

Minutes of the Meeting of Belbroughton Parish Council held in the meeting room Belbroughton on Monday 5th September 2011

Present : Cllrs K Green (Chair), J Bradley, N Hartill, L Harvey, C Hine, A Hood, A Ince, T Jones, J Kitson, S MacDonald, D Roberts, C Scurrrell and S Wright.

In attendance: Mrs C Limm, Clerk. County Cllr Ed Moore, District Cllr Janice Boswell, and three residents also attended.

263/11 Apologies – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Shotton.

264/11 Declarations of interest – None.

265/11 Minutes of the meeting on 4th July 2011

The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

266/11 Reports

Planning

The Minutes of the meetings on 4th and 18th July and 15th August were noted.

Finance

The Minutes of the meetings on 18th July and 15th August were noted.

Clerk's report

The Clerk had been informed that another planning application was imminent relating to the jewellery factory in Hartle Lane, Belbroughton. The revised application would seek to replace the old buildings by the Talbot car park with new buildings.

Cllrs Green, Jones, and the Clerk had met the suppliers about installation of the multi-goal at Fairfield Recreation Ground. A suitable location had been identified. There was a potential additional cost of £200 for installation if the ground needed to be levelled. The Clerk was awaiting advice from the District Council about whether planning permission would be required for the installation of a small area of hard standing in front of the goal.

The Clerk updated the Council about the loss of about 2 months of finance data following problems with her laptop and the failure of the computer firm who repaired it to back up the Quickbooks data. The lost data would have to be re-entered. She would try to have this done in time for the October Finance meeting.

267/11 Investments

The Council endorsed the Finance Committee's recommendation to reinvest £50,000 plus interest in a one year Santander bond. The Council also agreed the Committee's suggestion that surplus funds invested in Scottish Widows should also be invested in a short-term bond so that interest was payable on a regular basis.

268/11 Splitting the Council

Cllr Green reported on the meeting which she, Cllr Kitson and the Clerk had attended with Sue Mould, the District Council electoral services officer. A note of the meeting had been circulated. Interesting points emerging from the meeting were the importance of consultation with residents; the fact that once the governance process has started the District and Parish Council cannot necessarily control the outcomes; and whether the Parish Council had explored better ways of working within the current structure. No new information had been obtained about splitting the assets. The Clerk had therefore sought advice about this from NALC.

It was agreed that this issue should be on the next agenda for the Council to decide how to pursue it. Cllr Scurrrell suggested that this should include consideration of a change in the Council's name to include reference to Fairfield. Residents should be kept informed of progress on this issue in the Council's next newsletter.

269/11 Parish Council meeting room

The Clerk gave a update on the potential costs of improving the room to make it compliant with Disability Discrimination legislation. These were between £8,500 and £15,000 depending on how the work was done. Arguments advanced in favour of improving the room were its suitability for small groups, its convenience for the Council, its potential for future development, and its value as a capital asset. The counter arguments were that the room was an expensive place for the Council to meet and that it would need substantial improvements, beyond those required for the DDA, to make it significantly more attractive. It was necessary to consider value for money and what could be achieved by alternative uses of the money that would be needed to make the room DDA compliant.

On a show of hands the Council voted by 9 votes to 4 not to improve the room. Councillors Green, Harvey, Ince and Wright voted in favour of improving the meeting room with all the other Councillors present voting against this proposition.

Decisions about the consequences of this decision for future Council meetings and for the meeting room were deferred until the next Council meeting.

270/11 Bus shelter in Hartle Lane

The installation of a new bus shelter in Hartle Lane had been deferred pending the outcome of the County bus services review. Now that the continuation of the 318 service had been confirmed the Council agreed to commission the new bus shelter as planned.

271/11 Speed limit proposals

The County Council's proposals for new speed limits on the B4188 in Belbroughton were due to come into force in October. The Parish Council welcomed these changes and thanked County Councillor Ed Moore. Cllrs Bradley, MacDonald and Roberts volunteered to attend a meeting with the Highways engineer to discuss siting of the new VAS in Hackman's Gate Lane.

A resident asked if the enforcement of the 7.5 ton weight limit through Belbroughton could be better enforced. Cllr Scurrrell explained that enforcement of weight limits was not a police priority. The resident also suggested that the Council should consider a self-financing private scheme to enforce speed limits.

272/11 Winter Services

The County Council had circulated information about winter services which offered Parish Councils the opportunity to provide additional grit bins. It was agreed that the Highways Group would consider this for Belbroughton. Fairfield Councillors did not consider that additional bins were needed in Fairfield at this time.

273/11 Invitations

Invitations had been received asking the Council to participate in providing a flower display for the Belbroughton Scarecrow Weekend and in attending a 'Bridge the Gap' event on 8th October in Fairfield Village Hall to raise awareness of local organisations. Cllr Bradley agreed to organise flowers for the Scarecrow weekend. Cllrs Green and Ince agreed to attend the Fairfield event.

274/11 Councillors' items

- Councillor Hood asked for speeding in Quantry Lane to be discussed at a future meeting.

- Cllr Scurrall reported that excessive motor bike noise was being monitored and tackled by the District Council; that the outbreak of Japanese knotweed in Yew Tree Lane, Fairfield was being treated; and reminded everyone about the PACT meeting on 22nd September in Fairfield Village Hall.
- Cllr Bradley gave the Council prior notice about a Committee being formed in Belbroughton to organise events for the Queens' Jubilee celebrations in 2012.

275/11 Fairfield Villa football club

The Football Club was required by the Council to remove the football posts and rails at the Recreation Ground between matches played from the beginning of May to the end of September. This was to preserve the openness and accessibility of the Recreation Ground for other users. The Club found this requirement difficult especially when home games were close together. The Council agreed that the rails could be left in place (with the corners removed for access) once the school holidays ended in early September.

Cllr Green said that the Club did not always comply with the requirement to remove the posts and rails between matches during the summer months. It was agreed that this should be raised at a liaison meeting with the Club.

Comments had been received from the Club on the draft new lease. Mr Nind also raised an issue about a clause inserted in the current lease about the status of the Club House. He was asked to write to the Clerk about this.

The Council resolved to exclude the public and the press from discussion of this item because of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

The Council considered the points raised by the Club. However, it agreed that it did not want to renegotiate on the issues raised which for the most part had been fully discussed with the Club on previous occasions. There were two points on which the Council agreed to reconsider the lease:

1. the reference to obstructing the windows (9.8.1 in the lease) since the Council did not want to prohibit security bars.
2. payment monthly by direct debit rather than 3 monthly in advance. The Council was willing to look at this and to meet the Club's request if there was a satisfactory way of achieving this.

The Clerk was asked to instruct the Council's solicitor accordingly.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Signed.....Chairman