

Broadwas and Cotheridge Parish Council

Subject: Parish Council Plan for the future (aka Grand Plan)

Purpose of report: To set out for and ask the Parish Council to consider moving forward with its plan for the future.

1. Introduction and background

A year or so ago the Parish Council agreed it would be sensible if it had a longer term plan for how it went about its statutory responsibilities.

It was also felt that this would help parishioners to understand what it is able to do and what it is not able to do.

As a result a consultation exercise took place and some thoughts and views from those parishioners who took part were collected (see appendix).

There is not a requirement for the PC to have a plan but it can be regarded as good practice

2. What would be the purpose of the plan and do we need one?

Plans for organisations are often termed as “strategic plans” and can cover a period of up to 5 years or longer. They usually contain a series of priorities which reflect what the body is required to do and what in this instance local people have indicated are important issues.

Priorities therefore represent a focus for what and how we would go about things, and would normally be reviewed on a regular basis, at least annually. This would fit with the Annual Parish Meeting and help us to account for progress and consider whether any of the priorities need to be amended.

Such plans can vary in intent and scope, they can sometimes be complex and lengthy. They do tend to try and join together a wider

vision with specific actions, though of course some priorities are more difficult than others to tie down or make progress on.

As well as setting out “this is what we intend to achieve and why it is important”, a plan will also give an indication of “how” and “who will be involved” in doing this.

Recommendation 1 - That the Parish Council re confirms its intention to publish a plan for the future.

Recommendation 2 - That the Parish Council consider the optimum period for a plan I.e 3 or 5 years

3. How should we identify and organise our priorities and those of the parishioners?

In its first iteration our grand plan identified a number of themes or headings under which we started to group key issues/ responsibilities. This was largely addressed through discussion and has yet to reach the point of an agreed document.

Themes or headings can also serve to articulate a sense of vision and purpose e.g we want to improve or be better at something, we want to undertake a new venture in order to respond to A or B, we want to support X or Y and so on.

Such plans rarely exist in isolation and councillors will be aware of the raft of strategic plans that sit at a district and county level. It is likely that any plan we produce will need to consider any common points of reference. This may also be important in certain areas where for example there is additional support and or funding for a particular initiative or idea.

There are probably therefore 3 key steps we need to consider:

- Can we organise what we do into a number of themes or headings that would help give a plan structure and focus?
- Consult widely to canvass ideas and views in order to get a sense of what is important for whom and why
- Consider and produce a plan which reflects what and how we will seek to take forward what we have to do and would like to.

4. What might this look like?

Building on the approach we have adopted so far we may want to consider a number of headings as a guide for the structure and content of the plan for example;

- The sustainable and appropriate development of the parish
- Address the impact of climate change/caring for our environment
- Supporting parishioners to care for each other
- Promoting and supporting local activities and ventures
- Ensuring that the parish is a safe place to live

Examples of Parish Council plans can be accessed on the internet and it may be that advice can be provided by CALC.

It is likely that as a small parish council we would want to adopt a proportionate approach, so that in its final form any such plan was accessible and relevant to the priorities and tasks in hand. However most plans require a setting out of

- key principles and objectives
- Some context about the parish and the parish council
- The primary actions or tasks
- Who will be responsible for these
- A timeline I.e when we think we will need to review and when we hope to complete
- Some notes which breakdown and provide detail and measures e,g new website tested and in place

It is usually important when producing a plan to recognise that some of its value comes from listening to others and working out what is important and why.

Recommendation 3 - That the Parish Council agrees the next steps and tasks some councillors to develop a delivery plan

4. How long should we allow ourselves in getting to a point where we can publish our plan?

Although we may commit to a plan that is proportionate and fit for purpose, we may need to take account of the fact that the resource we will use to achieve this is reliant on people volunteering their time.

We may want to consider further consultation as a part of the process and or need to get a better understanding for example of the potential areas of need or risk.

We also may want to allow some time to work through any differences or need to balance what we would like to achieve with what we are realistically able to.

This suggests that we may want to aim for an October launch I.e 6 months from April?

Recommendation 4 . The Parish Council should consider and agree a timeline for producing its plan.

5. Summary

A Parish Council Plan may not be essential, but it would demonstrate how we work together and on the basis of a statement of vision and purpose provide us and the parishioners with a common focus and point of reference.

A part of the original discussion and thinking was that it would be a good idea to explore ways in which we can be as inclusive and open in how we conduct ourselves and how we reflect the views of others in trying to do our best for our communities.

Richard Burrows
Chair

1.3.21

Appendix

Broadwas and Cotheridge Parish Council

Feed back from Meet Your Neighbour event held on 7th March 2020.

In line with the "Grand Plan" we asked people to make contributions under the following headings in order to inform the future work of the Parish Council

- SUPPORTING LOCAL GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES
- IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENT
- IMPROVING OUR ROADS/FOOT PATHS AND SAFETY
- LOOKING AFTER EACH OTHER
- OTHER IDEAS

1. SUPPORTING LOCAL GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES (After the Covid-19 recovery)

- *Community Village Café run once a month by volunteers?*
- *More events at Cotheridge Church*
- *Coffee morning and produce sale monthly at village hall x2*
- *Sub Post Office at Village Hall x2 – or mobile post office once a week?*
- *Extend community transport scheme/mini bus/trips to Worcester*
- *Quiz Nights*
- *Play Croquet*
- *Play table tennis - scope for another night/age group?*

2. IMPROVING OUR ENVIRONMENT – All good points

- *Install solar panels on village hall*
- *Do we need more recycling points and do people know about them?*
- *Some advice on removing some branches by the entrance of the village hall*
- *Explore community options for green energy and solar*

3. IMPROVING OUR ROADS/FOOT PATHS AND SAFETY – Refer to MHDC & WCC

- *Improved speed limits and enforcement through Cotheridge and Broadwas*
- *More regular clearing of drains*

- *Make it safer for children outside of the school*
- *Keep the hedges trimmed by A44*

4. LOOKING AFTER EACH OTHER

- *Coffee morning provides opportunity to meet people x2 (Or afternoon tea)*
- *The Parish website is great – do more with it and promote it (Ideas please)*
- *Jim Norris will collect your prescription for you*

5. Other suggestions

- *Would like to know more about the parish (Requires more specific definition)*
- *Notice board outside the village hall would be helpful (There is one already!)*
- *Attend the Wolverly Homes Planning appeal (We await MHDC update)*