

## **Minutes of Annual General Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2024**

Held in the Vivian Moon Centre

**Present:** Sue Prosper (Chair), Tracy Ham (Treasurer), Cathie Hamilton, Jan Gent and Wendy Plowman

Also present were nine members of the public

1. **Welcome:** TH welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Apologies:** These were received from three residents.
3. **Approval of 2023 AGM MINUTES:** The minutes were approved and signed.
4. **Chair's Report:**

### **Love Braunton Chair's Report March 2024**

This report covers the period January 2023 to December 2023 and is submitted for consideration by the Love Braunton Annual General Meeting.

#### **Review of 2023**

The year started as 2022 had finished with ongoing significant activity for Love Braunton with its work on the Parish Neighbourhood Plan so as to ensure that it was adopted by North Devon Council.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to North Devon Council Local Planning Authority (NDC LPA) in November 2022, who then had to undertake a second round of consultation ahead of submission to the Examiner. The Examiner considered the draft plan and the second round of consultation responses received.

As we anticipated there was further detailed discussions between the LPA, Examiner and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group from January to June. These discussions were in respect of addressing queries raised by the Examiner, evidencing why Neighbourhood Plan policies were needed over and above the NDT Local Plan and where appropriate refining policy wording for greater clarity.

In July 2024 the Examiner recommended to NDC that the agreed draft of the Neighbourhood Plan could go forward for a Parish wide referendum where residents would be asked whether they supported the plan being formally adopted. NDC accepted this

recommendation and set the referendum for early September, when 90% of Braunton residents who turned out voted yes to its adoption.

Adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan is not the end of the journey – we are now continuing to represent residents on the Parish Steering Group to ensure that the policies within the plan are considered and adhered to when planning applications are being determined.

All the documentation in respect of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan and its onward governance can be found on the Braunton Parish Neighbourhood Plan website.

Less progress was made in implementing the MasterPlan for the village of Braunton. This is a design document providing a framework for improving the area and was approved by the Parish Council in early 2023 with an intended public launch date of around June 2023.

This target was not achieved and is an outstanding activity that LB will be looking to progress with the Parish Council in the first instance.

Throughout 2023 we continued to monitor planning applications supporting those applications in respect of truly affordable housing for local residents, the reuse of existing buildings, small local businesses or improved infrastructure whilst objecting to those where developments will have negative impacts upon Braunton – erasing its heritage, natural environment, wildlife, and overburdening an already breaking infrastructure. From September 2023 planning applications determined by the LPA must take into account the relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies.

During 2023 there were 1465 planning applications made to North Devon Planning – a drop of nearly 10% against the 2022 figure; of which 190 applied to Braunton's two wards – a decrease of 10% on 2022. Love Braunton responded to 60 planning applications where we believed the proposal would have either a positive or negative impact upon our community.

Of these 60 applications - 40 were approved, 7 withdrawn, 4 refused and 1 declined to be determined with 8 still to be decided at the end of 2023. In addition, we responded to 2 Appeals – both of which were dismissed by the Planning Inspector.

The most controversial of the outstanding applications is that of the Whitecross Windfarm On shore cable application. There has been significant community opposition to what is being proposed and the statutory consultees have lodged detailed objections.

Love Braunton has a page on our website dedicated to Whitecross and it is where we post relevant detail in respect of this planning application.

The current situation is that the applicant is pressing on with their application and have agreed to an extension of time in which the application has to be determined. The agreed date being 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024.

Love Braunton has also throughout 2023 continued supporting wild flower verge planting, funded the replanting of planters on the picnic space by the village green, had a stall at the village fair, attended the quarterly Taw Torridge Estuary Forum and monthly Parish Council meetings.

## Looking to the Coming Year - 2024

Following the adoption of Braunton Parish's Neighbourhood Plan we will continue to promote this key policy document to help ensure that the Parish develops as residents want and not as imposed developers.

Other specific activities that Love Braunton will pursue over the next 12 months are:

- Planning Applications – responding to applications that have both positive and negative implications for our neighbourhood
- Progress Braunton Village MasterPlan design document
- Grow membership and encourage active participation in our activities
- Continue to work with other local organisations - CARA, CPRE, Taw/Torridge Forum, Heanton Punchardon Parish Council and Braunton Parish Council.
- Fundraising – to support community gardens, plants for the Village Green, trees and street furniture.
- Community events – Village fairs and quizzes

## Steering Group

Everything that has been achieved in in the past 12 months has only been possible because of the commitment given by the members of Love Braunton Steering Group. Not only did they give an incredible amount of time to finalise the Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting documents, but they also made the fundraising happen, organised planting, monitored and responded to planning applications, made and distributed the LB merchandise, the housekeeping, and keep in touch with residents through their own networks.

I thank each, and every one of them, for their invaluable contribution to Love Braunton.

In closing this report, I thank the wider community, including Braunton Deli - retailer of our merchandise, for the ongoing support which you give to Love Braunton.

Sue Prosper  
Chair

Tracy Ham thanked Sue Prosper for being the Chair and for spearheading the Neighbourhood Plan along with Jan Gent and Cathie Hamilton. She added that Braunton Village doesn't realise the importance of the Neighbourhood Plan.

## 5. Treasurer's Report:

### Treasurer's Report for Love Braunton Financial Year 2023

The Love Braunton accounts were audited by an independent auditor in January 2024 for the financial year 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023.

These accounts record:

Total income for the year: £2,474

Total expenditure: £779

Net Income for the year: £1,695

The Net Currents assets at 31.12.23 were £3,738 which comprised of:

NatWest Bank account: £3,192

Stock: £446

Cash in hand: £100

Copies of the final accounts are available on request.

### **Income**

The main source of income for Love Braunton in 2023 was from our merchandise sales and fund-raising through our successful Tombola Stall at the Village Fair in May which took £239. As we are now depleted of prizes, we would be very grateful for any donations for our stall this year.

We were unable to hold an Autumn Quiz last year so held it over to 1<sup>st</sup> March this year at the Quay Café. This was a very successful event and we raised an amazing £509!

Merchandise sales raised £198 and we would again like to thank both Jan for creating these and for Fine Foods of Braunton, now The Braunton Deli, for selling them.

Additionally, we were very pleased in November to receive £2,036 from the Co-op Local Community Fund towards village enhancements. We are currently exploring how best to spend this money.

### **Expenditure**

Our biggest expenditure last year was replacing the plants in our planter boxes (£200), followed by the necessary expenditure to maintain our website and email (£169). With the addition of our 'White Cross' page the website has been extensively viewed and is an enormous asset in being able to quickly update information and share it.

Other expenditure was: £36 subscription to CPRE; £58 merchandise costs; £61 hall hire; £30 gift to our Auditor and £125 fund-raising costs.

### **Net Income**

Net Income for the year was a profit of £1,695 as it included the Co-op income held in restricted funds. Love Braunton's own funds decreased in 2023 by £319 as we did not hold the quiz.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped us both collect and spend the funds in 2023.

Tracy Ham  
Treasurer

## 6. Constitution

TH stated since its founding Love Braunton sometimes needed to make amendments to its constitution to make it function and that at this AGM two amendments were to be submitted to be voted on.

The first amendment proposed was to allow members of a government body, but were independent of a political party, to be allowed on the Steering Committee. (C.A.R.A – in a neighbouring Parish apparently allow this and it has worked well). The floor was asked to comment. One member of the audience brought up the point that some members of political parties convert to being Independent whilst still holding the views of their original political party. SP replied that she felt that as all of us hold a variety of political views, as long as members don't make political party statements, we can remain non-political. Lorna Childs stated that as an independent parish councilor she can assure us that there will not be a conflict of interests as all memberships of groups are stated at Council meetings. Another member of the audience felt that the new amendment would enhance Love Braunton. The amendment was proposed by Cathie Hamilton and seconded by Jan Gent. The amendment was passed by twelve 'yes' votes and with two abstentions.

The second amendment was to the number of members needed for a quorum. Currently it stands a five, with two members of the Steering Committee. This is currently unworkable due to the low number of members. The proposal is to make it three with one specified officer. It was proposed by Jan Gent and seconded by a member of the audience. Passed with fourteen 'yes' votes.

TH stated that at the founding of Love Braunton it was agreed that every four years there would be a discussion as to whether there was still a need for Love Braunton. It was proposed that Love Braunton was still relevant, and it was agreed for it to continue for another four years and then re-assess. Proposed by Wendy Plowman and seconded by Cathie Hamilton.

7. **Election of Steering Committee:** All current members have agreed to remain in post. Proposed by Lorna Childs and Seconded a member of the audience. Passed by fourteen 'yes' votes.
8. **New Members:** TH told the audience that Love Braunton really needs new members and encouraged anyone to fill out one of the fliers left on the table if they feel they have a bit of time to spare to come and join the group.
9. **AOB:** There wasn't any other business.

Tracy Ham thanked everyone for coming and invited the group to enjoy tea and cake. The cakes were kindly donated by Binge Box. After tea the meeting enjoyed a talk by Tatyana or Tan (as she is known) is one of two sisters who established The Gardeners Co.

The Gardener's Collective

<https://thegardenerscollective.co.uk/pages/meet-the-team>

Tan's talk described how The Gardeners Co came into being, that gardening activity embraces everything from window boxes to community schemes, the massive benefits of gardening for individuals' wellbeing and the activities that Gardeners Co is involved in within the parish – Braunton Academy, working with the Countryside Centre and Live Well in Braunton.

Tan closed her talk by providing contact details of website (as above)

TH thanked Tan for her talk which the audience found very informative and from the head nodding appeared to be in agreement with the beneficial nature of gardening!

The meeting was then closed at 12.00pm.