

MINUTE of the **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** held in the **MOOT HALL, MARKET PLACE, BRAMPTON** on **TUESDAY 30th APRIL 2019** at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT

23 persons present including:

Councillor D. Moorat, Chairman of Brampton Parish Council, (in the chair), Councillors I. Pennington, J. J. Harding, Mrs. J. Errington, R. Wood, M. Craik, K. Read-Bone, Mrs. J. Thompson, S. Jackson, Mrs. C. Bell, W. Nixon and O. Ramshay

IN ATTENDANCE – Clerk to the Parish Council
8 members of the public
2 representatives from Cartmell Shepherd Solicitors.

MINUTES

The minute of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24th April, 2018 was submitted for approval.

RESOLVED to authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 24th April 2018, confirmed as a true and accurate record.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Councillor Moorat welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave the following report:-

Looking back over the last twelve months, helps us as an organisation, to reflect on the progress that we have made, some of the unexpected challenges that we have had to cope with, some of the issues that fall into the category of waiting for other organisations to respond to our requests, all of which provide us with the opportunity to plan our objectives for next year.

Clearly the very major challenge this year has been one of financial management coping with increasing demands being made upon the parish against a reduced budget – how were we to fulfil all of our statutory obligations, our hoped for developments, having sufficient reserves to be ready to react to the unexpected, and to be able to respond to requests for grant assistance from various small organisations, which, like the parish council, are struggling during this period of austerity.

However, the good news is that - thanks to our Parish Clerk, we have survived the year within our budget, but there have been some casualties on the way. Our Christmas Lights switch on ceremony took some hits with a reduced budget, but the event was again very successful and very pleasing to see so much good will, support from such a large crowd in our Market Place. Many thanks go also to John Harding as chairman of our Finance Committee for keeping a watchful eye on our finances.

A major event in our town this year has been the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. Many hundreds of knitted woollen red poppies were provided by parishioners of the town and assembled onto a wire mesh curtain suspended from the Moot Hall clock Tower to the ground. Names of each person who served in the war were added to the curtain which was greatly admired both by locals and our visitors. Our poppy man called pop took up a seat on the Sands and looked impressive whilst our gardener Tom Ayres produced some very attractive flower beds to mark the occasion. An exhibition was created in the Moot Hall of extensive records and photographs of every Brampton person who served in the war, with a display of medals won and some impressive accounts of heroism, courage, on the one hand, matched by the harrowing sadness of the loss of loved ones, and how the families here in Brampton had to cope. An impressive parade of photographs of the 65 men of Brampton who lost their lives in the first world war was placed at the roadside in front of the Brampton War memorial Hospital. To finish off the day, a beacon was lit at the top of the Moat which was very well attended. Much of the research for this event was undertaken by our Parish clerk Allison who twice visited at her own expense, several of the war graves in Belgium and France.

A further major event in our town occurred just a few days ago when the Pirelli Rally once more came to town. The Pirelli organisation have told us that they receive such a warm welcome from Brampton that they are keen to return and would even like to arrange for the start of the rally also to be held here next year. Very many thanks go to Carol Bell who took on the task on behalf of our Council to organise our towns response. She encouraged local businesses to get involved and to her credit the town was busy with stalls, demonstrations and lots of people. Although it rained at one point, I have been told that this was an added bonus because there was a surge of people going into the pubs and restaurants. The Howard Arms told me yesterday that the Pirelli day was their busiest day since they opened. Our objective for encouraging the Pirelli Rally finish to our town was not only for us to enjoy the thrills of the cars but equally that local businesses should benefit from the increased footfall which helps to sustain Brampton as a small but busy rural market town. So Carol many thanks for the hard work you put into the project.

Our Christmas lights switch on ceremony was also a major success for us and similarly brings increased footfall into our town. It is so heart-warming to see families getting involved and the town square packed to capacity.

Many of our residents have commented how pleased they are with the work that we have carried out on the Moat. Much of the overgrown understorey of bracken brambles and bushes together with a few ageing trees have been removed to create a swathe of open ground reaching up to the top of the Moat so that once more people can see the monument from the town, but more importantly the now 360 degree view of the surrounding countryside from the top of the Moat is really impressive. Our Parish council has received much commendation from Historic England for what has been achieved on the Moat and therefore many thanks are due to Councillor Ian Pennington who has managed the project.

Our Visitor Centre has also spent a very successful year. Our record of over ten thousand visitors to the centre has been once more achieved and there have been many occasions when our volunteers have filled every available bed and breakfast place in the town. This year the Visitor Centre volunteers have produced a new "Welcome to Brampton Leaflet" a new Post Card showing our Town Crier, a new Parish Paths map, and a revision of the Brampton Town Trail. The visitor centre was successful in obtaining a grant to print all of these items which are now on sale, the proceeds of which will pay for the next print run. The visitor centre has generated more income than the grant given to it by the Parish council.

But what about the things that we have not achieved. Many parishioners are concerned about the speed of traffic in the town. Our Parish council has for a number of years now lobbied the Highways department to review the speed of vehicles in the town and to adopt a "twenty's plenty" limit but so far without result we will keep pushing this over the next year. Dog muck is always a problem for most Councils and we are no exception. Several times our Council has requested the help of Carlisle City Council whose responsibility it is to enforce such matters, but the problem remains.

Anti-Social behaviour has been a significant problem for our community over the last year. Our bus shelters have been vandalised, many incidents of aggressive and menacing behaviour from one particular individual and animal cruelty have caused many in our community to despair that nothing seems to be done to bring the culprits to justice.

A challenge which faces us is the somewhat demoralising effect of malicious and undeserved criticism of the Council. Most people are satisfied with the efforts of our parish council and its councillors. Many people are quite unaware of the hard work and commitment our councillors show in trying to make our town a really good place to live, work and visit. Comments on Facebook by a small number of ill-informed critics passing judgement on matters they have not bothered to research properly before commenting are very dispiriting – perhaps it is reassuring that such critics represent a very small minority – but how to respond to them needs some careful thinking.

But what about our plans for the future? This year we are to continue our work on the moat – concentrating now on repair of footpaths. The beginnings of organising a youth club and premises for youth provision in our town are in their infancy and we hope to be able to attract some grant funding to refurbish some premises the result of which will be to provide activities for young children. I would like to thank Councillors Ramshay and Wood for their hard work on this project.

We will be consulting our parishioners asking them for their views about life in Brampton Parish – what are the things that they are worried about, what they consider need improving or changing. The issues likely to be addressed are: housing, parking, speeding traffic, dog fouling, leisure opportunities, environmental issues, recycling, safety. All of this information will be collated to help produce a Parish Plan for the next 5 to ten years. The production of a parish plan will be helpful to attract grant funding for important projects. In conclusion, I can report a successful year for the Parish council. We have weathered the financial storms and have emerged at the end of a year with a good number of successful ventures. Our Councillors have played their part and as chairman it has been a privilege for me to work with them to steer a course across the seas of uncertainty. Last year I likened the role of chairman to that of the conductor of an orchestra – with many players each wanting to make their contribution to be heard. We have had councillors beating their drums; we have had trumpets making a lot of noise, whilst violins and cellos quietly get on with keeping the business flowing. The combined efforts of our entire orchestra of councillors has achieved a fine performance over the year. But we would have achieved none of this were it not for the commitment and loyal dedication of Allison our Parish Clerk. So Allison many thanks for all of your hard work and the many hours you have given to support the work of our Council.

RESOLVED to note the report.

CARTMELL SHEPHERD SOLICITORS

Elizabeth Crouch and Kendra Winter from Cartmell Shepherd Solicitors attended the meeting to give a brief presentation on the work the firm carried out, highlighting the following points:-

- Background information given on the firm and the role of individual staff members
- The range of services provided by the firm over all aspects of law
- Kendra Winter – recipient of Worldwide Excellence Award
- A free will review is being offered by the firm, anyone is welcome to come along and have a chat
- The firm are happy to meet people out of hours and would be happy to hold a surgery in the Moot Hall
- Most common queries regarding property are – issues from the Roman wall and regulations for septic tanks
- Other common issues are care fees and finance issues

RESOLVED to note the report.

OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

Several members of the public in attendance raised concerns at the proposed development to the rear of Braefoot, Sands, Brampton, highlighting the following points:-

- Rubbishing of Brampton's Conservation Area at the Development Control Committee meeting
- That photos of the proposed development were deceptive and did not show the overall height
- Applying to speak at a future Development Control Committee meeting
- The increase in objections from 6 to 35 after a leaflet was posted through neighbouring doors
- Why other planning applications in the area had been refused by the City Council but the case office supports this one
- That the City Council's planning department seems to go against National Planning Policies

The Chairman explained the following points:-

- The Parish Council's stance on the application
- Being a statutory consultee
- Difficulties faced when a parish councillor is not permitted to speak at Development Control Committee site visits

The Chairman asked that the members of the public write to the Parish Council requesting that a councillor requests to speak at the next Development Control Committee.

Other members of the public stated they were concerned about the planning appeal that had been submitted in relation to Unit 11, Craw Hall, Brampton, that they had a letter that they wanted to read out but would circulate it to those members present.

The Chairman reported that he understood that there was no current permission for Unit 11 to trade as a retail unit and that the Parish Council had always supported the view that use of Unit 11 as a retail unit should be objected to.

A member of the parish council felt that the planning application for Unit 11 should not be discussed at this point as it was on the agenda for the main meeting.

The member of the public concerned about Unit 11 stated that they were the sole objector and were being attacked on social media.

A member of the public reminded the Chairman that he had said that councillors were here to represent views of the public and how could he say that when there's a petition to support retail use of Unit 11? The Chairman replied that a petition had never been presented to the Parish Council and if one was received, then it would be dealt with.

A member of the public said that if there was a strategic plan for the town, then members of the public could be asked what areas they wanted to be used for retail.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for raising their concerns, but as consideration of Unit 11 was on the agenda for the main meeting then this meeting should be drawn to a close.

Members of the public were invited to stay for the main meeting of the Parish Council.

Meeting closed at 7.55pm.