

Minutes of Bramber Parish Council Ordinary Meeting

Held on 9 April 2025

Present:

- Cllrs A Blakelock (Chair), H Bayford, S Blakelock, M Croker (Vice-Chair), D Croker, D Goodall, S Green, D Kitson, M Tilley

Members of the public:

- One (Cllr R Noel)

Introduction

The Clerk introduced the new Clerk, Liz Trundle, and each Councillor gave a brief description of their roles within the Council.

52. Apologies for Absence

None.

53. Declarations of Interest

None.

54. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Draft minutes previously circulated by the Chair were agreed and signed by the Chair.

55. Matters Arising

None.

56. Public Session

No questions from the floor.

57. Climate Action Plan

The Chair updated the Council regarding priority areas:

- Local Walking and Cycling Plan - The need to ensure King's Barn Lane route to Steyning is safe for cyclists, particularly for pupils cycling to school, and to set this as a priority (supported by Geoff Barnard (GB) Greening Steyning).
- Reduction in Emissions - To agree costs and wording of the Clays Hill gateway posts- see item 62 a.
- Film and Talks on Eco-Subjects - The Council will be inviting the Bramber Society to the Annual Parish Meeting with a view to updating the BPC Emergency Plan.
- White Bridge Link - See item 58 b.

- Bramber Castle Orchard - Several fruit trees have now been planted.
- Bramber Car Park - Members of the youth scheme have replaced the soil in the car park and replaced this with good soil and manure for planting vegetables. Cllr Tilley mentioned that the owners of the Maharajah restaurant used to look after the flowerbeds in front of the restaurant. Cllr Green agreed to ask the current owners to continue to do this.
- Article for *Your Mag* magazine - The Chair confirmed that an article on reducing vehicle speed along Clays Hill had appeared in the March edition.
- The Chair also reported that she, Cllr M Croker and Cllr Tilley had met with the Joint Parishes Climate Action (JPCA) group and Ben Garcia from Brighton and Hove Buses regarding running a half-hourly circular bus service to and from Shoreham. This was not deemed feasible as the cost would be approximately £335,000, would require a double decker bus and there were no electric bus options available. Mr Garcia said that he would provide current statistics on bus usage. GB suggested that the bus route incorporated a bus stop at the new Glebe Farm development, but Mr Garcia confirmed that the development was not large enough to warrant a bus stop. Cllr M Croker noted that there was a timetable issue with introducing a new bus route; but GB offered to support a campaign to establish the service.
- JPCA also discussed the Local Walking and Cycling Plan (LWCP) and GB was keen that the group prioritises this - see agenda item 58 c. Additionally, there was an initiative to promote the local twitten paths with a local twitten map, signposts, and possibly an event whereby walkers tick-off twittens once used.

58. Reports

58.a HDC – Cllr Noel updated the Council:

- The Environment Agency would be restarting work on Bramber Brooks in May and this could cause some disruption.
- HDC Full Council on 2 April agreed to adopt a revised constitution, dissolving the Policy Advisory Group and introducing several new committees: Finance and Performance, a Scrutiny Committee for Communities and Places, the amalgamation of the current North and South District Planning Committees, and two separate licencing committees – one for taxes and one for alcohol. A motion on the Southeast Climate Alliance was also agreed.
- Devolution – Cllr Noel reported on an interparish meeting held on 8 April attended by the current WSCC leader and representatives of unity areas Buckinghamshire and Somerset. The general feedback was that parishes were taking on an increasing amount of District work, resulting in increased costs/precepts for local residents. Cllr D Croker asked about the future ownership of Bramber Brooks and Cllr Noel confirmed that it is possible that this would be given to BPC perhaps with the costs being off-set by BPC taking ownership of the car park.

58.b SDCP White Bridge Link:

- The Chair reported that Roger Potter had informed her that due to one of the landowner's family circumstances, the White Bridge Link project had been put on hold, and that this cycling project does not have permissive cycling agreements from all landowners. But the walking benefits would still be realised.

58.c Local Walking and Cycling Project:

- Cllr S Blakelock reported that he would be attending a LWCP meeting on 11 April and the aim was to establish lead parish roles. He would report back fully after the meeting.

58.d Neighbourhood Wardens

- The Chair reported that BPC had received a February report but not one for March. In the February report it was noted that the graffiti along Castle Lane had now been removed; and that the rutted footpaths near Botolphs had been reported.

58.e Joint Parishes Cemetery Committee

- Cllr Green reported that there had not been a meeting but a new list of burial fees and qualifications from 1 May 2025 had been circulated.

58.f Joint Parishes Youth Committee

- Cllr Bayford reported that a new youth service WhatsApp group had been set up and a Website for parents is also going to be set up.
- One youth worker had left, but the service is now looking for a replacement and are currently 'trailing' an additional new worker. The Youth Leader is doing more than her contracted 30 hours/week so her hours will be increased to 37 hours/week including training.
- Safeguarding training had been undertaken by five volunteers. And all committee members will be required to undertake DBS checks.
- Finance – end of year invoices will be sent out soon to each parish.

58.g HALC

- No meeting.

58.h English Heritage and Bramber Castle

- Cllr Green updated the council: Harris fencing had been erected around the Castle gatehouse to protect against falling masonry. And the 'sheer drop' sign by the kitchen area had also been replaced.
- Cllr S Blakelock asked about the ownership of the footpath from the church – Cllr Green confirmed that she had looked this up in the archives but the ownership is unclear to date.

58.i Village Hall

- No meeting

58.j Website

- Cllr Tilley reported 'usual' usage of the BPC website.

58.k Patient Participation Group (PPG)

- Cllr Bayford reported that the PPG had run a breast Cancer focus day which had gone well. The next meeting would be on 29 April. There was a meeting at the Hub on 8 April

on the future of the Upper Beeding surgery. Cllr S Blakelock mentioned how interesting he found the latest edition of the PPG magazine.

59. Finance and General Purposes

59.a Payments for April 2025

- The list of payments for April 2025 was unanimously approved.

60. Planning applications

- None received.

61. Other planning matters

- Cllr M Croker clarified that the enforcement order placed on Sunny Croft regarding felling of the owners' trees had been lifted because the trees posed a danger to the gas supply. The owner's intention is to replace the trees with railings.

62. Highways and public rights of way

62.a Village gateway

- Cllr M Croker confirmed that the location for the gateway had been confirmed with WSCC and that the Council now needed to confirm the wording.
- Councillors debated various wording combinations. It was noted that the gateway itself would indicate that vehicles were entering a residential area.
The Chair proposed that Councillors emailed the Chair or Clerk with their preferred wording and that if there was not a majority of councillors in favour of any one suggestion the Council would put wording combinations to Bramber residents at the Annual Parish Meeting. This was unanimously agreed. The gateway itself would be ordered immediately with the wording to follow.
- Cllr R Noel suggested applying for residual CIL money to off-set the gateway cost under the sustainable transport section and the Clerk agreed to investigate this.

62.b Any other issues

- Cllr M Croker noted that the mobile vehicle sign will be in The Street for another month.

63. Environment and parish action

- The Chair noted HDC's decision for a Declaration of River Recovery. Cllr M Croker also pointed out that there was water pollution near the tip and that septic tank discharges are also high in the area; but 'acceptable' levels of discharge remain high.

64. Consultations

- None received

65. Correspondence

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT
18/2	HDC	PC/NC Climate Action Network
7/3	The Tree Council	Free or subsidised trees

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT
8/3	Chris Kirk	Tracing the rails
10/3	SBUB	Wardens report
13/3	HDC Declaration	River recovery
2/4	Colette Harber	Botolphs Cemetery fees

66. Items for next agenda

- Cllr Bayford raised the fact that the Bramber Neighbourhood Plan had not been updated within the required five years. The chair explained that until, the HDC Local Plan is finalised we cannot move forward. Cllr M Croker confirmed that as Steyning had not included housing in its original plan it was able to add housing ‘design codes’ as guidance for potential development.

67. Date of next meeting

- The Chair confirmed that the next meeting would be on the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) on 14 May 2025 at 6.30pm with guest speaker Tony Skelding, HDC Emergency Planning Officer, who will be offering guidance to the Council and Bramber Society on updating the village’s Emergency Plan. The Annual Parish Meeting would be followed by the BPC Annual Parish Council Meeting.
- The meeting closed at 8.45pm.