

BROADWAS AND COTHERIDGE PARISH COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF AN ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

HELD ON Monday 9th MAY 2022

1. **PRESENT:** Councillors Burrows, Cullen,, Clarke, Worrall, Usman, Longley, Guest,

IN ATTENDANCE: G. Winkworth (Village Hall Management Committee) Chris Croft Trustee (Broadwas Sports Association), Bryan Merriman (Broadwas Gospel Hall,) and 5 parishioners. County Councillor Scott Richardson Brown.

2. Apologies: District Councillors Walton and Chambers. The Rev Jennifer Whittiker,, West Mercia Police , James Dennis Headteacher Broadwas School (NB 1hope to attend but had a governors meeting).

3.Welcome from the Chairman

The Chair thanked all for attending and explained the history, purpose and approach to the meeting. He noted the reports received and asked those present to highlight looking to the coming year what would be important for them, the community and the Parish Council. He apologised for the late circulation of the report from the Parish Council Chair but would summarise some of the main highlights and messages. He hope that all present would engage in an informal manner with points of interest and exchanges of information.

Those present who had submitted reports spoke briefly to them.

The following was noted:

Broadwas Sports Association - a question was asked is there room for any other sports? Explained due to popularity there is currently limited space for other sports, but members and trustees were always open to suggestions.

The Chair noted the discussions between the PC and `BSA to look at ways of working collaboratively and the recent meeting with MHDC Connecting Communities.

Village Hall - Hope is to increase scope of usage.,meeting room available for numbers of up to 12. Would benefit from broadband and the Chair noted that subject to a signal from WCC and HMG it was intended to re submit proposals for Fibre to Premises/Full Fibre dependent on support of local residents and businesses.

Formal opening next saturday 14th may 3-5, tea time event with refreshments, thanks to funders, displays about usage of the hall

Jubilee Celebrations this year. (usually at the school but its closed) 5 th June starting at 11 am. refreshments, competitions, displays , bouncy castle etc continuing on throughout the afternoon.

Parish Council report

- Looking to attract new councillors (2 vacancies) and welcomed interest and involvement from parishioners
- Cllr Worrall highlighted intention to invite people to a meeting to take the Dementia Community project forward now pandemic restrictions had been lifted. It was hoped to become a part of the Teme Valley arrangements
- Cllr Clark talked about the current developments for looking after footpaths and that she was shortly taking up the role of Footpath Warden. It is hope to link up with neighbouring parishes to create connected walks. Any volunteers would be welcome. A parishioner offered to share some information.
- A question was asked about the lengthsman role. The Chair explained an appointment had been made and it was hoped to identify at start date, this had been delayed because of a family bereavement. It is intended to try out a model used in other parishes and the lengthsman will initially be in the parish 4 hours every fortnight and will build up a “round” and specification, with additional hours as needed. This would be reviewed after 3 months. It was also confirmed that any matters that may require and or fit with the terms of the scheme should be reported in the first instance to the Clerk (the new website will have a reporting facility) and or direct to the lengthsman when he is in the parish and he will liaise with the Clerk.
- A concern was raised about renewed activity on one of the plots on the Gladwish field . The Chair highlighted the efforts the PC went to to support effective enforcement, and would encourage direct referrals/reports to the Enforcement Officer at MHDC and or the District Councillors. The PC would also report when aware. There followed a discussion about how people experienced enforcement in the parish and serious concerns were raised as to how effective MHDC’s approach is. The Chair agreed to take this into ongoing discussions with MHDC councillors and officers.

4. Becoming a Parish Councillor - The Chair explained there were 2 vacancies at present for the Broadwas part of the parish and these could be filled on a co-option basis. The Chair encouraged those present to promote this and to get in touch about any interest.

5. AOB -

6. Closing remarks - The Chair thanked all present for their interest, attendance, contribution and support. He said that the PC and councillors would continue to do

their best to be inclusive and open in order to fulfil its responsibilities and deliver value for the precept whilst working collaboratively with all, in the best interests of the parish.

Meeting started 1930, concluded 2010

Signed.....dated.....

Appendices - Reports received.

Chairman's Report

-  This report provides a summary of the activity and impact of the Parish Council during the last year.
-  It helps to demonstrate accountability to parishioners and how we as a Parish Council try to do our best and learn from experience
-  As in the previous year the effect of the Pandemic has created unusual circumstances.
-  The report also demonstrates the priorities we are working on and how we strive to be inclusive and fair.

The people

-  We have sadly said good bye to Councillors Eric Dale (who served as Chair), Keith Brooks and Robert Pearce. Each of them had served the Parish Council for many years and their contributions are not only missed but gratefully appreciated
-  We have welcomed Councillors Monica Longely and Daniel Usman (from Cotheridge and Vicki Clark (from Broadgreen). Cllr Richard Burrows took up the chair role and Magda Cullen the vice chair role.
-  Presently there are 2 vacancies and we welcome expressions of interest. (These can be filled by co-option unless more than 2 people come forward when there would need to be an election)
-  The Local Authority election in May last year saw the election of County Councillor Scott Richardson Brown and we have welcomed his attendance at meetings and contrition to local important issues.
-  District Councillor Walton has maintained his high level of interest and commitment to the Parish and has made a significant contribution to the Parish Council as a whole and to specific matters in addition to his direct dealings with parishioners.

- ☀ District Councillor Chambers has been missed in terms of his previous profile and commitment but has been supportive when called upon.
- ☀ Cllr Worrall has sat as the Parish Council representative on the Broadwas Village Hall Committee and also is the lead for our efforts to become a Dementia friendly community.
- ☀ Cllr Guest has provided a lead for managing the finances
- ☀ Cllr Clerk is soon to take up the role of Pathway warden and is also leading in setting up our new website.
- ☀ Ex Cllr Dale has been engaged to maintain the present website to ensure that the information that we are legally required to post has been undertaken.
- ☀ The lengthsman served the Parish during the year but decided not to continue due to other work commitments. The Parish Council has appointed a new lengthsman (Tim Hughes) who will take up the role in May.
- ☀ A local resident (Vid Blakney) kindly advised the Council on a long term approach to the play and outdoor activity equipment on Berryfields.
- ☀ The Parish Council has been admirably served by our Parish Clerk Carole Hirst. Sadly she has decided to step down from May 23rd.
- ☀ During the year, perhaps in part due to remote meetings we have benefited from the attendance and active involvement of a number of parishioners.
- ☀ We have also developed our relationship with Broadwas Sports Association, the Primary School and the Village Hall Management Committee who all play such an important part in parish life.
- ☀ We have worked closely with senior officers from both WCC and MHDC on a number of key issues in order to help them understand what is important for the parish and to assist them in delivering an effective and efficient service.
- ☀ We have responded as promptly as possible to a wide range of enquires from parishioners and other parties though e mail, phone, social media and from letters

What we have learned and will try to improve on

- ☀ Although local government necessarily requires the following of procedures, at the level of the Parish Council it is all about the volunteering and we are grateful for the many hours Councillors and others who live in the parish give to the community. We will continue to promote openness and inclusivity, and always seek to respond as quickly as we can to enquiries and requests.
- ☀ Building on the work of ex Cllr Dale we will shortly be in a position to launch a new parish council website, this will ensure we are fully compliant with legislation and help provide a more direct contact and access point to the Parish Council and its business.

- ☀️ We welcome the community focused website that Mr Dale has recently set up and continue to support the Parish Magazine Foot Prints
- ☀️ We have started to use social media and will continue to develop how we do this.
- ☀️ We have had a first meeting with lead officers from MHDC who are responsible for the Connected Communities programme, this aims to strengthen local communities and ensure that their priorities have more impact on MHDC priorities.
- ☀️ We will continue to have face to face meetings with senior officers and District and County Councillors to address specific local priorities and as importantly hold the various departments to account for what they are responsible for and have agreed to do for our parish.
- ☀️ We remain committed and now that pandemic restrictions have been lifted, will resume our plan to hold events where people can come and meet each other, share what they do and what is important to them. This helps the Parish Council to follow some clear objectives in addition to meeting its statutory responsibilities.

The things we are required to do and some other things we have done

- Meetings - we have continued to meet (virtually via Zoom) until January of this year. Unfortunately we were only made aware that by meeting virtually past a certain point last year, we inadvertently fell foul of a condition that resulted us in the need to apply to the Secretary of State for permission to in effect re appoint the parish council. Fortunately decisions made at the small numbers of meetings that were technically not quorate were covered by delegated powers to the Clerk and retrospective formal motions.
- We have ensured that good records were kept and that these are easily and widely available
- We reviewed the assets the Parish Council is responsible for and decided to regularise these in terms of ensuring that our interest is registered with the Land Registry. We instructed our solicitors and it is expected that this will be completed by August 2022. (It could have been completed but there are significant delays at the Land Registry).
- We are reviewing and planning for how we exercise our responsibilities for the common land at Broad Green.
- By meeting regularly we are able to oversee the budget, agreed expenditure, ensure that formal planning consultations are responded to, oversee the maintenance and use of parish assets, and engage with and on particular issues raised by members of the public or by the Parish Council.
- We are legally required to set the precept which is the small percentage of the Council tax bill that is directed to and for Parish Councils. We have reduced the precept as in our view (and on the advice of our auditors) there is not a justification for holding a high level of reserves. We therefore agreed in addition to the

reduction in the precept a 10 year programme to gradually reduce the size of reserves. This means should a need arise to raise new funding we can review this.

Our accounts have been audited and were found to be in order. Details were published and this information is always available.

We operated the lighthouseman's scheme and also appointed where necessary contractors to ensure that land within the asset base of the Parish Council was maintained,, including our commitment to Rural England in respect of Broad Green common land and the site of scientific interest. (In respect of the latter the Parish Council continues to be grateful to G Winkworth for this interest and hard work.

As Custodial Trustees of the Broadwas Village Hall, we have continued to support the Management Trustees and the Village Hall Management Committee who are directly responsible for the Village Hall. This included the payment of a grant of £30000 toward the extension project.

We have been able to make a number of small grant payments to local groups.

As a result of damage caused by a lorry we have replaced the height barrier at the entrance to Berryfields.

In June of last year there was a traffic incident that resulted in minor damage to the bus shelter in Broadwas and the damage to the post box. Royal Mail removed this on the 3rd June and to cut a very long story short we know understand via the CEO's office that a new post box will be erected on the grass area adjacent to Taberness Close within the next few weeks. The failure by Royal Mail to communicate and consult residents as well as appearing at times to mislead those who made enquiries was shocking. Equally the various departments of the County Council and District Council were often either reluctant or unwilling to work with all concerned, though eventually after the intervention of the County Councillor there was a slight shift in this. In effect residents of Broadwas have not been able to access this facility and it has consistently been the most frequent issue to be raised with the Parish Council by parishioners. The Parish Council raised a number of formal complaints and persisted in seeking to get this essential service restored.

The Parish Council has acted to establish in the best interests of the Parish its responsibilities in respect of assets it owns and or has an interest in. Where possible this has been done on the basis of taking legal and specialist advice and entering into dialogue with those concerned.

We were pleased that as a result of the residents in Little Green and Cotheridge who signed up to the Fibre to Premises Broadband project, and with support from WCC the Parish Council assumed the role of legal entity to enable these schemes to go ahead. Work is presently underway and it is hoped will be finished by June/July. This means that domestic and business premises in these parts of the parish will have full fibre internet connections. Unfortunately efforts to achieve the same for Broadwas ran up against the closure of the scheme and funding. There was less enthusiasm in Broadwas to take this opportunity up. However the

Government has launched a new scheme and we are waiting for details and it is hoped to re submit a proposal for Broadwas. The Parish Council would like to thank those who did step forward and recognise that this was an important opportunity to equip the parish for the future, and also to thank councillors and other volunteers for all the work they did.

What we have learned and will try to improve on

- ☀️ We continue to listen and to be alert to matters that are put to us as being important and try to act, but are aware that we cannot always help and often any progress can seem to be painfully slow.
- ☀️ This means we have to continue to work collaboratively with District and County Councillors and the officers from both authorities, recognising that they have many calls on their limited resources.
- ☀️ However there have been times in the past year when their have been voices that have questioned the overall competence and effectiveness of some areas of activity undertaken by statutory authorities and agencies.
- ☀️ We will continue to seek to work collaboratively and seek to understand why it can appear that mistakes are made or communication is poor, and where necessary hold others and ourselves to account.
- ☀️ As we return to in person meetings we will continue to welcome parishioners to meetings and provide opportunities to seek views and listen to what's important.
- ☀️ We are also committed to improving communication and to further develop how we can help improve the place where we live for all.
- ☀️ Councillors are in part as a result of the pandemic interested to support an promote opportunities for people who vulnerable and or who may need help, for example working to make the parish dementia friendly.

Planning and development

- ☀️ At time it can seem that parish councillors spend more time on matters relating to planning which reflects how this can be important to parishioners. It is also a complex, difficult and frustrating area, and it can be too easy to forget that more often than not as a Parish Council we support applications.
- ☀️ As a Parish Council we completed our Neighbourhood Development Plan some years ago and this continues to provide the basis for how may or may not comment on applications. We are fortunate to have and had the benefit of a number of councillors who can call on their experience of planning and development, as a result we are often in a good position to comment to a high technical standard and with authority.
- ☀️ Notwithstanding that individuals are entitled to comment on and are often directly affected by the proposal of others to do things with the land and property they

own. It is always a challenge for the Parish Council to see things from different points of view and make judgments as how best to respond and intervene. We have during the year sought to offer those who are proposing new developments and or those who are affected by them the opportunity to share their views. This had influenced our submissions and has also given cause for us to work with others to try and clarify or effect change.

- ☀️ We are fortunate as a parish to benefit from district councillors who take a direct interest.
- ☀️ For many on all sides the processes can seem to be frustrating and unfair, and as a result levels of trust in the local authorities are often not as high as they could be. The role of Parish Councils is limited in terms of planning and influence, but as a Parish Council this does not deter us from trying to promote clarity, explanation and on occasions actions.
- ☀️ We took part in an external peer review of how MHDC operate in respect to planning and enforcement and are currently seeking to find out whether this review has made a difference.
- ☀️ It is fair to say that it is a matter of concern that the way in which things work seems to encourage those wishing to develop their land or their property to ignore the rules. Although most people do follow the rules, we have experienced and are experiencing locally a number of situations where it does appear that it is better to break the rules than follow them.
- ☀️ We have continued to seek to help officers from both authorities when it appears that the choices they have made may be open to question, so that we can understand why it appears that often things seem to take a long time to happen and some people benefit from not following the rules that most people do.

What we have learned and will try to improve on

- ☀️ We will need to continue to keep abreast of and get involved in wider issues relating to planning and development such as review and revisions to the South Worcestershire Development Plan. In order that we can anticipate and be prepared for changes that may impact on us locally
- ☀️ We have recently reformed our planning sub committee so that we can maintain our standards and focus as well as helping parish councillors to learn more about this complex area.
- ☀️ We want to continue to try to be positive and proactive, though every time someone breaks or appears to disregard the rules we have to react. We know that this can only be successful if we foster good relationships and can demonstrate that we understand things.

And finally

- ☀️ Parish Councils are one of the eldest forms of local government and although they have limited responsibilities and resources, they play an important role in ensuring that the place in which we live is not overlooked or changed in ways that do not take into account the different views people might have.
- ☀️ Our communities like many others rely on the role and contribution that volunteers, local organisations/faith groups and businesses play in making things happen. We are fortunate that we have so many people who are prepared to give up their time or make their services available.
- ☀️ As a Parish Council we are looking to the future, we want to continue to improve how we look after the things in the parish that we have a responsibility for
- ☀️ . We want to work closely with the local authorities especially in terms of maintenance of the roads, drainage and other key services, so that we can be assured that they are ensuring that our parish is seen as important.
- ☀️ We want to engage with all the agencies and people who are in a position to do something about road safety and speeding given that the major road/route that runs through the parish is a constant source of concern for many of us. We want to be convinced that a) these agencies are working together and b) that they can bring forward serious proposals for addressing the issues on the A44.
- ☀️ We will be bringing forward proposals for how we might improve Berryfields and are exploring with Connected Communities how this might be funded.
- ☀️ We are reviewing how we exercise our responsibilities in respect of the common land and SI site at Broad Green, and how we can encourage residents and others to respect this important asset.
- ☀️ We are intending to complete our launch of Dementia Friendly community as a part of the Teme Valley arrangements
- ☀️ We will hold further consultation events as we are particularly interested in how we might support new ideas for supporting people when they want to act in the interests of our communities.
- ☀️ It is likely that from next year we will become part of a new ward focused on the Teme Valley as a result of the changes proposed by the Boundary Commission.

VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE: Geoffrey Winkworth

In many ways 2021 / 22 has been a year of two halves. Until July the hall was still subject to varying levels of Covid restriction and while this was lifted in stages many potential users were nervous about resuming the levels of activity experienced before the pandemic. Indeed at the end of the period covered by this report some activities had still not fully resumed.

Lunch in Company (LINC), Women's Institute (WI), fitness classes, table tennis, yoga, the sewing group and the Parish Council have resumed meetings and we have welcomed a dance class and home schoolers group as new regular users. All necessary equipment is now in place to enable short mat bowls to be played and a sectional stage has been installed which, it is hoped, will enable a diverse range of new presentational and entertainment activities.

Two functions were arranged by the committee and volunteers. The Christmas Fare, while being a little smaller than usual, nevertheless was successful being conducted under Covid prevention rules. An evening with food and music we once again enjoyed the entertained of GRVIII with the proceeds shared with the Air Ambulance.

In February the issue of electrical, fire alarm and emergency lighting certification enabled the final Completion Certificate to be issued by the Building Regulations Authority. The extension project was brought to a conclusion, within budget, by the sanding and finishing of the main hall floor, carpeting in the meeting room and decoration. In addition to the painting of all the new construction it was decided to re decorate the remainder of the existing parts of the building. Sincere thanks are due to the willing band of volunteers who turned up day after day with paint brushes and rollers. Together with the floor and cleaning of the curtains this has lifted the overall visual impact of the hall considerably.

While not as high impact as the enlarged hall and the furnished meeting room the store is none the less a very important feature of the extension. At last we are able to put chairs, tables and games equipment away where they are not an obstruction.

The installation of Air Source Heating and LED lighting has considerably improved the 'green', 'eco friendly' credentials of the hall. While it has not been a particularly cold Winter there has been ample opportunity to experience the performance of our new air source heating system. Reports have been good for both heating and cooling and electricity consumption has been within expectations.

As with all village and community halls Broadwas has benefited from a Government Covid support grant which covered the cost of outgoings during lockdown.

Both the main hall and the meeting room are now available for hire as separate facilities

Broadwas Primary School.

Significant issues over the last 12 months

There have been significant developments in education over the last 12 months that have faced the school. I will endeavour to explain these in the report I have prepared and also the challenges we will face in the forthcoming 12 months.

- During the Autumn Term the school faced significant periods of illness with both staff and children being affected by COVID19. This changed a great deal of the planned celebrations around Harvest and Christmas and caused us to

have a parents evening online again. Many trips were also cancelled due to the impact of the pandemic even though the restrictions were very different at this time of the year. It also resulted in children missing more time off school affecting their education. School remained open with the exception of one day where staff illness forced the school to close.

- The school continued to move forward,. We were Ofsteded in September 2021 and the school retained it's 'Good' Ofsted rating. This was a significant achievement in the light of the pandemic and the fact that the school had experienced a great deal of leadership change in the last few years. Credit goes to all the staff and children for their enormous effort and hard work.
- Catch Up support is still being provided to children who have found the pandemic a problem. This will continue throughout the Summer term.
- Some sporting events were able to take place and the school achieved the runners up spot in the 'Cluster Girls Football Tournament'.
- SEND needs and support have greatly risen over the last 12 months. The school, is facing a challenge to try and meet the needs of children with ASD and ADHD in an ever increasingly financially difficult environment.
- Mental Health is a significant issue and challenge for the school. Many pupils and parents are struggling and school has become the front line of support for these people. Support from LA and NHS is patchy and the school are now working with the Mental Health Board and local counsellors to try and support schools in Worcester with better training and advice.
- We have supported many charities throughout the year including: MacMillan Cancer support, British Red Cross, Red Nose Day, Christmas Present Appeal, Hello Yellow Mental Health, Worcester Foodbank and many more!
- School continues to develop the curriculum and are working on each subject over the next few years to develop and increase the rich and stimulating curriculum.
- School are working on building project ideas in order to develop the school for the future. This could include the development of the front of the building, extending Year 5 and 6 classroom and also developing the Reception area. We have had an influx of iPads and an Interactive Smartboard within the hall.
- The school are also looking at upgrading the server so it is now a hybrid system of cloud based storage as well as onsite storage.
- Plans are in place for the Jubilee celebrations at the end of May and for an Art project in July to develop the values and vision of the school. This will create a permanent piece of artwork for the school.
- The Summer Term has brought a further change in restrictions and allowed the school more freedom. This has allowed more visitors into school and the return of trips and much more sport and outdoor education!

Significant Issues for next year

- Support and development of a Recovery Curriculum and the development of the rich and exciting curriculum.
- Continued rise in SEND numbers
- Continued rise in the support of Mental Health in the community.
- Demands of a small budget that is getting squeezed smaller every year.
- Planning for the reactions to the Government's White Paper and the possibility of Academisation.
- The need for more pupils to maintain a fully functioning and flourishing school. Need to raise numbers in school to allow the school in the long term to survive

BROADWAS Sports Association. Chris Croft

Broadwas Sports Association (BSA) – 25 years old. Football/Cricket/Bowls/ Now Croquet

Composition – Sports Ground (Stoney Ley, Broadwas). Originally farmer's field, now cut grass. With Clubhouse/Old Cricket Pavilion incl. kitchen area/Toilets/Mower Shed/8 Mowers/ Practice hoops, mallets, balls, woods, jacks + vintage table tennis table

Membership – Growing from 25 to 45 to 75 current members (All actively playing croquet as game of choice, largely to suit present 55-85 age profile)

Activities – Balance between Competitive and Social Croquet. BCC wins Regional Competitions / runs Internal Club Tournaments / enjoys Social Croquet (Weekly Roll-ups)

Organisational – Run by small management committee reporting to appointed BSA Trustees. Charitable status/legally watertight/financially secure/sensibly insured

Enduring Purpose – Provide VFM value for money sports facilities that match the needs and profile of our B&C Community and its surrounding villa12ges with no restriction on age, health, creed, affordability or ethnicity

Magic Ingredients – Teamwork/Self-Help/Community Spirit/Covid Resilience

Next 5 Years –

- **Build on Strengths**
- **Widen Appeal**
- **Reduce Age Profile**
- **Find Generous Benefactors to fund Capital Projects**