

Minutes of the meeting of Belbroughton Parish Council Finance Committee held on 16th February 2015 in the Barton Room, Fairfield Village Hall.

Present: Councillors J Bradley (Chair), I Dalziel, K Green, T Jones, A Mabbett, Dr R Morgan, D Roberts, and P Shotton.

In attendance: John Farrell (Clerk). 1 member of the public.

073/15 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs. S Pawley and C Scurrall.

074/15 Declarations of interest. No interests were declared.

075/15 Dispensations. None were requested.

076/15 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 19th January 2015 were approved, and the chairman signed the minute book.

077/15 Bank reconciliation:

The bank reconciliation for the Council's operational bank account was noted. Cllr. Bradley signed the bank statements and the 'Quickbooks' reconciliation prints. In accordance with the Council Financial Regulations – rotating this role - Cllr. Morgan would carry out the reconciliation processes next month.

078/15 Accounts for Payment

The clerk circulated the list of items for payment in February totalling £5,424.32 and detailed the transactions involved. The payments were authorised and Cllrs. Shotton and Mabbett signed the cheques.

078/15 Grass Cutting

The Committee noted that Keith Basketfield had decided not to quote for renewing his contract. The clerk was asked to write to him thanking him for his service and also to ensure that he had submitted all outstanding invoices. The Committee noted the four tenders received from the ten invitations for quotations for the two 2015 grass cutting contracts. The Committee recommended the tender from Greenaways of Woodcote Green Bromsgrove and asked the clerk to obtain suitable testimonials for the quality of their activities.

079/15 Parish Gardening

The Committee agreed that it was satisfied with the quality of the two present gardeners and that it would not seek to change the individuals presently contracted.

The Committee recommended that the contracted hours would be increased to 8 hours and 6 hours per month for Belbroughton and Fairfield gardeners respectively. The total hours would therefore rise to 72 for Belbroughton and 54 for Fairfield to be spread between March and November.

With no increase for a number of years the Committee recommended an increase of 5% in the hourly rate to £10.50 per hour is offered for both posts. The increase in hours and the hourly rate payable were compatible with the Council approved budget for 2015/16.

The Committee noted that both gardeners would require guidance on specific areas to look after and a degree of monitoring. Cllr. Dalziel would therefore be the point of contact for the Belbroughton gardener and Fairfield Cllrs. together would be the points of contact for the Fairfield gardener.

080/15 Belbroughton Cricket Club

The Committee noted from the correspondence received that the club had been successful with its partner funding from Cory Environmental Trust and the English Cricket Board. The Committee therefore agreed to the release of the Parish Council capital grant of £1,150 which was contingent upon the partner funding confirmations.

081/15 Parish Room Belbroughton

The Committee noted that the tenant was one month in arrears with the rent and also had not paid in funds in respect of the insurance premium nor rent deposit. Cllr. Bradley had visited the tenant and had been advised of her difficult personal circumstances and also that funds due to her were overdue. She however fully intended to cover the arrears shortly. The Committee asked the clerk to write formally to the tenant informing her of the arrears but also acknowledging the comments made when the councillor visited. The full Council would re-assess the position on 2nd March.

082/15 Sylvester's Corner Belbroughton

The Committee agreed the purchase and planting of the Hawthorn tree from Whiting Landscapes Ltd for £245 + VAT. This tree whose positioning had now been agreed by the B.D.C. Tree Officer is to replace the felled sorbus tree which was in a dangerous condition.

083/15 Society of Local Council Clerks - Annual Practitioners' Conference

The Committee approved Cllr. Morgan and the clerk attending a day each at the national conference to be held in Stratford on 5th and 6th March. The cost of £245 would be taken from the training budget.

084/15 Maintenance items.

Cllr. Mabbett advised of a damaged road sign on the Dordale Rd junction with Brook Rd, Fairfield - The clerk would inform B.D.C. requesting a replacement.

Cllrs. Mabbett and Jones would assess again the location of a grit bin at Snuff Hill Fairfield to see if an alternative siting would be more appropriate.

Cllr. Mabbett requested that the County Council Highways dept. look at resitting a 30 mph speed limit sign in Bournheath Road, Fairfield and remove vegetation obscuring another 30 mph sign in Yew Tree Lane Fairfield. The clerk would report into the hub.

Cllr. Mabbett also requested that the road name sign at Yew Tree Lane / Bournheath Rd was cleaned – the clerk would ask the Parish lengthsman.

Cllr. Morgan advised that the 50 mph sign at Madeley Rd / Heath End Rd had been damaged – the clerk would inform the County Council Highways. Dept. via the hub.

Cllr. Dalziel advised that he had requested the County Council Highways to consider installing a mirror at the junction of Bradford Lane and Dordale Rd Belbroughton.

085/15 Other Finance Business

Cllr. Bradley advised that he had spoken with local residents regarding the maintenance of Sylvester's Corner bank area. They would happily maintain the area after the council had funded and arranged the planting of appropriate shrubs on the site. They will advise him of their suggested planting scheme.

Cllr. Roberts reminded the Committee that the Council budget allowed for £100 for the planting of bulbs in Belbroughton which the gardener would attend to. Cllr. Bradley advised that the budget also had been set to cover a pro-rata sum for Fairfield.

Cllr. Mabbett advised that the specification and costs for the Fairfield First World War Commemoration Plaque had been received. The Committee agreed the design and costs and that the 'Crown Estate' colours of Silver and Black would be used.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Signed.....Chairman

18.