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Minutes of the **Annual PARISH Meeting for Borough Green** held in Borough Green Village Hall on **Monday 9th May 2022** starting at 1900

Present: Cllrs Taylor (Chairman), Shaw, Perry, Wray, Reading, Ramsden, Butterfill, Rawsthorne, Simpson & Millener the Clerk. Cllr Palmer (TMBC) was present, and one Member of the Public.

Apologies from John Coley, St Josephs RC Church, Howard Passingham BGJFC, Borough Green Bowls Club, and Cllrs Crawley & Shaw

Minutes - there were no minutes, the last meeting was two years ago.

Chairman's report previously published in the Voice, at the end of the minutes

Clerk's Report touched briefly on attaining a clean Internal Audit, and that the Parish Council was in a strong financial position. and was repeated and minuted in the main meeting.

John Foley, Secretary of St Joseph's Parish Council A short report on St Joseph's Catholic church :

The church was officially opened by the Archbishop of Southwark, Most Rev John Wilson in February 2020. During the lockdown attendance at church services inevitably fell off but now that Covid restrictions are largely lifted attendance at Sunday Mass is now back to about 50 each week. We still wear masks and keep doors open to ensure there is no danger of the congregation catching Covid.

We can now plan to have social events in the church and are to have a Quiz Night with an informal supper as well a Parish Supper towards the end of the year. Both events were well attended in previous years and we expect them to attract a good number of participants.

Mass is celebrated on Sundays at 9.30 am and on Thursdays at 10.00 am. All are welcome.

Howard Passingham, Borough Green Junior Football Club Report for season 2021-2022:

Once again I wish to thank the chairman and councillors for their continuing support of BGJFC, enabling us to give access to football for around 300 local young people. After a very tough couple of years we are pretty much back to a full season. We even managed to re-start our littlies academy on a Saturday morning for Reception and year 1, which is our introduction to football level. At the other end of the scale our open age ladies team had a pretty good second year, finishing mid-table after a two division promotion last season. We also saw the first Ladies FA Cup game at Potters Mede, startling a good little run in the cup for the team.

We are a community club and as long as we have sufficient coaches and facilities, we do not turn kids away they are deemed "not good enough". We do not trial players, they can come along to training and see how they like it. We are a welcoming and open club where all abilities are welcome.

Looking to the future, we would like to start a youth girls team, the time is right, ladies football has a presence on TV and is becoming more popular than ever. We will be increasing our advertising for both players and coaches over the summer months and see if we can drum up sufficient numbers to get something going. We are also interested in starting a men's adult team. Currently we give some fantastic coaching and life skills lessons to the local youth community but when they pass 18 we have no pathway into adult football. We would like to rectify this and have an adult team working under our umbrella.

Finally, many thanks to the local business in supporting and sponsoring our teams, this is keeping our membership costs down to a very reasonable £6.50 per week and kitting out the players in some very smart apparel.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2019, 2020 & 2021 (also published in the Voice Magazine)

It has been a tumultuous few years. In 2019 our Clerk Hazel suffered serious illness, and I owe a debt of gratitude to my Members for helping me to keep the Parish functioning. After a year's sick leave Hazel decided to retire having served Borough Green for 37 years. That started recruitment for a new Clerk, and we were fortunate to employ Bernie Galopin, who as well as being a qualified accountant, has lived in the village for many years, and is heavily involved in community life. He has been responsible for bringing the Parish into the digital age, and applying such strict regulation to our finances that we are now consistently scoring 100% on our Annual Internal and External Audits. The easy going Bernie you see around the village is a different person to the man who takes on our various contractors, and ensures we get the best value for your money.

Bernie's start was a true baptism of fire, Covid Lockdown arrived, and his first PC meeting was held on Zoom, and it was a long time before he had the chance to meet some Members in person.

Bernie is also more closely involved with Barry and Rob, our two long serving groundsmen, and is building a proper team. We are taking on more of the work that used to go to contractors, and Barry and Rob enjoy a new close involvement in the decisions that affect their working days.

BGPC has always been a pro-active Council, and we have just seen the culmination of two Major Projects. The new Rec footpath, soon to be extended to the whole perimeter, and with the help of the Rec Revamp Group and many local businesses, the new Children's Play Area, which come rain or shine is always packed. BG Parish Council is unusual in that we very rarely fall below 11 members, there are always replacements standing in the wings. Whether that is down to my sunny personality, or people wanting to do their bit and be part of a go-ahead group, I couldn't comment.

One heartbreaking time during this period was the loss of Sandra Gould, a long serving Parish Councillor, and the heart and soul behind our Christmas Lights for over 30 years. She was a personal friend, and when we ran the Youth Drop-in Centre, she was the first in the queue of volunteers, and the last to leave when it closed 8 years later. A shadow hanging over us all during this period, and still with us today, is Tonbridge & Malling's Local Plan and Borough Green Garden City. But Wrotham, Platt, Ightham, Stansted, Plaxtol, Shipbourne and Borough Green are members of a loose Parish Alliance, and working together gives us collective planning and financial muscle that we do not have as individuals. We now have a loud voice at the Table.

Another black note during this time was legal action against the Parish Council, which is still hidden under enforced confidentiality rules. This irks me because I have always believed in total transparency, but you have my personal guarantee that once the gag is lifted there will be a full disclosure of this sorry saga.

The Parish Council has been acquiring land in the village for the benefit of residents. First buying the Harrison Rd land at auction, then Crowhill Knob and the Staley's Acre Play Area. Then a 30 year fight got us Isles Quarry East as a huge tranquil natural open space and woodland. And last but not least, the Public Toilets in the Village Hall Carpark. These pieces of green land are now protected from development. It may be that at some time in the future residents want some of this land for other uses, but the whole point is it will be your decision, not the Planning Department or rapacious Developers.

Mike Taylor (Chairman) May 2022