**Brent Pelham and Meesden Parish Council**

**DRAFT MINUTE OF**

**BRENT PELHAM & MEESDEN ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**7:30 pm Wednesday 18th May 2022**

**At Meesden Village Hall**

**PRESENT:**

Trevor Hughes Councillor and Chairman

Steve Murphy Councillor

Sarah Wotton-Ramsay Councillor

Kate Hinch Councillor (Retiring)

Wilf Dimsdale Councillor

Andrew McNeil Meesden Resident

**In Attendance:** Ken Newstead - Clerk

**Minute Item**

**Year.Month.Item**

**22.05.01 Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chairman welcomed Meesden resident Andrew McNeil to this meeting and apologised for CouncillorTed Barclay who was unable to attend due to illness. Absence approved.

**22.05.02 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

No previous meetings had been held

**22.05.03 Open Session for Residents**

**Q.** Is the MEESDEN village sign that was damaged three years ag to be replaced?

**A.** The Clerk confirmed that the damage sign had been returned to East Herts Council for replacement and that no further communication had been received. Councillor Trevor Hughes agreed to contact East Herts on the matter.

**A.** It was noted that the drainage ditch adjacent to Mill House had previously been full of foul water due to a faulty septic tank pump at the property. Councillor Steve Murphy agreed to contact the owner Ian Welch to check that the faulty pump had been replaced.

**Q.** Why was the footpath adjacent to Black Hall being resurfaced.

**A.** The Council has been told by the landowner Ted Barclay that the footpath needed resurfacing to allow vehicle access to his land. Concerns have been raised that this might lead to unauthorised used by members of the public for recreational vehicles and Councillor Wilf Dimsdale is to ask Ted Barclay if he can adopt barriers to prevent this? **\*\* See Appendix 1 below\*\***

**Q.** What measures have been taken to prevent Meesden Wood being sold to a property developer?

**A.** Trevor Hughes is to check the progress of Planning Protection that he has had with Sara Saunders in East Herts District Council.

**Q.** Are there still plans to have a BRENT PELHAM village sign?

**A.** The original plan to construct a ceramic sign had to be stopped due to the size and weight of a suitable ceramic sign. The option of having a painted sign has been discussed and Kate Hinch will be able to find out if this is still likely to happen.

**The meeting concluded at 7:55 pm**

Minutes approved by Chairperson: .............................................................

Signed: .......................................................................................

Date: ...........................................

**Appendix 1 – Feedback from Cllr Barclay**

With reference to the Blackhall footpath some clarification is needed. The hard track is part of a conservation scheme grant aided by DEFRA to minimise mud from getting into the river Ash and spoiling the water quality Further downstream the Ash is a good trout stream.

Most of the way that is being resurfaced it is not a public right of way. There is a bridleway that runs the other side of the hedge, the Blackhall side and this is a grass trackway as far as the bridge at the bottom. There is then a short stretch when the right of way and new hard track are combined. The bridleway then officially crosses the ditch and continues uphill between the hedge and the ditch.

At one time this was wider, but water seems to have eroded the lane in many parts and undergrowth has blocked the bottom end. Further up the hill the old lane becomes wider, and the undergrowth has been cleared and the hedge coppiced. The old lane is then clearly visible and is even passable in places.

This would be a good opportunity for the county council to remake the green lane/bridleway by piping and widening the narrow bits and removing the stumps. This would probably have to be a combined effort with the estate, and I would be happy to discuss this with the rights of way officer. At the moment there is a large amount of soil which could be used for lane widening but which will need to be spread after harvest and will then be unavailable.

Lanes like this can be very attractive. The one from Washall Green to Old End is good example. it was completely blocked and was cleared in the 1990s. The Blackhall Lane is a continuation of this.

In the meantime, walkers and riders will no doubt use the now hard track.

              Just an idea.

                    Ted.