

Minutes of the Meeting of Broxton Parish Council on 9 January 2025 at 7.30pm at Broxton Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Vere Isham (Chair), Cllr Tony Adams, Cllr Rachel Kesterton and Cllr Van Haaren.

Kate Rixson (Clerk).

The meeting opened at 7.30pm. The chair welcomed councillors and members of the public including District Councillor Bagnall.

25/01-1 Apologies for absence

Cllr Hume had prior family commitments and Cllr Wendy Adams was unable to attend due to a prior engagement. The reasons for apologies were accepted.

25/01-2 Declarations of interest in matters on the agenda

No declarations of interest were made.

25/01-3 Public open forum

No questions were raised.

25/01-4 District and County Councillors' reports.

Cllr Bagnall reported on the district council meeting on 8 January which had discussed the White Paper on devolution. He outlined the issues and that Uttlesford had various options for partnering with other districts but the procedures were unclear and details were awaited.

A parking questionnaire/survey would be sent out to parish clerks from UDC with the aim of planning parking policy on a district-wide basis.

25/01-5 Approval of minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting

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

25/01-6 Reports received

25/01-6.1 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.

In response to issues raised in the minutes of the November meeting:

- the clerk reported that no location had yet been notified for the Dick Knowles commemorative bench which was being stored at Broxton Hill Farm. She would check the position. **Action: Clerk**
- the Prince of Wales pub and its car park had been made an Asset of Community Value on 21 November 2024. See 25/01-6.4 below. **Action: Clerk**

25/01-6.2 Vacancy for councillor

The clerk reported that a candidate had come forward for co-option. The Notice of Vacancy was being displayed and was on the website. If an election was not requested (to the district council elections team) by 21 January the council should co-opt as soon as possible after that date.

25/01-6.3 Financial Reports

Copies of the below had been circulated and made available on the website. Bank statements had been sent to the councillors to review and were available in the meeting. Cllr Adams checked the bank reconciliation with the cashbooks and reported no issues to the council.

25/01-6.3.1 Bank balances and reconciliation between the cash books and bank statements for 1 April to 31 December 2024

Cash book records:

Income: 1 April to 31 December 2024: **£21,266.46**

Made up of Precept £20,250, £345.63 bank interest and £670.83 VAT refund

Spending: 1 April to 31 December 2024 (not including transfers between bank accounts): **£15,655.70**

Made up of £15,455.72 and £199.98 VAT. VAT is normally recoverable.

Reconciliation of cashbook with bank account:

- **Unity Current** account as per bank statement 31 December 2024: **£3,236.58**
- **Unity Current** account as per cash book at 31 December 2024: **£3,236.58**
 - Bank statements match cashbook.
- **Unity Deposit** account as per bank statement and cashbook at 31 December 2024 **£19,382.70**
- **Available funds (current plus deposit account balances less any unprocessed transactions), £22,619.28.** This includes £17,008.52 reserves brought forward from 2023-24.

25/01-6.3.2 Payments made since last meeting and those due under contractual or statutory obligations

A list of payments made and due (contractual, statutory and previously approved), including salary of £776.99 for December and January, had been circulated and was tabled.

25/01-6.3.3 To note spending and income in the year to date compared with the 2024-25 budget

A detailed comparison had been made available with the agenda. At 31 December 2024, expenditure in the first 9 months of the year was two-thirds of the budget for the whole year, therefore below budgeted

expenditure. This included a donation to the Village Hall charity of £6,360 to cover costs. Funds were available to cover contingencies.

25/01-6.4 Planning update

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.

A planning enforcement officer had visited the Prince of Wales car park very recently.

25/01-6.5 Footpaths and highways issues

No new issues were raised.

25/01-6.6 Reports from councillors

None.

25/01-7 Decisions

25/01-7.1 Approval of precept demand

The tax base having increased slightly, it was noted that the precept of £20,250 agreed at the last meeting would result in a Band D council tax payment of £78.16 for 2025-26. This was a reduction of 58p, or 0.74%, on the previous year. The precept of £20,250 was confirmed unanimously and the chairman authorised to sign the precept demand. **Action: Clerk, chair.**

25/01-7.2 Approve additional bank signatories

A decision was deferred in view of the current vacancy.

25/01-7.3 To review responses from parish councils concerning planning enforcement

Some support was noted and it was agreed that a draft letter making a formal complaint to the local planning authority should be prepared for approval by councillors and to send to supportive parish councils. **Action: Clerk**

25/01-7.4 To approve the appointment of Per Pro Ltd as auditor of the 2024-25 accounts and to review the Village Hall charity accounts

This was approved on the fee basis offered.

25/01-7.5 To pay the CHT invoice for defibrillator pads

The pads had been fitted. Payment of £76.74 inclusive of VAT was approved.

25/01-7.6 To approve a transfer from deposit to current account

A transfer of £10,000 was approved in anticipation of any expenditure before the first payment of the 2025-26 precept.

25/01-7.7 To consider quotations for grass cutting

No quotes were available yet so this item was deferred. **Action: Clerk**

25/01-7.8 To consider joining the UALC and renewing the 100 Parishes Society membership

Both were approved at a cost of £5 and £10 respectively. **Action: Clerk**

25/01-7.9 To consider a response to UDC's consultation on its 2025-26 budget

The opportunity to comment was noted.

25/02-7.10 To consider commenting on planning applications and appeals

25/01-7.10.1 UTT/24/3230/DFO – to build seven houses on land adjacent to Goodacre House, Church End (following outline consent for access and development). The council endorsed the objection from neighbours and agreed to lodge comments in those terms. The application would be decided by the planning committee and the council planned to make representations then. **Action: Clerk**

25/01-7.10.2 Appeal (APP/C1570/W/24/3356475) against refusal of UTT/24/0323/FUL – land between Thatched Cottage and Goodacre House, Church End – 1 dwelling. This would proceed by written representations with no hearing. It was noted that the council's objections had been forwarded to the Planning Inspector. The council did not wish to add anything further.

25/01-8 Matters to be noted and/or for future consideration

Cllr Adams advised he would be making a new window for the bus shelter as a better option than repairs.

The council was concerned at the damaging effects of the closure of the Prince of Wales pub and agreed to do what it could to encourage it to re-open. The clerk was asked to raise issues concerning the pub and car park as necessary and to liaise with district councillors.

25/01-9 Next meeting date

The next meeting will be on Thursday 13 February 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

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