

Minutes of the Meeting of Belbroughton Parish Council held in the Jubilee meeting room at Belbroughton Recreation Centre on Monday 3rd December 2012

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

In attendance: Mrs C Limm, Clerk; County Councillor Ed Moore, District Councillor Janice Boswell and two members of the public also attended.

347/12 Apologies

There were no apologies for absence. Cllr Scurrrell apologised for his late arrival.

348/12 Declarations of Interest

- 1) All Parish Councillors declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to discussions concerning the setting of the Council's budget and precept since they all had a home within the parish.
- 2) The Council agreed the request that had been submitted by every Councillor for a dispensation to enable them to take part in discussions and to vote on matters concerning the setting of the Council's budget and precept. The dispensation was granted on the grounds that without such a dispensation the Council could not transact its business.

349/12 Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5th November were approved subject to a correction to the reference to PC Lord. The minute book was signed by the Chairman.

350/12 Reports

Planning meeting on 19th November

The Council noted the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting.

Finance meeting on 19th November

The Council noted the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting. Cllr Kitson said that the Finance Committee had agreed a one year investment of £25,000 in the bank of Cyprus UK, but before the investment was made the Committee would review the Council's cash flow to ensure that there would be adequate funds readily available to meet bills for repair of the collapsed wall in Belbroughton.

Clerk's report

- Cllr Sheila Blagg had alerted the Clerk to a potential planning application from Veolia for recycling of 'bottom ash' at their site. The County Council had asked for an environmental impact appraisal.
- The Council's Allotments Committee had met on 21st November. Their recommendations would be on the agenda for discussion the January Council meeting.
- The Lighting Working Group had also met and their recommendations would be for discussion in January – agenda time permitting.
- PC Lord's colleague, Tim Burling, had asked to attend the next available Council meeting to outline the new policing arrangements for Belbroughton.

351/12 Wall at Sylvesters Corner, Belbroughton

The surveyor's report on the collapsed wall had been circulated just prior to the meeting. His view was that other sections of the wall were vulnerable. He suggested that in the short term most of the existing wall should be removed and the battered back (reduced) whilst a decision on permanent repairs is considered. This would enable the footpath and road to be reopened. This work would be needed in any case to enable a permanent repair to be done. The District's Conservation officer had indicated that the Parish Council should do whatever was necessary to make the site safe but should retain any sandstone removed from the wall and should not pre-empt the restoration of the wall in due course. Planning permission would be needed for the long term repair work.

The Council agreed to appoint Mr Symonds to manage the first stage of the work required to make the wall safe and get Queens Hill re-opened. It was delegated to the Clerk in consultation with Cllrs Green, Kitson and Roberts to make decisions about this 'make safe' stage of the work. The Clerk was authorised to agree expenditure of up to £6,000 if necessary. The Finance Committee was authorised to make decisions about contractors for this work if required. If quotes were not available in time for the Finance meeting an additional Council meeting would be arranged for 17th December to discuss these.

352/12 Parish Council Budget for 2013/14

Cllr Kitson explained the recommendations of the Finance Committee concerning the Council's budget for the next financial year. The Council approved the budget proposed including provision of £1,000 for new one-off grants for parish bodies. The proposal was that the precept could be held at £55,000 again for another year. The potential costs associated with the repair of the collapsed wall were noted but it was agreed that funding for these costs should be considered when more information was available. The Council had sufficient reserves to cover the costs in the first instance.

In view of the continuing uncertainty about the Government's proposals for Council Tax support and how these would impact on parish precepts it was agreed to defer ratification of the budget and the precept until the January Council meeting.

353/12 Parish Council meeting room, Hartle Lane

The Chairman said that there were four main options for the meeting room- to sell the site, retain the room and seek a tenant, improve the room for the Council's use, or continue to leave the room empty for the time being. The options with the least support were improving the room for the Council and leaving it empty. The majority view was that the Council should seek a tenant. However the Clerk was asked to obtain advice from local agents about both the scope both for selling the site and letting it out. It was agreed that the Clerk should also explore getting outline planning permission for a dwelling and whether planning permission would be needed for a change of use. Cllr Hartill agreed to assist with the planning issues.

Cllr Dalziel agreed to continue making weekly inspections of the room for the time being.

354/12 Footpath from Belbroughton Recreation Ground to the school

The planned improvement work to the footpath had been formally approved by the County Council with the proviso that the Parish Council would take responsibility for the future maintenance of the improvements (the new tarmac surface and the reinforcement to the banks). The Parish Council accepted this responsibility. The Clerk said that the adjacent tenant and landowner and the school had been informed about the work. The footpath would be closed during week beginning 17th December.

355/12 Ward boundary review

Information about the review's proposals had been circulated. The Clerk was asked to circulate information about the number of electors in the current and proposed parish wards. The Council's response to the proposals would be considered at the January Council meeting but residents should be encouraged to comment direct to the Boundary Commission by the 7th January deadline.

356/12 Grit bins

The Finance Committee's recommendations for additional grit bins were discussed. Storage of additional salt to enable the bins to be refilled raised some difficult issues and had not been resolved. It was agreed to order new bins as proposed by the Committee minus the one for Sylvesters Corner for the time being. This was on condition that the County Council confirmed that they would refill all the Parish Council bins at least annually. Cllr Scurrall registered his dissent from this decision.

357/12 Petition re Yew Tree Lane, Fairfield

The Council had received a copy of a petition from residents of Yew Tree Lane to the County Council about the state of this road. Cllr Sheila Blagg had asked the County to include repairs in their 2013 work programme. The Clerk was asked to write to support this request.

358/13 Maintenance items

- A broken manhole cover outside the Queens had been reported via the hub but not yet repaired.
- A number of road name signs in Belbroughton needed to be repaired. Cllr Boswell agreed to follow up.
- Leaves were still a problem on the High Street and Holy Cross Lane. Clerk to find out if James Callaghan was able to clear.

359/12 Councillors' Items

Cllr Boswell had attended a useful meeting with the developers of the Nash Works site. They planned to submit further information to the District Council about flooding issues shortly.

Cllr Moore had met Cllr MacDonald to look at various Highways issues in Belbroughton. He would respond formally after making further enquiries.

In response to a resident's concerns about HGVs ignoring the weight limit restrictions in Belbroughton, Cllr Moore said that new 7.5 ton signs had been erected at Bell End and Hackman's Gate Lane to warn lorries before they turned towards the village. Enforcement had been raised several times with the police but this issue was not a priority for them.

Cllr MacDonad had attended a meeting in Hagley to discuss the possible impact of the proposed Cala Homes development on school places. The main message had been that there should be no problem about school places in the short or medium term.

360/12 Parish Council New Year dinner

It was agreed that the dinner would be held on 14th January at the Queens, Belbroughton. The lengthsman and footpath wardens should be invited at the Council's expense.

The meeting closed at 9.55 pm.

Signed.....Chairman