

BROCKWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 MAY 2010 AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Present: 24 people were present

Parish Council Chairman, Jim Hunt, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Browning.

2. MINUTES

To approve or otherwise deal with the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20 May 2009. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

3. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE BROCKWORTH ENTERPRISE SCHOOL

Jan Scott, Head Teacher of Brockworth Enterprise School, reported that she had joined the school in September 2009 and changes were needed for the school to progress. The school is currently in the Ofsted category for Special Measures. However, a pledge has been made to improve the school and the summer should bring in better results and show the school is turning itself around. Timetable changes will be made from September 2010, a new leadership team has been created, and there will be a new uniform.

Sharon Clarke, (BES), had been doing some work outside the school, including the wildlife area, and has made great improvements. Mrs Scott thanked the Parish Council for their donation. They are looking at an outside covered area with a view to improving it with new seating and tables. It is quite a large area, and would be available for use by community groups.

There were questions from those present:

Q How are you getting on with local businesses during the recession?

A: Local businesses have been very generous with work experience placements.

Q What is the population of the school?

A. 650. Numbers for September are much better than last year and two buses a day bring children from Gloucester.

The Chairman thanked Jan & Sharon for coming to the meeting.

4. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM A REPRESENTATIVE OF BROCKWORTH YOUTH CENTRE

Karen Morgan was present in place of Ben Evans, as Ben was working at the Churchdown Centre. Karen reported that it had been a busy year for the Youth Centre, with 100 more young people accessing the service.

- 359 young people now have access to the service.
- 180 took part in regular activities, which is 50-60 up on the previous year.
- Last summer they worked with 120 people during daytime activities.
- One hundred people have recorded outcomes showing progression.
- Accredited young peoples' learning - counts towards other learning elsewhere.
- They have a Football team.
- Seventeen young people went to Poland on a culture visit.
- Eight different sessions are run each week in the evenings.

- There is a Youth Forum and some delegates from Brockworth will go onto the Youth Forum for the Tewkesbury area.
- Young volunteer leaders have been recruited and eight help on a regular basis.
- There are five adult volunteers that assist every week.
- 160 people have used the Youth Club in the past 35 days.
- Good partnerships have been built up with the extended schools cluster.
- Football sessions on Mill Lane attract 30 people each week. However, there is a funding issue for this.
- Local Police Constable Special Officers, PCSOs, have been helping with the Friday night sessions.
- Re-alignment of Gloucestershire County Council budgets mean that there is less money for part-time staffing and, as a consequence administration is now based at Horizons (Churchdown). There is also less money for materials but some of the young people are helping with bids for funding.
- The target age range is 13-19. There is a challenge to provide access for under 13s.

Cllr Shellswell congratulated the leaders and said that the youngsters are benefiting.

There were questions from those present:

Q: Are you increasing the activities during the holidays?

A: The programme for the summer holidays has changed. The Youth Centre already provides an average of 15-20 hours per week in the evenings, which only equates to 2 or 3 days. However, the club does not have enough staff to move to daytimes and would still leave a shortfall.

Cllr Collins stated that Ben is an absolute asset to Brockworth and the young people and has made a big difference in many ways. The Chairman added that all the Council members support that and noted that there has been a vast difference since Ben came to manage the Youth Centre.

5. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL – Cllr J Hunt

The Chairman's report was circulated to the meeting and Cllr Hunt gave an overview of the report. A copy of the report is included as Appendix I.

Q: The burial ground extension land is not very level and it was suggested that the extension land be properly levelled and flattened and rolled to make it easier for the grass cutters to mow over it, and to ensure cremation plaques are even and level.

6. TO RECEIVE A STATEMENT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

Mrs Shirley gave a report on the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2010.

Q: How much has been spent on repairs to play equipment?

A: £10k in the past 3 years.

7. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE POLICE – PC ROB GUEST

PC Rob Guest explained that he is a County Council funded officer and part of the Safer Community Team. His report, compiled by Inspector Stephen Chester, was circulated:

- Crime has decreased by 28.3% for the past year.
- The crime growth area is drugs.
- There has been a drop in reported incidents of Anti-social behaviour.
- There has been a decrease in litter being dropped.
- Funding for Operation OUST has been confirmed for a further three months.

PC Guest credited the Youth Centre Manager, Ben Evans, with the drop in crime figures and the work he does with young people.

Questions:

Q: Any major issues with Youth Centre (noise last year) and any other hot spots?

A: Youth centre issues are to be expected due to the nature of the business but no complaints flagged up. The Youth Centre sign had been damaged by a football due to a group getting frustrated at waiting to use the MUGA. It was not malicious damage, just started kicking the ball at the wall. PC Guest feels MUGA is fantastic value for money and equally the new one planned for the other side of Ermin Street. No hot spots had been reported.

Q: Graffiti board – do the police feel any issues with youth-related crimes anticipated?

A: PC Guest does not feel this will cause any issues after speaking to Ben Evans and young people in the area. They want the graffiti board. It was residents of vicarage court that objected the most and they will not be able to see it. It may also reduce the instances of youths climbing the wall as it will cause damage to the artwork.

8. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BROCKWORTH ALLOTMENT AND GARDEN ASSOCIATION – MR J RICHARDS

Mr Richards reported that this year had been very busy with fourteen plots changing hands during the year. There are 84 plot holders, with four on the waiting list.

The allotments are generally in good condition.

A tool shed was broken into last year and three motor mowers were stolen. Thieves had gained access through the roof, which has now been replaced with a brand new steel roof. Police were informed but no results.

Motor mower owners have been told not to leave them in the tool shed any more. Any mowers left in there will be removed and left outside.

Allotment rentals will be increased next season.

Questions

Q: Regarding the vacated plot, does the plot holder still owe money? Can they carry on the plot?

A: Yes, they have paid up, but have vacated the plot and terminated the agreement. Half a plot is 28 wide by 14 wide.

Q: What is happening about the request to keep bees?

A: One hive agreed for one year as a trial. The owner would have to have public liability insurance. Nothing happened since the matter first brought up.

Q: Is it possible to get in touch with the bee society to ask their advice?

A: Mr Richards said if someone wants to do it, then yes.

Q: Is the tool shed roof safe now?

A: Yes, the shed is as safe as it can be.

There was a suggestion that stapling chain link fencing to the rafters inside the roof would act as a further deterrent.

9. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY BUS AND BROCKWORTH ELDERLY GROUPS – MRS C NEAL

There are three clubs for the elderly:

i) Mondays – The Golden Age Club meet at St Georges Church. The club has had 52 years of continuous service but currently there are only about 25 members. Need some new members (men please!).

ii) Wednesdays – Day Centre at the Royal British Legion. Has been running for over 30 years and has about 20 members.

iii) Wednesday afternoons – Welcome Club at St Patricks Hall has been going for approximately fifteen years and has 42 members.

The community bus collects members and takes them to the clubs and, in between, does trips to the local Tesco's. The driver is very good and escorts the frail to the door and makes sure they are alright. It was the driver that could not get an answer from a door knock and found that the person had died and was able to alert the authorities.

Fifty people a day use the bus and there have been requests for it to run to Tesco on Fridays. Funding is in place until April 2011. The elderly clubs have always had transport provided.

Q: Would people pay to use the bus on a Friday.

A: The bus is already paid for through Section 106 money for Mondays and Tuesdays.

It was noted that it was due to Mrs Neal (as representative of the Day Centre) that we have the grant already and share with the other clubs.

10. TO RECEIVE A REPORT BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BROCKWORTH COMMUNITY PROJECT

Mr Scott Meadows highlighted several items from the Annual Report, a copy of which is at Appendix 2.

Questions

Q: When are you moving to the library?

A: Approx 12 July 2010 – The reasons for moving were: i) reduction in costs, ii) being able to have more space and iii) to be more accessible to the public in the evenings and weekends. They will have a dedicated training area in the library.

11. TO RECEIVE ANY OBSERVATIONS BY THE WARD REPRESENTATIVES ON TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – CLLR M COLLINS

Cllr Mike Collins addressed the meeting and gave a report on various County Council matters.

Education – Cllr Collins felt that BES should have received a degree of support rather than being put into 'special measures'. It does mean that the school gets more funding over a short period. Cllr Collins disagreed with the closing down of two schools in Gloucester, which puts pressure on more local schools that are also having problems.

New primary school, Coopers Edge, will be opening in September 2011 and will be run by a parents group. A number of children from Brockworth will be able to go to that school.

Cheese Roll – Cllr Collins went to the meeting that decided not to proceed with the event this year, but felt that the meeting should have been held within six weeks of the last cheese roll, not ten weeks before next one. The event was cancelled, not on a Health & Safety issue, but rather that the police withdrew their support. Last year there had been traffic problems on the A46. One steward could not deal with the traffic problems and the Police would not help.

Insurance for the event is for a maximum of 5000 people, whereas last year there were well in excess of that number.

There have been discussions about changing the status of the land (from common land) just for the event so they can charge a nominal fee and restrict attendance, and pay stewards.

It was commented that the internet has killed the event this year, as it is publicised as far away as Australia. Next year different arrangements will be put in place.

A consultation meeting took place with Highways about traffic calming on Ermin Street and there will be a formal public consultation. Cllr Collins was happy with the proposals. The works will be funded through Section 106 developer funding.

This is the last year of this parish council term. Cllr Collins would like a contested election next year for the parish council to ensure proper democracy.

Questions:

Q: What is the biggest cause of the massive tax rate for Brockworth?

A: Cllr Collins said he felt it was due to the cost of the Brockworth Community building and he gave a breakdown of the elements of the council tax bill.

Q: How do we compare to other districts / boroughs?

A: Cllr Collins has information for all Tewkesbury parishes. He advised the questioner to look at other District Council websites to research the information.

Cllr Jude Perez and Mrs Maureen Rowcliffe-Quarry gave the Borough Councillors' report

The Borough Councillors report was circulated to all present.

Cllr Rowcliffe-Quarry said she was proud to be a Borough Councillor this year after previous years of the Borough Council being in voluntary measures.

Capital grants had been given out and Brockworth Albion Football Club have benefited.

There is a new Communications Officer, Claire Davies, who has made a lot of difference.

There is a new petitions policy to improve communications.

The new Chief Executive is very proactive and approachable.

The DRIVE, 'Delivering Real Improvement, Value and Excellence', and CHESS, 'Clean & Green, Healthy, Excellent, Safe & Strong', programmes were outlined

Tewkesbury Borough Council is going forward and a lot of hard work has been carried out for the DRIVE programme.

Questions:

Q: Brockworth Parish Council and Tewkesbury Borough Councils are being run well but cannot cut costs and continue to run things well. There is a need to look at what we get for our money.

A: Yes, it is more expensive, but feels it is better to pay a little more, rather than have litter on the streets, etc.

Cllr Collins advised that Tewkesbury Borough Council is capped and not able to increase the precept more than 3.5%, so they have streamlined their operation and have been more efficient. There has to be a balance between being realistic and providing good value for money.

12. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE HEAD TEACHER OF CASTLE HILL SCHOOL

No report received.

13. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE TREE WARDEN – MR E FLOUNDERS

Mr Flounders circulated his report.

Trees have been planted with schoolchildren at Ribble Close, Castle Hill and Brockworth Enterprise School. Six trees were planted at Ribble Close where there is a 250-year-old ancient oak.

Mrs Rowcliffe-Quarry and Mr Flounders looked at Castle Hill School and, with the help of a donation from the parish council, planted trees around the perimeter of the sports ground, one for each class. The children will look after the trees and maintain them.

Tree felling at Abbotswood Road was a big issue this year and was done by the Gloucestershire Highways in response to problems with flooding on Ermin Street. Mr Flounders felt their reaction was excessive, but hope to have better relations with Highways in future. The stumps will be allowed to grow and will be managed in the future.

More than 46 trees on Painswick Road were felled. Highways did consult us, but nothing we could do, as the work had to be carried out, which involved felling the trees. Highways are committed to replanting trees once works are complete. Need to make sure trees are planted and are not overlooked at the end of this year.

Mrs Rowcliffe-Quarry and Mr Flounders worked with Brockworth Enterprise School for a nature island. A lot of work was done with BCTV help and, hopefully, next year will look again and get a grant from the Tree Council.

Tree Preservation Orders have been requested for two Perry Pear trees at land at Kennel Lane.

There is an Ancient Tree Hunt, which the Woodland Trust is running to record details of ancient trees.

Mr Flounders is grateful to Brockworth Parish Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, local organisations, and would like to thank the Police for their actions when a few youths stripped bark off a tree near Castle Hill School. When the police were informed, PC Guest went to the school assembly and spoke about the implications of their actions.

In the past year, more than 70 trees have been destroyed in Brockworth, and only fourteen have been planted.

Questions:

Q: In 2012 it will be the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Is there a scheme for planting trees?

A: Yes, Mr Flounders would like to find an area in the parish where this could be done; perhaps in an old English orchard of 1 - 1.5 acres of land. The scheme would need to be overseen by the parish council. A similar thing had been carried out in Daglingworth for the millennium and was working very well.

Regarding the Perry Pear trees, Mrs Rowcliffe-Quarry advised that there is a new petitions policy at Tewkesbury Borough Council. Previously, despite collecting over 500 signatures, the petition was largely ignored. Now, any petition with more than 100 signatures has to be considered at the senior level of Tewkesbury Borough Council. Mrs Rowcliffe-Quarry asked if each person could take a form and get signatures for the Perry Pear Trees Preservation Order.

Cllr Furolo asked that the petition be hand delivered and Cllr Collins responded that the petition would be handed over during a full council meeting at Tewkesbury Borough Council.

Completed forms to be handed to Julie Shirley or Maureen Rowcliffe-Quarry.

Q: Has there been any response from South West Cider, regarding making Perry from the Perry Pear tree fruit?

A: Nothing yet.

Mrs Perez congratulated Mr Flounders, on behalf of the parish, for all his hard work.

14. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, EITHER BY CORRESPONDENCE OR IN PERSON ON THE EVENING

There were no questions.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

Julie Shirley
Clerk to the Council

Date: