

Minutes of the Meeting of Belbroughton Parish Council held in the Jubilee Room Belbroughton Recreation Centre on Monday 7th September 2015.

Present: Cllrs. D Roberts (Chairman), J Boswell, J Bradley, T Jones, P Margetts, Dr R Morgan, S Pawley and C Scurrall.

In attendance: J Farrell Clerk. County Councillor Rachel Jenkins. 1 member of the public also attended.

282/15 Apologies had been received and were accepted from Cllrs. A Hood, A Mabbett, S MacDonald, J McFarling and S Nock.

283/15 Declarations of Interest: Cllr. Scurrall declared an 'Other Disclosable Interest' in agenda item 11b.

284/15 Dispensations: No written requests had been received.

The Meeting was adjourned for members of the public to speak on any matter of concern relating to the agenda or for future discussion.

285/15 The meeting was re-opened and the minutes of the Parish Council meeting 6th July 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

286/15 Reports

Chairman's Report: Cllr. Roberts welcomed members back after the summer break. He hoped that the 'Working Groups' previously set up would meet promptly to complete their tasks. The Belbroughton Scarecrow Committee had confirmed the proposed joint arrangement with the Council regarding their defibrillator. He also mentioned that a national survey quoted in a newspaper had listed the 100 best places to live in England, with Middle Road, Wildmoor and Madeley Road, Bell Heath being recorded as nos. 35 and 46 respectively.

Planning Committee:

Cllr. Scurrall advised that any member of the public is able to question the District Council direct regarding perceived planning breaches. The District Council had confirmed to members the regulations concerning the display of advertising banners / posters. Council noted the minutes of the committee meetings 20th July 2015.

Finance Committee:

Cllr. Bradley advised that the Council's cash investments were now covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme following the recent enactment of legislation to include smaller local authorities which included this parish council. He confirmed that the investment strategy of the Council already ensured that no one investment would be greater than £50,000 and thus all are covered within the current scheme limit of £85,000 per institution. This amount reduces to £75,000 in January 2016. The Committee had reviewed the Council Financial Regulations and recommended their ongoing adoption. Council noted the minutes of the committee meeting on 20th July 2015.

Clerk's Report:

1. The Green, Belbroughton. The developer is to submit his costings for the two drainage routes and have these assessed by a surveyor employed by the Parish Council. The solicitors are drawing up the final document, the Deed of Easement, and expect this to reflect the agreed Heads of Terms.
2. The approved change of name of the Parish Council to 'Belbroughton and Fairfield' will now be progressed with the District Council. There had been no adverse comments received from residents following the Council's request for feedback.

74.

3. Tree work – a branch had been removed at Sylvester’s Corner Belbroughton due to Health and Safety requirements and with the agreement of the BDC Tree Officer. Work at The Green Belbroughton will be carried out 8th Sept in line with the Tree decision Notice dated 2nd July 2015 from BDC (Oak tree - Selectively reducing lower limbs to suitable branch unions to raise the crown to 4 metres. Sycamore tree – Remove lower limbs to raise crown to 6 metres and selectively reduce remaining lateral limbs to a suitable branch union.)
4. The Parish Hill / Bournheath Rd. Fairfield hedge has been trimmed by the Lengthsman and Bernard Edwards has taken away the spoil. The Lengthsman has also dealt with the weeds on Hartle Lane from the A491 to the 30 MPH gateway signs.
5. Following the Parish Council’s request the gateway speed limit signs in Fairfield had been cleaned.
6. The streetlight replacement at Stourbridge Rd. Fairfield had been commissioned through the County Council, although no date has yet been advised for the work.
7. A Secure Trust Bank £20,000 two year investment has been opened with rate 2.33 % p.a. , this follows the maturity of the Julian Hodge Bank investment £20,000. The ‘Investec’ five year investment matures 7th September 2015 and the funds will be returned within 5 working days. The Finance Committee will consider options for re- investment.
8. W.C.C. have agreed after a lengthy process (3 letters) to cut the hedge in Galtons Lane, Belbroughton and invoice the agents acting for the landowners.
9. BDC have confirmed they would assist with a villages ‘tidy up day’ by providing litter picker sticks and plastic bags plus use of a mini leaf collector machine and operative. In addition they would pick up the filled bags after the event.
10. W.C.C. Minerals Consultation – The copy of the summary and links to the full appraisal documents have been sent to Cllrs. Any response (required by 25th Sept.) should be considered by the Planning Committee on 21st Sept which gives cllrs. a further 2 weeks to assess the proposals. Those members not on the Planning Committee may advise the clerk of any comments they have to add for consideration.

County Councillor Rachel Jenkins:

Advised that the County Council budget would be considered again on 17th September. She was on the Fire Service Authority and informed Council that discussions were in progress on a ‘services’ Hub for the Wyre Forest district which would probably lead to a sharing of premises by Police, Fire and Ambulance. There would be a closer working relationship with Warwickshire. She was no longer involved with the Children’s Services Directorate.

The ‘Dial a Ride’ proposed earlier this year had not brought forward the necessary public interest and would not be progressing.

There is continuing work at WCC Highways assessing if speed limits can be reduced on Hartle Lane, Belbroughton.

She pledged £1,000 from her ‘Divisional Fund’ towards the costs of the proposed diversion of the footpath near to Hackmans Gate Lane which the Parish Council was considering as a project.

287/15 Guest Speaker

David Rischmiller - Rural and Business Crime Co-ordinator North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership gave an introduction to himself and this new role. This role is funded by Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest district councils and designed to assist rural areas where it is perceived that residents and businesses felt that Police resources were more targeted on urban areas. He will be listing crime prevention advice, working alongside other agencies e.g. fire and probation seeking to share intelligence via a website.

He requested that all crime is reported, since it was felt that up to 60% of incidents went unrecorded. If all crime is reported then patterns are obviously seen and there is a greater chance of an arrest.

He urged all landowners with vulnerable sites to be wary of travellers' incursions, advising that the process of subsequent eviction is tortuous and tidy up bills for landowners are often significant. He can advise on prevention measures. The District Council has no powers to evict trespassers from private land.

Assistance although not funding would be available on how to 'badge' villages as safe areas, which involves a greater use for example of 'Smart Water' thus deterring criminals from coming into such areas.

288/15 Staff Salary

Council approved a resolution to exclude the public from this item due its confidential nature. The clerk also left the room.

Council approved the clerk's salary moving to the next increment in line with the contract of employment.

The clerk re-joined the meeting.

289/15 Council Insurance

Council noted that insurable risks had been reviewed and Council approved the renewal of the insurance policy with Hiscox and the payment of the premium of £914.44.

290/15 Grit bin

Council approved the purchase of an additional grit bin at a cost of £150 to be sited at Woodfield Road Bell Heath.

Action: Cllrs. Hood and Morgan via the clerk to inform W.C.C. of the desired precise position for the bin.

291/15 Scarecrow Weekend

Council approved the request from the Belbroughton Scarecrow Committee to use The Green and Sylvester's Corner Belbroughton during the forthcoming fund raising weekend.

Action: the clerk to inform the Scarecrow Committee.

292/15 Grants

a. Council approved the recommendations of the Finance Committee for the annual Capital and Minor Grants. It also approved under the Local Government Act 1972 Sec 137 a donation of £275 to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Council also approved the recommendation of the Finance Committee for the re-allocation of the unused £2,241 from Capital Grants budget to the 'Parish Projects' budget.

76.

b. Cllr. Scurrrell left the meeting prior to this item.

Following the Fairfield W.I. advising of the reasons for the delay, Council approved, that the minor grant of £150 can be made to the Fairfield W.I. which had previously been approved in 2013 but not drawn.

293/15 Defibrillator

Cllr. Scurrrell re-joined the meeting.

Cllr. Roberts informed the meeting of the proposed joint arrangement with Belbroughton Scarecrow Committee, and the Talbot Public House regarding installation and maintenance of a defibrillator along with the training requirements for operating the unit. Council approved taking ownership of the defibrillator which the Belbroughton Scarecrow Committee was to purchase and have installed on the wall at the Talbot Public House High St Belbroughton. Council further approved arranging the recruiting and the training of volunteers for its use.

Action: Cllr. Roberts and the clerk to progress with the Scarecrow Committee and The Talbot P.H.

294/15 Parish Projects

Cllr. Pawley detailed the recommendations of the 'Working Group' which had met 4th September to consider proposed projects. Council approved the recommendations.

1. Progressing the legal processes for a new footpath near to Hackmans Gate Lane, Belbroughton which involves seeking County Council agreement to the suggested diversion and then making good the new path - Funding ceiling of £2,000.
2. Upgrading of Fairfield bus shelters - Funding ceiling £1,500.
3. Belbroughton High St. purchase and installation of new Christmas lights - Funding ceiling £2,000.
4. Fairfield Village gardening works - Funding ceiling £500.

It was noted that under item 1 County Cllr. Rachel Jenkins had now pledged £1,000 from her 'Divisional Fund' to assist with the project which would therefore have funds of £3,000 available in total. It was further noted that this project would probably take longer than 12 months to be completed.

Council agreed that the 'Working Group' should meet every six months to review progress on the parish projects and to assess any fresh projects that may be proposed, taking account of future budget allocation of funds.

Action: Cllrs. to progress their individual projects with assistance from the clerk.

295/15 Ballast Pheonix Ltd - Incinerator Bottom Ash facility – Permit Decision.

Council noted that the Environment Agency were to hold a 'drop in' day Thursday 10th September at Fairfield Village Hall to explain to the public the processes they had undertaken in arriving at their 'Minded to' decision to issue the permit. Cllr. Roberts informed the meeting that the consideration of planning permission for the facility by the County Council was entirely separate and details of the fresh consultation process were awaited.

296/15 Training Courses

Council agreed to consider this item contemporaneously with agenda item 17.

Council approved the attendance by the clerk on the 'Volunteers Good Practise' course being run by Society of Local Council Clerks since it wishes in future to consider involving volunteers in community activities across the Parish.

Council noted that the website Belbroughton.com was not serving the community adequately and approved the purchase and registration of a fresh domain name to include the changed name of the parish council (Belbroughton and Fairfield). A 'Working Group' of Cllrs. Margetts, Morgan and McFarling were tasked with setting up the new site and preparing for consideration by Council its management and the content to be uploaded. Council approved an initial budget of £100.

Action: the working group to progress the domain name purchase and liaise with the clerk on operational matters.

297/15 Flags

Council approved the purchase of two Commonwealth flags at a total cost of £47. These would be flown annually on the commemorative day in the two villages commencing next year on 14th March.

Action: the clerk to arrange the purchase.

298/15 Councillor items.

Items for inclusion on future agendas:

Cllr. Pawley – the purchase of bulbs for planting at Sylvester's Corner Belbroughton.

Cllr. Boswell – Assistance for the Belbroughton United Charities for their land management.

Cllr. Margetts – the setting up of a Facebook page.

Cllr. Scurrell – The protection of Parish Council land from traveller incursions.

Cllr. Jones – Further requests to seek County Councillor's 'divisional funds' support.

Cllr. Roberts requested that a further letter was sent to the resident of the Farthings, Holy Cross Lane as there had not been the required trimming of overgrown vegetation.

Action: the clerk to send a further letter.

The Meeting was closed at 9.45 p.m.

Signed Chairman.