

Minutes of the Meeting of Belbroughton Parish Council held in Fairfield School, Fairfield on Monday 2nd April 2012

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

In attendance: Mrs C Limm, Clerk. District Cllr Janice Boswell and County Councillor Ed Moore (first half of meeting) and four residents also attended.

098/12 Apologies: No apologies were received.

099/12 Declarations of interest : No interests were declared.

100/12 Minutes of the meeting on 5th March 2012: The Minutes were agreed.

101/12 Reports

Chairman's report

Cllr Green thanked Cllr Ed Moore for his contribution of £1,250 from his County Councillor funds towards the costs of the planting and new bus shelter in Hartle Lane, Belbroughton. She mentioned an Email to the County Council, copied to the Clerk, that alleged impropriety on the part of the Parish Council over the siting of the new VAS in Hackman's Gate Lane. The Chairman said that the County should respond in the first instance.

Planning meeting on 19th March

Cllr Ince reported on this meeting. The Minutes had been circulated.

Finance meeting on 19th March

Cllr Scurrrell reported on this meeting. The Minutes had been circulated.

District and County Councillors reports

Cllr Boswell suggested that the provision of a defibrillator in the parish should be considered. One was available in the doctors' surgery in Belbroughton during open hours. The practical difficulties were noted, including the need for trained users.

Clerk's report

- i. A liaison meeting had been held with representatives of Fairfield Villa Football Club – the Club was making arrangements to keep local residents informed about a forthcoming match at which a large number of spectators was expected and about the planned building work at the Club House.
- ii. There was an electoral review of the number of Councillors on Bromsgrove District Council. It was agreed that this should be considered at the next Finance meeting to meet the deadline for comments.
- iii. A new Code of Conduct would need to be adopted by all Councils before 1st July. The District Council was drawing up a new model code on behalf of all Councils in Worcestershire. Councillors would need to agree to abide by the new Code and fill in new Register of Interests forms.

102/12 Co-option of a new Councillor

Mr Ian Dalziel was co-opted to fill the vacancy for Belbroughton ward.

103/12 Parking in Stourbridge Road, Fairfield

Detailed proposals were not yet available.

104/12 Annual Parish Meeting

The agenda for the meeting was agreed. It was agreed that reports should be requested from the County Councillors, neither of whom could attend the meeting, and that a handout should be available with contact details for parish organisations.

105/12 Parish Council work programme and priorities

The Clerk had circulated a note for information about the tasks on the Council's agenda for 2012/13 showing when they would occur. This did not take account of unforeseen events or new initiatives. Councillors noted that the next couple of months were busy with year-end financial items and the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Report. Cllr Hartill suggested that an additional item to consider was the new planning regime and what opportunities this presented. This was agreed and noted for a future discussion.

106/12 Splitting the Council

The Chairman summarised the background and key issues. The Council's working group had made a number of recommendations about the timetable and process, but the first decision for the Council was whether it favoured a split and wanted to consult the electorate with this recommendation. The pros and cons were debated. On the one hand Councillors noted that the Council was working well, that pursuing a split could impact adversely on the Council's ability to move other things forward, and that there would be a financial cost involved. On the other hand the proposal for a split had recognised that the identities and aspirations of the two villages were different and that 'sense of community' was a key criteria for a new parish council. The cost of the process of splitting would be justified if the outcome was better for both villages. The Council noted that expectations had been raised in the Council's publications that there would be consultation on this issue.

It was agreed that the Council should consult residents with the recommendation that there should be a split into two Councils. The Council agreed to ask the working group to meet again to work up detailed proposals including:

- the consultation process and timetable
- whether the consultation document should endorse the previous Council's recommendations for future arrangements, including in particular the proposed handling of the allotments
- the costs and benefits of a split, including the costs of the process.

107/12 Quality Parish

The Council agreed not to seek QP re-accreditation in September 2012 in view of its other commitments and priorities. However this would be reviewed in about a year's time and it would be open to the Council to apply then if it so wished.

108/12 Tree planting

The Council agreed in principle that it should respond positively to the offer of trees to be planted on publicly owned land in Belbroughton by the owners of Springfield House. This would help them to fulfil the requirement to plant a dozen trees to replace those improperly felled by the previous owner of the house. It was agreed that Cllr Roberts would consider potential sites in consultation with other Belbroughton councillors. Sites to be considered included the village green, Sylvesters Corner, the green opposite the school in Bradford Lane, the churchyard and Belbroughton Rec. The Rec. Committee had already indicated their interest in having some additional trees. The Council agreed not to propose a new tree at Dark Lane in view of local residents' firm opposition.

109/12 Maintenance items

The Council considered a resident's request that it should have Fairfield War Memorial cleaned. Councillors were not sure that this would be desirable since some ageing was attractive. Fairfield Councillors would consider further and report back.

The Council agreed that the grit bins in Fairfield were not fit for purpose and it was agreed that the Clerk should ask a representative of the County Council to visit and see the problem. In addition, the missing bin in Madeley Road had still not been delivered and the bin already there had not been relocated as promised. In the circumstances the bill for the bins should not be paid pending a response from the County Council.

110/12 Council meetings

It was agreed that the Council would book the new meeting room at Belbroughton Rec. for meetings in August, September and October. It would review in the autumn where it would meet on a longer term basis. The Clerk was asked to enquire about the availability of Fairfield School in the autumn term.

111/12 Councillors items

Cllr Scurrell circulated a report and talked briefly about a recent meeting of the police Community Engagement Group. He mentioned that the Chief Constable would be at the next Area CALC meeting on 6th June.

Cllr Roberts said that work was planned for the coming week on the planting in Hartle Lane. Volunteers to help would be welcome.

Cllr Macdonald confirmed that the Belbroughton Scarecrow Weekend would be on the last full weekend in September.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Signed.....Chairman