

# BRUNSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022

Present: Councillors E. MacKinlay, Horner, Laverick, J. MacKinlay  
and Ramsey.

In attendance: Roger Gray – Clerk (retiring)  
Ian Humphries – Clerk & RFO  
City Councillor Avaei  
4 Residents

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Graves and City Councillors  
Campion and Laverick.

### 2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

**RESOLVED** - That Councillor E. MacKinlay be appointed Chairman of the  
Parish Council for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

(At this point Councillor E. MacKinlay took the Chair)

### 3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

**RESOLVED** - That Councillor M. Ramsey be appointed Vice Chairman of  
the Parish Council for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

### 4. CLERK AND RFO

The Chair reported that this would be the last meeting the Roger Gray would be  
attending in his role as Clerk and RFO for the Parish Council. He had carried out  
this role over the last 32 years and following his retirement from his full-time job in  
2021 he was not retiring from this role. He welcomed Ian Humphries who was  
going to take on the role of Clerk and RFO on an interim basis until the local  
Council elections in May 2022. Ian Humphries had worked for the Parish Council in  
the past and had many years of experience carrying out the role of Clerk and RFO  
for a number of Parish Councils.

**RESOLVED** – That the members place on record their thanks for the work and  
support Roger Gray had provided over his many years working  
for the Parish Council and their best wishes for a long and  
happy retirement.

### 5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on  
13<sup>th</sup> April 2022, including confirmation of any key decisions  
made under delegated powers, be approved as a correct and  
signed by the Chairman.

## 6. WARD COUNCILLOR UPDATE

City Councillor Avaei advised that the Ward Councillors would provide an update at the next meeting of the Parish Council on actions they had taken in response to issues raised and activities they were carrying out in the area

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

## 7. ENVIRONMENT AND HIGHWAYS

### a) Broken Street Lamp

The Clerk reported that it had been confirmed that the broken streetlamp in the car park was not part of the contract with SSE to maintain street lights in the City therefore they would not fix it.

He referred to the unique reference on each streetlamp and to the on-line reporting system that members of the public could use to report faults with street lighting by using this reference.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted and the link for reporting faulty streetlamps be published on the website.

### b) Jubilee Park – Boundary Fence Adjacent to Allotments

The fly tipping next to the boundary with the allotments had been reported to the City Council.

### c) Jubilee Park – Play Equipment Replacement

A member referred to discussions with the City Council earlier in the year regarding the replacement/upgrade of equipment in the play area in the Park. There were still no items of play equipment for young children and the piece with a swinging tyre had been broken and unusable for years.

It was reported that test holes had been dug in the Jubilee Park as part of the exploratory work the Council was carrying out in relation to the creation of a new cricket square.

A resident reported that there was a metal cover in the vicinity of the former pavilion which was not covered with grass but appeared to be unsafe.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted and the City Council: -

- i. be reminded of the statements/commitments made in relation to improvements to the equipment in the play area at the site meeting and,
- ii. carry out safety checks on the metal cover at the site of the former pavilion.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

**d) Waste Recycling Centre, Brunswick Industrial Estate – Un Marked Metal Pole**

It was confirmed that the metal pole in the unloading area now had yellow stripes on it.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

**e) Robert Allan Court – Area of Land in Front of Building**

The Clerk provided an update in relation to the discussions with Sue Wannop and Natures Landscapes regarding the proposed tidying up and planting of bushes and shrubs on the piece of land in front of Robert Allan Court.

Unfortunately, the Home had only been supplied with 3 “whips” instead of the number they had expected. Natures Landscapes were looking to see if they were able to assist the home by sourcing some more bushes and shrubs for the area.

Some of the grant from the Ward Committee towards the cost of the original works could be allocated to purchase a small number of additional shrubs if necessary.

**RESOLVED** – That the update be noted.

**f) Grass Cutting in the Village**

There were complaints regarding the poor standards of grass cutting in the Village. The latest cut carried out this week had been the worst for many years with random areas missed, edges of grassed areas not being cut and grass clippings left all over the pavements.

Residents present at the meeting identified specific sections of grass where the grass cutters had not gone. Reference was made to previous explanations provided by the City Council that they only cut @80% of the grassed areas to encourage/support biodiversity and the 20% would be cut as part of the next cut. The areas missed on this occasion did not appear to fall into this “explanation” for being missed.

The Chair referred to complaints the Parish Council had submitted over many years about the poor standards of grass cutting but nothing ever appeared to happen or improve as a result when the cutters came back the next time. The contact for grass cutting meant there were only a limited number of cuts carried out each year irrespective of weather conditions when they were being carried out. As a result, the grassed areas were being damaged, and clippings built up on the pavements.

It was essential for individual members of the public to log issues on the Council’s website to ensure the extent of the problem and concerns it was creating were made visible to the City Council.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted and the concerns about the poor and deteriorating standard of grass cutting in the Village continue to be raised with the City Council.

### **g) Big Waters**

It was reported that there was a large pothole on the access road to the car park at Big Waters. A resident reported that she had contacted Urban Green regarding a fire in a litter bin at Big Waters and they had responded and resolved the problem quickly.

The Clerk reported on the actions taken following the identification of the owner who had “fly tipped” at the Big Waters car park. The personal details of the person involved had been sent to the City Council for action

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

### **h) Martin Way – Dead Rat**

A member reported that she had tried to log this issue with the City Council over several days but had given up trying due to the length of time she had to wait on hold when ringing the City Council. She had eventually managed to speak to a member of the Neighbourhood Response Team who had removed it

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

### **i) Inconsiderate Parking on Pavements**

A member had reported that she had received complaints about vehicles parking on pavements and not leaving enough room for people with double buggies or a wheelchair to get through the narrow space that was left on the pavement.

**RESOLVED** – That the problem be brought to the attention of the police and the City Council (residents should report the incidents when they occur and if it is safe to do so take a photo to provide evidence that would assist follow up action).

### **j) Overnight Parking of HGVs that carry hazardous products**

The Chair referred to information he had received regarding an application from a haulage company to park its vehicles overnight on the industrial estate whilst they were passing through the area with hazardous loads. He was unsure about what permissions/permits were required or if there was any right of appeal/consultation on such requests.

**RESOLVED** – That the Planning Department and licensing team at the City Council be requested to clarify if a license is required to allow HGV vehicles that were carrying hazardous waste to park overnight on the industrial estate.

## **8. BRUNSWICK IN BLOOM**

It was reported that the Christmas tree had now been planted and was being watered on a regular basis until it was “established/bedded in” on the site.

Brunswick in Bloom were looking for more members so that it could increase its

activities across the Village. It was reported that the operator of a local store in Wideopen had offered free delivery to the Village for any plants purchased by Brunswick in Bloom.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

## **9. PLANNING MATTER**

### **Planning Application 2022/0271/01/TPO at Brunswick House Brookside Avenue, NE13 7DP**

It was understood that an arboriculturist had been referenced in the planning application submitted for these works. The Parish Council's concerns/objections to the latest round of pruning/felling had been submitted to the Planning Department.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted

## **10. DINNINGTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

The Clerk circulated a copy of a letter received from Dinnington Parish Council inviting residents to view the on its website and submit comments by 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

The Plan had taken a number of years to produce with the support of external resources. The overall aims and objectives of producing and adopting a Neighbourhood Plan were discussed and the appropriateness of producing one for Brunswick Parish were considered. Due to the level of resources and costs involved in producing a Plan it was essential that the aims and objectives of having a plan were clear and that the benefits to the village and the Parish of having one significant.

There was a general discussion about current developments in the village and the wider area and the possibility of housing developments on land adjoining the Village. Due to the "green belt" status of the majority of the land and that there were few remaining plots of land that were suitable for development it was not likely that there would be any further significant housing developments in the Parish. Previous efforts to build on "green belt" land had been turned down and any developments on existing sites had to match the footprint of the structures/buildings they were to replace.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted and Parish Councillors and members of the public be encouraged to submit comments on the Plan to Dinnington Parish Council.

## **11. HOUSING MATTERS**

### **a) Reporting Requests for Repairs**

The Clerk confirmed that he had reported that he had tried to report the non-cutting of the grass to the rear of the bungalows in Greenside Avenue to YHN however, he had been advised to report this problem using the on-line reporting system on the City Council's web site. However, there were no options on the site to report issues about grass cutting.

As previously reported the officers at YHN had to use the same system as members of the public to report repairs. There was concern at the long delays before calls to the "Repairline" were answered and the alternative number 0191 2787878 had similar long delays when tenants were using it. It would be a help if the system advised callers the position they were in the queue.

Officers at YHN had agreed to raise the problem of grass cutting on behalf of the Parish Council on this occasion due to the problem of reporting issues about grass cutting on the City Councils web site.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted and the comments made regarding the long delays in calls being answered and the suggested improvements to the system be forwarded to the City Council.

#### **b) Cheviot View – Water Leak**

A member referred to a recent incident at one of the cottages on Cheviot View. The leak had been reported but there had been significant delays and lack of communication between officers at YHN, the City Council and the contractor who had been identified to fix the leak. It had taken lots of phone calls over 5 days and being on hold waiting for someone at the Civic Centre to answer the phone.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

#### **c) Greenside Avenue - Paved Communal Area to Rear of Properties**

A member referred to the build up of leaves and the growth of moss between the paving stones to the rear of properties in Greenside Avenue. The pavements/walkways were now dangerous for the residents and those elderly people accessing the Rest Centre for events.

**RESOLVED** – That the problems be reported to the City Council and it be requested to clear the pavements/walkways in this area.

### **12. CRIME STATISTICS**

The Clerk reported that he had used the link provided by Northumbria Police to access the crime statistics on -line. However, the data on the system was reported at a Command level rather than a local level. This meant that the statistics for crime in the Command Area were high as they included crimes in the Gosforth/Jesmond/Town Moor area of the City as well as the Northern Villages. It was not possible to break these down into the area of the Village so they added little value/comfort if they were to be used as an indicator of levels of crime in the Village (unlike those previously provided on a monthly basis by the police).

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted with disappointment.

### **13. AIRPORT USERS COMMITTEE**

The Chair provided feedback from the last meeting of the Committee and on the updates he had recently received from the airport.

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

#### **14. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

##### **a) Cheques for Signature**

<b>Cheques for Signature</b>	
<b>Cheque No.</b>	<b>Amount</b>
	<b>£</b>
000000	0.00

(there were no cheques to be signed at the meeting)

**Bank Balance 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 - £13379.92.** (subject to pending transactions)

**RESOLVED** – That the information be noted.

##### **b) Annual Governance Statement 2021-22 (Section 1)**

**RESOLVED** – That the annual governance statement submitted to this meeting for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 be approved.

##### **c) Draft Annual Accounts 2021-22 (Section 2)**

The Clerk submitted the draft annual accounts and copies of the trial balance for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. He drew members' attention to any significant variations between 2020-21 and 2021-22.

**RESOLVED** – That the draft annual accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 as now submitted be approved.

##### **d) Accounting Statement**

**RESOLVED** – That the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances for 2021-22 be approved.

##### **e) Certificate of Exemption**

**RESOLVED** – That the Certification of Exemption 2021-22 be confirmed and approved.

#### **15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman reminded everyone that for the next Municipal Year the meetings of the Parish Council would be held every other month to facilitate the interim arrangement for the filling of the post of Clerk and RFO. These arrangements would be reviewed in May 2022 when it was hoped the position of Clerk and RFO would be filled on a permanent basis.

It was confirmed that the Clerk could be contacted between meetings via email ([brunswickpc@gmail.com](mailto:brunswickpc@gmail.com)) and if necessary, an additional meeting could be convened if there was an issue of significant concern affecting the Village where the Parish Council felt it necessary to respond to. The Clerk in consultation with the Chairman also had delegated powers to make decisions in relation to the actions of the Parish Council. Any decisions made using these delegated powers would be reported back to Parish Councillors and recorded in

the minutes of the next meeting.

**RESOLVED** – That the next meeting of the Parish Council be held at 7:00pm on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at the Rest Centre Greenside Avenue.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Signed: -.....Chairman

Date: -.....

**Exchange of Information**

- Clerks & Councils Direct May 2022 Issue 141