

PARISH OF BRIMINGTON
MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Held at the Brimington Community Centre, Heywood Street, Brimington
On Tuesday 17 May 2016 at 7.00pm

Attendance:

Parish Councillor C Brown (Chair of the Parish Council),
Parish Councillor P Cawthorne (Vice Chair of the Parish Council),
Borough Councillor J Burrows (Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council)
Borough Councillor T Gilby (Deputy Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council)
Derbyshire County Councillor TGilby

Parish Councillors: G Barnett S Bean A Bellamy, I Callan, D Culley, Councillor, B Weston and S Yates
29 Members of the public
E Boswell – Locum Clerk

Parish Council Chairman, Councillor Christine Brown opened the meeting.
Good Evening and welcome to everyone attending Brimington Parish Council's Annual Parish Meeting.

My name is Christine Brown and I am the Chair of the Parish Council on my left is the elected Derbyshire County Councillor for Brimington County Councillor Trisha Gilby, next to her is Borough Councillor Terry Gilby Deputy Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council and Borough Councillor John Burrows Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council, on my right is Mrs Liz Boswell Clerk to the Parish Council and next to her is Parish Councillor Peter Cawthorne Vice Chair of the Parish Council.

1) Apologies for Absence

Councillor J Haywood

2) Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 19 May 2015

Resolved: To accept the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 19 May 2015 as a true and accurate record.

3a) Report of County Councillor Tricia Gilby representative of Derbyshire County Council

Thank you for inviting me this evening. I am proud to be able to present my second report as the County Councillor for Brimington.

I wish I could say that the situation has improved since last year, but unfortunately it has not. Derbyshire County Council is facing its 7th year of cuts to its grant from the government; £170 million has now been cut. With reductions of that scale there is bound to be an impact on frontline services. Public consultations have recently been held regarding the closure of Children's Centres including the one in Brimington, alternative management of the Tupton Lock Visitor Centre and changes to subsidised bus services and community transport. All of which will have some impact on the residents in Brimington. I have encouraged people to contribute to the consultations, made submissions to Cabinet and have been working with local agencies to try to mitigate the impact of these changes.

As a Labour led local authority we are not just sitting back and letting this happen. We have instigated a number of large projects which we hope will bring in income to replace that which we have lost. For instance we are setting up a development company which plans to build housing on land held by the public sector for sale at a market price. The surplus from which will be used to fund essential services for vulnerable children and adults. This will lead to development on brown field sites, such as the land around Staveley Canal Basin and would take pressure off green field sites. We are also looking at other commercial ventures such as establishing a solar farm. In addition we continue to maximise the use of our assets and where possible making savings by sharing buildings. This is already happening with the Registry Office moving into the Town Hall. This is an excellent partnership venture which will improve the service as well as helping both the County and Borough Councils balance their budgets.

We know that times have been even more difficult for people living in areas of deprivation therefore we will be launching the Thriving Communities Fund next week. This will mean an addition £47 thousand to be sent in Brimington. I am particularly interested in hearing from local organisations with ideas that will support families and older members of the Brimington community.

I am also pleased that the Community Leadership Fund will continue to be able to support local groups with their activities over the next year. During the past 12 months I have been able to support the Luncheon Club that meets in the Community Centre on a Tuesday, the Annual Brimington Flower and Produce Show, the Village Market organised by the Village Circle, the Karate Club that meets in the Brimington Club on Wednesday evenings and the Annual Tipton Lock Festival which pupils from Henry Bradley School contributed to. In addition I have been able to support local environmental projects including tree management on Peterdale Road, which residents have been requesting for a number of years. I am continuing to work with a local group to produce some interpretation signs which will encourage responsible use of the countryside as well as informing people about the wide range of wild birds that nest in the fields between Brimington and Tipton. In the forthcoming year I would particularly like to hear from local groups who have not previously applied for funds.

I started this speech by explaining that the Government's austerity measures were impacting adversely on Brimington and ways in which the County Council are seeking to address the issues. Whilst I would like to end on a high note I regret that I have to instead issue a warning about how the Tory Government's education policy may also adversely affect the future of Brimington's youngest citizens. Their plans for academisation is no more than privatisation of schools. A cross party parliamentary committee found that there is no evidence that academies improve standards. The independent Audit Commission have heavily criticised existing academies for mishandling public funds – including Executive Heads getting massive salaries whilst the numbers of teachers are reduced in favour of employing lower paid teaching assistants. School sites such as Brimington Junior School which many Parish Councillors and other local people campaigned for will be handed over on a 125 year lease. That is the same length of time that we have had state involvement in education. Brimington Junior School is attractive to the academy chains because of the number of pupils on role and because it is a fairly new building. On the other hand the academy chains have closed schools housed in Victorian buildings and moved children from schools with small numbers to larger

schools, increasing journey times and distances for these families. It is the Local Authority that picks up the cost of these longer journeys.

Governors at two schools in Brimington have already voted to progress moving towards being an academy. Having been to a recent briefing held by the academy company and the consultants that are paid by the Government to help schools set up as academies I would like to make three points:-

i) First of all the National Association of School Governors say that whilst schools coming together in a federation makes a real difference to children's education it does not support academies as being the next logical step.

ii) The economies of scale that the multi academy trusts claim to make and the opportunities for school staff coming together to learn from each other are already happening under the umbrella of Derbyshire County Council. We are currently developing an even better model of school support for 2017

iii) Due to pressure from the County Councils Network, the Unions and campaigns led by parents and governors the Government has backed down on its plans to make all schools academies by 2022

So I say to School Governors there is no need to rush into new arrangements without fully looking into all the implications and alternatives. I urge all Brimington parents to carefully consider whether this is the best thing for their children and grandchildren. The increased salaries for executive head teachers, the consultant fees and the £3 million cost to Derbyshire County Council in the unnecessary re-organisation of school governance would surely be better spent in the classroom. I am happy to speak to anyone who wants to know more.

Finally I would like to thank my Parish Council colleagues for their support over the last year and I wish you all the best with your plans for the year ahead.

3b) Report of Borough Councillor John Burrows Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council

First I wish support the comments made by County Councillor Tricia Gilby on the academisation of schools. To make a profit out of education is wrong when the focus should be on the education of children. The high pay of executive head teachers and the large consultancy fees is something that the people of Brimington should be saying is not acceptable.

Now on to the report of Chesterfield Borough Council's activities. In Autumn 2015 an independent residents satisfaction survey was carried out. The outcome is that 90% of residents are satisfied with Chesterfield as a place to live. This has been achieved by working in partnership with Brimington Parish Council, Staveley Town Council and other agencies. We are pleased with the result.

The Borough Council are landlord to 9,500 properties, 90% of tenants of tenants are satisfied. The Borough Council are committed to investing in quality housing. From the housing revenue account £32 million has been spent on the housing stock; and in 2016/17 millions more will be spent to ensure that the people of Chesterfield have a better than decent home standard. On Stand Road 22 quality properties for older and disabled people have been built at a cost of £3 million. The London Borough Estate at Barrow Hill is having an overhaul including the roads and garden areas. The Local Government Mortgage Scheme can help to put local and younger people on the first step of the housing ladder via the local branch of the Natwest.

Chesterfield Borough Council is committed to employing local people and to ensuring that unemployment figures are reduced; as this has a significant impact on the local economy.

The new £11.25 million Queens Park Annex has been opened, this is a massive improvement on the previous facility. The old facility will be demolished, and residents will have the opportunity to discuss what should be put on the site, suggestions so far have included an ice-skating rink, MUGA and skate board park. A massive refurbishment of Eastwood Park has been undertaken, the Borough Council have responsibility for 90 green spaces and want to concentrate on ensuring that the spaces are used.

On the Birchall Estate in Unstone, Heritage Hotels are putting in a £400 million investment that will attract visitors from all around the world. The complex will be a hub to encourage up to 1,300 people per week into the area.

The Borough Council, Brimington Parish Council and Staveley Town Council continue to be successful in working in partnership with Derbyshire County Council in challenging financial pressures. By 2020 the Borough plans to be self reliant with a range of commercial activities.

The plans to become part of the Sheffield City Region are not taking Chesterfield out of Derbyshire. The devolution deal gives £900million of investment with a further un-ring-fenced £484 million over the next 5 years. This will improve jobs, skills growth and tourism, further making Chesterfield a place to live, a place to work, a place to invest in and a place to visit.

Finally the cabinet are proud to announce that Chesterfield is to become involved in the Syrian Refugee Project; a small number of families will be welcomed into the town.

3c) Report of Parish Councillor Christine Brown Chair of Brimington Parish Council

The Parish Council is served by 10 Councillors elected every 4 years. These are voluntary positions and they receive no recompense for their service. Meetings are held at 7.00pm in the Community Centre every 2nd Tuesday of each month, at each meeting there is opportunity for members of the public to raise any issues.

The Community Centre was built in 1869 as a Wesleyan Chapel; it has been extended to provide additional meeting rooms. The upkeep and maintenance of this building is of vital importance to the Council and over the last two years the roof has undergone major maintenance due to the age of the building. Various groups hire the hall including play school, luncheon club, mat bowling, dance classes, art group, Evergreens and Brimington Women's Club. We would like to encourage more activities within the Centre and this year the Clerk is promoting the hire of our rooms by a variety of outlets.

Last year 2 craft fairs were held in the main hall, the Brimington Allotment Society held their Annual Show in August and in December a Brass Band Carol Concert is held in conjunction with Chesterfield Borough Council.

The Parish Council believes that it is important to keep residents informed about its activities and therefore a newsletter is published up to four times a year. It was realised that the newsletter was not reaching all parts of the village, it is now distributed to each household by the Brimington Air Cadets.

Welfare rights sessions are held each Monday morning in the Community Centre. This is an opportunity to meet with a professional advisor from the Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre. This is funded by an annual grant of £2,000 by the Parish Council and is a free service to members of the public.

In partnership with the Village Circle, the Parish Council provides lighting for the Christmas Tree in the Village, this morning the Clerk and I met with representative of the Borough Council to discuss the provision of lighting for this year.

Each year the Parish Council is responsible to organising the village Remembrance Service. The 1083 Squadron ATC and Drummers led the Parade to St Michaels Parish Church where the service was held and then on to the gates on Manor Road where wreaths were laid at the Remembrance Gates.

I would like to thank the Parish Councillors for their support and guidance over the last year.

4) Attendance Record 2015/16

The attendance record to 2015/16 was circulated.

5a) Young Achievers Award

Chloe Yates of Pondwell drive was nominated for the Young Achievers Award for her services to the community

Councillor Brown presented her with a certificate and her name will be added to the presentation board in the Community Centre

5b) Civic Duty Award

Christine Brown of Upper Croft Close was nominated for the Civic Duty Award for her services to the Luncheon Club

Borough Councillor Burrows stated that the Parish Council Chair has been nominated for the Civic Duty Award for running the very successful Luncheon Club that provides a hot meal for between 35 and 45 people each week; but more than this she is always happy to help, she is involved in wide range of activities in Brimington and has been an active Chair of the Parish Council. The Award is very well deserved. He presented her with a certificate and her name will be added to the presentation board in the Community Centre.

Councillor Brown replied that she had not known that she had been nominated by 6 people for the award, that she was very proud to receive it on behalf of all the people involved with the Luncheon Club, Carol, Denise and Sam in the hall this evening all play a vital role, as do many others that couldn't be here tonight, with special mention of Lyndsey who is a fantastic cook. I accept this Award on behalf of all involved.

There being no further matters the meeting closed