

Minutes of the Meeting of Broxted Parish Council on Thursday 11 April 2024 at 7.30pm at Broxted Village Hall

Present were:

Cllr Vere Isham (Chair), Cllr Tony Adams, Cllr Wendy Adams, Cllr Andy Cousins, Cllr Adam Hume, Cllr Rachel Kesterton and Cllr David van Haaren. Kate Rixson (Clerk).
Fourteen members of the public attended.

The meeting opened at 7.30pm. The chair welcomed councillors and members of the public.

24/04-1 Apologies for absence

None.

24/04-2 Declarations of interest in matters on the agenda and declaration of acceptance of office

No declarations of interest were made.

24/04-3 Public open forum

In answer to a question, the chair said that the parish council had objected to planning application UTT/24/0558/FUL, for change of use of land at Woodgates End to airport-related car parking. District Councillors had asked for the application to be decided by the planning committee of Uttlesford District Council if the planning officer recommended granting permission. It was suggested that the parish council should ask MAG (owners of Stansted Airport) for its view on the application.

A member of the public informed the council that he had created a new access to the road from land at Woodgates End, and had had pipes and power laid. He had bought 18 acres which he intended to use to grow flowers commercially. He objected to the development of the adjoining land as a car park.

Concern was expressed regarding the Prince of Wales pub, which was currently closed after a fire on 10 April (the day before the meeting). The council was informed that the majority of the damage was from water rather than fire but so far the level of damage had not been established. The pictures hanging in the bar had been badly damaged. It was suggested that the village hall could be used as an alternative social space, with a temporary alcohol licence if feasible. As trustee the parish council raised no objection to the use of the hall, if existing bookings were honoured, and suggested a small group of residents get together to make plans. It was believed that at one time the pub had been listed as an Asset of Community Value but it was not currently listed. It was requested that the parish council apply to have the pub listed again. **Action: Clerk**

In response to a question the council advised that the village hall had more legal protection, particularly from being sold and/or put to an alternative use as an asset of a registered charity than as an Asset of Community Value, therefore the listing had been allowed to lapse.

The defibrillator attached to the outside of the pub wall would need to be moved as it required a power supply to keep the cabinet at a steady temperature. It would be moved to a position on the outside of the Village Hall for time being.

It was noted that waste was being dumped in the pub car park and that this had been happening before the fire. It was pointed out that a waste transfer licence was needed to deal in quantities of waste. The council agreed to make enquiries and ask the district council to remove the waste if possible, or take other enforcement steps since the site was on privately-owned land. **Action: Clerk**

Members of the public left the meeting at this point.

24/04-4 District Councillors' and County Councillor's reports to be heard, if attending

In the absence of district or county councillors their recent correspondence was considered including the sudden cancellation of the 316 bus service. The contractor had withdrawn its services and the county council was making arrangements with other transport firms.

The lack of enforcement of planning breaches over the past 6-9 months was noted. Councillors asked the clerk to make a complaint to the planning authority and invite a senior planning officer to address the council. Consideration could be given to referring the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman. **Action: Clerk**

24/04-5 Approval of minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on 14 March 2024 were an accurate record and they were signed by the Chair.

24/04-6 Reports received

24/04-6.1 Clerk's Report

This had been circulated and made available on the website so was taken as read. A copy is annexed to the hard copy of these minutes.

24/04-6.2 Financial Reports

These had been circulated and made available on the website. Bank statements had been sent to the councillors to review.

24/04-6.2.1

Bank balances and reconciliation between the cash books and bank statements for the full year (year end 31 March 2024)

Receipts and payments		Notes and total
Receipts (i.e. income) to 31 March 2024	£20,423.08	Precept £20,250 paid in full. £103.80 interest, £70 expenditure on hall reimbursed.
Expenditure* to 31 March 2024 *not including transfers between bank accounts.	£ 12,913.04 plus 483.18 VAT £ 13,396.22	As recorded in cashbook.
Receipts less expenditure in current financial year. Includes VAT.	£7,026.86	This is the increase in reserves since 1 April 2023.

Reconciliation		
Unity Current account as per bank statement 31 March 2024	£5,439.43	See statement no.8
Less unprocessed payment requests at 31 March 2024	(£521.98)	Payments for grass-cutting and salary set up 28 March 2024
Unity Current account as per cash book at 31 March 2024	£4,971.45	
Unity Deposit account as per bank statement and cash book at 31 March 2024	£12,037.07	
Available funds	£17,008.52	Includes £9,981.66 reserves brought forward from 2022-23.

24/04-6.2.2 Payments made since last meeting and those due under contractual or statutory obligations

Payments as approved at the 14 March 2024 meeting had been made. A list of payments made and due (contractual, statutory and previously approved) had been circulated and was tabled.

24/04-6.2.3 Comparison of 2023-24 spending and income with the 2023-24 budget

It was noted that spending was about 30% below budget and below anticipated expenditure of £16,100 (see approved budget for 2024-25), partly due to a delay in receiving an invoice for legal advice which would now fall in the next financial year. There were also significant savings on staff costs, purchases and training. It was noted that smaller councils were advised to retain between 3 and twelve months' expenditure as a reserve. The following year's budget was for £23,500 approximately so the reserves of £17,000 were at an appropriate level.

24/04-6.3 Planning update including conservation area

24/04-6.3.1 Conservation area – Place Services had kindly agreed to invoice Broxted and Henham Parish Councils separately, each bearing 50% of the cost of their study of Brick End Road/Pledgdon Green Lane. Place Services had said they would aim to supply their report in May.

24/04-6.3.2 Planning tracker - A schedule of outstanding and decided planning applications and progress on enforcement matters had been circulated and put on the website. This was taken as read.

24/04-6.3.3 Quarrying consultation – A consultation response approved by councillors had been submitted.

24/04-6.4 Footpaths and highways issues

Cllr Kesterton had contacted the landowner about a well-used footpath which had been ploughed over but not reinstated. She had not received a reply as yet.

Improvements to paths near Church End had been noticed.

24/04-6.5 Reports from councillors

None save as 24/04-6.4 above.

24/04-7 Decisions

24/04-7.1 Payments for approval

Payment of the affiliation of the Parish Council to the Essex Association of Local Councils (including affiliation to the National Association of Local Councils) was approved, amounting to £184.61 (no VAT).

24/04-7.2 Approval of a list of payments made under statutory, contractual or other obligations for the financial year 2024-25 under Financial Regulations 5.6 and 5.7

A list of payments had been circulated and was tabled. The following payments were approved:

Item	Payee	C/S	Amount
C = contractual	S= statutory		
Salary	K Rixson	C	Variable dependent on hours worked
Clerk's training/development costs	Provider or reimbursement to K Rixson	C	Variable according to annual budget, subject to prior approval of training/development
Clerk's SLCC membership	Soc of Local Council Clerks	C	Variable according to salary
Contributions to pension scheme	NEST pensions	C	Variable according to salary
Tax and National insurance payments	HMRC	S	Variable according to salary
Parish Online mapping software	Geoxsphere Ltd	C	£60 annually
Website/domain/e-mail hosting	Mythic Beasts Ltd	C	Variable dependent on storage requirements
Bank charges	Unity Trust Bank	C	£18 per quarter
Internal auditor's fee	Per Pro Services Ltd	C+S	Variable based on time taken
External auditor's fee	PKF Littlejohn	S	Required only if full audit required
Grass -cutting	S Smith	C	As invoice for amount agreed
Information Commissioner's Office registration fee	ICO	S	£35 annually
Election costs incurred by district council	Uttlesford District Council	S	Four-yearly, or when a poll takes place, calculated by District Council

24/04-7.3 Response to Department for Transport consultation on night flights at Stansted Airport

It was noted that Stansted Airport Watch would be producing a briefing which should be consulted before a response is drafted. For consideration/approval at next meeting.

Action: Clerk

24/04-7.4 Response to new planning applications

No new applications had been notified to the council since the last meeting.

24/04-8 Matters to be noted and/or for future consideration

None raised.

24/04-9 Next meeting date

The next meeting will be on Thursday 9 May 2024 and would be the Annual Assembly and the Annual Parish Council meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9 pm.