

# BRAISHFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting of Electors held at  
Braishfield Village Hall on 1 May 2018

(The Annual Parish Meeting is also known as the APA – Annual Parish Assembly)

## Present

### Members of Braishfield Parish Council:

Chairman Jane Bennett  
Vice-chairman Mike Edwards  
Cllr Richard Brazier  
Cllr Ian Knights  
Cllr Carole Renvoize  
Cllr Mark Swinstead  
Cllr Peter White

### Others:

County Councillor Alan Dowden  
Borough Councillor Martin Hatley  
19 electors  
Clerk to Braishfield Parish Council Kate Orange

(Note: questions/comments from the floor are in *italics*)

35. Apologies

No apologies were received

36. Welcome and Introduction by Chairman Jane Bennett

Newly elected Chairman of the Parish Council, Jane Bennett welcomed County Councillor Alan Dowden, Borough Councillor Martin Hatley, and all present. She noted that she had not envisaged taking on the role of Chairman of Braishfield Parish Council, and fills it with sadness in the circumstances of the death of former Chairman John Bevan. She hopes to take forward the ongoing challenges in the parish; and thanked Vice Chairman Mike Edwards for chairing the parish council in the interim.

37. Minutes of Meeting held on 2 May 2017

The Minutes of the APA of 2/5/2017 were agreed.

38. Presentation on Emergency Planning in the Parish

Chairman Jane Bennett described the progress that the Parish Council's working party has made towards drafting an Emergency Plan for the parish. The group are looking at various scenarios such as loss of power or severe weather, identification of details of people or organisations able to assist in emergencies, and places of refuge in the parish. They are

examining the idea of an emergency generator for connection to the village hall, and identifying which regions are served by which sub-stations.

*Details about the generator?* At the moment the plan is to have a fixed generator, which may be the size of a small container, and may be a gift to the parish.

*The resilience of the Newport Lane sub-station needs to be looked at.*

39. Chair's Report on Braishfield Parish Council

Vice Chairman Mike Edwards reported on the work of the parish council over the past year. His report is attached to the Minutes.

40. Introduction to the Village Library

Village volunteer Lisa Grummett introduced the village library. Lisa feels that the telephone box is iconic. When it became redundant, she did not want to see it lost to the village; and suggested (after discussions with John Bevan) that the parish council bought it from BT – which they were able to do for £1. She suggested they used it for as a library, and she volunteered to establish it. The library was opened this evening. She hopes that it will be successful.

41. Opportunity to Sponsor Benches

Cllr Carole Renvoize noted that the parish council is receptive to proposals to place sponsored / memorial benches in the parish. There are a number of benches at the pond, so new ones would probably need to go elsewhere.

42. Report on Braishfield Village Association

Chairman of the Village Association Jimmy Chestnutt reported for Braishfield Village Association. He congratulated Jane Bennett on appointment as Chairman of the Parish Council and Cllr Ian Knights on joining the Parish Council. The BVA is working closely with the Parish Council.

- a) The email network is growing and provides important information to residents.
- b) BVA/parish council have been unable to encourage suppliers to erect a mobile phone mast within the parish but there is a new mast to the south.
- c) Broadband coverage is improving at the north of the parish and will continue into Pucknall.
- d) BVA will be keeping a village diary so that groups can co-ordinate and avoid clashes of dates. This will be on the BVA website.
- e) Mike and Sue Mullane will be missed in their work with the BVA News. Wendy Dolby-Stevens is doing a good job of taking this onwards.
- f) Jimmy Chestnutt paid tribute to John Bevan.
- g) With John Bevan he had been planning to push for something to be done about the traffic speeds which are creeping up, and pot holes.
- h) He expressed delight at the parish council plan to look at putting bye-laws in place to protect the car-park and recreation ground.

*Cllr Peter White has buckled a wheel on a pot hole recently.*

*Gigclear are asking for residents to collaborate and share costs (broadband coverage).*

*4G broadband may be an option.*

43. Report on Braishfield Village Hall

Ian Knights, Chairman of Braishfield Village Hall, reported.

- a) The AGM will take place in June.
- b) The Pantry shop/cafe is now a trading company, and the hall remains a charity. Refurbishment has begun and more plans are in progress.
- c) They are working towards re-labelling the committee room as a community room; and they plan to remove the suspended ceiling and improve the ambience.
- d) They hope to refurbish the kitchen and offer storage for community groups.
- e) Steve Renvoize has been organising planting.
- f) They plan to remove /reduce the height of the trees at the east.
- g) Sporting Memories was an excellent event and followed on from Braishfield Memories.

44. Report from PCSO Storm Perrott

A PCSO was not available for the Meeting, due to duties.

45. Report from our County Councillor, Alan Dowden

Cllr Alan Dowden's report is attached to the Minutes. He congratulated Jane Bennett on her appointment as Chairman of the Parish Council; and his great sadness about the death of John Bevan, with whom he had had lots of conversations while John was Chairman of the Parish Council.

*Are Hampshire County Council making mistakes which cost money and could have been avoided?* - Cllr Dowden responded that they have to be picking these up – for example pot holes.

*Has there been any cost analysis of the cost of clearing up fly-tipping against [savings made in] waste & recycling?* Cllr Dowden responded that there has been some analysis of expenditure on clearing up fly-tipping but it did not include clearance from private land.

46. Report from our Borough Councillor, Martin Hatley

Test Valley Borough Councillor Martin Hatley's report is attached to the Minutes.

He gave his congratulations to Jane Bennett on her appointment as Chairman of Braishfield Parish Council. He has enjoyed working with all the Chairmen of the Council from Andrew Lalonde onwards.

Further to attached notes, he has donated a grant towards young people's football via Braishfield Bees.

47. Electors' Open Period and Questions

*Why has the Abbotswood community building not opened?* Cllr Hatley will find out and contact the resident who raised the query.

*A resident has concerns about the high speed of traffic between the Wheatsheaf and Dog &*

*Crook, which is a straight road and is used by horses. Another resident agreed: he takes his children to school on foot – can a 20mph speed limit be applied as in Chilbolton? Cllr Dowden noted that 11 police officers cover from Nursling to Stockbridge, in a working pattern of three shifts: they are reactive rather than proactive because of the costs. The parish could consider speedwatch. Cllr Jane Benneet confirmed that the parish council have requested cost details of speedwatch.*

*Cllr Brazier is looking at Pucknall's through traffic and potholes and will copy information to Cllr Dowden for assistance.*

*On behalf of the parish council Cllr Brazier is looking into the s106 money available (from developer's contributions on developments in Braishfield) and establishing how it has been spent. On the Crook Hill footway, around 4,000 has been spent but needs to establish why, when it was supposed to be funded by the s106 money from the Abbotswood estate. He is finding hard to arrange for the re-allocation of money to causes other than outdoor recreation, and is seeking a meeting with TVBC staff over this.*

## Chair's Report on Braishfield Parish Council – May 2018

### Introduction

My first duty is to pay tribute to our former chairman, John Bevan, who sadly passed away in January of 2018. He was much appreciated as chairman, fellow councillor and friend. His loss is felt by the whole council and by the community as a whole.

I would like to thank all the councillors for their continuing hard work on behalf of the village and also thank our clerk, Kate Orange, for her deep knowledge and professionalism which keeps our work moving along the right lines.

The vacancy on the council is filled this evening by Ian Knights, who is also chairman of the Village Hall Committee. Ian's membership of the parish council should help the close cooperation between the parish council and the village hall at a time when the hall is undergoing a major series of enhancements, which have already increased its significance in the life of the village.

### Recreation Ground

The recreation ground continues as one of our major responsibilities and the past year has seen two significant pieces of work take place. First, the car park was top dressed with chippings – a new approach that we shall keep an eye on over the next couple of years. Secondly, major work took place on the trees around the recreation ground, following a comprehensive survey organized by Jane Bennett. The works are not complete, in that it was recommended that the large Thuja trees on the boundary with the school should be felled. This is a job for the coming year, since the costs involved stretched our budget. An item of concern to the council is the abuse of the car park at the recreation ground. Vehicles are being parked there for very long periods. The car park is intended for immediate users of the recreation ground, the hall and the shop – no overnight parking is permitted. One case has been particularly recalcitrant, even after the personal attention of Mark Swinstead and the involvement of the police. This case has demonstrated our limited legal powers and is leading us to consider enacting a by-law that would help us deal with any future instances.

### Footpath from Dog & Crook to Jermyns Lane Roundabout

We continue to be frustrated by the lack of progress on the footpath. The diversion of the existing 712 footpath through the arboretum was turned down, which has given the arboretum management problems in making their land available for the new footpath along Braishfield Road.

However, there is some hope for progress on this in the near future and we thank Carole Renvoize for tracking this important item on our behalf. We also thank councillors Martin Hatley and Alan Dowden for their continued support on this matter.

### Planning

The importance of planning to the village and to the council has been reflected in the creation of a planning committee under the chairmanship of Richard Brazier. This enables us to conduct meetings whose sole focus is planning matters. We continue to receive substantial numbers of planning applications, including those for new dwellings and for

extensions. The appropriateness of the proposals and their design details require us to exercise considerable judgement. We have also adopted a policy of site visits and discussions with the applicants to ensure our better understanding of proposals. We are also looking at a revision of the Village Design Statement – to bring it up to date and to reflect developments that have taken place since it was created. This will need involvement of villagers generally.

The allocation of section 106 money contributions from developments to appropriate projects in the village continues to occupy us, with Richard Brazier taking the lead. We have succeeded in directing some funds to the works at the village hall, but other funds are available which we are having difficulty in getting applied to the right projects.

### Broadband and Mobile Phones

There was good news regarding mobile phone coverage in Braishfield over the past year, with O2 and Vodafone upgrading their local masts so that 4g is now available from them over a large part of the village. Unfortunately, there are still parts of the village with poor or no reception and we seek to change this.

With regard to broadband, we are still waiting for the upgrade of cabinet 4 to fibre broadband and we are also seeking a solution for properties distant from the cabinets. We continue to work with Jimmy Chestnutt of the BVA on these matters.

### Roads & Highways

Although primarily the responsibility of Hampshire County Council, the Parish Council does act as a set of local eyes on the condition of the roads. Various repairs have been carried out as a result of consultation – such as the work between Pond Cottages and Braishfield House. The council is also pursuing an extension to the 30 MPH limits on village roads, particularly on the section past Manor Farm and the riding school at the north end of the village.

### Lengthsman Scheme

In the past year, Braishfield joined the local "Lengthsman" scheme. This provides us with access to a handyman who can undertake minor tasks under our direction. The budget is limited, but the scheme has already enabled us to complete work that would otherwise have taken much effort to organize. We have had a set of repairs and refurbishment done to the bus shelter, clearing of the access to the water valve at the pond and the clearing of vegetation along some paths. Thanks go to Kate Orange for helping organise this work.

### Emergency Planning

We have established an emergency planning committee with Jane Bennett acting as chairman. The committee involves people from the wider community and its focus is to come up with practical responses for Braishfield to any of a variety of emergencies, whether caused by extreme weather or by failures of infrastructure. We hope that coordinated community action can help deal with such emergencies, particularly in the case of vulnerable people.

Mike Edwards  
Chairman, Braishfield Parish Council

## **Alan Dowden Baddesley County Councillors 2018 report**

I have now been the Baddesley Division County Councillor for over 26 years. I am a member of the Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee & a member of Hampshire's Pension Funds Panel & Board .

I understand the challenge of the budgetary pressures that Hampshire County Council faces with a further £140 million of savings to be found over the next two years. It was disappointing that all of our Hampshire MPs voted for these savings to be made.

In early February, the government did however give a small amount of additional funding to Hampshire in the final budgetary settlement and allowed the authority to raise the Council Tax up to 6%. The County have raised the Band "D" Council Tax by 5.99% to £1,200.96p from April 2018. Hampshire's tax rise is in cash terms context is the steepest rise in three years in Hampshire's history rising by over 15%.

Council Tax is a regressive tax: it hits hardest those on low and fixed incomes. Once again the revenue budget is about managing decline rather than fostering growth.

The County Council have been able to identify extra revenue from areas such as their street lighting contract, and renting out buildings that were surplus to requirement.

Health & Adult Social Care have been tasked to find a further £56 million of savings over the next two years. This follows already having to save £181 million since 2010, at a time when people are living longer and therefore making greater demands on services. There is a dependency more and more on voluntary organisations, family and friends and neighbours to assist with social care requirement needs. This is why I was active in seeking that we maintain Community Transport; subsidised public bus services like the (46) Stagecoach service from North Baddesley to Winchester. I argued with the administration that there was no joined up thinking by cutting these services. How could many of these vulnerable people attend voluntary organisations and hospital appointments without transport provision. I am pleased that

there has been a **temporary reprieve until April 2019** for bus subsidies and Community Transport, so services continue..

Social Services have a huge task in finding cost savings. To date savings have been found by the use of better technology & Extra Care provision and Re-enablement teams are areas that have helped to reduce costs. Further large cost savings have been achieved by reducing staff. The Conservative Chairman of the Local Government Associations Well Being Board, said “ **Councils have a proud record of getting on with the job of delivering for local residents and doing so in partnership. But it is not an exaggeration to say that circumstances are now steering steadily towards the impossible.** The government have promised a green paper due to be published in the summer of 2018.

The Household Waste Recycling Centres have also temporarily been reprieved. **However, charges for this service are being sought by Hampshire County Council from Central Government.**

School crossing controls will also now continue, although a much stricter criteria has been introduced to make sure they are absolutely necessary and those that do not meet the new criteria will be lost.

Shortly as part of the operation resilience programme Paynes Hay Road will be resurfaced at Braishfield.

I have been able to provide financial support to many groups and organisations from my HCC Community grant annual allowance. Some are listed below.

- Braishfield Bees Football Club & the Braishfield Village Hall
- St Francis Church, & Knightwood Youth Club, Valley Park
- Relate South West Hampshire
- Eastleigh/Test Valley Mencap
- Scouting organisation at Chandlers Ford & North Baddesley
- North Baddesley over 60's Club
- Romsey Choral Society & Hampshire Search & Rescue Dogs

## Report of Borough Councillor for Ampfield and Braishfield - Martin Hatley – 1 May 2018

This is the time of the year when Council Tax bills arrive and in many a household the same question is asked, what do we get for our money?

I was very saddened to witness the serious fire at The Potters Heron, in the Ampfield part of this Ward, on 19 March. I immediately remembered seeing the destroyed building after the fire in November 1966, after which it did not reopen until 1972. Ironically in 1966, the hotel was due to host a dinner for the fire brigade the following evening!

Within an hour of the alarm being raised, in addition to the 25 fire appliances, over 120 firefighters and 50 other emergency personnel, on site were Test Valley Borough Council officers including a senior director. They were in contact with the County Council emergency planning department. The Borough's Housing Services were put on standby to arrange any emergency accommodation for staff or guests, which might have been required, building control engineers were ready to give any advice about safety and stability of the building during fire fighting, and investigations and repairs afterwards. Representatives from the Village Hall and Parish Council offered the village hall and its facilities.

Due to the incredible professionalism and hard work of the firefighters, and some very expensive hi-tech equipment, the fire was contained to the restaurant and bar area and thankfully there were no casualties. Thanks to the fantastic efforts by the staff, the hotel opened for business within just 6 days – unlike the 6 years delay after the 1966 fire. The signs on the verge saying 'ONLY SINGED! WE'RE OPEN' and 'THE THATCH WILL BE BACK!' are very heartwarming.

All this was only possible because of the vast investments made by the various authorities who request money in your council tax bills, and so were able to respond when it mattered.

Budgets are important in our personal lives. We all have our own household budgets:

- We set targets for how much we want to spend, income we want to earn and, if we're lucky, targets for how much we want to save.
- We spend time forecasting what might happen over the year to change our plans – What if the roof leaks, etc.
- In this uncertain world, we do our best to plan for the future especially if we know that our income is likely to reduce over time.
- We may do it subconsciously, but we also allocate resources to what is most important to us and our families. We spend money on what we value the most and prioritise our spending on what will make the biggest difference to our lives.

The Council's budget is **exactly** the same; granted that it's hugely more complex and has many more zeros on the end of the numbers, but basically it's **exactly** the same:

This is a serious business and the consequences of getting it wrong are severe. You will have seen recent reports in the press about Northamptonshire County Council who are on course to overspend by 21M in the current year

Our Revenue Support Grant from the Government has reduced by 98% in the last five years from 3.1M to only 56,000 next year and will end entirely in 2019/20. It's something that we've prepared for though. Our successful Project Enterprise investments in commercial property and housing have

helped generate some replacement income and we are due to receive 1.7M more income next year than if we had kept our money in the bank.

Prudent budgeting means that regrettably the Borough Council's proportion of local Council Tax is being increased by 5 next year to 141.41 for a band D property. This equates to less than 10 pence per week for a Band D property and continues to be one of the lowest in the whole of England.

It is also worth noting that the Borough's Council tax has risen by just 28 in ten years – that's an average of just over 5 pence per week.

## **UPDATE ON FOOTPATH DIVERSION AND NEW FOOTWAYS FROM JERMYNS LANE JUNCTION**

Unfortunately and surprisingly the Government Inspector did not agree to the footpath diversion through the Sir Harold Gardens to a path within the Gardens along Braishfield Road towards the Village and along Jermyns Lane towards the main Gardens entrance, The security of the Nationally and Internationally important tree and plant collection continues to be compromised.

The proposed footpath along Jermyns Lane, but within the Gardens, to the main entrance is no longer proposed. Instead, a new dual purpose path being constructed on the other side of the road as part of the Ganger Farm development will be available for use from the roundabout to opposite the main entrance.

The much needed and long awaited path from Jermyns Lane to the Dog and Crook has consequently been delayed. As residents know only too well, this is a particularly dangerous stretch of road to walk along for our schoolchildren and students, especially during the dark winter months.

I am pleased to report that Test Valley Borough Council are actively progressing the detail and design for this long awaited new path.

The aim and preferred option of all parties concerned is to have the new path run along the same route within the Gardens as the existing permissive path (which is currently kindly allowed by the Hiller Gardens). It will then exit and run along parallel to the existing Braishfield Road towards the Village. It will cross over to the other side of the road near to the existing bridge and access to the sewage pumping site, and ultimately terminate at the car park to the Dog and Crook.

The details of using the section within the Gardens still have to be agreed. Although it is the preferred option, the Sir Harold Hiller Gardens is a registered charity and so everything is subject to the rules and requirements of the Charities Commission being complied with. The trustees have to act in the best interests of the charity and have to obtain the best reasonable deal possible for the charity. As there is goodwill on all sides, I am hopeful that everything will soon be amicably sorted out and that construction of this scheme will begin this Summer and hopefully completed by early Autumn. This will be an excellent legacy for the Late John Bevan, who worked so tirelessly on this project.

**Grants** - I was pleased to support the grant from TVBC for 21,402.36 towards refurbishment of the Braishfield Village Hall and to present a Councillor Grant of 500 to the Braishfield Bees Football Club for youth training.