

Brafield on the Green Parish Council

Annual report for 2017/2018

(1 April 2018 - 31 March 2019)

General Council operations and business excluding Finance

Parish Council Meetings

- **7 Public meetings of the Council.** May, July, Sept, Nov 2018; Jan and March 2019 and an extraordinary meeting in Dec 2018 advertise on the PC Notice board.
- **Adoption** of Annual Return, Risk Assessment, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, Procedure for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection (subject to some amendments), and Complaints Policy

Personnel

- **Clerk and RFO (Responsible Financial Officer).** Vivien Hartley and Cllr Dawn Allingham as unpaid clerk during the Clerks illness (as approved by Ncalc)
- **Chair/Vice-Chair.** Cllrs. Gill Morgan/Dawn Allingham
- **Internal Financial Control Officer and Risk Assessor.** Cllr. Dawn Allingham
- **Councillors.** All Councillors in office following uncontested local Council elections in May 2015
 - Gill Morgan
 - Helen Barnell
 - Dawn Allingham
 - Kevin Ward
 - Terry Barnell (Resigned Feb 2019)
 - Sarah Dorey co-opted March 2017
 - Francoise Copsey co-opted Nov 2018

- **Councillor representation and principal assigned responsibilities**
 - **Newsletter and publications editing; local environmental matters.** Cllr. Helen Barnell (covered by Cllr Sarah Dorey during HB absence)
 - **Church and Poors Land Charity nominees.** Cllrs. Kevin Ward and Dawn Allingham
 - **Highways Warden & Website.** Cllr. Terry Barnell
 - **Street lighting.** Cllr. Sarah Dorey
 - **Planning** – strategic (Cllr. Kevin Ward) and local (Cllr. Gill Morgan)
 - **Police liaison.** Cllr Gill Morgan
 - **Village FB Page.** Cllr Gill Morgan

- **Employment contracts**
 - Barbara Osborne – payroll service provision
 - Tracey Newman – bus shelter cleaning resigned July 2018
 - Rebecca Aldridge – bus shelter cleaning from Sep 2018
 - Sue Gautrey - Play Area litter picking
 - JS Landscapes - Play Area grass and hedge cutting/maintenance
 - Wickstead Ltd - annual play equipment inspection
 - Brown and Barden - grass cutting of village green
 - Aylesbury Mains - Street lighting maintenance/repairs
 - Trust for Conservation Volunteers (Bedfordshire) - village green/pond environment maintenance supported by several village residents as volunteers

Volunteer support

- **Police Community Support Officer.** PCSO Stephanie Bacon
- **Parish Paths Wardens.** Richard Sheward, and Jeff Marlow
- **Delivery of village newsletters.** Sue Gautrey, Alan Harvey Jones, Elsie Pittams, and Rita Clayson; with Cllrs. Helen and Terry Barnell

- **Village Website.** Vacancy exists
- **Farmers.** Rights of way maintenance and reinstatement after cropping
- **Play Area maintenance** – weekly check and log. Sue Gautrey.
- **Village Sign flowers, provision and maintenance.** Various Parishioners mainly Deryth Clements & Liz Ingham

Other

- **Subscriptions** to Northamptonshire Association of Local Councils (NCALC) and the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).

Village communication

Newsletter

- Production and distribution of 6 issues of the **Parish Council Newsletter** to every household (Nos. 94-99, May 2018– March 2019);
- **Newsletters** included 49 news items including the promotion of the following:

Parish Council

- Parish Council meetings and business throughout the year; including elections and ongoing Vacancy.
- Village Green – inviting village volunteers to support the Conservation Volunteers' (TCV) in their management of the Village Pond
- General Police and safety concerns
- Highways – inconsiderate parking progress on matters reported for maintenance and repair; dog fouling
- Planning Matters
- Chasing housing needs survey
-

Parish events/activities

- St. Laurence's Flower Festival (and Fete) and Horticultural Show and Fete
- Village Open Gardens
- The new Village Hopper Bus Service

- Denton Surgery updates
- Denton Primary School. Summer and Christmas Fayre;

Police and Community Safety

- Updates on crime incidents in Brafield and vicinity; and associated crime prevention advice
- Fraud scams,

South Northamptonshire Council

- Information on changes provision

Northamptonshire County Council

- Issues Surrounding NCC and changes to local governance
-

Health Services –

- Denton Surgery Patients' Group activities

Website

Ongoing issues have caused the webmaster problems throughout the year and we suffered to complete loss of the village website. A new standalone PC website is up and running which is now maintained by the Clerk.

Surveys

- None within this year

Financial business - Efficiency/Value for Money

- Total expenditure for the year was **approx. £11k** against a budget or **precept of £13250**
- The expenditure can be summarised as follows:

Subject of expenditure
Employment of Clerk and other personnel to support the volunteer Councillors

Other administrative costs – insurance, audit, room hire, fees, subscriptions etc
Communication/website
Village infrastructure and environment – maintenance and development*
52 street lights; 3 bus shelters
Greenspace mowing, village green and pond and general estate maintenance
Play area support/management
Total
Precept 14000 for 2018/19

Further detail about any aspect of expenditure can be requested from the Clerk to the Council including s.137 expenditure and the Council's accounts are all open to the electorate for viewing.

- Continued participation in the **NALC internal audit scheme**
- **Setting of precept** for 2019/20 at £14000
- Examples of in-year efficiencies:
 - **Councillors'** withholding expenditure claims for printing, travel and other PC related tasks.
 - Use of **volunteers** – see above
 - Changing street lighting to energy efficient fittings –further checks needed to ensure cost savings are still being maintained'
 - ○ Shared membership of Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) – 20% contribution

Environment

Estate management

- **Street lighting** (52 streetlights)
- **Bus shelters** (3 shelters).
- **Children's Play Area** – occupying land rented from Brafield Church and Poors Land Charity at a peppercorn rent

- **Verges, Village sign (and Village Green)**

Village green and pond

- **Village Green** – grass cutting contract (as above);
- **Specialist maintenance of the pond** – engagement of team from the Conservation Volunteers (TCV) for work on pond and environs supported by volunteers from the village in the Autumn

General

- **Nothing to report**

Trees [wardenship]

- Nothing to Report

Planning

Strategic

National Planning Policy, Joint Core Strategy development, Neighbourhood and Local Planning

- Planning - Numerous attempts to arrange an appointment with SNC Housing Officer to discuss Parish Housing Needs and Local Plan development proposals unsuccessful. Attempt to engage with SNC Councillor to assist, also proving negative. Finally appear to have a response and the survey is imminent.
- Nomination of Cllr Ward to attend the Planning Committee meeting at SNC Jan 2019 to give both the PC and Parish objections to application S2018/2416FUL

Parish planning

Planning applications

S2018/1082FUL – 24 Church Lane – Appeal Pending
S2018/1169FUL – 52 Billing Rd – Approved
S2018/1835FUL – 8 Green Rd – Approved
S2018/1928TCA – 11 The Green – No Objections

S2018/2096FUL – 59 Bedford Rd – Withdrawn
S2018/2031TCA – 31 The Green – No Objections
S2018/2105CON – 5 Bedford Rd – Approved with
S2018/2104CON - S2018/2103CON – S2018/2102CON - S2018/2101CON –
S2018/2100/CON – S2018/2099/CON – S2018/2098CON and
S2018/2097CON - linked to conditions on application S2018/029FUL
S2018/2355FUL – 127 Station Rd Cogenhoe – Approved
S2018/2393FUL – 90 Billing Rd – Approved
S2018/2416FUL – 24 Church Lane - Approved
S2018/2429/HPD – 59 Bedford Rd – Prior approval not required
S2018/2499/TLN – Water Tower – No Observations
S2018/2800CON and 2799CON – 5 Bedford Rd – Approved
S2019/0115NMA – 8 Green Rd – Approved

Licensing applications

None

Highways

- Regular Warden engagement with NCC as Highway Authority through continued reporting on the state of Roads and Footpaths, and their accessibility including reporting items for actions - \highway role taken on by Cllr Copsey
- Specific involvement and lobbying on issues that affect the Parish

Rights of way

- Continued support to the **Parish Path volunteer wardenship scheme**

Community support

Rural Bus Service – Reporting of the withdrawal of the W8 Bus service and information regarding the Cogenhoe & Whiston Village Hopper Scheme – small financial donation approved.

Community Safety: *see also Newsletter above*

- Reporting of various safety concerns affecting residents

Children and Young People

Play Area

- Regular maintenance (contractor – JS Landscapes) including weekly and daily safety checks and ‘diary’ logging of checks and Annual Inspection (Wicksteed Ltd)

Grant donations

- Donation of £50 to the British Legion towards the Remembrance Sunday wreath (s.137 payment)

Final word of note – It should be acknowledged that this has been a very challenging year for the PC - With the clerk suddenly becoming very ill and unavailable to us we had to think on our feet and after much liaison with Danny Moody of NCLAC (we certainly got our membership monies worth this year!) we managed to get by.

We had issues at this time with our Banking mainly due to NW continuing to use a mandate from 15-18 years ago despite councillors completing new mandates twice in the interim. This prompted the council to change to Lloyds Bank which was fortuitous as it mean the Chair had the bank books during the sudden unavailability of the clerk, NW are still proving difficult and the clerk is still attempting to close the old accounts.

We suddenly lost Cllr T Barnell in Feb 2019 due to a sudden change in his health and due to this have been without Cllr Helen Barnell for 2 meetings (March and May 19) while she assists Terry with his health.

While we welcomed Cllr Copsey on board however this has only allowed us to stand still and a vacancy remains for a councillor as advertised in the Newsletter.

I'd like to take a moment to thank the PC team during this very difficult year for their ongoing support – here to a calmer 2019/20 year at Parish level, though with the county and district reorganisations under the Local Government review and the Brexit issues for Central Government i fear this may not be the case!

Cllr G Morgan
Chair to the Council
May 2019
AGM

