

Minutes of the Meeting of the Broxton Parish Council

Thursday 9 September 2021 at 7.30pm at Broxton Village Hall

Present were:

Cllr Wendy Adams, Cllr Andy Cousins, Cllr Adam Hume, Cllr Vere Isham (Chair), and Kate Rixson (Clerk).

21/9-1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Holt, Cllr Kesterton and Cllr Smith. County Councillor Martin Foley, who could not attend, was thanked for information passed on via email.

21/9-2 Declarations of interest

Pecuniary interests were declared by all councillors in relation to the motion to consider Stansted Airport Watch's request for funds. Dispensations had been granted by the Proper Officer on the basis that otherwise there would be no quorum and it was in the interests of residents.

21/9-3 Public Open Forum

District Councillor Maggie Sutton reported that a new Chief Executive of the district council had been appointed.

21/9-4 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 July 2021

The minutes had been circulated. They were approved as accurate and were signed by the Chair.

21/9-5 Reports received

21/9-5.1 Clerk's report

This had been circulated and no questions arose.

21/9-5.2 Legal advice on the council's role in relation to common land

The clerk reported on the advice that had been received from NALC and EALC in relation to the willow tree on Cherry Green common and the damage it had apparently caused. Clear advice was to fell or reduce the tree. Advice was awaited in relation to nuisance from dumping on adjacent land. See below item 6.2.

21/9-5.3 Finance

21/9-5.3.1 Report on balances and bank reconciliation:

Receipts to 31.8.2021	£ 8,315.10	
Expenditure to 31.08.2021	£ 6,770.18	Including cheques written but not yet presented
Receipts less expenditure	£1,544.92	
Balances/Reconciliation		
Current account 31.08.2021 as per bank statement	£ 5,804.70	

Less cheques issued but not presented by 31 Aug 2021	(50.00)	
Current account available balance	£5,754.70	
Deposit account 31.08.2021	£3,451.87	
Available funds	£5,754.70 £3,451.87	£9,206.57

21/9-5.3.2 Verification of Cashbook

A print-out of the digital cashbook entries had been circulated but as all councillors present were bank signatories, verification against the chequebook and bank statements was deferred until the next meeting.

21/9-5.4 Footpaths

It was noted that way markers were often missing and not replaced.

21/9-5.5 Planning

District councillors reported that the preparation of the Local Plan was on track. A call for sites had produced more offers than were needed but many would be unsuitable for development, when considered in more detail.

There were no new planning applications for the council to consider. Progress on applications to date had been circulated.

21/9-5.5.1 Neighbourhood plan

It was noted that Takeley PC had set up a steering group and the next meeting was 13 Sept. Cllr Isham will attend.

21/9-6 Decisions to be made

21/9-6.1 Approve a drainage ditch under common land at Cherry Green

It was *agreed* that this work by a householder should be approved as the area would be made good afterwards and no other residents, who would have needed to be consulted, were affected. The clerk should write to the householder accordingly. **Action: Clerk**

21/9-6.2 Fell tree on Cherry Green common land if so advised

See 21/9-5.2 above. It was *agreed* to obtain a report from an expert who could advise on the relative risks and benefits of felling, or reducing the tree then felling. The clerk was asked to obtain quotations. **Action: Clerk**

21/9-6.3 To consider taking part in celebrations of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022

It was *agreed* that the council would not plan any events but the clerk should contact the Broxted Community Association to pass on the organiser's emails. **Action: Clerk**

21/9-6.4 To claim bursary for clerk's training

This was *agreed* and the form signed by the chair.

21/9-6.5 Payments were approved as follows:

A cheque was reissued for the clerk's July salary (authorised in July) as it had gone astray and had been stopped: £685.50.

In addition the following payments were approved:

Payee and purpose	Amount £
K Rixson for August Clerk's salary (net) for 62.84 hours worked in July 2021	658.49
K Rixson for September Clerk's salary (net) for 64.67 hours worked in August 2021	674.54
Attwaters Jameson Hill solicitors invoice 2004860 dated 9 July 2021 for drafting and advice £3,000 plus £600 VAT (invoice already paid)	3,600.00
K Rixson to reimburse annual fee for email service from Mythic Beasts Ltd £16.67 plus £3.33 VAT	20.00
Total payments to be authorised	4,953.03

21/9-6.6 To carry out repair work on Jenny's Bench

Cllr Hume had inspected the bench again today and found very little deterioration in the last year but that it was badly marked with bird droppings and needed a thorough clean. He recommended preserving the bench and not attempting repairs or restoration. He thought it was not viable to attempt to pull together and glue the arms of the bench, which had delaminated. He recommended that the bench be coated with a preservative and he would research a suitable product. Ideally the work would be carried out in the workshop not in situ. It was *agreed* that the bench would be moved to Cllr Hume's workshop and he would carry out the work he proposed to preserve the bench.

21/9-6.7 To consider a request for a donation to Stansted Airport Watch

The local campaigning group SAW (formerly Stop Stansted Expansion) was engaged in supporting judicial review proceedings relating to the planning inspector's decision to allow the planning application UTT/18/0460/FUL on appeal. The application was to increase aircraft movements to 274,000 and passenger movements to 43 million annually. It was noted that the application was strongly opposed in the council's area. A donation of £1,500 was proposed as this was the amount given in the last two years and was part of the budget for donations and grants for the current year. However as three councillors were absent from the meeting a decision was deferred until the council's next meeting by which time the expenditure and income for the first half of the year would be known.

21/9-6.8 To approve and submit the Neighbourhood Plan Expression of Interest form to the local planning authority Uttlesford District Council

It was noted that an application had been submitted to UDC, as previously agreed, to designate the whole of the parish of Broxted as an area for a Neighbourhood Development Plan. However the neighbouring parish of Chickney, which had no parish council but a

parish meeting, might be interested in joining with the council and adding that parish to the designated area. It was *agreed* that the officer at UDC should be informed about the discussions with Chickney residents which were now taking place. She should be asked whether it was possible to add this additional area to the application and what was the procedure for doing so. **Action: Clerk**

21/9-6.9 To consider questions to put to the Highways Panel via the UALC representative

After discussion it was *agreed* that the following issue should be raised with both the county councillor and the highways panel: there are areas in the parish which appear to be highways land (e.g. verges and flags of grass at junctions, tarmacked footpath across the junction at Brick End), especially where roadworks and traffic-calming measures have created these. However these areas are shown on the Essex Highways interactive map as not being maintained by the county council. How can this confusion be resolved? **Action: Clerk**

21/9-6.10 To consider attending the Highways briefing for local councils on 7 October (Zoom)

Councillors will attend if possible.

21/9-6.11 To decide whether to request/accept devolved powers in relation to highways from Essex County Council on the terms offered

After discussion, it was concluded, with regret, that although it would benefit the local community if the council were able to carry out highways repairs and other work in the parish, the county council's offer of financial and other support was not enough to allow this. It was not feasible for the parish council to take on any financial and legal responsibilities for highways so the offer should not be taken up.

21/9-6.12 To consider attending Great Dunmow Town Council's planning committee meeting on 23 September

It was *agreed* that Cllr Isham would attend if other commitments allowed, as the results of the call for sites was to be discussed.

21/9-7 Matters to be noted and for future consideration

Proposals for dealing with the common land in the parish should be placed on the agenda of a future meeting. The question of a donation to SAW (see above) should be on the agenda of the next meeting.

21/9-8 To confirm the date of the next meeting

It was *agreed* that the next meeting would be on 14 October 2021 at 7.30pm and that meetings would continue on the second Thursday of the month except for December and August. The starting time of the meeting would remain 7.30pm unless councillors decided otherwise.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.