

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Broxton Parish Council on Thursday 12 May 2022 at 7.30pm at Broxton Village Hall

Present were:

Cllr Wendy Adams, Cllr Vere Isham (Chair), Cllr Rachel Kesterton, Kate Rixson (Clerk) and one member of the public.

22/05-1 Election of Chair of the council

Cllr Isham was duly elected Chair. It was resolved that the declaration of acceptance of office would be made at the next meeting of the council.

22/05-2 Election of the Vice-Chair of the council

Cllr Kesterton was duly elected as vice-chair.

22/05-3 Apologies for absence

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

22/05-4 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

22/05-5 Public Open Forum

A member of the public commented in relation to the proposed Neighbourhood Plan – see 22/05-8.10 below.

22/05-6 Approval of Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 13 April 2022 were confirmed to be an accurate record of proceedings and duly signed by the Chair.

22/05-7 Reports received

22/05-7.1 Clerk's report

This had been circulated and placed on the website. It was taken as read and is annexed to these minutes.

22/05-7.2 Finance

22/05-7.2.1 Report on balances and bank reconciliation

Councillors reviewed and noted the balances to 30 April 2022 as follows:

	£	Notes and total
Receipts (i.e. income) to 30.04.2022	£ 10,000.00	Half of the Precept of £20,000
Expenditure to 30.04.2022	£ 1,685.29	Reduced by PAYE refund of £148.80 from HMRC
Receipts less expenditure	£8,314.71	
Balances		
		Balance carried forward from previous year: £6,517.66

Current account as per bank statement 30.04.2022	£ 12,072.12	
<i>Less</i> cheques issued before 30 April 22 but not yet presented	£(692.00)	Friends of Historic Essex: £12 MWA Arboriculture: £480 Citizens Advice Uttlesford: £200
Current account available balance at 30 April 2022	£11,380.12	Takes into account unrepresented cheques.
Deposit account as per bank statement at 30.04.2022	£3,452.25	No unreconciled items. Interest rate 0.05% p.a.
Available funds	£11,380.12 + £3,452.25	£14,832.37 (includes £6,517.66 carried forward from last financial year)

22/05-7.2.2 Comparison of bank statements and cash book

The bank statements had been circulated to councillors. Arrangements will be made for Cllr Holt to check the cash book and chequebook against bank statements.

22/05-7.3 Footpaths and highways

It was noted that the Dunmow-to-Thaxted road B184 would be closed for a period on Saturday 28 May for the Ride London cycle event.

Cllr Kesterton reported that a footpath between Broxted Hall and Moor End Farm had been ploughed over and could no longer be seen on the ground. She would provide the location to the clerk who would report it. **Action: Cllr Kesterton, Clerk.**

22/05-7.4 Village Hall Annual Report

This had been circulated and placed on the website. The Council was glad to see the Hall's bookings were gradually increasing and that renovations had been carried out. The accounts have now been audited and would be presented for approval by the council as trustee as soon as possible. **Action: Clerk**

22/05-7.5 Planning

Progress on applications to date had been circulated. The report was taken as read. The new application UTT/22/1257, for change of use of land next to the church and churchyard, from agricultural to a dog day care centre, was considered. Concerns were raised in particular about noise, the effect of increased traffic to the site, its proximity to the church (a listed building) and disturbance to people visiting graves and during church services. It was agreed that the clerk should draft comments, for approval by councillors and submission to the planning authority by 3 June. **Action: Clerk**

22/05-8 Decisions made

22/05-8.1 Payments were approved as follows:

Steve's Gardening Services for grass-cutting in April and May: £240

Clerk's salary for hours worked in April, plus staff costs for March: total £721.33

Affiliation fee, Essex Association of Local Councils and National Association of Local Councils: £177.60

22/05-8.2 To consider appointing a Village Hall committee and approve terms of reference

Legal advice and guidance was awaited from the Essex Assoc of Local Councils concerning the need for and role of such a committee for a council as small as Broxton. This matter was deferred until after the advice was received.

22/05-8.3 To consider appointments to the Planning Committee and review terms of reference

After discussion it was decided to dissolve the planning committee, which had not met for some time, and to arrange an extraordinary council meeting if planning matters needed to be considered urgently.

22/05-8.4 To review and approve Standing Orders

The Council's existing Standing Orders were approved unamended.

22/05-8.5 To review and approve asset register and revised asset valuation policy

The asset register was noted and approved. It was decided to adopt an asset valuation policy under which values would be restated from April 2023 in line with the JPAG Practitioner's Guide current edition. Consequently:

1. assets would be valued at their acquisition value with no depreciation or appreciation
2. a note of the notional market value of each asset at 31 March would be made by the RFO in the asset register at each year end and
3. assets acquired at zero cost or which have no functional purpose or intrinsic resale value will be included at a nominal £1 value. **Action: Clerk**

22/05-8.6 To consider replacement of damaged grit bin and funds for cost

It was agreed that replacing this was desirable, that no insurance funds were available and that a grant should be sought initially from the county council via Cllr Foley. The cost was likely to be approximately £110.

22/05-8.7 To decide on plan for willow tree on common land

The specialist report advised that heave was unlikely to occur if the tree was felled. The report recommended waiting until the Spring of 2023 and, if there had been no further problems, felling the tree. This plan was approved. The residents affected should be advised of the experts' conclusion and the council's decision. **Action: Clerk**

22/05-8.8 To consider removal of a goat willow tree trunk from common land

The council concluded that as the trunk was not causing an obstruction and the budget did not allow for removal, it would have to be left in place. This would be reviewed if circumstances changed.

22/05-8.9 To decide next steps concerning the Interpretation Board

Cllr Kesterton reported that she had met Ken McDonald of the Hundred Parishes Society and would place an item in the next parish magazine seeking an artist to work on the board. A design studio in Ashdon had been recommended and Cllr Kesterton would be contacting them. Funds were available from the Hundred Parishes Society. It was agreed that Cllr Kesterton should explore the options further and report in due course. **Action: Cllr Kesterton**

22/05-8.10 To decide the next steps to take in relation to the Broxton and Cherry Green Neighbourhood Plan

Concerns were expressed about, on the one hand, the limited resources within the village to prepare a Plan, and, on the other hand, the risk of losing the opportunity to exert some control on new building in the parish by creating a Plan. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Isham would work with a member of the public and Cllr Hume to write an action plan. The Action Plan should be included on the agenda for the next council meeting.

Action: Clerk

22/05-8.11 To consider applying to the county councillor's grant fund

See 22/05-8.6 above.

22/05-8.12 Attending Local Councils' Liaison meeting 6 June 2022

Cllr Kesterton would be able to attend.

22/05-8.13 Attending Stansted Airport Watch AGM 8 June 2022

Cllr Isham would be attending.

22/05-8.14 Planning Application UTT/22/1257

See item 22/05-7.5 above. **Action: Clerk**

22/05-9 Matters to be noted and for future consideration

The council expressed appreciation and gratitude for the interest shown by a local resident who had suggested adding to the flower troughs already installed by residents. The clerk's next piece for the parish magazine could include a request that anyone wishing anything similar should contact the council.

Cllr Kesterton reported that the Community Association had been contacted about participating in Parish Games in July. The CA had concluded that it was not feasible, especially as the Prince of Wales is currently closed, and it was confirmed that the Parish Council has no budget for this.

22/05-10 The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 9 June 2022 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20 pm.