

STROGBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on **Wednesday 17th July 2024** at 7.30pm at the Village Hall, Ridgeway Road, Brogborough.

PRESENT:- Parish Councillors, Denise Tuitt (Chair), Tom Elsdon, Claire Westerman, Neil Wright, Alison Moss, Unitary Councillor Sue Clark, Robert Morris, the Clerk Lizzie Barnicoat, and no members of the public.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:- The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, apologies for absence were received and accepted from Parish Councillors Jeannette Newbery.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST TO BE DECLARED:- There were no declarations received for the meeting.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at this point

3. OPEN FORUM:-

No public statements received.

The Chair reconvened the meeting at this point

4. PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY:-

One vacancy remains it was noted.

5. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MATTERS:-

a) Planning appeal hearing for Brogborough Landfill Site, Woburn Road, Lidlington CB/22/00548/MW update – Councillor Neil Wright had spoken at the appeal on behalf of the Parish Council, it was disappointing to discover at the last minute that the local authority had withdrawn the appeal objection. Members of the public made robust challenges to the appeal mainly relating to the displacement of the skylark population. Due to the proof of evidence documentation not being available online as per the direction of the appeal letter link, the inspector adjourned the hearing. Cllr Sue Clark did secure an invite on the site visit that took place. The Parish Council had worked on reviewing the additional evidence documents, agreeing to submit the following:

Following on from the planning appeal hearing in June, Brogborough Parish Council are grateful for all those who made representation at the appeal hearing to express views on behalf of the organisation they represented as well as those who expressed their own individual comments. Having located the proof of evidence documents and reflecting on them, there is no reassurance from reviewing them that matters to safeguard the Skylarks have been satisfactorily address. There remains a number of gaps as raised in person by those at the June appeal hearings which leave the important local Skylark population vulnerable, therefore the Parish Council concerns remains.

A mitigation strategy that is only outline with disregard for any baseline data being captured is not sufficient when ensuring the protection of such a highly classified species. The mitigation site has also not been satisfactorily secured legally which is another worry, as without this security in place it is clearly against local and national planning police principles give the proposals must not have adverse impacts on protected species and species of principle importance like the Skylarks. With such uncertainty around the ownership of the mitigation site it means as the mitigation site is not owned by the appellant, they have no control over whether the landowner decides to sell off their land for development in the future or change the type of crops grown to those that are unsuitable for breeding Skylarks. A further example of the apparent total disregard with no guarantees of a suitable habitat for the Skylarks going forward.

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In addition, the Parish Council would like to highlight the two pairs of Lapwing who now successfully breed on the proposed application site, there continues to be no mitigation forthcoming for this declining bird species.

The Parish Council would also like to add that there is insufficient information relating to the maintenance and management strategy of the land under and around the panels, this does not seem to have been covered sufficiently, for example, is the grassland going to be regularly strimmed, mowed or grazed? If mowed this would bring about a rapid decline in the diversity of species present on the landfill site as many plant species will die out due to their inability to set seed due to regular cutting. If regular cutting is planned this will bring about a large decline in invertebrate species. It is felt that factors such as these should be included in the evidence at this stage of an application.

The lack of challenge by local authority Officers within the planning appeal proof of evidence documents that are now accessible is disappointing. To then also find the local authority have decided at the very last minute without any prior notification to the very concerned nearby villages, not to present at the appeal has made it extremely challenging. As without the local authority input it has left it Parish Councillors who volunteer their time to try and review such technically detailed documents and to try and ensure their community voice is heard. Brogborough is a small, rural community passionate about its thriving local environment so richly populated by different species, yet at this vital moment has been left totally unsupported at a time when it needed help the most against a sizeable organisation that for decades has dictated with little regard for local residents this area which is a key landscape feature of the village.

Cllr. Clark summarized the site visit, feeding back it had been useful. It was noted there appears to be no additional information in the proof of evidence documents that were reviewed as part of the new information that was made available on the appeal website more recently.

b) Local Transport Plan consultation – information had been circulated on this, with it being an opportunity to input into this important areas. Comments for submission were confirmed to be: The Parish Council ask the local authority to use this opportunity to better understand the needs of local communities such as a small, rural, parish like Brogborough which relies on transport in many ways. Councillors wish to highlight concern over the lack of public bus services which causes isolation in the village, there is such a limited service that runs from the Amazon site, Number 34 however, it does not serve the local community so this is far from ideal. Bus Number 47 has not been seen since it was due to start serving the village from June. When changes to such public transport services are bought in, it would be helpful to have a higher level of publicity, a more targeted approach in the area would enable assurance that the whole local community is able to know about the change. Whilst a notice on a board might reach some members of the community, engaging directly with the local Parish Council on what approach best suits their community would be better so they can disseminate this information for example through local WhatsApp groups, circulation email lists etc that suit the way their village works best.

Without a regular, or reliable public transport service it means it is not feasible to travel to work this way or even access any local services as a result such as doctor appointments.

Brogborough has suffered with many challenges on the local highways network, whether it is speeding vehicles, heavy goods vehicles travelling through the village or persistent issues with parked vehicles. All cause local concern, and are highways safety issues, yet trying to get the local authority to engage and support is challenging. There needs to be an easier way with more opportunities for joint working with the local authority to try and combat this issues which are regularly raised by the local community as a major concern. Enforcement needs to be more robust and more accessible for a rural community like Brogborough who can email in to the local authority numerous times but struggle to get a response and the best they can hope for is an acknowledgment rather than any action being taken sadly.

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During the review process of local network issues there also must a joined up thinking approach about the strategic road network which directly impacts on Brogborough given its proximity to Junction 13. With the changes from East West Rail, Universal Studios, Marston Valley all combined with the existing Junction 13 problems will really threaten the ability to function as a community when traffic is as bad as it is.

It was asked that the Clerk submit the above comments and include reference about loss of the camera enforcement for the 7.5t limit.

c) Planning applications received after the publication of the agenda – CB/24/01089/FULL Single storey rear extension and removal of chimney at 9 Ridgway Road – Council agreed to make no comment on the application, though asked the Clerk to follow up on why the neighbour comments were not available on the online portal.

Milton Keynes Local Plan being refreshed, formal consultation on Regulation 18 phase commenced today setting out the strategic sites for growth. The sites in local proximity were outlined with the pressure on local traffic resources. There are some public events, encouragement given to attend with future agenda item to ensure Parish Council response is submitted.

There was no planning decision notices in the parish to note.

6. UNITARY WARD COUNCILLOR REPORTS: -

Cllr. Bongo had updated ahead of the meeting that the concerns over the verges in the village looking unsightly, the soil has sunk and the utilities are showing had been pursued with the local authority trying to get a parking survey undertaken in the local area. The local authority do have an area wide “no footway/verge parking” in place currently, but the rules are that there must be required signage in place to enable enforcement. Councillors agreed to take advantage of the “no footway/verge parking” lines and signage offered, and to be fed back to Cllr. Bongo to follow up. Cllr Bongo had also pursued the completion of highways safety works by engaging with both the developer and contractor recently. There had been engagement with a Specialist Traffic signal supplier to finish off the works as soon as possible. There is a small amount of work that needs to be completed by them before the local authority can plan a commissioning date and get the crossing operational it was noted.

Cllr Clark reported that new CEO at East West Rail introduction meeting with the consultation being on hold until the government decide and make an announcement, with it being detailed at the meeting with a new CEO it would be a fresh start.

Central Bedfordshire Council Local Plan consultation launches next week it was noted.

Prologis have confirmed there are daffodils planted with Cllr. Clark willing to attend the Parish Council meeting representative get together with Prologis that is being arranged.

The camera scheme for enforcing the 7.5tonne limit project has been dropped it was reported, there has been no supporting reason or rationale as to why this scheme has been dropped, it was noted there have been ANPR cameras placed in the parish recently for a short period of time however, it is unknown for what purpose.

7. VILLAGE MATTERS:-

Open Spaces – following site meeting to look at additional signage regarding dogs, these have been received from the Officer, Cllr. Tuitt reported installation is ongoing.

Village Amenities – no items to discuss.

Play Equipment Inspection – play inspections continue to be carried out. Annual external inspection had taken place, report circulated , discussed action to be taken, some work is needed, CPM Playgrounds Ltd to meet with some Councillors to discuss the report, Clerk to arrange. Trap risk on the gate to be followed up, Cllr. Tuitt to follow up.

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Grass cutting – the Clerk had followed up what would happen if the Parish Council passed back the grass cutting responsibility to the local authority, meeting being arranged to discuss this, with a date set for this week to talk through with the local authority.

Newsletter – the newsletter had been collated and shared amongst Councillors, Cllr. Eldson thanked for work on this.

Footpaths – no update to report on the issue of the alleyway, along the rear of the shops remaining overgrown and establishing ownership. Meeting with local authority Officer to discuss the local rights of way on 26th July, all Councillors welcomed.

Badgers Meadow broken fence was discussed, it was noted some trees and hedges nearby have set, so the boundary is now more secure than previously.

Police Officer Juliet Wright offered dates for a Speedwatch team information session, 1st or 8th August for understanding more about how Speedwatch works. Cllr. Tuitt to arrange meeting for 1st, all welcome.

8. COMMUNITY ENERGY PROJECT UPDATE:-

Cllr. Wright had shared some initial thoughts on a community project, information was shared with Councillors, it was discussed the possibility of how to support a community energy project to benefit the whole community. Identifying an area that a wind turbine might be suitable to site in the local area, or having solar panels on resident roofs. Greensand Community Energy are able to support, advertising the group to encourage interested residents to come forward was felt to be useful. Free training opportunity for helping others in the community learn about energy saving. Clerk to upload the information onto the Parish Council website.

9. FINANCE MATTERS:- Latest transaction report provided to all Councillors as of 3rd July including copy of the Council bank balances. There had now been correspondence received from Metro Bank to the Clerk's address. HMRC VAT reclaim had been actioned for processing with Metro Bank account details included, Clerk detailed claim for £15980.95. £1808.59 is the next VAT claim that will be made which would take the claims up to 31st March 2024, this to be actioned once the large claim processed.

The latest with Barclays access was that Cllr. Moss to follow up and seek for the closure of the accounts with the remaining balances of £437.25 and £0.18 to be actioned as per the previous closure notice letter that clearly stated these accounts are to be closed with monies to be transferred to Metro Bank. It was noted Cllr. Moss had followed up and certification is likely to be required for progressing any banking arrangement changes with Barclays.

a) Payments for approval

Andy Muskett Ltd street lighting maintenance 24.25 quarter 1 £57.60

Firwood Treet Services Ltd tree maintenance work £1,850.00

ROSPA Play Safety play area inspection fee £230.40

Backlight Ltd admin support £873.07

Markus Louw Landscaping

Invoice 128AI football field cut 6th April £720.00

Invoice 128AJ football field cut 6th May £720.00

Invoice 128AK football field cut 18th May £720.00

These were presented at May meeting, due for payment then were discussed, but payment not processed. Total cost £2160 less over payment made to contractor in 2023 season of £708 means outstanding amount of £1452. Invoice for this meeting to be added:

Invoice 128AL football field cut 6th June £720.00

Therefore totalled to be paid confirmed as £2172.00 to Markus Louw Landscaping

It was unanimously agreed to approve and resolve to make the above payments, resolution passed.

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The following payments made between meetings via direct debit were ratified by the Parish Council, unanimously agreed:

Npower street lighting energy June £42.33

Relative of previous Clerk had been in contact for collecting some Parish Council items, Clerk to arrange. It was noted there had been no Advanced Turf invoice received following request sent after last meeting to mow Badgers Meadow and awaiting BATPC membership renewal.

b) Quotations for consideration

Clarity on the grass cutting specification were noted, the previous agreement was for the grass to be left where it lands, to have grass blown off the paths would be at a cost of £40.

10. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:-

Draft minutes from 29th May had been shared with all Councillors, it was unanimously agreed to approve the meeting minutes as a true and accurate record unanimously agreed, resolution passed. Chair to sign.

TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING: -

Clerk had continued to progress Council website updates. Ongoing arrangement of training session with Jed Gibson still trying to be arranged.

Register of Interest forms Cllr Wright recently completed but still not showing online yet. Cllr Elsdon form not online, even though completed, follow up actioned had been taken directly with local authority to help resolve.

Clerk contract had been updated as agreed at the last meeting, to reflect to engage with Backlight Light for the short term with support welcomed to assist the Parish Council with the associated administrative and financial matters. Hours to be recorded of work done as and when required in the short term. Document to be signed by both parties, Clerk and Chair actioned.

Attempts have continued to electronically register Parish Council for Government Gateway online account in order to resolve the HMRC payment matter last minuted as: Remaining outstanding payment item previous minute reflected, it was noted that the PAYE April to September 2023 cost had thought to have been paid, however, this appeared to be outstanding, along with payments for associated PAYE costs dating back to the last paid 22/23 1st quarter.

Approximate calculations had been made and shared with Councillors being built into the budget consideration for 2024/25. The Clerk had followed up and liaised with HMRC regarding the best way to resolve the outstanding PAYE submissions and payments. This has been actioned with debt collection put on hold with BPO, however further debt collection letters continued to be received. Challenges with HMRC updating new contact details for the Parish Council prevented this progressing, however, following letter sent to HMRC the Parish Council now have confirmation in writing that updated contact details have been accepted by HMRC which will enable PAYE debt management communications to be pursued now.

Cllr Clark item to be followed up to check on progress regarding the concern raised at the last meeting relating to the northbound slip road of Junction 13 coming off the motorway, the traffic lights appear to have been removed. New white lines have been painted at the junction but the removal of the traffic lights is now making the junction dangerous, with there being no poles in situ it was noted. Cllr Clark to follow up with contact at National Highways, awaiting update.

CBC Leisure Parish Schedule for Broxborough, to be collated and submitted alongside the Recreational Open Space Strategy (ROSS) Survey, ongoing.

The asset register document collation work remained ongoing.

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Street lighting – Clerk had contacted broker to instigate agreed move from Npower to SSE for a fixed rate three year contract expecting a saving of £150.00 per year awaiting feedback, had been chased again.

Speed indicator devices - Clerk shared information on speed indicator device units and possible funding sources, it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council contribute £500 financially in principle and Clerk to obtain funding for two units expected to be in the region of £6,000 funding in total required for two devices. Marston Vale Turbine and Wixams Tree Trust, Unitary Councillor Ward Fund are being explored. Rookery South application with early September deadline being explored.

Prologis communication feedback given meeting offered, Councillors agreed it would be helpful. Trying to secure funding for vehicle activated sign had been raised as had the push button crossing at the traffic lights to ensure they work functionally.

Clerk had contacted local authority Officer Jack Bowers copying in Unitary Councillors to the communication to chase what steps were being taken in improve highways safety after the recent fatality on Bedford Road, chased, latest response was not informative.

No follow up communication received following the representation made at previous meeting regarding East West Rail information from a member of the public from Husborne Crawley.

Ward Fund request had been made for help with funds for the Parish Council speed indicator devices, Clerk had followed up and fed back on contribution with Clerk to make application with the local authority.

Tree work had been completed by Firwood Tree it was noted.

Insurance renewal quotation work will be ongoing as the renewal is not quite due yet, so Clerk will continue to pursue.

Clerk had made external audit submission and to arrange for the audited items to be placed on Council website.

Policy documents updated with Council logo on new NALC Financial Regulations document based on updated model circulated as well as latest Code of Conduct model reviewed. It was unanimously agreed to approve them with appropriate Brogborough inserts to be made including the badger logo.

Police have undertaken a speed check along the C94 on a Sunday, which was pleasing but disappointing.

Funding for two devices being - Incylcis funding Monday's meeting look for money from it. Drax or Millbrook Power

Carbon catcher meeting Cllr. Wright attended and gave summary.

11. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:-

Local Transport Plan communications – circulated, to be filled in so can be submitted

Workplace Health Bulletin: May 2024

Workplace Health Bulletin: June 2024

M1 junction 10 to 13 - Traffic Management update – circulated

Parish Council website communications with JG

Unmetered Supply Renewal - Street Lighting quotation communications – ongoing

Planning appeal for Brogborough Landfill Site, Woburn Road, Lidlington CB/22/00548/MW communications

Louws Landscaping grass cutting communications – invoices agenda item

Street Lighting Brogborough Andly Muskett Ltd – invoices agenda item

RoSPA Play Safety Inspection Reports -circulated, agenda item

Invoice 80839 from Playsafety Limited for Brogborough Parish Council – agenda item

Invoice 1982023_676763 from Firwood Tree and Garden Services Ltd – agenda item

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Brogborough Parish Council - AGAR 2023/2024 acknowledged receipt from external auditors
Prologis communications regarding community improvement items - circulated
GrantScape Online Application Registration
Morelock communication regarding quotation for a vehicle activated sign device
Unitary Councillor SB update on the Bedford Road highways safety measures – circulated
Unitary Councillor SC apologies for the meeting – responded to
CBC Update for Town and Parish Councils - July 2024 – circulated
CBC Last chance to shape future of local transport – agenda item
Priority Setting Meeting 10th July 2024 - North Central Bedfordshire
Beds RCC News - June 2024
CBC Adoption of the Planning Obligations SPD T/PC
CBC Community Safety Youth Survey 2024 - printable version
Last week to have your say on the future of libraries in Central Bedfordshire
Npower Dashboard has been upgraded
CBC Advert for Panel Members
CBC - Enhance community facilities with a Community grant fund Deadline 19JULY24
CBC Share your thoughts on two strategies to shape the future of arts, culture and libraries
M1 junction 10 to 13 - Safety enhancements surface repairs
Prologis Marston Gate Expansion Policy SE2 Planning Committee 29/5/2024 communications
CBC Officer communication regarding rights of way walkround – actioned
CBC Officer communication regarding grass cutting in parish – actioned
Unitary Councillor SB Brogborough - STOPPING Residents parking on grass verges FMS –
403858 communication -
CBC confirmation Brogborough settlement audit received
Brogborough Parish etc, helpful info for Parishes wanting to take climate action – agenda item
CBC Planning letter for CB/24/01089/FULL – agenda item
Play Repairs, Maintenance and Inspections by PFL
Speedwatch - New Group Enquiry copied into communication sent
CBC Funding for tree and hedge planting in your town/parish council
CBC Town and Parish Councils - June 2024

Illegal rave in Brogborough recently, local police community engagement it was asked that the Clerk to check in with Community Officer team, Clerk to follow up with PC Rachel Vaughan and CBC Community Safety Officer to seek reassurance of any reoccurrence.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: - Wednesday 4th September 2024 at 7.00pm, meeting closed 9.20pm, CW sent apologies in advance.

Signed

Dated