

Minutes of the Meeting of Belbroughton Parish Council held in the Barton Room Fairfield Village Hall on Monday 7th December 2015.

Present: Cllrs. D Roberts (Chairman), J Boswell, J Bradley, A Hood, T Jones, A Mabbett, S MacDonald, P Margetts, J McFarling, Dr R Morgan, S Nock, G Parsons, S Pawley and C Scurrall.
In attendance: J Farrell Clerk. 6 members of the public also attended.

407/15 Apologies had been received from County Cllr. Rachel Jenkins and, District Cllr. Chris Allen-Jones.

408/15 Declarations of Interest: Cllrs. Roberts, Bradley and Pawley declared an 'Other Disclosable Interest' in agenda item 14 as they were committee members of the Belbroughton History Society.

409/15 Dispensations: Written requests had been received from Cllrs. Roberts, Bradley and Pawley to remain in the meeting during the consideration of agenda item 14 and to join in the discussions but not to vote should a vote be called. Council approved the dispensation requests.

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

410/15 Minutes

The minutes of the council meeting held 2nd November were approved and signed by the Chairman after the insertion of the following wording at the commencement of minute 378/15 " The Chairman requested that references should not be made to the previous performance of the investments involving the previous I.F.A. ".

411/15 Reports

Chairman's Report: Cllr. Roberts thanked councillors, residents and the clerk who assisted with the replacement of the Christmas lights at The Green, Belbroughton. He invited members to attend the formal 'switch on' and carol service on Wednesday next at 6.30 p.m. He further commended the nativity scene erected by the Belbroughton Scarecrow Committee on Sylvester's Corner.

Agricultural Holdings Committee:

Council noted the minutes of the committee meeting of 2nd November 2015. Cllr. Hood advised that due to the recent very wet weather it was unlikely that the further planned farm walk over Stoneybridge Farm would occur until the New Year.

Planning Committee:

Council noted the minutes of the committee meeting on 16th November 2015.

Finance Committee:

Council noted the minutes of the committee meeting of 16th November 2015.

Clerk's Report:

Under delegated powers a payment was authorised of £50 towards the carol service and lights switch on at The Green, Belbroughton following a formal request to the clerk from the Council Chairman.

The new website belbroughtonandfairfield-pc.info 'administration rights' were passed over to the clerk on 3rd December. The site will in future be populated with council and committee agendas and minutes along with inputs on parish and community events and general items of information.

The Green, Belbroughton – the surveyors report on the 2 drainage options is awaited.

Mr John Penlington has been written to expressing the council's thanks for his administration for a number of years of the community website Belbroughton.com

Health and Safety work has been carried out on The Green, Belbroughton following the replacement of the Christmas lights. A trench has been dug to bury new electric cabling and an approved electrician has attended to the required connections. This work replaces the former trailing 'head height' cable which was unsatisfactory and potentially dangerous.

412/15 Meetings Venues and Dates 2016

- a. Council approved the revisiting of the decision of Council 2nd November 2015.
- b. Council approved holding the next Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 25th April 2016.

Action: The clerk to amend records.

413/15 Parish Council Budget for 2016/17

- a. Council approved the budget following the recommendations of the Finance Committee and would finally decide the level of the Precept at the January Council in case there were matters arising in the coming month that may alter the recommendation for a reduced precept from £65,000 to £60,000.
- b. Council approved the publishing of the full budget on the new website once the Precept decision had been finalised.

414/15 Parish Investments

Council noted the costs that would be incurred should it take up advice offered by an Independent Financial Advisor. Market research indicated that these costs would be circa 3% on the amount of an investment placed and ongoing costs of .5% p.a. should the investment require and the council desire ongoing monitoring. The Council approved seeking advice from an I.F.A. on available financial products but not to place any investments, and thus incurring the potential commission payments – that decision requiring to be brought back to a future council for consideration. The approval was subject to a vote with 11 voting in favour (Cllrs. D Roberts, J Boswell, J Bradley, T Jones, A Mabbett, P Margetts, J McFarling, Dr R Morgan, S Nock, G Parsons, and C Scurrell) and 3 voting against (Cllrs. Hood, MacDonald and Pawley).

Council accepted Cllr. McFarling's offer to source separately information on a range of financial products for comparison purposes only.

Action: The clerk and the Finance Committee to source an IFA to provide without obligation investment options for £100,000 of the Council's capital fund for consideration.

415/15 Parish Lengthsman

Council noted that David Aldridge was to retire 31/3/2016 after 11 years in the role. Council wished to record their gratitude for the years of excellent service. A 'Working Group' of cllrs. Mabbett, Roberts and Pawley, was set up to assess the ongoing job specification and to organise and undertake the recruitment process.

Action: The working group to meet to progress the succession process.

416/15 Ballast Phoenix Ltd - Veolia PLC – Incinerator Bottom Ash facility.

Council noted that the Environment Agency had granted the operational permit to Ballast Phoenix Ltd. However there had been no indication from the County Council regarding the position with the necessary planning permission required.

Action: The clerk to seek information on the planning application from County Cllr. Sheila Blagg.

417/15 Belbroughton Post Office

Council approved a response to the Post Office consultation regarding the proposed move of services from 24 High St to McColls Retail Group at 29-31 High St.

“ The Parish Council is pleased to see the continuance and the increased availability of services in Belbroughton. The Council however would wish the new operator and the Post Office to ensure that there is adequate disability access and that changes are made to the interior of the premises to guarantee that services are delivered in a timely manner that will retain customer satisfaction.”

Action: the clerk to inform the Post Office of the response.

418/15 Mr M Pritchard

Council decided not to invite Mr Pritchard to address the council regarding his previous actions undertaken on behalf on the council.

Action: The clerk to inform Mr Pritchard.

419/15 Tidying the Parish

The Council approved a sum of up to £500 to be spent on footway clearance of leaves and debris should the District Council not carry out the recently requested works.

Action: The clerk to source a B.D.C. contractor or separate contractor to carry out works at sites as advised to him by cllrs.

420/15 Belbroughton.com

- a. Council approved the revisiting of the decision of Council 2nd November 2015.
- b. Council defeated a motion to continue to fund the website for a further 12 months with 4 votes in favour and 5 votes against and 2 abstentions. Cllrs. Bradley, Pawley and Roberts did not take part in the vote.

Action: The clerk to inform Mr Penlington.

421/15 Crime Prevention

Council noted that there had been an aggravated burglary in Fairfield recently and Cllrs. will enquire at the forthcoming P.A.C.T meeting on 8th January as to whether CCTV on parts of Stourbridge Rd would be a feasible option.

Cllr. Roberts recommended the use of ‘Smartwater’ for protecting items in the home, with packs being available from the District Council.

Action: Attending Cllr(s) to report back to a future council.

422/15 Parish Room Belbroughton

Council noted that the November rent had now been received but December’s was yet to be paid by the tenant. In addition the rent deposit had still not been brought up to the correct figure. The clerk was asked to continue to monitor and report the position to the next Finance Committee meeting.

423/15 Fairfield Notice Boards

Council deferred consideration of this item relating to possible re-siting and replacement of the current notice board to a future Council meeting.

424/15 Parish Newsletter

Council decided that the next newsletter would be produced in the Spring 2016 which would be issued to residents prior to the Annual Parish Meeting.

425/15 Farmland Policy.

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.

426/15 Parish Council Dinner

Council noted that this was to be held in early January in Fairfield and approved the invitation including partners of former Cllrs. Dalziel, Green, Ince and Shotton. The clerk, Lengthsman and the parish gardeners would also be invited.

427/15 Councillor Items

There were no items.

The Meeting was closed at 9.59 p.m.

Signed Chairman.