

Minutes of the Meeting of Belbroughton and Fairfield Parish Agricultural Holdings Committee Council held at the Fairfield First School Monday 17th October 2016.

Present: Cllrs. A Hood, T Jones, P Margetts, and R Morgan, plus co-opted members Mrs A Ince and Mrs M Rees. In attendance: J Farrell Clerk. 7 members of the public also attended.

310/16 Chairman

Cllr. Allan Hood was re-elected Chairman of the Committee.

311/16 Apologies - None.

312/16 Members Declaration of Interests

Cllr. Margetts declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as one of the Parish Council's tenants was also a tenant of his.

Mrs Ince declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as she was a tenant of the Parish Council.

313/16 Dispensations

Cllr. Margetts and Mrs Ince had both requested dispensations and the Committee approved that both may remain in the meeting and to speak if desired. The Committee also approved that Cllr. Margetts may take part in any votes.

314/16 Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2015 and the Chairman signed the minute book.

315/16 Farmland Walks

Members of the Committee had 'walked' the farmland on 22nd September and had concluded that the land and boundaries were generally in good heart and were being well looked after. The Committee noted the clerk's report and agreed that a small hedge area at the junction of the private lane into Stoneybridge Farmhouse and Madeley Rd be reduced to aid sight access. Also, an area of fencing also on Madeley Rd required repairs. The track at the top end of Stoneybridge had deep ruts and required levelling in places by infill of hardcore.

A farmgate was missing at Madeley Rd. however upon the enquiry by the Chairman of the farm tenants present at the meeting as to their wishes, the Committee agreed that no action would be taken to reinstate this gate since the tenants felt they would prefer unfettered access.

Action: the clerk was asked contact the relevant tenants for the maintenance items to be dealt with and to seek quotes for the farm track improvements.

316/16 Farm Policy

The Committee considered the implementation of the Council minute 425/15 of 7.12.2015 - *(Council approved that upon renewal of the Farm Business Tenancies (Notice is given by September 2016 with the new F.B.T.s effective from September 2017) that they are to include a statement requesting tenants where possible to avoid the feeding of crops grown on Parish Council land to livestock being raised for the non-stun slaughter meat industry.)*. - and recommended that the Farm Business Tenancies should not be re-drafted in view of the legal costs involved and the difficulty in monitoring and enforcing such a statement. It recommended that the Council should instead write to each tenant expressing the Council's request.

The Committee further recommended that the Council advises local parish councils, the W.C.C. and the National Association of Local Councils of the request made to the tenants.

Action: the clerk to send appropriate letters.

71.

317/16 Other Items

The Chairman invited comments from members of the public.

The Committee noted the concerns of 6 members of the public, whom were also tenants of the Parish Council, regarding the Parish Council notice that has been sent to the tenants seeking an increase in the Farm Business Tenancy rents of £15 to £100 per acre p.a. from 30th September 2017. The Committee agreed to refer the issues raised to the full Council on 5th December for it to re-consider the previous decision taken.

Action: the matter to be placed on the December Council agenda.

The Meeting closed at 7.00pm.

Chairman

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