

UPPER BROUGHTON
Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting
Tuesday 21st March 2017 – 7pm
Chair: Anne Copley

There were 10 members of the public at the meeting, five of whom were Parish Councillors.

Apologies: NC Cllr. Cottee, Cllr's. Barry and Watson.

Acceptance of the minutes of last year's meeting held on Tuesday 22nd March 2016: Cllr. Flood proposed that the minutes of the meeting be accepted as a true record; this was seconded by Cllr. Bailey and passed.

Matters arising: The drains that were reported blocked after the last meeting had been cleared after a request was made to the County Council. Unfortunately, a year on, the drains are once again filling with debris and in need of clearing. The water was still coming up in front of the gas box on the corner of Melton Rd. The Clerk was asked to report the drains again to the County Council.

Chairman's Report 2017

The Neighbourhood Plan has played a big part in our year. Following on from a talk by Jenny Kirkwood of RCAN and village workshops, two meetings have taken place with interested parties. The second one was attended by Bob Philips, Planner and Urban Designer & Planning Consultants, who gave a most informative talk and pointers on how to proceed. 7 residents and 2 councillors attended. Now a recruitment plan has been put into place to inform and hopefully get input and help from villagers before proceeding. I would like to thank David Russell for coordinating this. Although this is a Parish Council initiative it requires a working party of villagers, young and old, including Parish Council representatives, of which all have to be dedicated for a period of 12 to 18 months to put together the document, helped by expertise from outside consultants.

A group meeting of all Councillor Combella's Parishes was hosted in Upper Broughton for Rushcliffe Planners to give a presentation and informative talk on planning issues, followed by plenty of time for questions.

Many planning applications have been dealt with during the year including one appeal that was allowed, and one appeal dismissed. The latter being the wind turbine on the side of Melton Road. A very long wait, but a pleasing result for most people.

Our Annual Risk Assessment was carried out. The old Chapel seats on the Cross Green were found to be in a poor condition and were removed by Councillor Parkinson. A new teak seat will be purchased locally and installed on Cross Green shortly.

Permission has been given to us for posts and chains to be put around the village pump to protect it following a lot of recent damage. The pump is of historical value to our conservation village and needs to be preserved.

Traffic and tractors with large loads have been a big problem on Top Green due to the narrowness of the road and the number of cars parked outside resident's properties. Contractors using large farm vehicles were contacted and requested, if possible, to use Bottom Green where the road is wider and not so many cars are parked. This has proved most satisfactory.

As usual, speeding traffic has been a concern, especially entering into the village from the A46, and the Parish Council has continued to look at ideas to help improve the situation.

After a recent meeting with Councillor Cottee and Kendra Hourd of Highways I am pleased to report that shortly a "Slow down" warning will be painted on the road prior to reaching the 30 also on the road. The old 30 signs either side of the road on the grass verges are to be replaced with new, more visible ones. The Parish Council will still continue to investigate other avenues especially the interactive sign, but these will have to be funded by the parish.

I would like to thank the Village Hall Committee for continuing to keep the hall in good condition and in constant use for events run both by villagers and by organisations from outside the village. Exercise classes are proving most popular.

The Parish Council is also considering whether to repair/replace the windows in the village hall in the near future.

I would like to thank Jo Cartmell, our Clerk, for all her work and help this past year and also to Rushcliffe Borough Councillor Tina Combellack and Nott's County Councillor John Cottee for their much-needed advice. We wish John all the best in the forthcoming election.

Finally, a big thank you goes to Upper Broughton Parish Councillors for all their work and support during the year.

Open Session:

Four members of the public had attended the meeting primarily to discuss planning application 16/03037/VAR which was on the agenda to be discussed by the Parish Council in the following meeting. Mrs Judith Mason noted that the applicant had shown a complete disregard to all previous planning applications and removed a section of mature hedge and replaced it with a wall and gate. The development which had taken place, in Mrs Mason's opinion, contravened all planning policies and in particular, it did not improve or enhance the conservation area. The hedge that had been removed had been highlighted in the inspectors report for the planning appeal as benefiting the development as it provided screening of the new building. The planning officer who had attended the site had reassured residents that the hedge would be replaced and to now have an urban looking wall and access, was unacceptable.

The fact the developer had also tarmaced the entrance to the new entry point meant that parking would be likely especially with the steep gradient of the drive and also a natural soak away area had been lost and surface water was now being directed into properties that were further down the hill. Mrs Mason felt that the developer should be made to take down the wall and replace it with the hedge as she felt to allow the development would set a precedent going forward.

Mrs Ceri Calvert supported the points that had already be made and also reinforced the point that she had been informed by a representative from the planning department that the hedge would be replaced. Mrs Calvert felt that the enforcement team were not carrying out the job it's members were employed to do as there had been little enforcement despite the developer repeatedly diverting from the approved plans. Mrs Calvert felt the wall and entrance were not an improvement to the street scene and described the structure as a 'pastiche of suburbia'.

Mr Jenkins also raised concerns that the development breached all the Borough Council's policies on the environment and the conservation area and was struggling to understand how this application had been granted.

Cllr. Combellack noted that she was fully aware of the issues surrounding this development and shared the concerns of the residents. Cllr Combellack advised the meeting that the best course of action would be to invite Mr Pegram and Mr Hall to a planning meeting to answer questions from members of the public.

Mr Russell commented that the property was now being lit at all hours of the day by large floodlights which were causing light pollution to the neighbouring properties. The Clerk had spoken to the planning officer who confirmed that lights were not something that required planning permission even in a conservation area. Light pollution was an issue for the Environmental Health Department.

Mr Russell also wished the Parish Council to increase the precept as while all the other councils had increased their share of the council tax, the parish council had reduced its. Mr Russell would prefer to pay a higher tax, the proceeds of which could be put back into the community of Upper Broughton with the belief this would encourage parishioners to come up with initiatives that would benefit the community.

The Clerk noted that the precept set by the Parish Council had remained the same year on year, it was the tax base – the number of people paying tax that had increased and therefore a decrease had appeared on the tax bills. It was also noted that the Parish Council do have a community fund which is available to the parish for initiatives that need support. The Chair agreed that this would be added to the agenda at the next Parish Council meeting for discussion.

No further business: meeting closed – 7.52pm