

# Barnt Green Parish Council

## Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 at 7.00pm

**Members present:** Cllrs R Cholmondeley (Chairman), C Hotham (vice-Chairman), R Briggs, E Gumbley, J Jellie (2 vacant seats)

**In attendance:** Gill Lungley (Executive Officer)

### 16/38 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr S Whitehand and accepted.

### 16/39 Declarations of Interest

- a) The requirement to keep the Register of Interests updated was noted.
- b) and c) The need to declare Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Disclosable Interests was noted.

Cllr R Cholmondeley declared an Other Disclosable Interest relating to minute no. 16/47(a) log no. 020, as the neighbour to the property under discussion, and would leave the meeting at that point. The meeting would be chaired in his absence by the vice-Chairman.

It was formally noted at minute no. 16/47a that any views expressed by Cllr C Hotham, who is also a member of Bromsgrove District Council, were preliminary views taking into account the information presently made available to the Parish Council. Cllr Hotham would reserve his final views on the applications until in full possession of any further relevant arguments for and against.

- d) That dispensation requests are to be in writing was noted.

### 16/40 Requests for dispensation

No requests for a dispensation had been submitted

### 16/41 Adjournment of meeting to hear from:

- a) **Members of the Public:** Not required.
- b) **County Councillor: Peter McDonald** had sent apologies for missing this meeting and a report as follows:
  - 1. The County Council is to increase the Council Tax by 4% and cut expenditure/services by between £25 and £30m (8% increase in three years). This is at a time the County Council has £112m in unringfenced reserves.
  - 2. It is still spending in excess of £500,000 a year on consultants and is to continue spending at least that amount.
  - 3. The County is to increase its expenditure on Private Fostering to £10m this coming year, although it has a very well respected in-house provision at almost half the cost.
  - 4. Positive Activities/Youth Provision is to be cut over the next two years by 50%, this will mean the end of the few remaining youth centres.
  - 5. The County's ambition to be self-reliant by 2018 is on course - this means no grants from government and all monies raised by the council tax/business rates - at least 60% of services will be lost and 95% of all services being commissioned out.

Members commented they would like more information on the comment relating to spending on consultants (item 2 above).

### c) **District Councillor: Charles Hotham**

- 1. The district council's proportion of council tax is to rise by 2.5%; this is above the referendum trigger but special dispensation has been granted due to Bromsgrove's 'dire' government settlement. Reserves of £800,000+ will be used to help provide a balanced budget.
- 2. The request for grant funding for toilets in Barnt Green has been deferred.
- 3. Provision of grant funding via New Homes Bonus is in doubt and will be referred to the BDC's meeting in April.

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## 16/42 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 03/02/2016 and 15/02/2016 were agreed a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 16/43 Chairman's Report

Cllr Cholmondeley reported that as most of this month's items are covered in the agenda, only one item to note as follows:

Commemorative medal re HM Queen Elizabeth II 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday: two samples of this medal had been received and would be passed on to the two volunteer litter pickers.

## 16/44 Decisions taken by the Executive Officer since last meeting and updates

44a) Footpath 507 adj Scout drive	Scout drive has been resurfaced via Lottery funding. EO to contact NWWM and WCC to attend to respective tasks to reduce the flooding of the footpath at this point.
44b) Car parking issues	Photographic evidence, when received is recorded but is no longer being forwarded to the police. Residents are advised of this and of the date of the PACT meetings to attend and raise the issue there. Cllr Hotham, via BDC, will ask for enforcement powers to be adopted to deal with on-pavement parking.
44c) Network Rail, Hewell Lane bridge	The sidewalls of the bridge are unfinished; Chairman has spoken to Network Rail sponsor who advised this is awaiting installation of barriers.
44d) General Correspondence in addition to weekly newsletters etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Woodlands Alive event 28/02/2016</li> <li>- mental health issues</li> <li>- volunteer work party at Hartlebury Leapgate</li> <li>- UpFront Neighbourhood Planning update</li> <li>- Wellbeing Partnership (BDC health partners)</li> </ul>
44e) RoSPA inspection	The EO has asked to meet with the inspector when the play equipment on both sites has the annual inspection in March; Cllr EG to also attend.
44f) Millennium Park dog waste bin removal	Response received from BDC's Environmental Policy and Awareness Officer stating waste in the public litter bins is not sent for recycling. Members are keen to attend the recycling plant (envirosort)
44g) Hewell Road Bollards	Decision taken 03/02/2016 to re-install; WCC advised.
44h) Flagpole	Members were advised of possible flagpole costs and dismissed the suggestion of siting it in Millennium Park. Alternative sites would be considered including scrub land in Hewell Road.
44i) Meeting with village retailers	Plans are underway to find out if village retailers/businesses are keen to meet regarding NDP and future events. Letters to be issued w/c Mon 07/03/2016
44j) Smart Water	It has been stated that if at least 80% of parish households register as SmartWater users, then the cost of each kit will be £7.90. There are 788 households in BG parish. This topic will be discussed at the PACT meeting scheduled for 23 <sup>rd</sup> March and Sgt Burling would be asked to provide as much information as possible.
45k) The Bulletin	The Spring 2016 issue had been printed and is being distributed.

## 16/45 Co-option to the two vacant seats

No application had been received for co-option; members would continue to seek suitable candidates, and this has been included in the letter to village businesses.

## 16/46 Finance

- i) Current financial position. The bank reconciliation to 29/02/2016 was reported along with the following receipts and payments for February:

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RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR FEBRUARY 2016					
	Description	Receipts	Payments		
			Gross	VAT	Net
v175	Hire of football field, 2nd term 2015	170.00			
v176	Removal of Christmas Tree		42.00	7.00	35.00
v177	General maintenance and playing field		273.43	45.57	227.86
v178	Millennium Park hedge cutting		60.00	0.00	60.00
V179	Data Protection registration		35.00	0.00	35.00
V180	Street lighting supply		207.22	33.17	174.05
V181	Lengthsman scheme		500.00	0.00	500.00
V182	Office telephone		17.84	2.97	14.87
V183	Printer inks		16.56	2.76	13.80
V184	Street lighting maintenance		264.00	44.00	220.00
V185	Street lighting repairs		173.46	28.91	144.55
V186	Administration salary		1089.05	0.00	1089.05
V187	Website hosting		58.00	0.00	58.00

- ii) Reimbursement for Christmas lighting energy costs  
**It was agreed** to pay, upon request, £15 per year for the last three years to the two businesses who allowed use of their premises' energy for the Christmas lighting.
- iii) Funding support to Bromsgrove District Citizens Advice Bureau.  
**It was agreed** to not support the CAB request for funding.
- iv) Additional administration cost of £96pa relating to computer software which will be shared with others, was noted.
- v) Internal Auditor for financial year ending 31/03/2016  
**It was agreed** to appoint Diane Malley as Independent Internal Auditor for the 2015/16 financial year at a cost of £120. The internal audit will take place for 1 week from 09/05/2016.
- vi) New Regulations arising from Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 include the freedom to opt out of external audit by the appointed body as long as this is replaced by an appropriate external auditor following the appointment of an audit panel and procurement exercise.  
**It was agreed** to remain opted-in so that the external auditor will be appointed by the sector-led body.
- vii) Appointment of solicitor to act on the negotiations for taking on the commuters' car park, Fiery Hill Road.  
**It was agreed** to appoint Thomas Guise solicitors to this role.  
  
Members also considered whether to establish a trust fund for the money that is being provided by CALA Homes to support future maintenance costs.  
**It was agreed** to establish a trust to ensure the car park fund is used solely for car park purposes and kept separate from the parish council's general and reserve funds.
- viii) Grounds Maintenance Contract: the contractor for Parker's Piece and various sites around the parish is maintaining costs for 2016.  
**It was agreed** to retain the current contractor for 2016 and for the Executive Officer to clarify the schedule of works.
- ix) The New Councillors' Guide produced by NALC has been updated and is available from WorcsCALC for £2.70 each.  
**It was agreed** to purchase 15 copies.
- x) It was noted that Bromsgrove DC had awarded a grant of £350 to the parish council via the ward member Coun C Hotham, to support the installation of a light in the bus shelter.

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## 16/47 Neighbourhood, Planning and Environment

- a) To consider the parish council's response to planning consultations received since last meeting, including:

Log020 / 16/0072	18 Bittell Road, B45 8LT	Single storey rear extension, front entrance porch and alterations to flat roof to form a pitched roof on front elevation
Having declared an Other Disclosable Interest, Cllr R Cholmondeley left the meeting whilst this item was discussed; the meeting was chaired by Cllr C Hotham. The Parish Council's comment was 'No objection'. Cllr Cholmondeley re-joined the meeting and resumed the Chairman's role.		
Log021 / 16/0036	Meadowcroft, 33 Fiery Hill Road, B45 8LE	Drop kerb and remove Fir Tree Hedge and create a gravel driveway and garage
The application form does not include any reference to, or details about, the proposed garage. As there is no information relating to size, appearance, or materials to be used the parish council cannot comment from any informed viewpoint on the proposal and can only therefore recommend refusal. With regard to the application for the dropped kerb and pavement crossing, due to the close proximity of the railway station to the site the road way is used for commuter car parking. The installation of a dropped kerb here will reduce the number of car parking spaces available thereby moving car parking to a different site further away from the station. The parish council would recommend refusal for that reason. With regard to the removal of the hedge, this site is in the Barnt Green conservation area and the removal of the hedge would be detrimental to the area's character.		

- b) **Parker's Piece footway** – members were provided with information about each contractor's work and compared the three different tenders, on the basis of which:  
**It was agreed** to award the contract to install a footway, 3ft wide for a total of 263 metres plus 8 metres at the stream, across Parker's Piece between the pedestrian gate entrance (south-west corner) and the stream (north corner) following the west/north-western boundary, using 20mm Cotswold chippings to Hosking Ground Maintenance for a total cost of £4,568 +VAT.
- c) **Fencing and hedge, Parker's Piece adjacent Margesson Drive**  
Following recent fencing renewal by resident in Margesson Drive, it was suggested that the sparse hedging alongside that fencing be renewed/replenished to screen the change in ground level and new concrete fencing support. Cllrs R Briggs and E Gumbley would visit the site to review requirements.
- d) **Parker's Piece height barrier**  
Due to purchase of new tractor to cut the grass at Parker's Piece, the contractor will not be able to access the playing field due to the height of the access barrier.  
**Members agreed** to ask the contractor to make the necessary adjustments to the barrier to enable continued access to ensure no loss of security level.
- e) **Neighbourhood Development Plan, update**  
Cllr R Cholmondeley reported on recent meetings held with Cllr S Whitehand and site specific groups within the parish with a number yet to be held.

## 16/48 Consultations

- a) **Network Rail (NR)** proposed diversion of footpath crossing (fp. 500) between Barnt Green & Cofton Hackett.  
Following closure on safety grounds of the footpath that crosses the railway line, NR were proposing options including a footbridge which would retain the current route, and a variety of different footpaths along new routes.  
**It was agreed** to support the installation of a footbridge; new footpaths would be acceptable but not one that crosses the field to the west of the railway line.

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- b) **Worcs County Council** proposal to prohibit waiting, Fiery Hill Rd/Brookwood Drive  
There was no objection to the proposal to prohibit waiting at the entrance to Brookwood Drive off Fiery Hill Road.

**Point of Order:** the time being 21:10hrs members agreed to continue with the meeting to the end of business.

## 16/49 Events

- a) To note arrangements for the Sport Relief Mile on 20/03/2016  
Risk Assessments would be carried out and a meeting is to be held with the Barnt Green Chuggers on 10/03/2016.  
**It was agreed** to pay the cost of the First Aid cover for the event via Elite First Aid, £380.
- b) Other forthcoming events were noted:
- i) **PACT meeting** 7pm Wednesday 23/03/2016, Friends Meeting House  
To include discussion on SmartWater / SmartWater Parish status.
  - ii) **Shindig Theatre** 'The Origin of Species' 16/04/2016
  - iii) **Community Walk** 23/04/2016, bus to Stoke Prior, walk back to Barnt Green
  - iv) **Annual Parish Meeting** 7.30pm Wednesday 27/04/2016, Friends Meeting House. Possible speakers could include Network Rail sponsor, Parish Footpath Warden and speaker on the Open Gardens event.
  - v) **Barnt Green Open Gardens** weekend 02/07/2016 and 03/07/2016

## 16/50 Governance

- a) **Financial controls procedure**  
**It was agreed** to adopt the revised procedure for Financial Controls
- b) **Date of Annual Parish Council meeting 2016.**  
**It was agreed** to hold the Annual Parish Council meeting on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016 to start at 6.30pm
- c) **Review of website**  
Cllr J Jellie would undertake a review of the website.

## 16/51 Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

- (i) report on meetings attended:
  - The Executive Officer reported on the County/Parish Conference held 24/02/2016.
  - Cllr C Hotham, in his capacity as district councillor, had met on site with planning officers to discuss the application for 28 Bittell Road.
- (ii) agree the attendance of councillors at forthcoming meetings:  
Cllrs R Cholmondeley and S Whitehand were to attend the WorcsCALC Bromsgrove Area Committee meeting on 09/03/2016
- (iii) report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda: not required.
- (iv) raise items for future agendas:  
Request to make use of Parker's Piece for U-12's league football as 'home pitch'.

## 16/52 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

A meeting to comment on the recently received planning consultations would be arranged.

The next schedule parish council meeting will be held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 80 Hewell Road.

This meeting ended at 9.42pm.

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Chairman 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016