



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held at CATSHILL VILLAGE HALL

GOLDEN CROSS LANE, CATSHILL, B61 0JZ

THURSDAY 28th September 2017, 7.30pm

Present : Cllrs O Sweeting (Chair), B McEldowney (Vice Chair), P Baker, M Ball, J Bate, G Blackmoor, M Knight, P Masters, N Ward

In attendance: Clerk – R Powell; Ms C Welsh (Bromsgrove Centres Manager), Bromsgrove District Cllr S Webb, Ms V Harman

- 17/09-01** Chairman's welcome
Cllr O Sweeting welcomed all present to the meeting
- 17/09-02** Members' Apologies for absence
Apologies were received from Cllrs M Shephard and T Gillespie
- 17/09-03** Co-option
It was noted that there were two vacant seats on the Council which it was hoped would be filled by Co-option.
Members were requested to consider the Co-option of Ms Val Harman onto the Council. This was carried out by private ballot.
It was agreed, by a unanimous vote, that Ms V Harman be co-opted onto the Council.
Ms Harman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took her seat at the Council table.
- 17/09-04** Open Forum
- 4.1 Members of the Public**
Ms Cheryl Welsh and Cllr Shirley Webb gave a presentation outlining the upcoming initiatives it was hoped the Parish Council would support including a Christmas Event and Light Switch On, Catshill in Bloom and Dementia Friends Steering Group.
- 4.2 Worcs County Councillor for the Woodvale Division**
Councillor Shirley Webb had circulated her report (attached)
- 4.3 Bromsgrove District Councillors for North Catshill, South Catshill and Marlbrook Wards.**
District Councillor Shirley Webb had circulated her report (attached)
Cllr Shirley Webb and Ms Cheryl Welsh left at this point in the meeting
- 4.4 Any other community representative**
No community representatives were present.
- 17/09-05** The meeting was closed for Open-Forum and re-opened.
- 17/09-06** Declarations of Interest
No member stated any declarable interest.
- 17/09-07** Dispensations
No new requests for dispensations had been received.
- 17/09-08** Approval of Minutes of previous council meeting
It was agreed to accept the minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held 27/07/17.
- 17/09-09** Members' Questions
No questions had been provided
- 17/09-10** Chairman's Report
Cllr Sweeting reported that a lot had been going on since the last meeting of the Full Parish Council. He had attended a meeting with Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group to look at the scope of the group and brief the new lead on the Environment Group who was very interested and knowledgeable. Cllr Sweeting stated that the Parish were extremely lucky with

the expertise that was offered through Members of the Neighbourhood Plan group and that without them a lot more money would have had to be spent on the exercise.

Cllr Sweeting had attended the CALC Executive meeting who now had a new chair who was very keen on networking and training. He wanted all Councils to work together as it was felt a lot of power could be gained this way rather than working individually.

The Environment and Highways Committee had discussed a variety of topics and the meeting of the Trustees of the Village Hall would be reported on later.

Cllr Sweeting had attended the meeting of Bromsgrove CALC which covers 21 Local Councils. During this meeting Cllr Sweeting was voted in as Chair and would now do his utmost to get all 21 Councils to attend and work together as one voice. Currently only around a third of Councils attend and he hoped to move this along. CALC is invaluable to all and especially to Clerks who would be lost without that point of reference.

Cllr Sweeting had attended an Events Committee meeting and a number of events were being arranged for November and December, including the Christmas Meal. Members and groups are working hard to make the village more vibrant.

The Planning Committee had discussed items in length. Cllr Sweeting noted that the group contained people with a massive cross section of knowledge and how well the Committee was progressing.

The Bonfire Working Group had also met and Cllr Sweeting wished to thank Cllr McEldowney for all the detail and hard work he had put into getting it off the ground.

17/09-11 Clerk's Report: Emergency Actions, Update and List of Communications

11.1 Parishioner Correspondence – To inform Members of the correspondence received during the last two months.

The Clerk informed Members that the damage reported by a resident at Milton Road Park had now been fixed and the split in the wood would be monitored as it was low risk. Further correspondence had been received regarding requests for details of the Bonfire Event, issues with parking on Milton Road, the request for extension of the double yellow lines and concerns about the Meadow including the use of garden gates to gain access to the park and why volunteers were filling the dog bag dispensers. The Clerk had responded to and progressed all requests in the appropriate manner.

11.2 Footpath Walk Co-ordination

It had been requested by the Neighbourhood Plan Environment Working Group that any future footpath walks be co-ordinated with the data collection needed to progress the plan. Members discussed this and it was suggested a list of routes and suggested dates could be collated. It was also noted that a Footpath Feature would be an excellent addition to future newsletters.

11.3 New Data Protection Act May 2018

The Clerk reported that in May 2018 a new data protection act will come into force when the EU directive 'General Data Protection Regulation' takes effect, and will replace the 1998 Act. Many of the GDPR's principles are the same as the 1998 Act but with new obligations on Data Controllers and Data processors and enhanced rights for individuals. It requires some organisations such as Public Authorities to appoint a Data Protection Officer who will have certain responsibilities. It is not clear yet whether this extends to Parish Councils. CALC will be offering training after Christmas when some of the elements have been clarified. However, it has been advised that preparations be made this year for compliance and this will have resource implications. The ICO has given guidelines and steps to follow and the Clerk would be taking this to the Finance and Staffing Committee for further investigation.

11.4 Finance Reports – Pensions, Audit, Neighbourhood Plan Grant Application

*Pensions – The Declaration of Compliance was now complete so all elements of the Automatic Enrolment process for pensions had now been completed.

*The Parish Council had received an unqualified audit which was now displayed on the

website with the notice of completion of audit document

* The Clerk had had a meeting over the Summer with Dr Fabray, the Assistant Clerk, Cllr Sweeting and Mr P Sharp. There was a possibility that the Parish Council would be requested to apply for a grant to complete a Character and Landscape Assessment to feed into the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base. This would involve instructing consultants and the application would be in the region of £3000 potentially. It was felt this was needed to be able to make informed statements about the land that will potentially be ear marked for building in the future.

11.5 Receipt of Thank you for Grant provided to CAB

The Clerk reported that an email of thanks had been received for the £600 donation made by the Parish Council to the CAB Bromsgrove and Redditch.

It was suggested the fact that the grant had been awarded should be put into the upcoming newsletter to inform residents that the CAB offered a free service for all.

11.6 Dementia Friends Meeting and details of pop up event

The Clerk reported that the Dementia Friends Pop Up Café would be held at Catshill Village Hall on 27th October between 2pm and 4pm. Many different groups and services would be in attendance including Police, Fire, RBL, Carers Association and Age Concern. The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council may also wish to have a stand at the event, and/or the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

11.7 Completion of Assistant Clerk's probation review

The Clerk had completed the Assistant Clerk's probation review over the Summer break. It was noted that the Assistant Clerk was performing exceptionally well, continues to learn and is confident enough to offer thoughts and views. The Clerk noted that she was very pleased and grateful to have him working with her.

11.8 Invitation to present medals for Summer Reading Challenge

The Parish Council had again been invited to present the medals at the Summer Reading Challenge Medal Ceremony on Tuesday 3rd October at 5:30pm in the library. Cllr McEldowney would represent the Council and Cllr Baker would take photographs of the event.

11.9 Dodford Police Van Event

The Police Van display unit would be parked on Dodford Village Hall Car Park in Priory Road between 11am and 1pm on Saturday 14th October.

Members had suggested that the Police be invited to a FPC but the Clerk also suggested that an event such as this be arranged for Catshill and North Marlbrook Residents.

11.10 BDC Reports

The hedge had now been cut back on the A38 as requested.

The Clerk had requested that the bus shelters in the Parish be cleaned but may also be asking for some to be maintained due to the current state of those particularly on A38.

Relevant correspondence available from the Clerk: includes weekly CALC updates August and September 2017; weekly updates from BDC Planning lists, WCC road works lists and reports, Neighbourhood Watch Alerts, M5 J4A to J6 updates and newsletters, NRSWA, Wellbeing in Partnership Newsletter August and September, Worcestershire Voices update, Highways England Traffic Management bulletin, Bromsgrove Advertiser, CPRE Campaigns update, Bromsgrove and Redditch Update, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner updates, North Rural Police Newsletter, Superfast Worcestershire update.

17/09-12 Committee and Representatives Reports

Background papers available

12.1 Environment and Highways Committee – 07/09/17 (Cllr M Shephard)

Cllr Shephard was absent from the meeting but Members had received the minutes of the meeting. The Clerk also asked, on behalf of Cllr Shephard, if all Members were happy to be on the Emergency Committee for the Emergency Plan.

It was agreed that all Members would be a part of the Emergency Committee.

Cllr McEldowney was invited to talk about the Marlbrook Tip Working Party he had attended at this point in the meeting (document attached)

12.2 Planning Committee – 21/09/17 (Cllr T Gillespie)

Cllr Gilliespie was absent so Cllr M Knight reported and noted those decisions made through delegated powers as per the minutes that had been circulated.

12.3 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – 27/09/17 (Cllr B McEldowney)

Cllr McEldowney reported that they had received an update from Dr Fabray about the analysis of the Level 1 questionnaire, a presentation from Mr Crysell relating to relevant legislation with regards to planning and the Neighbourhood Plan, a presentation from himself about the Seminar he had attended, an update from the three working groups and agreement to a spend of £3000 on research to provide supporting evidence for the Environment Working Group, building on and enhancing that already available from Bromsgrove and Worcester. In addition, the group were still looking at developing a mission statement.

12.4 Any other report from Parish Council representatives including those for:

- **Remembrance Service Committee – 05/09/17 (Cllr P Baker)**

It was noted that this was not a Committee but a group Organisation for the event stayed much as the previous year. The Chairman of the Parish Council would read one of the four lists of names with the Middle School and the Scouts doing the other reading and a youngster reading the poem. Extra barriers had been requested from the road closure management team that could be placed on the pavement in front of the War Memorial, allowing for chairs and wheelchairs to be placed in that area. Cllr Baker also reported that discussions had begun regarding an event, possibly on the Meadow to mark the centenary of the war, which had been previously agreed by the Parish Council to be held somewhere between 2014 and 2018. There was a worry, however, that not enough people were involved in the organisation. The idea at present included a re-enactment group, possibly a military group to provide displays or some interesting articles and to include a minutes silence, possibly with a piper, for the commemoration. There may also be a few side stalls for exhibitors and entertainment for the children. The next meeting was scheduled for October but there was a need to get more people on board.

- **CALC Executive Meeting – 06/09/17 (Cllr Sweeting)**

Cllr Sweeting had referred to this in his Chairs report (17/09-10)

- **Village Hall Management Committee – 11/09/17 (Cllr J Bate)**

Cllr Bate reported that they continued with repairs and improvements. They had now installed CCTV cameras due to a lot of vandalism and teenagers and youngsters annoying the neighbours. There were 4 operational cameras and two more to go in and the police had already been to view them following an incident. Cllr Sweeting, in his role of Chair of the Village Hall, was attempting to get quotes for various improvements, particularly the main entrance which would allow them to tidy up the front and sort out the canopy drainage. The Committee had been devising fund raising activities.

Saturday 11th November there would be an afternoon tea party in the hall with a singer and music which was aimed at the middle aged and the elderly and would cost £5. If this event was successful, the Management Committee may think of hiring the social club again as they used to with different types of entertainment.

There would also be a Halloween party that was being organised by the Village Hall Manager. The Management Committee were pleased to be doing something for the village.

- **CPRE AGM – 12/09/17 (Cllr B McEldowney)**

Cllr McEldowney reported that very few Parish Council's attend the meeting. Three major planning applications were discussed along with Neighbourhood Plans, the Black Country Core strategy consultation, road congestion and air pollution in Bromsgrove.

- **Bromsgrove Area CALC – 13/09/17 (Cllr O Sweeting)**

Cllr Sweeting had referred to this in his Chairs report (17/09-10) but added that they were aiming to get some good, relevant speakers at the meeting and he hoped that some of the Members from Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council would attend.

- **Bonfire Working Party – 25/09/17 (Cllr B McEldowney)**

Cllr McEldowney reported that he had provided a bullet pointed list for discussion including enhancement of current risk assessments, obtaining a view from the fire service as to how many people could be admitted to the area behind the tape at the event, volunteers for stewarding, sound system and lighting. The price of the event had been changed to £3 per adult and £2 per child. Posters would be printed and the banner altered.

- **Newsletter (Cllr P Masters)**

Cllr Masters thanked everyone who had provided an article and noted that this would be a bumper edition with lots of photographs included. Cllr Masters noted that the deliveries would be harder this time of year due to the weather and dark nights. It was also requested that it be ensured that all households, including new estates, be included in delivery. It was suggested that next year, deadline dates for the completion of newsletters would be set in advance to ensure three editions were created.

- At this point in the meeting, Cllr Ball reported regarding issues with the Cemetary being left open at night. District Councillor Shirley Webb had not been aware that this was happening and it was reported to be a money saving initiative. A combination lock had now been fitted and a letter had been sent out to all those with loved ones in the cemetary requesting they ring a central person to gain the combination code for the day they attend. A 'Friends of the Cemetary' group was being established to go in and tidy the area.

17/09-13 Finance

13.1 To receive the payments and receipts report of the Responsible Finance Officer and to approve bills for payment; spreadsheet for August and September circulated

The current financial situation, including comparison of budget to actual income and expenditure to date, was noted. The payment schedule for August and September, as below, was approved.

13.2 to agree a budget for the Christmas Meal Event (Cllr N Ward)

Cllr Ward provided a breakdown of costings for Members to consider then reported the reasoning behind the figures in relation to the type of event that it was aimed to provide. A letter that had been received by a resident following last years' dinner was also read to Members.

It was agreed to provide a budget of £1200 for the cost of the Christmas Meal Event

17/09-14 Opportunity to discuss the extent of the Parish Council involvement in upcoming initiatives including Christmas Events, the Dementia Friends Pop Up Café and Catshill in Bloom

To include agreement as to any donation to be made towards lights for the Christmas Event.

It was agreed to delegate the decision in relation to the contribution of costs towards Christmas Lights to the Finance and Staffing Committee.

17/09-15 To note the comments submitted on behalf of the Parish Council in response to:

- **Consultation on New Fire Governance Proposals – deadline for comment 11th September 2017 (Cllr B McEldowney and Cllr M Ball – document circulated)**

Members had had the opportunity to read and provide thoughts on the comment that had been made on behalf of the Council during the process of writing. Members had also received a copy of the completed comment (see attached). It was noted that this was a very good document and Cllr B McEldowney and Cllr M Ball were thanked for their assistance in researching and writing it.

- **Consultation on Worcester County Council's Rail Investment Strategy – deadline for comment 5pm 11th August 2017. Information available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/LTP (Cllr P Baker)**

Cllr Baker reported that the aim of the proposals was to improve services in Droitwich, Kidderminster and Stourbridge and proposing an improved service from Worcester to London. Cllr Baker had noted that there was no comment to be made about the services that did not affect Catshill and North Marlbrook but that there was agreement to any improvements that allow people to travel easier across the Country.

Cllr Baker was thanked for his assistance with this consultation.

17/09-16 To discuss the purchase of speed stickers for wheely bins on certain roads in the Parish
It was agreed to defer this item to the next Full Parish Council

17/09-17 Opportunity to discuss the Council's thoughts on the contract between BT and WCC
 This item had been requested following the presentation given by Virgin Media at the previous Full Parish Council. Members felt that there was potentially more research needed prior to any discussion being had in particular following the contents of Cllr Webbs report and its reference to the collapse of the contract between Gigaclear and WCC. It was requested that this be an item at the end of next month's Agenda to allow a decision as to whether this research should be carried out.

17/09-18 Items for the next meeting
 Members were requested to inform the Clerk of any items for the next meeting

17/09-19 Date and time of next meetings:

- Finance and Staffing Committee – 12/10/17
- Planning Committee – 19/10/17
- Full Parish Council – 26/10/17
 - All meetings at Catshill Village Hall, 7:30pm unless otherwise stated

This meeting ended at 21:28 hrs

Signed Date.....
 Chairman of Catshill & North Marlbrook Parish Council

Minute no. 17/09-13.1

Excerpt from accounts day-book to show payments and receipts for August and September 2017:

Date	Payment Voucher no.	Receipt Voucher no.	Chq No	Details	Receipts	Payments (gross)
August	V061		online	Allen Farnsworth Lengthsman - July 2017		192.00
	V062		online	Royal Town Planning Institute - Neighbourhood Plan Seminar attended by Cllr B McEldowney		72.00
	V063		d/d	Talk Talk - Office Phone and Broadband (July 17)		41.11
	V064		d/d	EE - Office mobile - August 17		21.40
	V065		online	Mrs R Powell - Clerk's expenses (Sundries and postage)		12.69
	V066-68		online and s/o	Salaries		1,109.78
	V069		online	Dr Chris Fabray - Neighbourhood Plan Expenses (analysis tool July and August including upgrade)		90.00
	V070		d/d	Npower - war memorial electricity		82.32
		R5		WCC - Lengthsman Scheme re-embursement	390.49	
				sub-total	21,843.09	17,418.06

	Payment	Receipt				
Date	Voucher no.	Voucher no.	Chq No	Details	Receipts	Payments (gross)
	V071		d/d	Talk Talk - Office Phone and Broadband (Aug 17)		39.70
Sep	V072		d/d	EE - Office mobile - August 17		21.40
	V073		online	G Force Fireworks - Balance for fireworks display		2,250.00
	V074		online	Charlotte and Craig Saving Hearts Foundation - Deibrillator for Village Hall		1,560.00
	V075		300922	Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd - Removal of tree stump from Baptist Church Garden		108.00
	V076		300923	Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd - August 17		237.60
	V077		300924	Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd - July 17		237.60
	V078		d/d	N Power - Electricity for War Memorial		82.32
	V079		online	Grant Thornton UK LLP - Fee in respect of 2017 Annual Return		360.00
	V080		d/d	Information Commissioners Office - Data Protection Registration annual renewal		35.00
	V081		online	The Royal British Legion Lickey End Branch - Remembrance Service Wreath		25.00
	V082		online	Worcestershire CALC - Clerk Training		30.00
	V083		300925	Cllr B McEldowney - Travel expenses and parking for NP Seminar		15.80
	V084		online	Allen Farnsworth - Lengthsman August 2017		192.00
	V085		300926	Catshill Middle School - Payment for hire of car par for Bonfire Event		25.00
	V086, 88 & 90		oline and s/o	Salaries, including unpaid leave for ill child (Clerk) and overtime for Assistant Clerk		1,121.30
	V087		online	Mrs J Hallett - Litter Picker Expenses		18.90
	V089		online	Mrs R Powell - Clerks expenses (postage)		19.50
	V091		online	HMRC - PAYE submission quarter 2		218.11
	V092		d/d	Water Plus - Water at Ivy Gardens		21.90
				sub-total	21,843.09	24,037.19

Bank Reconciliation and budget comparison as at 28/09/17					
Finances at start of year	50,195.66				
Add receipts	21,843.09			Bank a/c as at 28/09/17	33,366.08
		72,038.75		Deposit a/c, Co-op	21,171.61
Less payments		24,037.19		Less unrepresented cheques	6,536.13
		48,001.56			48,001.56
RECEIPTS	Budget 2017/18	actual to date		u/p cheques	
Precept	42,346	21,173		V073	2,250.00
DCLG CTSG	-			V074	1,560.00
Interest	300			V075	108.00
Lengthsman*	2,104	390		V076	237.60
Donations/other/§	500	190		V077	237.60
Newsletter advert	300	90		V078	82.32
VAT refund	2,000			V079	360.00
Reserve Fund	6,000			V080	35.00
	53,550.00	21,843.09		V081	25.00
PAYMENTS				V082	30.00
Staff Costs	21,500	7,265		V083	15.80
Administration inc off	4,000	1,578		V084	192.00
CALC inc travel expens	1,200	1,042		V085	25.00
Audit	400	470		V086	157.00
Training	1,500	85		V087	18.90
Insurance	1,000	851		V088	740.29
Members expenses	400	41		V089	19.50
Elections	1,500	-		V090	224.01
Grants : NWWA, Scou	2,600	896		V091	218.11
Events - Fun Day/R Su	3,500	2,775			6,536.13
Communications - nev	1,350	420			
Gardens (includes wat	2,500	2,010			
War Memorial (includ	1,000	229			
Lengthsman	2,500	1,169	budget/precept (intended expenditure)		7077.69
Environment eg main	500	777	Specific reserve (capital expenditure)		15,700.00
Neighbourhood Plan	2,000	1,655	Emergency Reserve (fixed capital)		31,760.00
Capital Projects *	6,000	1,560	Discretionary Reserve		-
Section 137	100	25			54,537.69
VAT paid		1,189	unrepresented cheques		6,536.13
			balance		48,001.56
Total	53,550.00	24,037.19			

*Lengthsman, actual WCC refund amount allocated for year to 03/2018 is £2104.00
 S137 limit is £7.57 x total no. of electors 5,220 = £39,515.40

Reports:

Minute number 17/09-4.2 and 4.3:

County Councillor Shirley Webb

Woodvale Division - September 2017 Report

Catshill Events

Along with members of Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council we have a few volunteers and together we have formed **Catshill Dementia Friendly Steering Group**. We have arranged a big launch on Friday October 27th at the Village Hall 2-4pm. Our aim is to make more people aware of Dementia / Alzheimer's and help Catshill become Dementia Friendly.

Christmas Tree light switch on same date as Craft Fair at the Village Hall. Saturday 25th November 2017. 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm. Next meeting at the Village Hall 26th September 5.30 pm. We will also be discussing Catshill In Bloom which we hope to start asap, lots of local business's keen to support.

Halesowen Road Temporary 40mph speed limit whilst roadworks on M5 on, now in place.

Meadow Road / Woodbank Drive – TRO in process and ready for consultation.

Catshill Cemetery – after a meeting with residents and Cllr M Ball at the cemetery, the cemetery is currently not being locked of an evening, residents are concerned for the upkeep of the premises. We have agreed to arrange for officers to open and close the gates during the winter. In the summer / spring months we are looking at options of using a keycode / combination padlock. We also discussed the possibility of starting a **Friends of Catshill Cemetery Group** – to keep residents involved in future activities at the cemetery, Remembrance service / Christmas service etc., If anyone is interested in helping please do get in touch.

Fairfield – Stourbridge Road / Brook Road junction – discussing dropped kerbs in this area and by the village hall.

Bromsgrove Road, Fockbury Mill Lane and Snakes Lake Lane

Resurfacing to take place in October / November

Kidderminster Road – Following the fatal accident in January 2017 the road was assessed, it would seem the surface was not identified as being the issue but water on the road. Since then drainage works have taken place to help rectify this together with some tree cutting and sweeping of the highway or roadside debris.

Warbage Lane / Priory Road parking on verges. Unfortunately, there is nothing we can do to stop people parking on the public highway, unless they are causing an obstruction which then becomes a police matter.

White lines painting / slow down signs – this will now be completed in the Spring unless there is a specific safety issue. PC to advise which roads / lanes for signing.

HGV weight limit signs – we cannot restrict Warbage Lane from HGV usage or enforce weight restrictions.

Bournheath - Fairfield Road / Dodford Road - TRO now in process to protect the junctions.

WCC

Children's Services – currently being partnered with Essex. Essex County Council are recognised as a 'best in class' improvement partner due to their track record of improving their own services and then working with other local authorities to deliver tangible sustained improvement. Ofsted continue to monitor our performance. Funding has been increased to support improvement, which will take 3-5 years period to improve. Currently looking at a range of Alternative delivery models for Children's Social Care Services.

Focus of the improvement plan is on four areas

- Family Front Door – Management of contacts, referrals and Assessments.
- Early Help – Remodel the Early help offer
- Culture – Create a Child-focused and Accountable Culture
- Quality Assurance – Understand what 'Good' looks like

Superfast Broadband

Unfortunately, Gigaclear has now pulled out of the contract with WCC due to issues around Highways and concerns over health and safety. We are hoping returns from Superfast's investments from service providers might be utilised to address the shortfall. There is an ongoing procurement in place and further details will be sent in due course. Two boxes in Dodford should be in deployed in October (Box 25 Priory Road) / November (box 78 Woodland Road / Church Road) . Money Lane box now up and running.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk

MEETING MARLBROOK TIP WORKING PARTY

5.30PM 21 September 2017; Council House, Parkside, Bromsgrove

Notes of Meeting

In attendance were:-

- Cllr Richard Deeming - Chairman
- Officers: - Ruth Bamford, Tracey Lovejoy - legal
- Councillors: - Brian Cooper
- Residents Representatives - Mike Adams, Paul Batchelor, Charlie Bateman, Roy Hughes, Sue Hughes
- Other Representatives- Lickey & Blackwell Parish Council, Catshill & North Marlbrook (Bernard McEldowney) PC, Lickey Hills Society
- Environment Agency - Tony Deakin, Fiona Upchurch, Martin Quine

Fiona Upchurch - Told the Group 7 of the 10 (sic) measures had been completed, but the 3 outstanding items had not been completed by the 31st August 2017 deadline. The site owners had been sent a letter. No response had been received yet. The Environment Agency will now step in and do the works required by the Enforcement Notice. No time scale had been set, as they are still assessing the work to be done.

Brian Cooper – Asked if the cost will be passed on to the site owners. EA responded yes but, if they do not pay, a charge will be placed with the Land Registry. EA will clarify which company i.e. Link Property, Liberty Construction is the actual owner of the site. The EA will bring on their own materials, and have powers to do the work, but can only do the work necessary to make the site safe to comply with the Engineers Report. They have a Section 17 notice, which gives them the power to work on site, but Liberty can remain on site. The next steps are for them to employ an engineer to undertake a site survey to determine the base levels, before importation of material.

Ruth Bamford – Has not received a planning application from Liberty Construction. She has previously had legal advice to say planning permission is required for the work. She would expect the EA to submit an application, which will be subject to the usual 13-week timetable, with a public consultation period. I asked that any planning application from the EA include details of its likely impact on the local community of them carrying out the work, eg, number of lorries per day likely to be delivering soil etc. to the site and the rough time period involved to do this work, so that local residents would have an opportunity to adequately comment on the EA planning application.

Tracey Lovejoy – Read out a statement from Worcestershire Regulatory Services. Since EXEA took over the gas monitoring earlier in the year, they have no concerns with the readings or gas management system.

Fiona Upchurch – The EA are bound by the terms of the Panel Engineers report, but they have their own Panel Engineer who will assist them.

Tony Deakin – Although the EA will do the work, and not Liberty Construction, the equipment already on site belongs to the owner and they have no powers to remove any of it. They will work out what material is on site, and see if they can re-use any of it. Bromsgrove District Council have agreed that a named Planning Officer will be allocated to deal/liaise with the EA

A future date has not been set as the EA are at the very early stage of assessing the situation.

Bernard McEldowney

28th September 2017

Minutes number 17/09-15:

Response to Proposed Changes to Fire Governance – Submitted 10/09/17

The Parish Council is opposed to change of governance for the following reasons:

- 1). The evidence that annual savings of £4 million pounds per annum could be achieved by the move is highly questionable.
 - 2). The PCC claims the change of governance would facilitate greater collaboration between the two fire services and West Mercia Police. He does however acknowledge that a great deal of collaboration already takes place. There is every likelihood that even more collaboration could be achieved under the current governance arrangements and further cost savings achieved without the need for a change of governance.
 - 3). The consultants stated that there was no criticism offered of the performance of the existing governance or organisations in their current form. They had not become aware of deficiencies in any dimension of their performance, which would cause them to consider that there is a failure or risk of failure to overcome. The argument they presented was rather that there was an opportunity for more to be achieved on the same resource base by working together under 'joint governance' and a co- developed plan than by working separately. So although the consultants have no major criticism of the current governance arrangements they still recommend a change to 'joint governance', with the PCC replacing the 40 elected councillors who sit on the two fire and rescue authorities. One wonders if that was the desired outcome from the start of the consultation!
 - 4). There has been widespread opposition to the proposal from local councillors from a wide range of political backgrounds.
 - 5). John Champion was only elected PCC last year on a very low turnout, and is relatively inexperienced in his current role. It is somewhat arrogant on his part to now think that in addition to his responsibilities for governance of West Mercia Police, and his continued role as vice-chairman of Wyre Forest District Council, that he should replace 40 experienced elected councillors and take over the governance role of our two local fire and rescue services. The current governance arrangements are not broken and they don't need to be fixed.
 - 6). John Champion's election manifesto for the role of PCC made no reference to his desire to take over the governance role of the fire service so he has no mandate for this proposed change.
 - 7). Under the current governance arrangements councillors from a wide range of political backgrounds are involved in the decision making process. The change of governance would in effect be less democratic as it gives all the power to one person from one political party.
 - 8). The legislation introduced last year abolished the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and give the Mayor of London direct responsibility for the fire and rescue service in London. Boris Johnson reduced the number of fire stations and fire engines in London despite widespread opposition from the public. He also went on to sell off the London Fire Engine fleet to a private equity firm for £2. This highlights the risks involved in giving so much power to one person.
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Cllr B McEldowney
End of report