

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**  
**held on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024 commencing at 7:00pm**

**Present**

M Smith (Chair), S Brown, F Perkins, S Doolan, K Motion, E Fincher, J Lemmy.

**1 Apologies for absence**

E Searle, S Wilks.

**2. Presentation by Volunteer Action**

A representative of Volunteer Action made a presentation detailing the transport and befriending schemes that the charity operates in the East Northants area and with Brigstock residents. He highlighted the details of the scheme and steps they have taken for fundraising. They are looking for help with promotion and fundraising and to increase the number of drivers and befrienders in the areas. Leaflets about the scheme are available in the Village Hall.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting and issues arising**

The previous minutes (19<sup>th</sup> April 2023) were read and signed as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed: J Lemmy

Seconded: S Brown

**4. Chair's report**

This has been a more low-key year since the previous year of Celebration and sorrow, however the Parish Council have continued to work hard on behalf of the village. Following two resignations we have only been able to recruit one new member to the council. We are very pleased to welcome Elaine Fincher to our number but despite numerous encouraging adverts on Facebook and in village notices there has been little interest. This is disappointing as critics are quick to complain but there are no volunteers coming forward to help us to make a difference.

The ongoing problem of the potential for flooding has been addressed on many fronts. The locally designed warning system is in place and has been thoroughly tested this year. Despite initial teething troubles, with more fine tuning it can be heralded as a success (to the envy of surrounding villages)

There has been a variety of meetings focussed on flooding. RAIN (Resistance And Innovation Northants) has liaised with those affected and offered various solutions to individual problems. Ziggy from North Northants council held a, well attended, meeting to look at the bigger picture and to help us to put in place an effective plan for efficient communication, when disaster looms, with the many willing volunteers. To that end we are finalising a list of names and numbers of the volunteers.

There will be training for those that want to take on the role of a Flood Warden who would coordinate the necessary activities. Preferably, more than one person would train as one person may be away from the village when the need arises. In close liaison with the Longhurst Group, owners of Harpers Court plans are being developed to ensure residents safety in the event of a flood.

Maintenance and repairs are not exciting but are a necessary part of the Parish Council's responsibilities. This year there have been two expensive repairs. Part of the stone wall around the Village Pound has been rebuilt but much of the rest of the wall also needs attention in the near future.

We have also replaced the fence along the front of the meadow in Bridge Street. A great improvement which, when painted, will last for years. Sally Wilks will be looking for volunteers for her painting party soon.

We continue to monitor and make recommendations on planning applications to North Northamptonshire Council. At present there are a few outstanding enforcement issues which, with the help of our District Councillor, we are actively pursuing for a resolution of this problem.

It is good to see the new houses coming to completion on Stanion Road. Grace Homes have continued to work closely with the Parish Council, particularly in relation to the effectiveness of the new chicanes. This was a design imposed on them by Highways which has proved less than satisfactory. Hopefully with some adjustments this will improve. The constant rain throughout the past few months has made the site a mud bath and although some mud etc has made it onto the road I think Grace Homes should be congratulated on clearing it away as effectively as possible. We look forward to welcoming new residents to our community.

Other ongoing local projects include the construction of the solar farm, the incorporation of the implications of changes to Article 4 and servicing the LED street lights. The projects related to a proposed grant from Scottish Power, when the farm is operational, will be a focus for this coming year. It is important for the whole community to be involved with this development so much time has been spent this year on finding the best way to achieve this. A questionnaire should be finalised soon.

Care of the cemetery is also on going with tree pruning and grave maintenance a priority. Much thought has been given to the best way to maintain headstones in place but ensuring a safe environment.

Lastly, it is hard to believe that Sophie has been in post, as Clerk, for a year. She has tackled the steep learning curve with energy and enthusiasm. So thank you Sophie for your good humour and hard work in supporting us to be an efficient council. Also many thanks to all of the Brigstock Parish Councillors for their continued hard work and enthusiasm in this voluntary role to keep Brigstock a good place to live.

M. Smith  
2024

#### **5. Consolidated Charities Accounts**

The accounts were presented with a request for 2 x Parish Council approved trustees to be recruited.

#### **6. Welcome Pack Reporting**

The Clerk reported on behalf of E. Searle that in 2023 she had distributed 19 packs and has given out 10 so far this year.

#### **7. Public Forum**

No issues raised

#### **8. Date of next meeting**

April 2025

Meeting closed at 19:32