

LANGLEY BURRELL WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL DRAFT MINUTES

Annual Parish Meeting

held at 7.30pm

Maud Heath Room, Langley Burrell Village Hall

28th April 2022

Present: Cllr Robert Whitrow (Chairman), Cllr Rick Colthorpe, Cllr Katerina Johnstone, Cllr Julie Hoskins (Vice Chairman) and Cllr Rhian Lavery.

Also Present: John Burrell, Nick Cox, Sue Payne, Mark Griffin, Folke Pope and Mr V A Vines MBE Clerk of the Council.

NOTICE OF MEETING – Public Notice of the Meeting was given in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972

01/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Wiltshire Councillor H Greenman.

02/22 MINUTES Minutes had been previously circulated.

Those present received, considered and confirmed that the Minutes of the Virtual Annual Parish Meeting held on 19th April 2021 were a correct record.

Cllr Rhian Lavery proposed, seconded Cllr Katerina Johnstone and AGREED UNANIMOUSLY

03/22 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2021

There were no matters raised that were not included as later Agenda items.

04/22 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2022

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Robert Whitrow, reported on the Parish Council activities since the last Annual Parish Meeting in 2021.

The past year had seen a continuation of the impact of Covid restrictions, which had once again severely curtailed the normal activities of the Council, and resulted in the Council being unable to hold regular face-to-face Meetings until this calendar year. Notwithstanding these limitations 2021/22 had been another year of activity across the Parish.

The Parish continued to face pressures from the urban expansion of Chippenham, and while there were currently no new applications for development on the land opposite the entrance to the village across towards Birds Marsh Farm it was believed this was only a matter of time. The last year had seen the implementation of various boundary changes from April 2021 with the main areas of recent development comprising the housing development area to the south of the perimeter road along the north of Barrow Farm and the Rawlings Green area becoming part of Chippenham.

Wiltshire Council was not currently able to demonstrate the 5yr land supply requirement, and recent government pronouncements implied that there would be more 'sympathy/support' for smaller scale developments moving forward, so the pressure on the Parish from development remained high and of major concern.

Langley Burrell Neighbourhood Plan

As Parishioners were aware Langley Burrell Neighbourhood Plan was now 4 years old and had therefore lost much of its 'weight' in planning decisions, such that it would benefit greatly from being revised and updated. While formally developed by the Parish Council, the vast majority of the work had been undertaken on behalf of the Council by the Langley Burrell Residents Association (LBRA). However the LBRA had recently had a number of membership changes and needed re-invigorating and re-grouping to ensure it was able to ensure proper engagement in community support and feedback sessions. Community engagement in LBRA was strongly encouraged and anyone with an interest in helping should contact Robert or Rhian Lavery as soon as possible.

Finances

He was delighted to report that the Parish Council was currently in a reasonably robust financial situation. Parishioners would be aware that because the Parish had a 'made' Local Neighbourhood Plan it received 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds that were payable by developers for each house built in the Parish. Because of the extensive developments at Barrow Farm [and future Rawlings Green] Langley Burrell had received a significant amount of CIL related funding, and the current balance held for CIL funds was approaching £550k.

This CIL funding could only be spent on CIL qualifying criteria and needed to be spent within 5 years of receipt (otherwise they get returned to Wiltshire Council). Under the qualifying criteria the CIL funds could be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure, including transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals, and other health and social care facilities. This definition allowed the Levy to be used to fund a very broad range of facilities such as play areas, open spaces, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities, healthcare facilities, academies and free schools, district heating schemes and police stations and other community safety facilities, and the Parish Council was very interested in any suggestions from the Parishioners for the application of these funds.

The Parish effectively provided 'green space' facilities to both the Parish inhabitants but also those living on the north side of Chippenham, and people would probably be aware of the increased number of people enjoying the countryside the Parish had to offer. The Council are looking to try and enhance and safeguard these assets, and crystallise the benefits of some of the green space. Work was already underway on the creation of Nature & Heritage Trails across the Parish, and also work was underway on a project to enshrine the preservation and ongoing husbandry of Birds Marsh Wood.

In addition to these existing initiatives, current thoughts under consideration for the application of CIL funding included:

- i) Land purchases (dog walking field)
- ii) Village Hall development/extension

- iii) Sports pavilion for the sports ground
- iv) 2 x Tennis Courts
- v) Children's play area/Adult outdoor Gym equipment
- vi) Implementation of Speed reduction initiatives/30 mph zone extended/introduction of 20mph zone through the core village/introduction of entry 'gates' and narrowing curbs.

He advised that the normal (ie non-CIL related) funds, which were used for the usual running of the Parish Council were around £39k at today's date. This primarily reflected the benefit of an increase in overall income from the short-term increase in the number of residents within the Parish from the new developments (being lost with the boundary changes in April).

Parishioners would be aware that the level of financial support and the work undertaken by Wiltshire Council had been reducing significantly over the last few years, and Parish Councils were now being asked to undertake significantly more work themselves. This unfortunately resulted in an inevitable increase in cost for the Council, which coupled with national guidance to ensure each Council maintained adequate reserves/contingency for unexpected expenditure, resulted in the precept being increased 2022. However it was believed that the current financial position was reasonably robust and any future increases could be kept to a minimum.

Other matters

He reported on a number of Parish Council projects:

Defibrillators – three had been ordered and would be erected soon.

Pavement access/parking opposite the Langley Tap – restrictive posts had been ordered and would be erected soon.

The Council was looking to create a formal Emergency Plan.

Elsewhere the Council had pressed ahead with measures to counter the issue of speeding through the main village. Autospeedwatch devices/recorders were now in place and the Council was expecting to install two new ElanCity Solar Radar speed cameras in the coming months.

There were now three new notice boards in the Parish and another to be erected soon at the Village Hall and work had been done to support the development/crystallisation of information about Kilvert's countryside and Maud Heath's Causeway.

Langley Burrell remained a thriving community but was small and suffered from an above average mature population, albeit there had been a steady influx of younger families during this last year. The Parish continued to face challenges on multiple fronts – not least from Chippenham's expansion and the opportunities afforded to developers, but also from increasing regulations and legislative changes and an ever-decreasing level of financial support from Wiltshire Council. Elsewhere the Parish continued to face the creep of urbanisation from Chippenham, and would face continued pressures and challenges across the Parish to retain this rural environment everyone prized so highly.

GDPR communications

As advised last year, the Parish Council would like to ensure it was able to communicate more directly with Parishioners, using email where appropriate, and was continuing the work initiated last year to capture the relevant information from residents, while also ensuring GDPR compliance. This was an ongoing process and would continue throughout 2022. If anyone an attendance had not yet signed up to receive electronic communications please could they contact Viv and/or complete and return the relevant GDPR form.

Summary

In conclusion he wished to thank his fellow Councillors and the Parish Clerk for their actions and support over the past year, which had not been easy. He also wished to encourage others to get more involved, both with LBRA and also the Parish Council and looked forward to listening to reports from others throughout the evening.

05/22 PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET 2022-2023

A copy of the Parish Council's Approved Budget for the year 2022/2023 was circulated. The document allowed a comparison of budgets and required Precept since 2017/18 to be made. The Chairman highlighted some budget figures for information. There were no questions raised by those in attendance.

06/22 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL SUB GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

The Council had no Sub Groups or Sub Committees during the last year.

07/22 REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Langley Burrell Village Hall Trustees.

Katerina Johnstone (Chairman) reported that the Hall had opened its' doors again last April after the fourth lockdown and groups tentatively began to return, although they did not see a full return until the end of 2021. Despite early reservations on gatherings by some, they were able to hold two main events for the community, an end of lockdown party at the end of July and an evening of live entertainment, food and draft beers provided by Tom Grimshaw, saw that everyone had a great time and said they would like this to happen again.

They were also able to hold their Annual Fete on 25th September. The weather was great and again a good time was had by all. They managed to raise £2,000.00, which was shared between the Hall & St. Peter's Church.

She advised that in 2022 they had held a litter pick weekend at the start of April, with members of the community turning up to pick around the village, they collected over 20 sacks of rubbish. They also held an Easter Egg hunt on Saturday 16th April which had been a great success and enjoyed by many families.

They were going to hold a Street Party for the Queen's Jubilee on Sunday 5th June 2022 from 1pm. People could bring their own picnics, drinks & games. If the weather was inclement tables could be set up inside. They had provisionally booked their Summer Fete for Saturday 9th July, but this would depend on whether they could get enough people to help. A decision would be made at their May Committee Meeting.

Over the last 6 months they were fortunate enough to welcome some new members onto the Committee, but for various reasons, they were now down to just 3, which in the long term was unsustainable and they were putting out notices for new members.

Financially, the Hall was secure, due to Covid-19 Grants received. A Playing Field lease of 25 years had been offered to the Hall by the Scott-Ashes, which was in progress. They were unwilling to sell the land to the Parish Council.

Maud Heath Trust Trustees.

Julie Hoskins (Trustee) reported that the final Information Board, advertising and promoting the heritage and tourism aspects had now been installed near the main Monument at the top of Wick Hill. The Trustees were now making enquiries about the possibility of erecting a Plaque at Chippenham Clift, on the stone marking the start of The Causeway.

They were concerned about the state of the raised footway at Kellaways, particularly the arches and stonework by the River Avon but Wiltshire Council had advised that they were monitoring the situation.

She advised that their email address was now working and that annual repairs and maintenance was ongoing. They had been quoted £125,000.00 to repair the short stretch of Causeway between East Tytherton and the Canal. The path opposite The Warren (70 Kellaways) also needed attention.

St Giles Church, Tytherton Kellaways.

Julie Hoskins (PCC Member) advised that they waited with anticipation the arrival and installation of the defibrillator. The new Community Notice Board, provided by the Parish Council had been welcomed.

She particularly highlighted the remaining work required on the reinstatement of the Church Bell that required the “clapper” reattached. They were still trying to find a suitable person to do this. She reported that the Church organ and been cleaned and renovated.

The Church was part of the Draycot Benefice with no Resident Vicar for nearly a year. Sadly the first time of advertising for what was to become a part time post did not bring any candidates forward. Further advertising, with new criteria for the post, did bring a candidate to interview but it was felt by the interview panel that the candidate was not suitable for ministry in this Benefice. A part time, four day a week post, with accommodation was currently being offered.

Langley Burrell Residents Association.

There was no report from the Association but those in attendance acknowledged the vital part they continued to play within the Parish, often supporting and aiding the Parish Council when necessary and supporting the best interests of the whole community.

St Peter’s Church, Langley Burrell.

There was no report from the Church PCC. However, comment was made by attendees in regards to financial difficulties and a suggestion was made that perhaps a “round Robin” letter be circulated seeking donations could prove beneficial.

Langley Burrell Cricket Club.

Nick Cox provided an update on the re-formation of the Club in 2020. There was an intention to hold their first game at the end of May 2022, making it a special occasion, with a weather dependent end of season home game in September 2022. The cricket square had been scarified and was looking good. Practice sessions were taking place at Sutton Benger. He reported that Membership was growing with a Facebook and Instagram presence. He and others were investigating the long history of the Cricket Club. A number of fundraising options were under consideration particularly for capital proposals and the Parish Council could be approached for financial assistance. All present welcomed cricket back to Langley Burrell and wished the Club success.

08/18 REPORT FROM WILTSHIRE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Wiltshire Councillor Howard Greenman had been unable to attend the Annual Meeting and had provided a written report that was read to attendees

The report advised that it was good to be able to report on this, his 13th Annual Parish Report, although life continued to present its' challenges.

A year ago, he had reflected on the blight that Covid-19 had become on life and society in general, hoping that we'd soon be through the tunnel, and yet a year on albeit with a different variant Omicron, we continued to be beset with it, with spikes in different parts of the country and in fact in Wiltshire too. Although as a County we seemed to have been spared the worst outbreaks. Covid-19 had put significant strain on Wiltshire Council health budgets and on wider health service provision too, with the South West Ambulance Service Trust reporting numerous instances of inundation of their services. The NHS too, had valiantly soldiered on in the face of seemingly endless pressure on their expertise and care also. We owed them all a debt of gratitude. His thoughts continued to be with those of who had lost loved ones due to this pandemic. Even for those who hadn't lost loved ones, the aftermath would be felt for a long time to come.

He advised that he would come to some Wiltshire Council budgetary pressures, but that it was worth reflecting too on the utterly tragic situation being played out in the Ukraine. Who could have foreseen this ugliness just a few months ago? The impact of this, hot on the heels of Covid19 had been, and would be further felt by everyone no doubt, but he also knew that a number had offered accommodation to those displaced from the Ukraine, and everyone was to be applauded for that. He was hopeful that in the short term the bureaucratic obstacles to putting the kind gestures into practice would be overcome, as only too soon, everyone would need to 'step up to the plate' in this very practical way of fulfilling need. Within Wiltshire Council they were doing all they could to facilitate this.

Moving on to Wiltshire Council budgets for the following fiscal year he reported that, it was a bit of a mixed bag really, although happily not as painful as he once imagined it would be. Wiltshire Council had needed to plug a £27m shortfall in the budgetary provision, through £3m on the Adult Care levy, and £24m in savings. There had been a sharp increase in adult care and social services requirement necessitating some very careful and imaginative handling of fiscal priorities.

Broadly speaking he advised that the revenue spend for 2022/23 would be £417.703m, to be spent as follows;

35% caring for adults,
20% spent on supporting and safeguarding our children and young people,
10% on managing Wiltshire's waste,
9% funding the investment in Wiltshire's schools, new roads and housing,
9% on maintaining Wiltshire's highways and subsidising local bus services,
7% on running the council and local elections,
4% on our property,
3% on our online and digital services,
2% on Wiltshire's leisure and libraries, and
1% on improving Wiltshire's economy.

He continued to Chair the Strategic Planning Committee for Wiltshire Council and beyond the clear environmental pressures of some planning applications, was often faced with the tensions between Neighbourhood Plans and government targets for housing delivery. He was proud then of Parishes that had completed the Neighbourhood Plan process and urged others to continue to bring theirs to fruition.

He hoped soon to revitalise the Rural Parish Forum too following the break due to the pandemic, and would be focusing on fly-tipping once again as the scourge in our countryside and environment it was, and also hoped to bring back the Cyber Crime expert from the Wiltshire Constabulary to heighten our awareness of the increase of cyber crime, as it was now the fastest form of crime our police forces face.

In conclusion he thanked all for their time, with every good wish for the year ahead,

09/22 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND GENERAL DISCUSSION OF PARISH ISSUES

Kilvert's Heritage Trail: Cllr Robert Whitrow updated the attendees on progress in regards to a proposal to create a Heritage Trail. The intention being to promote the heritage and tourism aspects of the many historic assets, buildings, monuments, within the Parish. Efforts were being made to find assistance through various contacts including the Chippenham Museum and the Victoria County Historic Trust. Further information would be provided in due course.

Keep Britain Tidy – Great British Spring Clean (Litter Pick): As usual the Council had received Keep Britain Tidy information and Cllr Katerina Johnstone updated the attendees on the successful litter pick weekend at the start of April, with volunteers turning up to pick around the village, collecting over 20 sacks of rubbish. There remained a need to ensure that the Parish was regularly litter picked. Equipment was available if required.

Defibrillator Project – S W Ambulance Trust Training Session: The Council continued to pursue the provision of three defibrillators within the Parish and part of the 4-year lease agreement with the S W Ambulance Trust allowed for a yearly training session. It was likely that the defibrillators would be installed in the next few weeks. On completion of the project it would become possible to make arrangements for a training session later in the year in the Village Hall.

Community Safety/Neighbourhood Watch/Emergency Plan: The Parish Council was still need considering how to attract volunteers to fulfil important roles within the Parish. Cllr Rhian Lavery was working on a draft Emergency Plan that would require volunteer assistance to cover the whole Parish. The Council had yet to deploy their email database that could circulate community messaging and the like. Attendees were urged to sign up for the distribution list.

Traffic Speeds – the provision of Autospeedwatch Tools: The Parish Council had purchased and installed 2 solar powered devices. Data was now being collected to identify persistent speeding offenders. There remained a need for more Police recognition and assistance in Speedwatch.

Community Speedwatch – the Speedwatch Scheme volunteers: As part of the efforts to reduce traffic speeds throughout the Parish there was a need to identify volunteers to form a Community Speedwatch Team and a Coordinator for them to take the required training. The issue of rumble strips, speed bumps and Village entrance gates were methods of reducing speed and would be investigated through the Chippenham Area Transport Group (CATG). The repainting of existing speed limit signage was also important.

Speed Identification Devices (SIDS) - the provision of SIDs: The Parish Council had agreed to purchase two ElanCity Radar Devices and erect in the Parish at identified “hot spots” to provide advance warning to drivers and collect data in efforts to reduce speed levels. Subject to the approval of Wiltshire Highways it was likely the devices would be installed in the next few months.

Covid-19 – Impact on the Parish: The Pandemic and repercussions had affected Parishioners and businesses within the Parish, including the closure of the Village Hall. Local volunteers had assisted vulnerable people with shopping and medical collections and continued to do so when required.

Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Celebrations: Cllr Katerina Johnstone updated the attendees on proposals to hold a Street Party for the Queen’s Jubilee on Sunday 5th June 2022 from 1pm. People could bring their own picnics, drinks & games. If the weather was inclement, tables could be set up inside the Village Hall.

Neighbourhood Plan: The importance of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan was acknowledged and it was stressed that there was a need to update the Plan based upon the reduced Designated Area following the loss of Parish areas to Chippenham in April 2021. Up to date Plan policies would provide added protection to Local and National Planning policies, particularly the potential encroachment of Chippenham into the Parish. The Parish Council had delegated the updating task to the Langley Burrell Residents Association and no progress had been made to date. There was a need to consider how to attract volunteers to join the Association and fulfil an important role within the Parish.

Recreation Ground Facilities: There had been a number of suggestions on potential projects, including a sports pavilion, tennis courts, children’s play area, adult gym area and possible extensions to the Village Hall itself. It was likely that CIL funds could be used for capital projects. The crucial issue was timescale as CIL funds were time limited. Consequently, proposals would need to be considered swiftly. In addition to the Recreation Ground the possibility of children’s play facilities at Oakhurst was raised. The Parish Council had already investigated this and had not been able to pursue it further. However, the opportunity should not be missed and further investigations on land ownership would be carried out.

Rights of Way – Footpath maintenance – Community Warden:

The importance of the designated Rights of Way within the Parish had been previously acknowledged and it was stressed that the Parish Council and volunteers should protect and enhance them so that they remained open for use. There was a

need for proper signage and safe stiles etc. Comment was made that overuse during Covid-19 Lockdown, had been detrimental to path surfaces and that there was a need for careful control. It would be beneficial to have a Community Footpath Warden to oversee all Rights of Way and James Burrell suggested that he might have an interested party. This would be investigated further.

Birds Marsh Wood:

Cllr Robert Whitrow updated the attendees on progress in regards to proposals for Birds Marsh Wood. Being sited within the Parish there was a need to secure its' future protection, particularly from development proposals. Developers of the northern expansion area, as part of the Section 106 Agreement, had agreed to hand the Woods over to Wiltshire Council together with a £200k commuted fund. The Wiltshire Council had no wish to involve itself in future liabilities and if agreed could hand the Woods over to the Parish Council as a "proper body". The terms of this were being discussed and legal advice taken. In theory the Parish Council would become the owner but overall management handed over to an appropriate body.

Fly Tipping:

The issue of fly tipping in a number of areas of the Parish was raised and attendees were reminded that the Parish Forum had provided signage to assist the situation. The matter would be raised with the Forum when they next meet. In the interim, although of no legal basis attendees could erect some home made notices that at least would alert potential fly tippers.

10/22 CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Parish Council Chairman thanked all those who had attended the Annual Parish Meeting, looked forward to seeing them throughout the year at Parish Council Meetings and closed the Meeting at 8.40pm.

Signed:

Date: