

BROADMAYNE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2023

1. Welcome

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Steve Diamond, opened the Annual Parish Meeting held in Broadmayne Village Hall on Monday 15 May 2023, by welcoming local residents, members of the Parish Council, Dorset Cllr Roland Tarr, the Rev. David Johnson (Priest in Charge, Watercombe Benefice), and guest speaker, Ms Rachel Weiss, Community Engagement Manager, Age UK. The Parish Council Clerk was in attendance. Approximately 25 people were present.

The Chairman said that it was good to see people attending the Annual Parish Meeting because it was an opportunity both to review the past year and to get a steer for work in the future.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from the Head Teacher of Broadmayne First School, Mrs Helen Collings, and Cllr Peter Lamb.

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 16 May 2022

The minutes of the last meeting had been made available and were signed as a correct record.

4. Presentation by Ms Rachel Weiss, Community Engagement Manager for Age UK, North, South and West Dorset

Rachel explained that whilst Age UK was a national charity, each local branch was a small independent charity, in its own right, rather like a franchise. This meant that they had to bring in their own local income: they were not funded by the national organisation. The aim of Age UK was to promote independence in later life. Age UK North, South & West Dorset had 40 staff and was supported by 200+ volunteers in the community. The work was carried out through a range of different schemes:

- Befriending, which tackled loneliness and isolation (clients were matched to volunteers with similar interests and beliefs)
- Coffee and social clubs (in Dorchester and Weymouth, with guest speakers and activities)
- Dementia Support group in Wareham
- Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (a 14-week programme to stimulate memory and communication skills under an NHS contract)
- Exercise classes (seated vitality exercises to improve mobility and balance)
- Good neighbours (doing one-off jobs such as dog walking and shopping)
- Handyperson service (small practical tasks such as fitting locks)
- Home support (help with chores such as laundry, cleaning, light gardening, letter writing and IT support)
- Home from hospital (support in getting a home ready for a person to return from hospital: shopping, cleaning, GP liaison)
- Independent Living Team (focussing on helping people to live independently for as long as possible)
- Information and Advice (providing independent advice on housing and benefits, etc.)
- Traveling companions (helping people get from A to B, either by providing information or by accompanying people on trips)
- Welfare benefits team (helping people to claim benefits)

In answer to a question about identifying needs, Rachel said that they received referrals from GPs and other service providers, but that they often identified additional needs from talking to clients. In respect of lobbying, the national body made representations to central government, but local groups met with their relevant local authorities. She said that they provided support for carers through their information and advice and welfare benefits teams, and they had good connections with other services to which they could signpost. When asked if there was a shortage of volunteers Rachel

said yes, numbers had peaked during the pandemic but now they were competing for volunteers, particularly since the cost-of-living crisis was causing people to return to paid work.

The Chairman thanked Rachel for an interesting and informative talk.

5. Parish Council Chairman's introduction to the Annual Report

The Chairman introduced the Annual Report, a summary of the Parish Council's activity in the financial year 2022/23. He also thanked the Clerk and his fellow Parish Councillors for their hard work and support throughout the year. He said that he was sorry to be losing the services of the present Clerk who hoped to retire shortly and thanked her for work for the Parish over the last 14 years.

Last year he had reported on the co-option of Paul Whittaker to the Council. A change in work circumstances for Paul meant that he had been unable to continue as a Councillor. Paul was thanked for his work, in particular in respect of the broadband Fibre To The Premises project. The Chairman was pleased to announce that the council had been able to co-opt Cllr Sue Hawkins to replace Paul and he welcomed her to the council.

Volunteering was a central theme of the report, since volunteers were vital to so many aspects of village life: the hall, the playing field, Speed Watch, Scouts, Brownies, the lunch club and so on. All these organisations would welcome more help so please give them your support.

The Chairman also reported the death of Stan Harland, who had done a tremendous job in organising the Patient Support Group for many years. He would be greatly missed.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, and the D-Day event last year plus the Coronation Street Party this year had also been reliant on the work of volunteers. These had all been very successful events.

The Chairman finished by reminding everyone that the community website (www.broadmayne.org) and the Facebook group were a useful means of finding out what was happening in the village. He also encouraged attendance at the monthly parish council meetings where there was always a public participation session.

7. Report from Mrs Helen Collings, Head Teacher, Broadmayne First School

Mrs Collings had sent a written report about the school's activities which the Clerk read to the meeting.

The school continued in a positive place, with a recent strong OFSTED inspection and buoyant numbers. There were 134 children currently on roll, with 28 expected to join Reception in September, a positive number considering the fall in the birth rate in the local area. They continue to take children from outside the designated catchment area, particularly from around Weymouth. The school had a much higher than average percentage of children with special educational needs and worked very hard to support these children and their families, alongside everyone else in the community.

The parent/carer community was vibrant and engaged, and the parent/teacher association (FABS - Friends at Broadmayne School) were hard-working and imaginative in their approach. They ran several successful community events over the previous year, including bingo sessions.

Work on the school building had moved ahead, with various improvements made to the fabric of the building, particularly after the small fire last year. Most of the roof was covered in solar panels, and an air heat exchanger was helping to warm the pool. The pool was supported by a committed band of volunteers, particularly Julian Chesshire, who had been a source of great support and to whom a huge debt of thanks was owed.

The school continued to hold the Primary Science Quality Mark, alongside the Music Mark, both in recognition of the wide opportunities offered to children in these subjects. They also had the Green Flag as an Eco School, which is the highest award that can be gained and were the proud owners of the Silver Award as a Hedgehog Friendly Campus (the unmown grass areas were part of this initiative).

The school had a strong focus on well-being and outdoor education, making full use of the grounds which include a wooded area (with a campfire) and the local community. Trips to the Washponds and both the local churches were a regular feature of the curriculum. Staff were keen to use the local area to support their work, particularly as it had become so expensive to take children out on trips. They sought to be creative in order to develop the children's cultural capital in as many ways as possible, and often found it more cost effective to invite visitors to the school, rather than visiting them e.g., Shire Hall brought artefacts for the children to learn about the Great Fire of Dorchester, and Alexander D Great who worked with all classes celebrating Caribbean calypso, rhymes, and stories.

The school recently underwent a full two-day, graded OFSTED inspection. This was an intense process, but it was felt the visitors understood the school well and they were very pleased with the final report, which is available on the OFSTED website. The two targets within the report had already been identified and they were well on the way to addressing them.

Current priorities centred around ensuring continuity of leadership as Mrs Collings was stepping back from her post and a new head teacher would be taking up the reins in September, and the budgeting challenges of a small rural school in one of the lowest funded local authorities in the country.

They were currently looking for creative ways to access funding to continue to develop the children's experiences and were keen to know if anyone had links to local businesses or funding routes.

6. Dorset Councillor Tarr

Cllr Tarr explained that his ward, Winterborne and Broadmayne was large, covering 12 parishes. This meant attendance at many meetings. Also, with a unitary authority such as Dorset, councillors had to deal with a very wide range of residents' problems, many of which were concerned with housing and planning issues. This was interesting and challenging work, particularly in the face of central government under-funding.

Dorset Council was now looking at a range of climate change issues and in particular more wind and solar energy generation on council owned land. Cllr Tarr was particularly interested in active travel and was keen to advance the possibility of a shared-use route (cyclists, pedestrians, and horse riders) between Broadmayne and Dorchester. He was aware that this had been an aspiration for a long time, but he pointed out that some routes had come to fruition e.g., from Winterborne St. Martin to Dorchester over Duchy of Cornwall land, and at Maiden Newton.

In answer to a question about bus services, he said that Dorset Council received insufficient funding from central government to support the services which were required.

7. Open Forum

A number of matters were raised by residents during the open forum session. These included:

- A vote of thanks was given for the organisation of the coronation street party which everyone agreed had been a great success.
- Broadmayne to Dorchester shared-use route—what was the hold-up with progressing this? Cllr Tarr said that one of the issues was obtaining landowner agreement. (Post meeting note: the crossing point over the West Stafford bypass was being investigated by Dorset Council and that has also taken some time.)

- Potholes—what were Dorset Council’s criteria for dealing with them? (Post-meeting note: according to the Dorset Council website “potholes are prioritised for repair based on location, size, depth, and the category of road it’s on - a pothole on an A class road will be fixed quicker than a similar pothole on a C or D class road.)
- The proposed development on land adjacent to Broadmead—was there any progress to report? The Chairman said that determination was still awaited and that it was understood it was being delayed by Natural England’s advice on the need to achieve nutrient neutrality on discharges into rivers within the Poole Harbour catchment area (which included Broadmayne). A member of the public also asked if it would be possible to attend the Dorset Council planning committee meeting at which the Broadmead application was decided. The Chairman said that the meeting would be open to the public and the Parish Council would ensure that it was widely advertised when the time came.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting which closed at approximately 8.30 pm.