

Barnt Green Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green on Wednesday 5th April 2017 at 7.00pm

Members present: Cllrs R Cholmondeley (Chairman), C Hotham (vice-Chairman), R Briggs, E Gumbley, J Jagger, J Jellie, P Perry, S Whitehand

In attendance: One member of the press (The Village)
Two members of the public
Gill Lungley, Executive Officer

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

17/052 Apologies

Not required; all members present.

17/053 Declarations of Interest

- Cllr C Hotham has a standing declaration relating to his role as a member of the District Council's planning committee such that any comment he may make during discussion on planning applications will be preliminary views taking into account the information presently available to the Parish Council. His final views on the applications are reserved until in full possession of all the relevant arguments for and against.

17/054 Consideration of dispensation requests

No dispensation requests had been submitted in advance of this meeting.

17/055 Adjournment of meeting to hear from:

a) Members of the Public:

One of the members of the public present took the opportunity to speak about his personal observations of neglect of the local environment and, in his opinion, the shoddy workmanship and lack of care given to the recent highways works in Fiery Hill Road. He called upon the parish council to be more proactive in looking after the local roads.

In response, Cllr Hotham advised that the County Council has a limited budget for highways maintenance and prioritises any spending and whilst the parish council lobbies for better attention, any lobbying must discriminate otherwise constant lobbying would lose meaning.

b) Worcs County Councillor: Peter McDonald had sent apologies for non-attendance but had e-mailed the following three comments:

- The mini-island at the junction with Bittell Lane is to be reinstated to how it was originally.
- St Andrews School is to have its budget cut with the loss of two teachers by 2019. This means larger classes and less subjects.
- Oakdene, yellow lines should be completed in June.

c) Bromsgrove District Councillor: Charles Hotham, Barnt Green & Hopwood ward, commented that although there had been no meeting of the district council since the previous parish council meeting:

- The disused district council buildings have cost more than £150,000 since being vacated, these extra costs being equal to the amount of increase in the 2017/18 council tax;
- The proposal to develop the cleared East works (Longbridge Motors) site, Cofton Hackett and build 350 houses was turned down by the BDC Planning Committee, for reasons including lack of any s106 consideration in favour of Bromsgrove district.

17/056 Minutes of the previous council meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 1st March 2017 were agreed a true record and signed by the Chairman.

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17/057 Chairman's Report: Cllr R Cholmondeley

Cllr Cholmondeley commented that he had been made aware of a tree-felling business offering to do work locally but that the work being carried out was of poor quality.

17/058 Updates and Decisions taken by the Executive Officer (EO) since last meeting

Public toilets	Current position is that district councillor has reported to PC that funds have been allocated for public toilets by BDC through petition by district councillor; PC to be clear on terms having not yet asked for anything and have received no direct funding allocation. PC has a working party to progress scheme; not yet requested funds or consulted on need, siting, and ongoing costs.	
Footpath alongside scout hut	NWWM have obtained one quotation; WCC is to obtain a second. It was agreed to ask NWWM/WCC if the parish council's contractor could quote for the work.	
Playing field	Picnic tables and notice board now installed.	
Hewell Rd shops	EO is writing to owner/agent re improvements requested for flat roof over shop entrances 28 – 32a Hewell Road	
Safety checks	Awaiting results of annual RoSPA check to play equipment.	
Community Speed Watch scheme	Now that Bittell Road is operating as normal again following the 3-month road closure CSW scheme have advised data gathering will be undertaken in April. The EO is to ask about the siting of the monitoring equipment.	
Visit to Envirosort	This visit for all members has been arranged for 06/04/2017	
CALA/Fiery Hill Rd development, car park	A meeting has been requested with Cala reps to make contact and progress the need for protection strategies at this site.	
Railway station, rail-users group	<p>Members are aware there are 2 possible opportunities for local involvement in rail-related management: 1) Rail Users Group which is for local commuters using the wider rail network and 2) Station Adoption Group which seeks to enhance the station's environment via working with the local community (this latter item is discussed at minute no. 17/62d). It was agreed to defer promotion of a rail users group until the new car park has been opened.</p> <p>With regard to the station, it has been noted there is improved directional signage to the ticket machine.</p> <p>No details have been released regarding the recent death of a traveller crossing the track from platform 4 to catch a train at platform 2.</p>	
Blackwell Road flasher	A new VAS (vehicle activated sign) has been installed in Blackwell Road to alert drivers if they are travelling at more than 30mph; the original site was obscured by tree branches and it is to be re-sited further south.	
Quarterly inspection of accounts/bookkeeping	Cllr R Briggs carried out the periodic inspection of the book-keeping for the 3 rd quarter, Oct – Dec 2017, and found all to be in order.	
Visits / calls / emails – some of the contacts into the parish council office during March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email advising intention to set up a parish council in Rubery • Alvechurch PC policy on Social Media use • Information about the Birmingham VELO event 24/09/2017 • Invitation to Shindig promoter meeting • Train as a Dementia Friends Champion, 11/05/2017 • Easter Arts trail in Barnt Green, organised by St Andrews re Easter story • Concerns about traffic speed measuring cables at Sandhills Green • Concern about neighbour's extension via permitted development rights • Various related to date of Bittell Road / Kendal End Road re-opening • Various related to request for Motor Festival application forms • Visitor urging action to improve the appearance of the parish 	
General correspondence received and circulated to members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community First e-bulletin • Neighbourhood Planning news • MP March newsletter • Lickey Hills Society newsletter • SNT (policing) updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WorcsCALC update newsletters • BDC Weekly planning lists • Police & Crime Commissioner • WCC Highways updates • Community Health & Well-being updates

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Matters carried forward	SmartWater campaign Barnt Green station lifts Playing Field trees (tree officer check) Local Council Award Scheme (foundation) On-street car parking.	Risk management matrix Condition of drains Footpath to Cofton Social media training Rail Squeal
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17/059 Finance

- i. **A) Receipts and payments** for March are as listed on page 115. The bank reconciliation to 31/03/2017 and a summary of the council's position at the financial year-end were circulated at the meeting and recorded here on page 116.
B) Officer decisions made since last meeting, include a) to d) annual renewals of:-
 - a) Office telephone and broadband line rental at a cost of £154.90;
 - b) Parish Online (mapping facility), £28;
 - c) Grounds maintenance arrangements for both Millennium Park and the playing field; tendering process to be undertaken for new contracts in 2018/19;
 - d) Office software, £66.66.
 - e) An expression of interest has been registered with Where Next for 30 x hanging baskets and replanting of Hewell Road planters; c£900.

- ii. **Update of Asset Register**
It was agreed to update the Asset Register to include changes following recent capital purchases and disposals.

- iii. **Grant Funding Application, St Michael's Churchyard**
 The application for funding had been brought back for consideration by members following the council's refusal in September 2016 to award funding.
It was agreed to defer this matter whilst questions are put to the church relating to what funds are currently held in its churchyard account and whether the maintenance grant would be expected annually.

- iv. **Accounts software**
 The Responsible Finance Officer/ Executive Officer (EO) had requested the purchase of accounting software available to parish councils. **It was agreed** to delegate the decision on this matter to the EO in collaboration with the Chairman following appropriate investigation into what is available and its suitability.

- v. **Lickey Hills Society book**
 The Lickey Hills Society has recently published a book on the country park, available for sale at £5. **It was agreed** to keep a stock of the book in the parish council office for sale.

17/060 Committee and Working Party reports

- a) **Fun Run:** the promotional material including posters and banners was agreed and applications to take part could be made at any of three venues (Post Office, Sports Club and school).

- b) **Motor Festival:** more than 42 applications had been received along with offers of support and refreshment.
It was agreed to proceed with the event on 2nd July.

- c) **Village Improvements, Meeting with Centres Manager:** the next meeting of the 'Town Team' is to be on 12/04/2017 and a reminder will be sent to all village businesses.

- d) **Local public transport, BARN initiative:** members were keen to investigate whether there would be support for a regular circular route to service the village and outlying areas.
It was agreed to meet with members of the parish councils for Lickey and Blackwell, and Alvechurch.

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- e) **Consultation on proposed playing field improvements / new equipment:** analysis of the consultations that had taken place between 25/03/2017 – 01/04/2017 showed proof of support for outdoor gym equipment; quotations for this would be sought. Members also agreed to consider the form and distance of the path that is to complete the provision of a walking route around the playing field.
- f) **Risk Management and Finance working party:** Cllrs RC, CH and EG are to meet after Easter.
- g) **Bromsgrove Area CALC meeting 08/03/2017:** Hayley Gwilliam, health and fitness officer for Redditch and Bromsgrove councils, presented a talk on encouraging the elderly to exercise and the opportunities for exercise and wellbeing within the district.
- h) **Staffing working party:** this refers to minute no. 17/66, below.

17/061 Events

a) Schedule for 2017:

Event	Date
Fun Run (co-organised with Chuggers)	7/5/17
Motor Festival	2/7/17
Busking Festival [details yet to be confirmed]	August?
Community Walk	23/09/17
Christmas Lights & switch-on	2/12/17
Post-Christmas Walk	27/12/17

- b) **To consider holding future Shindig events:**
It was agreed to not, as a parish council, be responsible for hosting any future Shindig (Live and Local) events due to availability of and easy access to other venues.

17/062 Environment and Community well-being

- a) **Road closure junction Fiery Hill Road / Kendal End Road / Bittell Road.** The road reopened on 23/03/2017. WCC would be contacted to agree the ongoing maintenance of the verges in Fiery Hill Road and a meeting is to be arranged with representatives of CALA regarding the new car park, ongoing maintenance and security.
- b) **Bin emptying service.** Bromsgrove DC had provided a new price for the regular emptying of bins at the playing field. It was agreed to accept the new price for now and review it for next year.
- c) **Lengthsman update.** The EO's report included noting that the service had worked hard to restore the eroded verge in Hewell Lane caused by diverted traffic driving over it.
- d) **London Midland Adopt-A-Station scheme.** The suggestion to set up a group of volunteers who would care for the station would be put to the Annual Parish Meeting on 26th April.
- e) **Request to use Millennium Park 20/05/2017.** This request has been withdrawn.
- f) **Purchase of 'statement' planters.** It was agreed to purchase two new tiered planters to be sited on the corners of Hewell Road with Bittell Road and Hewell Road with Sandhills Lane, on condition they are kept watered and approval was granted to purchase a bowser.
- g) **Parking signs, Station Approach.** The parking signs at the junction of Hewell Road with Station Approach are misleading in that one states 'Pay and Display Car Park' whilst the other states 'Maximum Stay 2 hours'. It was agreed to contact WCC and London-Midland to resolve this confusion.
- h) **Worcestershire Carers.** It was agreed to arrange to meet with a representative of Worcestershire Association of Carers to explore the parish council's role in reaching carers who may not be getting the right support to help them in their role.
- i) **Tree charter, charter branch.** It was agreed to register as a charter branch via the NALC initiative to support the environment.

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17/063 Communications

- a) **Website.** As information relating to three quotes was circulated at the meeting, members agreed to defer deciding details of the re-vamp to the next meeting.
- b) **Review of Communications Strategy.** It was agreed to take a page in The Village twice a year (May and November) and to continue to publish the Bulletin twice a year (March and September).
- c) **Items for inclusion in the next newsletter/publication.** Members proposed various items of interest.

17/064 Planning

- a) **Planning Committee meeting 22/03/2017:** was inquorate and did not proceed.
- b) **Current applications** notified for consultation, comments as follows.

Log no. 64	17/0184	4 Fiery Hill Road B45 8LF	Single storey extension and minor alterations...
PC comment: no comment.			
Log no. 65	17/0224	37 Orchard Croft B45 8NJ	Demolition of semi-detached dwelling and erection of 1 no. new dwelling
PC comment: no objection.			

- c) **Neighbourhood Plan update:** a meeting has been arranged for 25/04/2017 at 3pm for all members to attend.
- d) **Action on long-term empty properties.** It had been noted that the planning authority may have powers to take action to reduce the number of derelict properties in the district that could be seen as a blight on the neighbourhood. Cllr Hotham would contact the planners.

17/065 Governance

Dignity at Work Policy and Member/Officer Protocol. It was agreed to adopt the Dignity at Work Policy and Member/Officer Protocol.

17/066 Staffing issues

It was resolved to exclude members of the public from the meeting to allow for discussion of confidential matters relating to staffing.

It was agreed to accept the re-evaluation of the Executive Officer's job, placing it on LC2, spinal column points 30 – 34. It was noted changes to the Grievance and Disciplinary Policy yet to be approved in the light of procedures to be undertaken.

17/067 Future Meetings and Items for future agendas

Councillors were reminded of meetings to be attended including:

- Annual Parish Meeting is to be held on 26/04/2017
- Annual Parish Council Meeting is to be held on 03/05/2017

17/068 Date and Venue of Next Parish Council Meeting

Annual Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 3rd May 2017 at 80 Hewell Road

This meeting ended at 9.25pm.

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Chairman

3rd May 2017

Barnt Green Parish Council

Minute ref. 17/059 (i)

Bank reconciliation for 2016/17 financial year to 31/03/2017.

Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2017					
Cash in hand at 1 April 2016	Unity Bank current account	3,483.66			
	Unity Bank deposit account	13,937.61			
	Cambridge	54,155.20			
	Alto	300.00			
				£71,876.47	
Add receipts between 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017		67,802.50			
Less payments between 1 April 16 - 31 March 2017		-74,756.18			
Cashbook balance at 31 March 2017			£64,922.79	A	
Cash in hand per bank statements at 31 March 2017	Unity Bank current account	1,146.05			
	Unity Bank deposit account	9,581.24			
	Cambridge B/S	54,516.60			
	Petty cash a/c via pockit.com debit card	200.00			
	Less un-cleared items, as list below	521.10			
Bank balances at 31 March 2017			£64,922.79	B	
A - B difference			£0.00		

Receipts and Payments record during March 2017

Payments for March	Description	Receipts	Payments Gross	Payments VAT	Payments Net
BACS v212	Lengthsman's quarterly invoice for Oct - Dec 2016		500.00	-	500.00
s/o v213	grounds maintenance, playing field		273.43	45.57	227.86
BACS v214	removal Xmas tree; install dog bag dispenser		54.00	9.00	45.00
BACS v215	Online mapping service		33.60	5.60	28.00
d/d v216a	dusk to dawn energy, footpath lighting		195.91	32.65	163.26
d/d v216b	continuous energy, footpath lighting		11.40	0.54	10.86
BACS v217	Clerk's CPD, attendance at conference		204.00	34.00	170.00
BACS v218	Printing - Spring newsletter		245.00	-	245.00
BACS v219	Printing - Motor Festival leaflet		66.00	-	66.00
BACS v220	footpath lighting maintenance and repair		310.44	-	310.44
v221	Annual business rates for office premises		-	-	-
BACS v222	renew Plusnet office phone, broadband line rental		185.88	30.98	154.90
d/d v223	Staff pension scheme, Feb 2017		150.73	-	150.73
s/o v224	website maintenance & hosting, March 2017		58.00	-	58.00
d/d v225	mobile phone contract Feb/March		5.00	0.83	4.17
s/o v226	office rent, quarterly payment to 24/06/17		1,237.50	-	1,237.50
BACS v227	staff salary, March 2017		1,027.32	-	1,027.32
BACS v228	quarterly PAYE and NI, final quarter		521.10	-	521.10
BACS v229	sponsorship of Christmas lights, 2016	2,418.69	-	-	-
s/o v230	monthly retainer, footpath lighting maintenance		264.00	44.00	220.00
BACS v231	picnic tables and notice board for playing field		2,330.40	388.40	1,942.00
d/d v232	office landline and broadband, Mar/Apr		9.50	1.58	7.92
BACS v233a	renewal of m/s office 365		79.99	13.33	66.66
BACS v233b	batteries for keyboard		4.50	0.75	3.75
contra v234	petty cash, contra entry		-	-	-
BACS v235	litter bin emptying service for 2016/17		625.37	104.23	521.14
BACS v236	deposit account interest	2.08	-	-	-
BACS v237	Annual wayleave - Millennium Park	57.50	-	-	-
BACS v238	service charge, 1/4 to 31/03/2017		18.00	-	18.00
	subtotal for March 2017, month only	2,478.27	8,211.07	711.46	7,499.61
	Total for year to 31/03/2017	67,802.50	74,756.18	7,077.75	67,678.43

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RECEIPTS for year to 31/03/2017	Proposed budget 2016-17	Budget summary	Actual as at 31/03/2017	Variance	% variance
Precept	57,650	57,650.00	57,650.00	-	0
Council Tax Support Grant	634	634.00	634.00	-	0.0
Interest	450	450.00	389.74	- 60.26	-15.5
VAT Refund	2,000	2,000.00	1,500.00	- 500.00	-33.3
Lengthsman reimbursement	3,500	3,500.00	2,953.83	- 546.17	-18.5
Miscellaneous	1,000	1,000.00	4,674.93	3,674.93	78.6
Total receipts	65,234.00	65,234.00	67,802.50	2,568.50	3.8
PAYMENTS for year to 31/03/2017					
Staff Costs	16,000		16,070.24	70.24	0.4
Chairman's expenses	425		150.00	- 275.00	-183.3
Office Running costs	6,000		7,024.51	1,024.51	14.6
Training and Publications	250		657.85	407.85	62.0
Meeting Rooms and Refreshments	60		28.00	- 32.00	-114.3
Subscriptions	900		748.89	- 151.11	-20.2
Insurance	1,000		1,036.16	36.16	3.5
Auditor Fees	445		420.00	- 25.00	-6.0
Legal/Professional Fees	500		183.00	- 317.00	-173.2
Loan repayments	-		-	-	-
Election costs	1,000		-	- 1,000.00	-
Donations	1,000		-	- 1,000.00	-
General admin cost	350		526.19	176.19	33.5
Administration		27,930.00	26,844.84	- 1,085.16	-4.0
Newsletters	1,000		980.00	- 20.00	-2.0
Website	500		696.00	196.00	28.2
Communications		1,500.00	1,676.00	176.00	10.5
Park Mowing	800		784.00	- 16.00	-2.0
Park Maintenance	2,000		1,556.54	- 443.46	-28.5
Park Safety Inspections	200		327.50	127.50	38.9
Playing Field		3,000.00	2,668.04	- 331.96	-12.4
Field Mowing	2,800		2,551.46	- 248.54	-9.7
Field Maintenance	1,500		1,672.96	172.96	10.3
Field Safety Inspections	200		327.50	127.50	38.9
Millennium Park		4,500.00	4,551.92	51.92	1.1
Hanging baskets	500		616.68	116.68	18.9
Planters	900		695.67	- 204.33	-29.4
Other environmental	900		387.14	- 512.86	-132.5
Village Environs		2,300.00	1,699.49	- 600.51	-35.3
Lights Maintenance/repairs	4,000		4,073.79	73.79	1.8
Lights Electricity	3,000		2,257.53	- 742.47	-32.9
Christmas Lights/Tree	7,000		11,218.34	4,218.34	37.6
Street Lighting		14,000.00	17,549.66	3,549.66	20.2
Lengthsman charges	2,000		2,000.00	-	0.0
Highways	250		1,200.00	950.00	79.2
Highways		2,250.00	3,200.00	950.00	29.7
Community Walks and other events	900		1,949.20	1,049.20	53.8
Miscellaneous Events				-	-
Events		900	1949.2	1,049.20	53.8
Neighbourhood Plan	2,000		-	- 2,000.00	-
Fixed Assets			2,971.28		-
Sub-total payments	58,380.00	58,380.00	63,110.43	4,730.43	7.5
Capital Projects	0.00	-	4,568.00	4,568.00	100.0
VAT paid	3,500	3,500	7,077.75	3,577.75	50.5
Total payments	61,880.00	61,880.00	74,756.18	12,876.18	17.2

Budget report:
comparison
of actual
receipts and
payments to
budget, fye
31/03/2017
Presented to
meeting
5/4/17 Barnt
Green Parish
Council