Blockley Parish Council

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

THURSDAY 15TH MAY 2025

AT 8:00PM IN ST GEORGE'S HALL, BLOCKLEY

MINUTES

Meeting opened: 20.00

Present: Jon Bryan Chair, Claire Turner Vice-Chair & District Cllr, Eleanor Thorneycroft, Chris Leach, Andy Turton, Jez John, Thomas Bradley Country Cllr

Clubs & Societies Marion Janner – Toddlers, Dogley & Blockley Jewish Society (& possibly Blockley Women Connect), Nigel Moore – The Voice, Rev's Delap - Church, Sue Salmon – Little Village Hall & Blockley Hort Soc & Souper Mondays, Jane & Robert McClement

Apologies: Cllr Chris Palengat, Philip Gee – Hedgehog Bus, Chris Scragg – BCA

1. Chair welcome and apologies
2. Approved of the minutes of Annual Parish Meeting on 16.05.24 unanimously
3. District Councillor's Report Clare Turner outlined CDC initiatives to support residents on low incomes. Waste Collections – LY largely re-organised and new rounds, our parish not adversely affected but others were, and processes were updated as a result. Licence Fee for Green Bins increased to £69/annually, discounts available to those on benefits. CT sits on Scrutiny committee and always prepared to raise issues that parishioners may have. Planning continues to be an issue – report due to be published on website but under- resourced on enforcement so still seeking solutions to this. Political changes: Mike Evemy new leader of council, previously on finance committee will take over from Joe Harris. Govt changes over devolution will impact CDC – so, probable outcome Glos. will be a unitary authority, and 12 months later CDC will cease to exist. Council numbers will decrease. An event is scheduled for 4th June for Town & Parish Councils regarding this. Full report on website.
4. County Councillor's Report Tom Bradley will send a report afterwards. Looking forward to working with us in his new capacity. TB will be sitting on Environment Committee and Rights of Ways & Common Land Committee. Re: Devolution GCC is to present costed proposals to Govt., there are varying opinions on single unitary/multiple unitary authorities. There will be a ministerial decision next June. Highways top of agenda: Robin bus, 5-mile drive to Chipping Campden due for re-surface this June. 14th July High St, School Lane & Bell Bank railings to be replaced. Full report on website.
5. Parish Council Annual Report - Cllr Jon Bryan – Chair welcomed everyone. Thanks to Lynden Stowe for his support over the years. Thanks to current Cllrs and new Cllrs and departing Cllrs, Maintenance Officer, Clerk & RFO, and welcome Charlotte Bullock, Admin. Assistant. Work projects this year have included Memorials Survey in Churchyard, Cemetery still needing new location, War Memorial Grant Funding & quotes for restoration work. BPC aims to shape, protect and support the parish & parishioners. We are looking for more cllrs – in particular from Ditchford, Draycott & A Magna. Looking forward to working Community to do more for them. Full report on website.
6. Reports by Lead Councillors:

   6.1 Financial Report, Cllr Jon Bryan Budget – With a frozen precept the key budget impact of the year turned to an external staffing review which highlighted the need for additional resources to operate more efficiently and best support both existing employees and parishioners alike. Cost centre deficits helped account for investments outwith of approved

reserves expenditure, but the end of year closed with approve expenditure yet to be billed which should be factored into budget tracking for the FY 25-26.
Income Summary for 24-25 shows a surplus of 9% vs budget totalling £11,804.87 owing to Deposit account interest, higher than budgeted Father Brown income, Cil Monies and Burial income (always unbudgeted). Higher Professional fees owing to proactive measures to secure project management services in relation but not limited to Memorials repairs, new cemetery land acquisition and parking improvement needs in Blockley. Financial year end saw a net surplus of £13,600.16 inclusive of a net positive VAT position of £5,438.87 owing to refund phasing. Full report on website.

6.2 Planning Report - Cllr Andy Turton 46 planning applications in past year, mainly TPO and small domestic changes, 38 approved 1 rejected & 1 withdrawn. TY no. pressure in terms of planning, new Govt, legislation. Development of a NDP – has legal status and we are starting with a Neighbourhood Priority Statement before end of year. This starts with community engagement over what is needed within the parish. We will conduct survey – to whole parish and results will be shared through events around the parish. We are looking for residents to also get involved the working group Marion Janner is interested in adding questions to the survey. **Action**: NH to put AT & Marion in touch re survey. Full report on website.

6.3 Youth & Recreation – Cllr Chris Leach – LY previous provider ceased to trade – new provider commenced Sept '24, weekly attendance was 14 now up to 28. Aim to increase continuity so that Juniors move up to Seniors. Also run School holidays - 5 days in summer holidays subsidised for children of the parish. May camp subsidised and more in the summer. ROSPA inspection took place in April BPC will review and clarify works required. Investigating acquiring a maintenance contract. Full report on website.

6.4 Burials – Cllr Chris Leach – Much maintenance and work on compost heap, new maintenance gate, pedestrian gate, memorials. Higher income due to fee review undertaken last year, also higher maintenance costs. We are still working on acquiring new land. Full report on website.

6.5 Environmental Sustainability – Cllr Clare Turner, Vice Chair & District Councillor. Started yr with 4 Cllrs now only 2 so not a lot of work has taken place. BPC has part funded a water testing. Local company has donated around 10 Bat boxes to parish. Siting to be decided. All planning applications are scrutinised in terms of biodiversity. Full report on website.

6.6 Personnel – Cllr Clare Turner was acting lead of Personnel for year. Due to turnover of Cllrs – currently 4 vacancies. Clerk & RFO has been working many unpaid hrs and not taken holiday. Personnel review identified need for more support & hours. As a result, BPC have recruited CB as Admin. Assistant. Training planned for both Clerk & Admin Asst. Strategic decision to outsource some project management. BPC are working towards paperless office. All Cllrs should undertake training – a new training policy should be created. Aim to develop a Parish Strategic plan. Full report on website.

6.7 St George's Hall Report – Cllr Tom Bradley New hire rates implemented this year. Identified that largest expenditure was energy – heat & light. TY replaced lighting with energy efficient lighting with Grant from CDC and funding from BPC as well. Committee determined to keep hall up to date. New Hall Manager started this year – Sarah Bartlett. Management committee, saw most of same members continuing, along with new Blockley Brass Band representation and 3 new representatives from BPC. There will be new members from clubs coming along to AGM 29th May. Full report on website

7. Local society updates (guest speakers from all parish clubs &societies were invited to provide an update).

a) Blockley Horticultural, Society Sue Salmon - Membership of 100. 2 big community events per year Spring & Summer shows. BPC have provided a grant. Shows have been running for 75 years.

b) Little Village Hall, Sue Salmon - Not currently in receipt of a grant from BPC – income and expenditure break even. Standard rate for one -off bookings. Will be refurbishing large windows and have obtained a heritage lottery grant to cover cost. Curtains & blinds also to be replaced

c) Church of St Peter & Paul, Rev'd Dana Delap - She has been here 10 years, and her parish now includes Ebrington, Blockley and Bourton on the Hill. Church priorities are hidden hardship, conservation of church building, environment, conducting baptisms, weddings & funerals, mental health first aid, Blockley Ed. trust, Bell ringers, Music events, Blockley Forum. In all a trustee of 17 charities. VE day celebrations were a great success. The monthly open-door services attract good attendance with their bacon butties!

d) Souper Mondays, Sue Salmon – These are conducted under Cakes & Co banner, grateful to BPC for supporting initiative. Still difficult to get attendees from outside of Blockley. Donations raised through these events has resulted in £200 to Cakes & Co.

e) Toddler Group, Marion Janner – Group is going well, it has made a massive difference to their financial viability having the financial support of BPC in the form of covering hall hire costs. Leader Jodie is stepping down after 10 years but a new mum is taking it on. Looking for volunteers from local mums or grandparents who may have a few hours to spare

f) Dogley, Marion Janner – Now has over 250 members on F/Book and growing, active members who share knowledge and recommendations for pet care (not just dogs) and will have a stand at Blockley Fair with Stow Vets in attendance

g) Blockley Jewish Society, Marion Janner – Will be planning the first outing to a Jewish Play being performed in Oct. at Chipping Norton Theatre.

h) Blockley Women Connect, Marion Janner – New group (replacing old WI group) is attracting and younger and more diverse group of women. Many interesting events on a regular basis and inspirational fundraising has been undertaken in past year. They are planning the Blockley Fair in June in conjunction with FOS.

i) The Voice, Nigel Moore – Past year has been one of consolidation. New delivery volunteers in place. Contributions from local authors have been well received. New Editor made a positive impact and was awarded a Community Award by the High Sherif of Glos. Sadly now moved on to new f/t job. Replacement has been appointed. Visitors were impressed by no. of clubs & societies at Better Living Expo. Link to web version published on BPC website has generated 12k views. The Voice would be keen to work with Cllr Turton & BPC on the development of the Neighbourhood Plan

j) Speed Watch update, Clare Turner on behalf of group – Have been concentrating efforts on Station Rd & Lower St. in Blockley, now added Draycott as well. Currently averaging approx. 4 checks/month. Unusually high proportion of offenders coming from outside of GL area. Group were recipients of an award from CDC. Would like to expand to other villages but need volunteers from those communities. BPC will fund speed wires around the parish and offers thanks to all the volunteers

k) Allotments Association, Clare Turner. No plots vacant currently, but no waiting list at present. There have been a handful of anti-social behaviour incidents – including an unattended fire. Assoc. will monitor and liaise appropriately

l) Paxford Village Hall Committee, Andy Turton (on behalf of Stephen Goodfellow) - Village is active and friendly and runs many popular events run throughout the year including weekly coffee mornings, wine tastings, regular quiz nights, film nights. Plans for PAXFEST are coming along well, thanks to BPC for allowing use of land, It will take place on 19th July and profits will be donated Katherine House Hospice & Food Bank

m) FOS update – Thanks to BPC for supporting successful & popular Gingerbread Trail. June Fair in conjunction with BWC plans are going well and support from BPC is bigger and better this year

Cllr Thorneycroft let meeting at 21.32

Meeting Closed 21.44