects, they were able to signpost to other fund providers.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the presentation be received, and Mr Mageean be thanked for attending the meeting and providing such comprehensive information on the work of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust.**

## **(ii) Questions from Members of the Public**

In relation to Item 10(i), Planning Application for Land off old Coach Road, Broxton, Cheshire - application for the erection of an agricultural building, the father of the applicant provided

supplementary information on the application. He added that the original planning application had been refused due to the siting of the building, trees, ecology of the site and lack of information regarding drainage. This new application addressed all the reasons for the previous refusal. The application would be to house and care for a flock of sheep which comprised 28 breeding ewes. Whilst the applicant's site totalled 5 acres, she did have access to an additional 300 acres for grazing.

The neighbour of the Old Fire Station attended the meeting reporting on the seemingly precarious condition of the building. Members agreed that this matter would be discussed in greater detail under Urgent Business.

## **5. FINANCES AND BUDGET 2023-2024**

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer submitted a report on the following:-

### **(i) Applications for financial assistance**

Members considered an application for financial assistance from Bickerton Tennis Club towards the purchase of new tennis court lighting (details circulated).

### **RESOLVED**

**That the sum of £250.00 be granted to Bickerton Tennis Club towards the purchase of new tennis court lighting.**

### **(ii) Approval of the payment of invoices, including necessary reimbursements**

Members approved the following payments:-

<b>Date</b>	<b>Payee/Payer</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
28/11/2023	Festive Lights	Outdoor Christmas Tree Lights		£118.77
29/11/2023	M Clough	Salary November (inc backpay)		£260.20
29/11/2023	HMRC	PAYE Salary November		£65.00
29/11/2023	RBL	Wreath		£25.00
05/12/2023	HMRC	PAYE Salary October (part Sept)		£61.00
05/12/2023	CW&C	Election Fees		£273.75
05/12/2023	CHALC	Training - Mark Henshall		£40.00
11/12/2023	Festive Lights	Outdoor Christmas Tree Lights		£111.47
22/12/2023	Festive Lights	Refund	£118.77	
28/12/2023	HMRC	PAYE Salary December		£56.40
28/12/2023	M Clough	Salary December		£226.13
30/01/2024	M Clough	Salary January		£225.93
30/01/2024	HMRC	PAYE Salary January		£56.60
28/02/2024	M Clough	Salary February		£227.00
28/02/2024	HMRC	PAYE Salary February		£57.00

### **(iii) Budget Expenditure to 19th January 2024**

Members approved the following Budget Expenditure to 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024 (the figures below excluded additional payments approved at the Meeting):-

Budget Head	Total	BUDGET ALLOCATED
Clerk Salary	£2,659.78	£3,052.00
Office Allowance	£579.09	£208.00
General Admin	£534.88	£1,100.00
Room Hire	£150.00	£165.00
Website Costs	£0.00	£100.00
Microsoft Office	£0.00	£50.00
Clerk Mobile Costs	£0.00	£100.00
Insurance	£534.68	£660.00
Training	£130.00	£200.00
S137 - Poppy Wreaths	£25.00	£100.00
Elections	£323.75	£548.00
A534 Interactive Signs	£0.00	£3,000.00
Running Cost/Contingency	£279.00	£1,000.00
Fire Engine House	£0.00	£1,000.00
Grants	£250.00	£500.00
Projects	£595.04	£1,000.00
	<b>£6,061.22</b>	<b>£12,783.00</b>

**(iv) Bank Reconciliation as at 19th January 2024**

Members approved the following Bank Reconciliation as at 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024

<b>Bank Reconciliation 19th January 2024</b>		
<b>BROXTON AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL</b>		
<b>Financial year ending 31 March 2024</b>		
Prepared by: Muna Clough, Parish Clerk & RFO		
Balance per bank statements as at 28th December 2023		£
Current Account (00674201)		£16,106.56
Less: any unpresented cheques (payments)		£0.00
Add: any unbanked cash		£0.00
<b>Net bank balances as at 28th December 2023</b>		<b>£16,106.56</b>
<b>The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book (receipts and payments account) for the year, as follows</b>		
<b><u>CASH BOOK</u></b>		
Opening Balance at 01/04/2023		£13,496.33
Add: Receipts in the year		£8,671.45
Less: Payments in the year		£6,061.22
<b>Closing balance per cash book [receipts and payments book] must equal net bank balances above</b>		<b>£16,106.56</b>

## **6. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**

The Clerk advised that Cheshire West and Chester Council had confirmed that there were no further CIL liable applications in the Parish that had commenced.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the report be noted.**

## **7. PRECEPT**

Members considered a report of the Clerk, detailing the proposed Budget for 2024-2025 and the associated Precept.

### **RESOLVED**

- (i) That the 2024-2025 Budget detailed within the Report be approved;**
- (ii) That a request be made to Cheshire West and Chester Council for the 2024-2025 Precept in the sum of £7,000.00.**

## **8. ROADSIDE VERGE BY THE GREEN OPEN REACH BOX SITED ON THE A534**

Members further considered the implications of parking on the roadside verge, and the visibility restrictions caused.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Clerk contacts Cheshire West and Chester Highways Department and requests a site meeting with Councillor Wild and another Member.**

## **9. HIGHWAYS MATTERS**

- (i) Highway Concerns reported in the area remit of Broxton and District Parish Council (Broxton, Harthill and Duckington), over the last 5 years**

The Clerk circulated information received from Cheshire West and Chester Highways Department on highway concerns reported over the last 5 years for Broxton, Harthill and Duckington.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the reports be received.**

- (ii) A41 BROXTON/A534**

Further to Minute 12(i) of the last meeting, Members noted that advice received from Cheshire West and Chester Highways was that this matter had been allocated to the area team for investigation.

### **RESOLVED**

**That this report be noted.**

- (iii) READING ROOM LANE**

Members noted that Councillor Jones and the Clerk had contacted officers about this matter. It was understood that a meeting had taken place and that the work to unblock the drains had been completed.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the Clerk contacts Cheshire West and Chester Council Highways Department to ask the Council to meet with some Members of the Parish Council to further discuss concerns over the condition of Reading Room Lanes.**

- (iv) SPEED CAMERA TRIALS**

The Clerk reported that she had contacted the Police and Crime Commissioner for an update on the speed camera trials and that she had been advised that he was currently working with Parish Councils to devise a framework through which they could purchase average speed cameras for their area. The Commissioner and his team were currently exploring how the scheme could be expanded

through discussions with other sites that had funds available and might benefit from such an intervention to reduce speed and keep their communities safe.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Clerk seeks another update for the next meeting of the Parish Council.**

## **10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Members considered the following planning applications:-

### **(i) New Planning Applications**

- **Cobweb Cottage Nantwich Road Broxton Chester CH3 9JH**

Ref No: 23/03798/S73 – Conversion of existing Smithy to single dwelling. (Variation to planning permission 22/00183/FUL – The Parish Council raised no comments on this planning application.

Ref No: 23/03799/DIS – Discharge of conditions of application 22/00183/FUL -  
The Parish Council raised no comments on this planning application.

Ref No: 23/03796/FUL – Demolition of existing dwelling and garage, erection of new dwelling and outbuilding – The Parish Council asked that the Clerk seeks clarification on the drainage arrangements.

- **Land Off Old Coach Road, Broxton, Chester, Cheshire**

Ref No: 23/03789/FUL – Erection of Agricultural Building and Access – The Parish Council raised no objections to this planning application subject to a review of the safety of access.

### **(ii) Decided Planning Applications**

Members noted the following decisions made:-

- **Fields Farm Whitchurch Road Broxton Chester CH3 9JR**

Ref No: 23/01010/FUL – Improvements to existing access point at Fields Farm - Approved

- **1 Broxton Hall Mews Whitchurch Road Broxton Chester CH3 9JS**

**Ref No: 23/03311/LBC** - External alterations to replace existing rear window and patio doors with new patio doors, change side door with a window and replace rear patio with new raised patio area - Approved

## **11. BOLESWORTH ESTATE**

There were no updates to consider at this meeting.

## **12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted that the date of the next meeting was Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

## **13. URGENT ITEMS**

The Chair wished to consider the following items of business as a matter of urgency due to safety reasons (Item 14) and concerns over misrepresentation of the Parish Council (Items 15 and 16).

## **14. FIRE STATION HOUSE**

**Concerns were expressed over the condition of Fire Station House.**

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) **That the Clerk be given delegated authority to appoint a Surveyor as a matter of urgency with approval being made via email consultation with Members for any costings in excess of the Financial Regulations allowance;**
- (ii) **That progress on this matter be considered at the next meeting;**

- (iii) **That the Clerk contacts the neighbouring resident with an offer to erect a barrier to prevent his children from accessing the site;**
- (iv) **That any correspondence relating to this matter is referred to the Clerk in the first instance.**

#### **15. FOOTBALL PITCH**

Councillor Wild explained the history of this piece of land, and his involvement in maintaining the area free of charge, for the community to enjoy over the last three years.

He expressed his strong concerns over the conduct of a Member of the Parish Council whom he considered was attempting to restrict his participation in this community work, by making unjustified comments and allegations to the landowner.

At this juncture, the press and public were excluded from the meeting, as the meeting discussed individual Councillors.

A number of Members referred to concerns over the particular Councillor's ongoing behaviour, especially as she was claiming to be acting on behalf of the Parish Council, which was clearly a misrepresentation. They confirmed that she most definitely must not continue to act in this manner.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That Councillor Wild to speak to the National Trust representative Mr Twigg, with the possibility of obtaining a more formal agreement for the maintenance of the land.**

#### **16. COMPLAINTS**

Councillor Vaughan referred to contact made by officers from Animal Control; Public Rights of Way; Planning and Scottish Power, who had informed him that they had been notified of concerns made by the Parish Council relating to the welfare of his animals.

Members confirmed that this most definitely was not the case, and that the Parish Council had not contacted any organisations relating to the welfare of his animals.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That Councillor Vaughan to pass any correspondence received from these organisations to the Clerk, who will make enquiries on these matters.**