

Minutes of the annual parish meeting held on the 18th March 2016 In Brigstock Village Hall commencing at 7pm

Present

Mrs D Solesbury, Mrs S Wilks, Mrs M Smith, Mrs T Towns, Mr S Malcom, Mr W Millen, J Schofield, Mr C Johnson Mrs Searle, Mr Bright, Mrs Shrive

1 Apologies

None

2 Minutes of previous meeting and issues arising

The previous minutes (15th April 2015) were read and signed as a true record of the meeting

3 Chairman's report

Welcome once again to the annual parish meeting.

This year we decided to raise the precept slightly to £20,000 which is in line with the precepts of other similar sized parishes and works out to less than £40 per household. I hope residents feel they are getting value for money.

In November another successful Bonfire Night raised enough money to fund the display in 2016 and have plenty to spare. We therefore decided to ask villagers if they needed funds for anything special. To date the Fireworks Fund has provided filing cabinets for the village hall to house important historical and village documents. Thanks to all those who helped make it a success once again. Our display is gaining quite a reputation locally.

Jane Jones and friends organised another Christmas Village Advent Calendar. The displays were wonderful and varied and contributed so much to the Christmas spirit. A Christmas Tree was also erected again on Hall Hill kindly donated by the Reynolds family and erected with the help of Justin Mumford. Father Christmas once again arrived in a pony and trap and distributed gifts of sweets, whilst the choir, accompanied by Julia Stanniforth, led the carol singing. Another great community event.

Thanks once again to William Millen for leading the planning committee and responding promptly and efficiently to planning applications. The Gladman Developments application for 110 homes off Benefield Road has not gone away but is due to be heard

at appeal in July when we hope that common sense will prevail and the application will be thrown out. There is very little support for such a large development in the village. The residents don't want it, East Northants Council don't want it, the County Council do not support it and our MP, Tom Pursglove, is on our side too so it will be interesting to see if the government's plans to devolve more planning decisions to local government really do hold water.

The Neighbourhood Plan committee meets regularly and is making good progress. A questionnaire has gone out to the whole parish and a good response was received so we now have a much better idea what the burning issues are in the village. Apart from dog poo and parking which are always concerns, there are particular worries about the strains of more housing on the school and doctors' surgery. A full breakdown of the results can be found on the village website. I would like to thank Chris Allen and the other members of the Neighbourhood Plan committee for their excellent work in putting together our Neighbourhood Plan for Brigstock. We are on course to produce the plan by 2017 and I am sure it will provide a vision for Brigstock fit for the next 15 years.

An Article 4 direction for the Conservation area is now being progressed and can be incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan.

We had to use the floodstore in January this year when three houses near Grafton Road bridge were flooded. Water reached the highest level since the major floods in 1998 and roads were impassable. Having a flood warden helped with organisation of the road closures and distribution of equipment and I would like to thank Ken Chapman for his help on the day. We learnt that one of the main problems is inconsiderate motorists who think they can get through the water regardless of the havoc they cause. A post flood meeting looked at ways of improving the blocking of the roads, and possible flood mitigation measures. The parish council has purchased a number of floodsacks which are more effective than sandbags and are available at cost to residents affected by the flooding. The County Council no longer provides sandbags.

The parish council is still looking at replacement LED lighting and we have had two companies out to advise. It is now possible to get lights that will dim after midnight thus saving even more electricity. We must now decide which style is the most appropriate for the village.

After consultation yellow lines are now going to be put along the High Street where there is a particular problem with

access. This should happen shortly which we hope will go some way to alleviating the congestion.

This year has seen improvements to the road surfaces in the village, dropped kerbs by the Co-op, and repairs to the pavements especially along Church Walk. The entrance to the village along Sudborough Road has also been enhanced. Soon there won't be anything left on our "to do" list. No, not really...

Following complaints about inconsiderate and illegal parking in the village we had a meeting with the police, Wendy Brackenbury our County Councillor, and local residents. Education before enforcement seemed to be the preferred option and the parish council, with the approval of the local police, is producing some parking tickets that can be placed on offending vehicles to deter them from parking in awkward places e.g. outside the school or on the pavements. Of course, if this strategy doesn't work then enforcement will be pursued.

A moveable flashing speed sign has gone up along Stanion and Sudborough Road which have always been speeding hotspots. It was working very well until someone stole the battery.....

The new village website is up and running providing the village with up to date information and links to Facebook etc. It is becoming very well used and has been invaluable in helping to gather information for the recent Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire. Nigel and I are planning to compile a welcome pack for new residents to provide information on all the village organisations and facilities.

Our new Cemetery and Churchyard ground maintenance operative, Steve Pooley, is doing a splendid job keeping the cemetery and other parts of the village neat and tidy. We are also fortunate in having John Croker who looks after the outfield on the Meadow so well for us. Thanks too to all those villagers who keep their areas of the village well trimmed.

This year saw the 90th birthday of our queen and residents were asked to gather on the 21st April to sing songs and make a circle of light round Hall Hill. About 100 people gathered to commemorate the event.

Thank you very much to all my fellow councillors who have attended meetings and lent support this year.

And many, many thanks to Nigel Searle for all the work he does behind the scenes to make the Parish Council run so smoothly and efficiently. He has even brought us into the 21st Century by getting us using a projector and the internet for our meetings. I know he enjoys it really.

Finally it is apparently good practice to hold the annual parish meeting on a different day to the parish council meeting to make it distinct. What do people feel about this? The Annual Meeting is not a council meeting. It is a meeting of the parish electors taking place between 1 March and 1 June. Electors can contribute to the agenda and it is often an opportunity to celebrate local activities and debate current issues in the community. Should we make it more of an informal opportunity for electors to come along, meet their parish councillors, and discuss things that they themselves have put on the agenda?

4 Brigstock Consolidated Charities Accounts

These are appended to these meeting notes.

5 Public Forum

District councillors report read to those present see appendix.

Issues raised:-

- Dog bin junction Bridge Street and Park Walk. It was confirmed that this had been ordered.
- Farmers vehicles driving at excessive speeds in Grafton Road. S Wilks will write to the farmers concerned
- Speeding on Grafton Road. This was outside the scope of the parish to deal with. Dialogue had taken place with NCC and the Police. Currently a gated entrance is being looked into and an improvement in the speed signage plus a flashing road sign.

6 Any Other Business

None

7. Date of next meeting

April/May 2017 The meeting closed at 7:45pm

BRIGSTOCK CONSOLIDATED CHARITIES

ACCOUNTS 1.2.2015 – 31.1.2016

Brought Forward:	Current Account	£2286.43
	Investment Account	£1656.57
		£ 3943.00

RECEIPTS:

Dividends	992.25
Rents	<u>1246.61</u>
	2238.86
	6181.86

PAYMENTS:

Insurance	394.59
Water payment	210.00
Admin	<u>65.00</u>
	669.59
	5512.27

GRANTS:

Poor	1000.00	
St Andrew's Church	392.32	
1987 Scheme	<u>790.00</u>	
	2182.32	3329.95
Current Account	1673.38	
Investment Account	<u>1656.57</u>	
	3329.95	

Investments

COIF Income Shares (2,963.71)	34,453.43
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District Councillors Report

ENC Councillor's Annual Report 2016 There have been a number of changes to the Planning Department this year: there is a new Head of Planning and various roles have changed. It was decided to discontinue the Four Towns Plan started 9 years ago which is still not completed but to go forward with a District Plan and at the same time encourage Neighbourhood Plans to be completed as soon as possible. Villages are encouraged also to complete their own plans. The development at Rushden Lakes is going ahead at a pace and plans for the Sustainable Urban Extension at Rushden are well in hand. This relieves the pressure on building new houses for the rest of the district although developers are still putting forward developments in some villages which many feel inappropriate. The contract for the non-statutory leisure facilities is up for renewal soon and a committee of members and officers has been considering the way forward with a plan that involves bringing leisure activities throughout the district. The council decided to spend £25,000 on investigating a possible way forward for unity with other district and borough councils The council continues to have success with its re-cycling and has kept to the present system despite pressure to have more bins to separate different types of waste. The Licensing Committee has worked with other councils to bring about improvements to the way taxi drivers are licensed. In future all applicants will have to have a good working knowledge of English and had training to combat Child Sexual Exploitation. This was especially important in the light of the report on Rotherham and the role played by taxi drivers in the exploitation of young girls. Looking for information on East Northamptonshire Council's website is much improved and has helpful information not previously available. The helpful information about switching energy supplier has been a success, the site to use this opportunity is: www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/ss The council has followed a policy of prosecuting known fly tippers and anyone seeing rubbish being dumped on the side of the road is urged to call the council. I do have Empowerment Funds available and I am always pleased to help local groups improve the opportunities available to our residents – please do not hesitate to contact me if you are a member or helper at an organisation where a small financial contribution could make a difference.

Cllr Sylvia Hughes