

BROUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 27th MAY 2025

Present: Cllr J Hodgson (Chairman), Cllr Mike Mossman (Vice Chair), Cllr K McAlister, Cllr A Taylor, Cllr C Brooks, Cllr S Dunn, Cllr Y Ezra & Cllr J Morrison.

In attendance: Heather Bournier-Clerk
HCC David Drew
Simon Henderson- Broughton Sports Committee
22 Members of public

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence

1)Apologies for absence had been received from TVBC A Johnston & Cllr J Morrison.

2)Annual report from Chairman

Cllr Hodgson reported the Parish Council had continued to act on behalf of the parish as consultees for routine planning, reporting potholes and faded white lines, tackling Southern Water regarding pumping and road closures and finally the Parish Council had gained possession of land at School Lane. He said Councillors present would report on their areas of responsibility and there would be a question-and-answer session at the end.

3) County and Borough Councillors' Report

HCC David Drew reported he had been a Hampshire County Councillor for the last four years. He explained that HCC are responsible for a 3.1-billion-pound budget which is very large. The bulk of the budget is spent on social care for both the elderly and children as this is a legal requirement. This large spend means there is a balancing act required to spread the balance to cover all the other items HCC are responsible for.

He delivered a report from TVBC elaborating on points regarding devolution and Local Government reorganisation, the revised local plan and building of new homes throughout the county and the new food waste scheme. The full report can be seen at appendix 1.

4) Simon Henderson-Broughton Sports Committee

Reported on the formation of the sports committee and how this is now working very well. He talked about the work required to raise funds and build a new pavilion. There is still a funding deficit and the project to sell bricks to local families to help to raise further funds is going well. Full details can be seen on the website. www.broughtonsc.co.uk He thanked all those who had supported the sports committee and the fund-raising efforts to build the new pavilion. Finally, he said the pavilion is almost complete and there will be an official opening event on 19th July.

5) Reports from Councillors

Cllr Taylor- reported on the plan to provide adult fitness equipment at the sports field. He confirmed the equipment would be funded by S106 funds from TVBC and that the equipment has now been purchased and will be fitted in the near future, hopefully in time for the opening of the new pavilion.

Cllr Dunn- reported on the process to provide the MUGA which was part of the original planning for the School Lane development. He confirmed planning permission was already in place and the PC has a duty to provide this. Cllr Dunn said a feasibility study will take place to establish details of what can be provided

Cllr Mossman- reported on the allotments and how some of these are well kept but other areas are very untidy. He also reported on the cemetery which also now needs some work to bring it up to a suitable standard. Work is underway to tackle both of these areas.

He also spoke about the land at School Lane which had recently been transferred and needs some maintenance work to be carried out to bring this to a suitable standard. The Parish Council will draw up a maintenance plan for the Salisbury Green area which is to be wildlife friendly. Work to the land near the car park will also be addressed and the Parish Council will be asking the management company for Downs Close

to deal with all the areas for which they are responsible.

Finally, he said he has spent a lot of time looking at the issue of flooding. One of the areas was the requirement to cut back weed in the brook. This has been coordinated and land owners are taking responsibility for their own areas cutting weed which should reduce flooding downstream. He said the issue with Southern Water pumping was to avoid overspill into the brook. He confirmed Southern Water had carried out a survey of the sewage system in the village and established this takes on ground water when the levels are high so the drains need repair. The survey does not include the pipes to individual homes which may also need repairs. Southern Water have agreed to let the Parish Council know what action they plan to take.

Cllr Ezra- reported on the importance of local government reorganisation and getting this right. It is important that all individuals respond to surveys so it is clear what they want. He raised concerns that funds to local charities and voluntary groups may well disappear. He said the way local government is funded is from Council Tax but there has not been a review of property value since 1992. The current plan is to have a Mayor by May 2026 and new councils in place by April 2028.

Cllr Mann- reported on his role to review the finance of the sports pavilion. Full details are recorded in Parish Council minutes but he confirmed the spend was on track with projections. He also reported on the Neighbourhood Development plan and the lengthy task of evaluating all the feedback from the village questionnaire. He said once TVBC have evaluated this a public meeting will be held.

Cllr Taylor- reported on footpaths and the importance of these to parishioners. He reported on the work needed to keep footpaths clear of foliage and the work now being carried out by local volunteers to help with this issue. He noted the legal responsibility of landowners to keep areas cleared and that Romsey Ramblers are also helping on a voluntary basis. He encouraged parishioner to report any problems they encountered to either the Parish Council or direct to HCC.

Cllr Hodgson-reported the new bridge over Deep Ford, despite delays, is now likely to be fitted in July.

He also reported the committee on the official twinning group wish to resign and the subject will be an agenda item at the next Parish Council meeting. He said it was likely new volunteers would be required to keep this initiative going.

Finally, he said Broughton Community energy is now an established group and a grant has been awarded in principle to carry out a feasibility study to provide alternative energy to the village.

Finance

5)The Clerk gave a brief overview of the Parish Council finances including details of annual accounts. She highlighted the areas where the Parish Council spend funds to support the parish

Finally, she invited those present to scrutinize the financial records and accounts should they wish. She confirmed records were audited by a local Parish Council expert and nationally by a government agency. Full details are also posted to the Parish Council website.

Public Participation

The following questions were asked by members of the public present

Q-Can we draw from the experiences from other areas that have already undergone reform for unitary authorities, could a guide be provided to help the public understand

A -Yes, the concept is good however all areas are different and although there are areas of good practice there are also areas of bad practice! It is crucial that local representation is there for local issues.

Q- cemetery mowing- could this be carried out by a team of volunteers like the churchyard

A-possibly- all areas are currently being explored.

Q-what was the original plan for a MUGA from the outline planning and how has this developed, what impact might this have on the area and the residents who live close by and what will the completed MUGA look like

A-An area for children to use and also a targeted area for adult sports, perhaps an area for organised matches. The PC has only just taken control of the land and been given the funds. A feasibility study will be carried out to establish details and the village will be given the opportunity to comment.

Appendix 1

Annual Report from Cllr Alison Johnston, Mid Test, Test Valley Borough Council – May 27th 2025

I want to start by expressing my sincere thanks to Broughton Parish Council and the clerk, Heather Bournier, for all their help and support over the last 12 months and for everything they do to serve our communities. It's a significant undertaking for which I am sure we are all very grateful.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my fellow ward councillor, Stewart MacDonald, for stepping in on my behalf during my unplanned absence from council duties at the start of the year.

This past year has seen many changes in Local Government and I thought it would be helpful to provide an update on those matters, and as we approach the summer, where further news is likely soon.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

Last December the Government published their White Paper on Devolution; creating more directly elected Mayors and moving some powers with the money to enact them from Central Government to a new Mayoral Combined Authority. At the same time the Government is requiring wholesale reorganisation of Local Government. My view is that devolution is broadly positive (as a mechanism for attracting more inward investment both from Government and the private sector), but that Local Government reorganisation is an unwelcome distraction and will not deliver the promised objectives without a fundamental change in the way Local Government is funded.

One of my main concerns with ending the two-tier system is that district and borough councils like Test Valley have previously been protected from the huge cost pressures that affect upper tier authorities. That means Test Valley has been able to continue the magnificent work in front line services and supporting local community projects.

Hampshire County Council on the other hand suffers from the rising cost of adult social care and children's services (which are statutory services) currently making up around 85% of Hampshire County Council's budget. As a result, Hampshire are having to make significant cuts to the other services they provide (including highways maintenance and pothole repairs!). Without a fundamental change in Local Government funding, once unitarisation happens, it is likely that those cost pressures will only increase, with resultant cuts on a much wider range of local services including those previously provided by Test Valley.

Although I don't fully support reorganisation, the Government has been clear that we do not have a choice. I am, therefore, of the view that it is incumbent on all local decision makers to try and make the best of the situation for the benefit of all local residents. An interim submission on the future of Local Government in Hampshire (signed by all 15 Local Government leaders in Hampshire) was recently made to Government. Key for me is ensuring that any new local authority maintains strong local connections and avoids becoming too remote and less agile making for poorer local services and less local decision making. We should have a much better view on the likely shape of the number of new authorities in Hampshire (3, 4 or potentially 5) and their boundaries, in the fourth quarter of this year. Mayoral elections are likely to take place in May 2026.

Housing Numbers and Local Plan

The new Government also confirmed that they've increased Test Valley's housing target by a staggering 78%. Rather than planning for 524 new homes a year, we now need to prepare a Local Plan that delivers 934 dwellings per annum. 15,878 new homes over the next 17 years. This despite solid delivery over the past decade or more.

This overnight increase without any transitional arrangements means we no longer have a 5year housing land supply and are therefore at risk of speculative development. Indeed, we are already seeing that across the borough in town, village and rural settings. Last month, an appeal was dismissed in Mid Test with the inspector making reference to our lack of five year housing supply. Government have also made clear they expect, and will support, development around commuter transport hubs.

Whilst I want to see this generation have the same opportunities as previous ones to get on the housing ladder or have access to affordable homes, my view is that new homes must be built in the right place, planned in consultation with local people and crucially include high levels of local infrastructure (schools, GP surgeries, roads, etc).

We have, therefore, been working at pace to amend our local plan to accommodate the increased

housing numbers, and later this summer we will be consulting with residents to ask for your feedback on the draft. We will need to make some tough decisions, and include many more sites than we would like, to try and prevent even more new development coming forward from speculative applications and appeals in an ad hoc way. Our task has been made extremely difficult if not impossible by the new Government's approach.

Fly-Tipping

Figures published by Government recently show that fly-tipping in Test Valley has decreased by 39.6% from 1,457 to 880 incidents over the past year. Any amount of fly-tipping is unacceptable but it's good to see that Defra figures show a large reduction in Test Valley. Our zero-tolerance approach, successfully prosecuting and publicising 65 cases between 2022 and 2024, ensures that any would-be fly-tipper thinks twice before dumping waste in our beautiful borough.

Food waste collection

Test Valley has agreed to bring in weekly food waste collections from Monday 13 October 2025. Every household will be given a small kitchen caddy to help with the collection of food waste and scraps in the home. A new fleet of specialist collection vehicles will collect the food waste from larger kerbside caddies. All of the collected food waste will be processed at an anaerobic digestion facility where it will be broken down by micro-organisms in the absence of oxygen. The methane-rich biogas generated during this process can be used as a fuel and the remaining product can be used as a nutrient rich fertiliser. A series of communications will shortly be shared with residents to support this change.

Test Valley's Budget

Against a backdrop of severe financial pressure for Local Government, Test Valley is in a relatively good position with our modest council tax rise of 3.05% protecting front line services. That means an average bill of £168.91 for an entire year of Test Valley Borough Council services. £44 (20%) lower than the average charge for the rest of England. Not only to have your bin collected every week but to maintain the housing & homelessness, planning, licensing, countryside, parks & open spaces, environmental health, economic development and leisure services - as well as continuing with our ambitious plans to invest and improve our town centres and villages.

Work In Broughton

It has been an absolute pleasure to promote local community projects with grants and provide other support where I can. I am delighted that so many projects in Broughton have been successful in securing funding through the various grant streams administered by Test Valley and the community engagement team, in particular Marie Stubbington.

This year, these include additional funding for the new Sport pavilion and funding to support the new business hub in the village hall and outside picnic benches.

As always, do please get in touch if I can ever be of any help. I can be contacted on 01794 500610 or at CllrAJohnston@testvalley.gov.uk

With kind regards,

Cllr Alison Johnston, Mid Test Ward, Test Valley Borough