

# Defford and Besford Parish Council

## Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting

Held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015  
at Defford Village Hall

Present: Cllr Robert Bemand (Chairman), Ron Davis, Sonja Lee, Patricia Steel, Jane Thompson and Hazel Wakefield.

Also present: Linda Blake, 7 other members of the public

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors David Robinson, Ian Spiers and Clive Woods.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. Minutes of the following Parish Council meetings to be confirmed and signed**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014 be accepted and signed as a true record.

### **4. Parish Clerk's Report**

- The head teacher at Defford-Cum-Besford First School has agreed that the War Memorial Plaque would be displayed within the school. The school will contact the Parish Clerk when the work has been done and it is hoped that Parish Councillors will be able to go along and see the plaque in place within the school when it has been erected.
- The Parish Clerk has contacted the former clerk, Graeme Evans who has confirmed that he is currently in the process of locating all of the Railway Memorabilia owned by the Parish Councils. He has agreed to attend the March meeting of the Parish Council and to bring the items with him so that the issue of storage can be further considered.
- Work on streetlights within the Parish had been completed in the first two weeks of January. On Column 1, in Crown Lane, the contractor was not able to fit a light shield as hoped, but instead has blackened out the rear of the lantern bowl to prevent the light shining into the resident's upstairs window. It has been reported that this light is still not working properly and has been permanently lit and the contractor has agreed to come out and look at this again.
- A letter had been sent to County Councillor Hardman on 4 December regarding the footpath on Spring Bank and a response was awaited.
- The damaged steps at Hillside had been repaired following a site visit in December. Unfortunately these steps had fallen into disrepair once again over the Christmas period, but Rooftop Housing had been out again in mid-January and repaired them again.
- All 3 New Homes Bonus money applications had now been submitted. The Clerk has been informed that these applications will be considered by a Wychavon District Council advisory panel in late February and then a decision will be made.

## 5. Planning

### (a) New Applications

W/14/01441/PN: Crabbe Tree Farm, Besford Road, Wadborough, Besford.

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and stables and erection of two four bed bungalows.

The Parish Council had no objection to this application.

### (b) Wychavon District Council decisions

W/13/02118/OU: Defford Motors, Upton Road, Defford Pending Consideration

W/14/01881/OU: Land surrounding and including 1 and 2 Avon Bank, Upton Road, Defford Pending Consideration

W/14/02020/OU: Land Adjacent, Hillside, Upper Street, Defford Pending Consideration

It was **NOTED** as part of these discussions that the Parish Council had objected to applications relating to 1 and 2 Avon Bank and Land Adjacent to Hillside.

## 6. Finance:

### a) To approve any payments due

The following invoice for £40.50 was approved for payment: Defford Village Hall, Hire of Hall 4<sup>th</sup> November and 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

It was **NOTED** that the Parish Clerk had queried invoices received earlier in the year from N Power for street lighting. This issue had now been resolved and the Parish Council had received a number of credit notes and were now in credit for the year to date.

### b) To set the precept for 2015/16

Information was presented as discussed by the Finance and General Purpose Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that the budget requirement for Defford and Besford in 2015/16 should be set at £9,010.

This was an increase in £150 from 2014/15 but due to the increase in the tax-base within the Parish, an overall Band D property council tax charge would fall 4 pence to £20.42 per annum.

It was **AGREED** that a reserve for election costs would be created to smooth the costs of elections and avoid a higher impact once every four years when ordinary elections are held.

## 7. Procedures

### a) Complaints Procedure

It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council would adopt the updated complaints procedure as presented by the Parish Clerk and based on the CALC model.

### b) Freedom of Information / Publications Scheme

It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council would adopt the presented publications scheme as part of good practice under the Freedom of Information Scheme. The Publications Scheme has been adapted for Defford and Besford Parish from a model scheme produced by the Information Commissioner

## **8. Timing of Council Meetings**

It was **AGREED** to hold both the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Council Meeting on Tuesday 12 May. The exact timing of each meeting to be confirmed.

## **9. Correspondence for Information**

The clerk outlined correspondence as circulated;

- 1) A letter from the Planning Enforcement Officer at Wychavon District Council confirming that the workshop at The Bakehouse, Harpley Road was in full compliance with the Planning Approval.
- 2) A letter from the head teacher at Defford-Cum-Besford First School. This had already been discussed under Agenda Item 4.
- 3) A letter from the Oil Buying Club, a business venture aiming to help people in rural areas who heat their homes with oil.
- 4) An email report from Steven Tinkler, Police Community Support Officer regarding crime.
- 5) A letter from Halls Solicitors regarding Defford Village Hall.
- 6) Information about the Community Grants Scheme which is run by Wychavon District Council.
- 7) Information from Wychavon District Council about a seminar for prospective Parish Councillor candidates to be held on 19th February at 6:15pm.

The Parish Council **NOTED** all the correspondence received.

- The Parish Council asked that with regard to item 1, that a copy of the letter should be posted on the Parish Council Noticeboard and that this information should be included in the Parish magazine to make it clear to parishioners that this Planning Application had been declared as fully compliant.
- The Oil Buying Club would be invited to make a presentation to the Parish Council meeting in March. It was also suggested that the Parish Clerk in Birlingham should be contacted to ask whether the Birlingham Oil Club was still in existence.
- Councillor Steele agreed to forward the Community Grants Scheme information onto the Village Hall Management Committee.
- The prospective candidate's seminar would be advertised on the Parish notice board.

## **10. Councillors reports**

a) County Councillor A Hardman  
Cllr Hardman was not present.

b) District Councillor R Davis

Councillor Davis reported to the meeting that Wychavon District Council were currently in the process of finalising their budgets.

- A suggested increase of 1.98% would be put before Full Council in February 2015.
- Overall their finances were in good order.
- The car parking charges would not be increased.
- A further £400,000 of savings would need to be found by March 2016, but based on the work achieved so far, this should be achievable.
- The Council holds £38 million on deposit at present.

Cllr Davis also reported that;

- The new Chief Executive sharing scheme was proving to be successful so far and it was hoped that further savings may be identified by sharing some functions between the two authorities.
- The New Waitrose in Evesham looked likely to be delayed until August 2017.
- The scholarship scheme being run by Wychavon continued to be successful with 100 scholarships being awarded per year.
- The Council would be aiming to increase the amount of brown recycling within the District

c) Parish Councillors

- i. Cllr Steel raised some concerns about the status of Broadband within the Parish and in particular that Besford was no longer in any programme to receive Superfast Broadband. County Councillor Hardman would be asked to explore if anything could be done on this matter.  
Cllr Steel also reported that LPG fuel negotiation had been carried out by John Sexton and that this had now dropped from 44p to 40p on a 12 month deal with Countrywide.
- ii. Cllr Bemand reported that the bus shelter on the A4104 had sustained damage to the tiles on the front and that he was concerned that unless repairs were carried out the state of this bus shelter would further deteriorate. It was noted that the Parish Clerk would contact Mark Williams to ask if he would repair this shelter and that should costs of repair exceed £200, a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

**11. To confirm date of the next meeting**

The date of the next Parish Meeting will be 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at Defford Village Hall.

The meeting was closed at 9:05pm.

**Public Questions / Comments**

- i. A parishioner from the Old Bakehouse requested that now the new building had been declared as fully compliant, that the Parish Council make this known within the village. This was discussed under Agenda Item 9
- ii. An update into the issue of Railway Memorabilia was requested and it was noted that this would be covered in the Parish Clerk's report.
- iii. The landlady of the Defford Arms asked if there had been any decision made regarding the money that will be available as a community grant from the developer of the Solar Farm. The Chairman informed the meeting that although he had received a letter indicating that a large amount may be given following the approval of this development, there was no formal agreement as to an exact amount and that no decision had been made as to how it may be spent.  
The Parish Council would be open to suggestions from anyone within the village as how to best spend any sum of money received. There would be the potential for a public meeting to be held to discuss this matter when more definite information is available.