

BRANDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11th July 2022 at 7.30pm, in Brandeston Village Hall.

Present: Councillors B Baker, P Baker, Bange, Fletcher, Locke, Summers (in the Chair), Williams, Clerk Catherine Bacon and one member of the public.

4/22-23/1 The Chair welcomed Councillors and the public to the meeting.

4/22-23/2 Apologies for absence was received from District Councillor Freeman (personal). **It was resolved that these were accepted.**

4/22-23/3 There were no declarations of interest.

4/22-23/4 A parishioner highlighted that the hedging at the bottom of the Manse hill has grown considerably since being planted and has significantly reduced visibility on the corner. The parishioner was aware of at least one accident on this corner since the new hedge has been in place and asked if there was anything that could be done.

Cllrs who knew the owners stated that they were sensible, and a gentle word would be appropriate. **The Clerk agreed to ask District Cllr Freeman to approach them as she has taken an interest in verge and tree matters.**

4/22-23/5 It was resolved that the Chair should sign the Minutes of the Meeting 13th June 2022 as a true and accurate record. (*Circulated and on website*)

4/22-23/6 There was no report from Suffolk County Councillor Bryce.

4/22-23/7 There was no report from District Councillor Freeman.

4/22-23/8 Finance – RFO

- a) The RFO reported that the PC has a balance of £10,098.67 which also contained £527.87 of MRT funds.
- b) The RFO reported that the 100+ club has a balance of £1829.39
- c) It was resolved that payment of SALC Invoice 107385439 (Annual Internal Audit), (£161.00 + £32.20 VAT) be approved.

4/22-23/9 Cllr P Baker reported that he had a meeting with the Headmaster of Brandeston Prep School. The Headmaster was interested to learn what the school undertook in the village. Cllr P Baker provided a list of the forthcoming events in the village, which the Headmaster was keen to try and attend.

Cllr P Baker reported that he recently attended the Village Hall committee meeting at which Kathy Churchill reported that work was progressing well with the new website. It was reported that Kathy would contact the Clerk to find out what the Parish Council would require.

Cllr B Baker reported that the submission of the Asset of Community Value (ACV) application is waiting on two points; being assigned a contact at ESC and the supporting information guidance length. Cllr B Baker had been in contact with ESC in order to be assigned an ESC Cllr and has not had a response after initial contact. The initial Cllr contact at ESC would not comment on the supporting documentation for an ACV but did note that a recent submission on a different application was too long at 70 pages. Cllr B Baker noted that the CAMRA guide provided a good reference. **The Clerk**

agreed to chase the contact at ESC. Cllrs who attended the meeting provided by the owners of The Queen reported that the event was well attended. The owners were able to explain their reasons for selling The Queen and answer any questions from the village.

4/22-23/10 The Clerk reported that she had contacted the local PCSO for guidance regarding security of the village Post Boxes after thefts in recent months in Suffolk. His response was as follows:

The theft of heritage post boxes is a rather unusual crime and one which has been occurring for some years, although it's comparatively recent that Suffolk has been targeted.

The post boxes are stolen, not for their scrap value which, being cast iron is low, but for their historic & heritage appeal. With some being over 150 years old, they can command good values when sold on auction sites such as E-Bay, some selling for over £600.

The type being stolen are those attached to street furniture, usually by the use of a metal band around something like a telegraph pole or similar. These are easy targets, as the thief only has to use a cordless grinder to grind through the band, which takes seconds.

The type you mention Brandeston has built into the wall of a building have not been targeted, as to steal one would take a lot of effort & time and make too much noise, so the village probably has no need to take measures to protect that one.

You mention the other post-box in the village is a free-standing type? If it's the column design where the post box goes all the way to the ground, again these are not being targeted for the same reasons as the wall embedded type. If it's the model which was widely used by the PO during the 1970s and placed on top of a post and of the same size as those attached to street furniture, that will be at risk, as the thief can grind through the post.

There is actually very little which can be done to protect these post boxes, particularly those in remote or unoverlooked locations, which is why they are so vulnerable. If the post box is within eyesight or ear shot of a dwelling or business, please do speak with the occupants and ask them to dial Police using 999 should they suspect a crime is being committed. The post boxes are heavy items, so the thief will have a vehicle close by to make their getaway. The registration of any suspect vehicle is always one of the best ways for Police to trace a suspect or stop the vehicle if it makes off. The make, model & colour are secondary, but useful if the Witness can acquire that information too.

A deterrent sign placed on or near the post box indicating it is covered by CCTV might also help, but only if there are buildings close by in or on which CCTV could feasibly be mounted. A thief will quickly deduce it's only a deterrent if the post box is by itself, nowhere near any buildings. If a sign is to be mounted to the post box itself, always seek permission from the PO first, although it's unlikely they will deny permission as it's protecting their asset.

Because the post box type being targeted is stolen with the use of a grinder, the grinder does make a lot of noise, albeit very briefly, so it's worth making people aware of this and to check should they hear a grinder in use.

Witnesses shouldn't be fooled by a vehicle displaying a PO or contractor logo and a suspect wearing work type clothing as criminals will go to these efforts to make themselves appear genuine. Even if a Witness asks for an ID card, these too can be forged, so, if the incident involves the use of a grinder, be suspicious, regardless of the presence of other 'legitimising' factors. When the PO themselves removes a post box, they will usually let the community know and they won't use a grinder.

4/22-23/11 The Clerk contacted SALC/CAS to obtain a quote for renewing the PC insurance when it is due at the end of September – the current insurers (Norris&Fisher) are not renewing when the current year’s policy is complete. CAS has secured a group discount with an insurer (Ansva Insurance) but they are not willing to provide a quote until one month before renewal. **It was agreed the Clerk will follow this up in September.**

4/22-23/12 Cllrs D Fletcher reported that the SID device is not working. He believed that it would not be possible to ask ESC or SCC to undertake any traffic calming measures without current data – the most recent data, though accurate, is skewed by reduced traffic levels due to COVID. The cost to fix the current SID is approximately £1000 and even greater to replace. The Clerk reported that she had contacted County Cllr Bryce regarding funding to replace SID but had not received any response. **The Clerk agreed to contact District Cllr Freeman to ask if she has any funds to support fixing/replacing SID. The Clerk would also follow this up with County Cllr Bryce.**

4/22-23/13 Date of next PC Meeting, Monday 12th September 2022 at 7,30pm, Meeting Room, Brandeston Village Hall.