

MINUTES OF THE BLOXHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT JUBILEE HALL, BLOXHAM ON WEDNESDAY 26 APRIL 2023 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Chairman Councillor David Bunn; Councillors Russell Avens, Joanna Barton, Stuart Begg and Steve Craggs.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: District Councillor David Hingley and five members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Parish Councillors Richard Boyce and Mike Fenner, County Councillor Kieron Mallon and Jenny & David Yates.

1/23 Minutes - The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2/23 Matters Arising - There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2022.

3/23 Chairman's Report & Financial Information – The Chairman reported on the Parish Council's activities over the last 12 months and how its funds had been spent.

The report included information on village assets and infrastructure, anti-social behaviour, graffiti and vandalism, speculative developments, traffic calming, Community Speedwatch, a new burial ground, communications, Parish Council meetings, financial information and the work the Parish Council would be undertaking for the next 12 months.

The report would be available on the Parish Council web site. www.bloxhamparishcouncil.co.uk

4/23 Reports from County and District Councillors – District Councillor David Hingley introduced himself to the meeting and thanked the residents for the warm welcome and support he had received since he became the District Councillor for Bloxham. Councillor Hingley was pleased to be representing Bloxham and his principle function as District Councillor, was representing residents and everyone was welcome to get in touch with him. Councillor Hingley also reported on the Local Plan and that it was being revised and there would be a public consultation exercise in the next few months.

5/23 Questions from Residents - The Chairman highlighted four questions which had been emailed to the Parish Council, prior to the meeting.

Q1. When will the residents of Bloxham be consulted on proposed 'traffic calming' measures, how will this be communicated and organised, and how will objections be handled?

A1. The Parish Council was not ready to start the consultation process yet because the PC would like pedestrian crossings, double yellow lines and the white linings to be included as part of the same Traffic Regulation Order, as it helped to reduce the costs to the Parish Council. The PC was also still waiting for an answer from the County Council on proposed zebra crossings. Once this information had been received, the informal consultation would commence, which would be followed by the County Council's formal consultation.

Q2. When will Cherwell District Council carry out an open, considered and public measurement of air quality and air pollution on Bloxham High Street at the shops, and how will residents be informed of the results and potential actions?

A2. A resident was leading on this project on behalf of the Parish Council and District Councillor David Hingley was supporting the process. There was an Officer at Cherwell District Council who was the point of contact and he would be invited to attend a future Parish Council meeting to address these points.

Q3. Can the Parish Council consider establishing a Bloxham Community Activity Co-ordinator and lead individual to help avoid clashes of events, such as we saw on Saturday April 2023, and to communicate and encourage community activities including new initiatives?

A3. The Parish Council would circulate a note in the village asking for a volunteer to take on this role. It was not a role which could be undertaken by the Parish Council, given there were currently five vacancies.

Q4. What role does the Parish Council carry out to help residents understand how to get action to clear blocked drains and gullies and repair pot-holes? How is this communicated to residents?

A4. It was the responsibility of the County Council to address issues relating to the highway. Issues such as blocked drains and gullies should be reported to the County Council using their Fix-My-Street web site. If there had been no action within a month, residents were encouraged to then contact the Parish Council and these would be followed up.

A resident addressed the meeting and asked whether a pedestrian crossing outside St Mary's Church could be investigated because it was especially difficult for elderly people to cross at the brow of the hill. The Chairman advised that this matter had been raised before and the County Council had felt that it was not a safe place to locate a pedestrian crossing. However, he would raise it with the Traffic Calming Working Group and if supported, refer it to the County Council to investigate. **Action DB**

A resident raised concerns about parking issues around The Square in Queen Street, queried the ownership of the land in Queen Street and asked whether this could be turned into a car park or turfed. The Chairman advised that the Parish Council wanted to take ownership of the land, which was why it had been fenced. As the current ownership was in dispute, the Parish Council could not turn it into a car park and any future change of use, would also have to be agreed with the residents of Queen Street. The Parish Council had been maintaining the land, but this had to be halted because hedgehogs were living on there.

The resident also reported that the public right of way over the Queen Street land into Green Hill Park, needed some maintenance work. The Chairman advised that this should be the responsibility of the County Council, but when the County Council made it into a public right of way, it was on the understanding that it would not carry out maintenance work. The Parish Council had looked at the steps and did feel that they were dangerous and needed to be addressed.

The resident also asked if 'no parking' signs could be erected in Queen Street next to the public right of way. The Chairman advised that if the parked cars were not causing an obstruction, particularly at the entrance to the public right of way, the signs were not appropriate because they would prevent residents from lawfully parking their vehicles. The resident also felt that the footpath running along Queen Street should be reinstated and the large potholes filled in. The Chairman advised that these had been reported to the County Council.

The resident also asked whether the triangular piece of land could be used as a turning area. The Chairman advised that any change of use would have to be discussed with the residents of Queen Street and agreed by the Parish Council. **Action TG/DB**

A resident asked whether the footpath on north side of Courtingon Lane, past Bloxham School grounds, could be widened. The Chairman reported that this had been raised on Fix-My-Street and the section from number 73 Courtingon Lane up to Painters Close was uneven and needed to be resurfaced. Ideally it would be widened to 2 metres.

A resident reported that the footpath along the A361 by the War Memorial needed to be scraped back because it was very narrow and she had been hit by a vehicle as she walked along the footpath. The Chairman advised that the Parish Council would ask its contractors to have a look at this area and scrape back the grass, if it was possible. **Action TG/DB**

6/23 Thanks and Close of Meeting – The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

(The meeting closed at 8.30pm)

Chairman
24 April 2024