

Minutes of the Meeting of the Broxted Parish Council Thursday 13 January 2022 at 7.30pm at Broxted Village Hall

Present were:

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

Note: the agenda was abbreviated to keep the meeting short, due to clerk's sick leave and the increased risk of Covid infection from a new variant and high case numbers locally and nationally. The quarterly budget report will be supplied at the next meeting.

22/01-1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Hume, Cllr Holt and Cllr Smith.

22/01-2 Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

22/01-3 Public Open Forum and District/County Councillors' report

County Councillor Martin Foley was present and gave a report:

Highways:

- Broxted PC's Local Highways Scheme – a request for a weight limit and speed limit on Brick End Road/Pledgdon Green Lane which was submitted in December 2021– should be considered at the Highways Panel meeting in January or February. It will take time to progress the scheme if it is accepted. Speed checks would be carried out beforehand and Highways has contacted the clerk about the locations for these.
- Uttlesford District Council was contributing an extra £200,000 to highways work in the district in the coming year.
- There have been a number of thefts of iron drain covers from roads. Any missing covers which are noticed should be reported to the police and to Councillor Foley.
- Catalytic converters are also being stolen – the police offer free marking to make tracing easier
- The stretch of the B1051 by Armigers Farm/Haigh's aggregate site has flooded regularly and frequently for many years and verges/road edges are badly damaged and dangerous. Cllr Foley could escalate the issues of damage to the road surface and the potholes at the road edge. The clerk was asked to report the matter to Essex Highways again and copy him in. **Action: Clerk**

Strategic Health Group

- Cllr Foley chairs this county-wide group which has noted problems with cannabis and nitrous oxide use in local villages. The ECC team is working with UDC's youth worker and police.

Youth services

- Thaxted Youth Club would welcome Broxted residents attending although it was appreciated that this would require a car journey.

Grant funding from ECC

- Cllr Kesterton asked if funds could be given to local families in need of help for significant one-off purchases such as school uniform. Details could be obtained from the primary school. Cllr Foley will consider this if Cllr Kesterton would kindly send her request to him again by email.
- About £500 could be offered to Broxted PC from the county Locality Fund via county councillors. If the PC wishes to apply, the clerk should request an application form from Cllr Foley. **Action: Clerk**

Councillors thanked Cllr Foley for attending, for reporting as above and for his support for the parish.

22/01-4 Decisions to be made

22/01-4.1 To set the precept to be demanded from the principal authority Uttlesford District Council for parish council requirements in 2022-23

The budget having been reviewed and agreed at the last meeting, the consequences for the precept were considered. It was noted that the precept needed to be increased to cover expenditure and to maintain reserves at the current level (which was lower than desirable).

As recorded in the minutes for the November 2021 meeting, it was noted that costs and expenditure had risen each year but the precept had remained the same at £12,000 except for a £1,000 increase for 2021-22. Particular costs increases were noted for planning matters (reflecting the greatly-increased number of planning applications affecting the parish which needed consideration and comment), for professional advice, mainly on planning issues, and staff costs. It was anticipated that by the end of the current (2021-22) financial year expenditure would be approximately £21,000 which exceeded the budgeted expenditure for the year by about £3,500, due to additional staff costs and additional professional advice.

The precept proposal was for £20,000 for 2022-23 on the basis of also using £890 from reserves to meet the 2022-23 budgeted expenditure.

Councillors were provided with an updated ready-reckoner (not available at the November 2021 meeting), which had now been supplied by Uttlesford District Council. This showed that a precept of £20,000 would result in an annual payment of £80.15 for 2022-23 for a Band D household, compared to £52.54 for 2021-22. Although this was a large percentage increase (52.5%) the additional payment for the average household would be £27.61 for the year.

After discussion Cllr Cousins proposed and Cllr Kesterton seconded the motion to set the precept at £20,000 for 2022-23 and this was unanimously *approved*. The demand was signed by Cllr Isham as Chair, for submission to Uttlesford District Council by 21 January 2022. **Action: Clerk**

22/01-4.2 Payments were approved as follows:

Payee and purpose	Amount £
K Rixson for Dec and Jan Clerk's salary (net) for hours worked in Nov and Dec 2021	888.68
K Rixson to reimburse annual fee for website hosting Dec 21 to 11 Dec 22: £80 plus £16 VAT	96.00
HMRC PAYE due for months 7-9 (taking account of credits for tax rebates)	161.40
Total payments authorised	1,146.08

22/01-5 Matters to be noted and for future consideration

22/01-5.1 Footpaths: The footbridge next to the property “Happy Days” in Chapel End was badly damaged and dangerous and had been reported to Cllr Cousins by a local resident. Further details would be obtained by the clerk who would report it to Highways.

22/01-5.2 Queen’s Platinum Jubilee events: Cllr Kesterton reported that the Broxton Community Association would be discussing public events to mark the jubilee – probably to take place on Sunday 5th June 2022 - at its meeting next week. The clerk was asked to add this to the agenda for the next PC meeting.

22/01-5.3 The designation of the Broxton and Cherry Green Neighbourhood Area, for the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan, had been approved by Executive Decision of the local planning authority Uttlesford District Council on 04 January 2022. The clerk was asked to add this to the agenda for the next meeting.

22/01-6 The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 10 February 2022 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.20 pm.