

**Minutes of the Annual Brompton Town Parish Assembly held in the Methodist Church,
Brompton on Tuesday 19th April 2022**

PRESENT – Councillors S Briggshaw, R Carter, M Shiel Dods (in the Chair), M Langthorne, S O’Sullivan, A Robinson and S Langthorne (Locum Clerk)

There were 14 members of the public present at the meeting together with County Councillor D Hugill and District Councillor I Sanderson.

1. MINUTES.

Copies of the Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Parish Assembly held online on the Tuesday 27th April 2021 were circulated prior to the meeting.

AGREED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Tuesday 27th April 2021, as circulated, to be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2. CHAIRMAN’S ANNUAL REPORT.

The Chairman submitted the following report –

Once again it has been an extremely busy year for the Council.

The Councils former Chairman Barry Martin moved out of the area during the year and I took over as the Councils Chairman.

At this time last year, it was mentioned that the most significant thing that had happened quite unexpectedly had been the closure of the middle bridge at Water End.

Working with the Environment Agency and structural engineers it became obvious that any new bridge would need to be substantially widened and raised in height to comply with the 1:100 years flood prevention policies and accessibility law.

It is planned to hold an open meeting at some time in the future so that residents are able to put their views on the possibility of a replacement bridge and ideas on how to raise the money for such a bridge

At the beginning of February dead fish were reported in Brompton beck at Bowe Bridge, these being a number of dace. Councillors inspected the beck the following morning and further up Fullicar Lane the beck was littered with thousands of dead fish and a couple of large ones.

The Environment Agency believed the incident was very localised as there no other incidents either upstream or down, and they believed the cause passed through quickly and was then diluted.

It is exactly now a year since the original Brompton Flood Prevention Group folded therefore the Council then took steps to ensure that the excellent work carried out by the Group over many years continued. However a new Group only lasted a few months and there is now an urgent need to establish another new Group.

Brompton was saved by only inches from flooding in January 2021 due to the leaky dams, which are there thanks to the former Flood Prevention Group. To prevent Brompton flooding in the future there must be a group of volunteers who will do the same

Anyone who can spare a few hours a month to form a new Committee is asked to contact the Council.

Several years ago the Council drew up a Local Plan for Brompton which examined a diverse range of improvements including increasing the diversity of flora and fauna of the village and the environment, particularly focusing on the communal greens.

The 'top green' of Water End near Fullicar was designated a space where re-wilding began in 2020 and walkers and dog walkers soon made their own now well-trodden routes which loop through the trees and beds. Now in 2022 the wildflowers - annuals and perennials - are well established and we hope 2022 will really see a difference in the increased diversity of plants.

October 30th being Communal Planting Day saw a great turn out of over 30 volunteers who planted hundreds of bulbs plus specialist wildflower seed mixes being sown onto ready prepared seed beds.

Both bulb planting and seed sowing will be extended each year in Autumn & Spring both in the wildlife area and around the other Greens as a continuation of the hard work of daffodil bulb planters Councillors Langthorne and Martin.

Unfortunately, recently there have been some instances of vandalism in the area but this can be rectified by reseeded.

The Council was successful in applying to the Police and Crime Commissioner for funding for a Vehicle Activated Speed sign for two locations and received £3,500 towards this which was to be match funded by the Council. County Councillor David Hugill also made a grant of £1,000 towards the project from his NYCC Locality Budget.

The Vehicle Activated Signs are currently being manufactured and will be placed near the school on the approach from the west along Station Road and near the Rugby Club on the approach into Brompton.

Once again substantial tree works are currently going on around the Greens as the arboriculturalists most recent report identified works being necessary to 58 of the mature trees. There is also quite a degree of catch up due to works not having been carried out during times of Covid.

Thanks, must again go to Councillor Langthorne for stepping in during the icy weather helping to fill grit bins and to Councillor Brigginsshaw for her work at the wildlife area.

Lastly, I would also like to thank all Councillors for all the time and support they have given over the last 12 months and also our Clerk Paul Atkin for his work and support during what again has been a difficult year.

AGREED – That the report be noted.

3. ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT.

The 2021/2022 Financial Accounts have been completed and are ready to send to the Auditors.

The accounts would be available for public inspection in July 2022 and any resident wishing to inspect the accounts should contact the Clerk.

Information about how the Parish Council has spent the precept is available on the Parish Councils website.

The Chair of the Finance Working Group reported that at the 31st March 2021 the Councils financial position was as follows -

Balances carried forward - £9,492

Precept - £45,000

Other receipts – (ie grants and burial fees) - £8,239

Staff costs – £4,128

All other payments - £52,961

Balance carried forward to 1 April 2021 - £5,642

Total value of cash - £5,642

Councils Assets - £75,500

The Precept for the financial year 2012 -2022 was increased to £54,000 and including a VAT refund of over £19,000 plus burial fees gave an overall income of £77,936 from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Payments during that same period amounted to £47,599, leaving a year-end balance of £36,736.

AGREED – That the report be noted.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS.

A resident who lived at Water End said that they had concerns regarding the middle bridge and the shocking mess of the stream last year because of the overgrown weeds that were allowed to flourish. They had only lived in Brompton for one year but had noticed the shocking deterioration of the stream and Bridge. They had been frequent visitors to Northallerton Town for many years, always stopping to sit on one of the benches facing the stream to enjoy a coffee. Their greatest pleasure was to walk over the bridge and watch the wildlife present there including heron, egret and usually a family of ducks. Since moving in just opposite the stream they were overjoyed to see the same wildlife from their kitchen and living room window. Unfortunately, once the weeds took over these beautiful creatures disappeared, they were obviously not prepared to fight through the weeds so have now taken flight and found a new home. There also needed to be realised the danger aspect for small children and dogs running around as the weeds just looked like a continuation of the Green with no sign of the water underneath. The weeds allowed to grow from the stream bed took up such a space that when it rained it made the risk higher for flooding and therefore should be moved annually.

They added that they really found it hard to believe that the quote of £60,000 for replacing the bridge was realistic and alternative quotes needed be sought.

In response it was said that It should be noted that the flooding issue was a regular topic for discussion in Council and residents were encouraged to read all the previous Minutes of meetings to be fully aware of the current position before attending a meeting. Residents were also encouraged to contribute to the Flood Prevention Group in the village.

An example would be the Minutes of the last meeting, Item 13, Any Other Business where the former Chair of the Council gave a summary addressing some of the issues raised.

(ii) Letter from the Former Chair of the Brompton Flood Prevention Group. "I'm saddened by the fact that the new flood group has folded already as the Chair had a great deal of enthusiasm to help with flood alleviation. I am extremely concerned that the Parish Councillors are looking at the leaky dams without the knowledge of what my flood group did in the 8 years I ran it as Chair. I will always be available to chat through what we have done and why. It is very important that you don't reinvent the wheel. The dams are leaky dams not ponds. The leaky dams on Geoff's land do not need to be repaired as I had a conversation with Geoff about them and as there was no money to repair them he was going to take them out. The reason is that Geoff wouldn't allow them to be any higher so they weren't very effective, but they were very helpful to persuade other farmers to come on board to have leaky dams on their land. Most farmers want to drain their land rather than put something in their ditches that may cause their land to flood slightly. Craig collects data from cameras we have near the leaky dams regardless of whether there's a flood group or not. He has evidence that they work and by

looking at the photos you could see which dams need brash taking out. Craig has waders so providing it's not too bad and there isn't much water Craig may be able to get rid of it. Alternatively a councillor could put them on and do it. I asked Jan Hodgson to give her waders to the Chair of the new flood group. Ponds are the future as leaky dams need repairing if wing walls aren't put in. Before our flood group disbanded all the dams had wing walls which support the dam and stop erosion. I can tell you now that the EA will not maintain them. The only hope is that the farmers in the future will be paid by the government to maintain them and encourage them to build more ponds. The evidence Craig has gathered from the cameras proves that the ponds work, The dams are only needed to slow the water so that it goes into the ponds more easily. Someone asked for a resilience plan, If that was a flood resilience plan we already have one and I gave it to the new Chair. If there's anything else I can help you with please send me an email. If you want to spend some money and the brash is particularly bad on the dams James Coxon contractor will clear a dam for £80". District Councillor Mrs Sanderson reported that the leaky dams were constructed when grants were available this did not cover their maintenance. However the Council could spend money on their maintenance.

AGREED - That Mr J Southwell be sent a copy of the letter and when a date was known to inspect the leaky dams all Councillors be invited to attend.

The resident explained her concerns to Councillors and Councillors tried to explain that they had worked tirelessly trying to get the bridge and flooding issues resolved.

There was a lengthy, sometimes volatile discussion about Environment Agency practices, and which was the best approach. There was a difference of opinion as to how the issue should be tackled and all parties felt let down by the Environment Agency.

A member of the Flood Prevention Group accused the Council of not providing support to the Group and detailed this as one of the reasons for the Group folding.

The Chairman pointed out that the Group had wanted autonomy and to be independent from the Council and that in the past the Council had provided financial support. She explained that the Councillors already had a full workload and simply did not have the time to be taking on the lead role for the flood prevention.

The Chairman asked what more support the Group had needed, but just received a barrage of unsubstantiated complaints. She also pointed out that only last week Councillor Langthorne had met with the Environment Agency to discuss outstanding issues.

The Chairman offered any resident the opportunity to look at the many quotations received to replace the middle footbridge, but all declined.

At this point of the meeting the Locum Clerk pointed out to residents that the Parish Councillors were volunteers who were doing their very best for the village and should be always treated with respect. She asked the residents not to raise their voices and only one speak at a time.

District Councillor Sanderson pointed out that there had been continual support from HDC, NYCC and the Parish Council over the years.

County Councillor D Hugill explained that the Environment Agency was working on a large project to reduce flooding in York and this might result in some flood prevention funding being available for Brompton. However, without a Flood Prevention Working Group the funding opportunity might be lost.

There was a discussion about the water quality of the beck and a resident felt that wildlife had disappeared, but Councillor Brigginsshaw disputed this and said ducks and a kingfisher had been noted in the previous week.

AGREED – That a mailshot be sent to residents asking for volunteers for a new Flood Prevention Group and to continue to support as much as possible.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm