



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held Online

THURSDAY 25th March 2021, 7.00pm

Present: Cllrs B McEldowney (Chair), J Bate, P Baker, I Hooper, S Osman, B Laniosh, P Masters, M Johnson

In attendance: Clerk – Carol Blake

Members not present: Cllrs G Blackmoor, T Gillespie, J Alderson

21/03-01 Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting

21/03-02 To receive apologies from any Member unable to attend

No apologies received

21/03-03 Open Forum

3.1 Members of the Public

Peter Hall talked about the issue of people parking half on and half off pavements in the area, it is not classed as illegal only if the pavement is fully obstructed but causes issues for wheelchairs and pushchairs trying to pass. Cllr Laniosh has reported a similar issue to our local police.

Alan Amor from Reddilight based in Redditch is interested in showing his Company's range of LED lighting to Parish Councillors, he is setting up a display in the grounds of his office site in a couple of weeks for Councillors to attend and see if they are interested in their range. He read in our recent Newsletter that the PC are looking into solar lighting in the area where some roads and alleyways are particularly dark and the Company are eager to meet our requirements at a reasonable price. Cllr Osman has been in contact with the Company, also visited the offices and is impressed with their range and their prices and will report back to Parish Councillors on his findings.

3.2 Worcestershire County Council member for Woodvale Division

Cllr Shirley Webb reported that COVID cases have decreased in Bromsgrove. Here to Help is still in operation. Libraries are due to open on 12th April with social distancing in place. Cllr Webb has received some complaints regarding speeding in the area and is keen to progress with the PC on updating VAS signs in the area. Cllr Hooper has an Environment and Highways meeting booked for 14th April and Cllr Webb will be invited to it to discuss ways forward.

Cllr Baker updated on Whitfield and Perryfields development and said he was not happy with the results of the pollution levels and increase in traffic that he has highlighted to Bromsgrove Council on numerous occasions, the results received from them were out of date and yet development application has been passed. There seems to be no urgency in upgrading roads or building a relief road to deal with additional traffic through the area before the development goes ahead. Cllr Webb stated that the developers have put aside £700k to deal with issues relating to this development.

3.3 Bromsgrove District Councillors for North Catshill, South Catshill and Marlbrook Wards.

Cllr Till reported on the state of the garages at Chadcote Way, a resident has complained again and threatened to go to the press to highlight the problem about the poor state of the garages and also fly tipping but the residents concerned cannot agree what needs to be done with the 20 garages in question. Bromsgrove Council cannot enter the garages as they do not own them or the land they are situated on so the situation is difficult to resolve.

Cllr Till thanked Cllr Laniosh on spending time locating the dog waste bins within the Parish.

3.4 Any other community representative

None present.

21/03/04 To re- open the meeting Parish Councillors and the Executive Officer may only speak from this point forward

21/03-05 Declarations of Interest

None raised

21/03-06 Dispensations

No member had submitted a request for dispensation to any agenda item.

21/03-07 To consider any applications for Co-option

Dean West was approved by all to be co-opted onto the Parish Council and joined the meeting.

21/03-08 Approval of Minutes of previous council meeting

It was agreed to accept the minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held 25/02/2021.

21/03-09 Chairman's Report

Chaired Bromsgrove CALC meeting Wednesday 10th March. Participated in 'Safer Bromsgrove' meeting Wednesday 17th March. The Chairman asked if anyone has any contact with Jackie Alderson, can they clarify if she wishes to remain on the PC. She is not responding to emails and not responded to phone messages left on her voicemail.

Thanks to Jill, Sami, Brett and Phil for assisting with delivering the Parish magazines. All were delivered within one week of receiving them.

9.1 Catshill Survey Results –Very useful results from the survey carried out which we should be aware of and provides PC with opportunities to identify future projects. Brief discussion ensued and Chairman stated that there is no rush with identifying what is required at the moment as it is an on-going issue and will be a continual item on the agenda for further discussions and more details can be added as we pursue.

9.2 Precept Increase – A mistake arose with the precept figures for 2021/2022 which Chairman, Clerk and Cllr Baker tried to resolve before the Council Tax bills were sent out to residents. This was highlighted after a Bromsgrove Councillor put it on his Facebook page. There were numerous phone calls and emails sent from the Clerk to BDC with very little or no response. Finally the Chairman and Cllr Baker pressed for a zoom meeting with the Head of Finance and the Financial Support Manager at BDC to try and resolve the issue and they said that the Council tax bills had been prepared for delivery and that to reverse the decision would cost £35,000 to reprint the bills etc., and that PC would be liable to pay that bill. Given that was even more than the extra money the new increase would generate, that was simply not an option. The PC rise equates to an average increase of £8 per year. The Chairman provided a press release to the Advertiser explaining what had happened and details were also released on the PC website and Facebook page explaining what had happened and asking residents to come up with any ideas on how to spend the extra money. This is on-going and ideas are being sent in.

9.3 Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting Dates – At the moment legislation for holding virtual meetings expires on 7th May, this may change as time goes on and lockdown eases but PC need to consider the two annual meetings normally held. There is no legal penalty if the PC do not convene the Annual Parish Meeting as PC's did not hold them last year due to lockdown.

It was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Council meeting on 29th April and wait and see what transpires later in the year.

9.4 London Bridge – Documents were provided and briefly discussed giving guidance and protocol in the case of the death of Senior National figure. It is likely that instructions will be issued by the Palace at that time and Government guidance would follow.

9.5 Neil Ward Update - Neil has not responded to the letter that was sent out to him asking if he still wished to participate as a Parish Councillor so the Chairman stated that there is no option but to disqualify him from the Parish Council.

21/03-10 Clerk’s report on delegated actions, update and list of communications

10.1 Complaint regarding speeding – Clerk has received complaint regarding speeding in Wildmore Lane which will be discussed in Highways meeting in April.

10.2 Thanks from Jim Quinn – Clerk has contacted previous Assistant Clerk and he has asked Clerk to send his thanks to all Parish Councillors for his retirement gift, card and also the Newsletter item, he was very surprised and touched by the generosity.

10.3 Lengthsman Contract to be agreed – Contract for 2021-2022 was shared and it was agreed that it correctly reflected the tasks of the Lengthsman and also the pay increase from 1st April.

General Correspondence received:

Weekly CALC updates ; weekly BDC planning lists, WCC road works lists and reports,

21/03-11 Finance

11.1 Payments and receipts report to 20/03/2021

An excerpt from the council’s accounts spreadsheet for March had been sent along with the bank reconciliation to 20/03/2021 is as follows:

Bank Reconciliation as at 20/03/2021			
Opening Cash Book balance		£68,644.30	
Add receipts between 1 April - 20 Mar 2021	58,584.39		
Less payments between 1 April - 20 Mar 2021	-41,092.82		
Cashbook balance at 20 Mar 2021		£86,135.87	A
Bank statements at 20 Mar 2021			
Unity Trust Bank	87,633.90		
Soldo card	68.57		
Less unpresented cheques, as list below	1,566.60		
Bank balances at 20 Mar 2021		£86,135.87	B

21/03-12 Items for Discussion

12.1 Community Arts during Lockdown and Subsidised Outdoor Performances – Cllr Osman

Cllr Osman has contacted Live and Local, they provide various performing acts which seem more feasible to PC at present, they are very heavily subsidised and would cost £65.00. Cllr Osman suggested a Summer fete with a musical influence and he would be happy to organise it. If it went ahead then this could be promoted in the Summer edition of the Newsletter along with any other events PC decide would be safe.

12.2 Update on Baptist Garden – Cllr Hooper

Two quotes have been obtained on updating the Baptist Garden, phase 1 which will happen on 17th and 18th April will be to clean up the area, phase 2 will happen in June when the path will be put down. The existing wall and fencing will be removed and a path with underlay and 7 hardwood sleepers will be erected, also a future plan for a remembrance tree within the garden, the cost is approx. £404.85.

It was agreed by all to accept this quote.

12.3 Dog Waste Bins – Cllr Laniosh

The Chairman asked that this item is discussed in April's Environment and Highways Committee meeting and report back to FPC with results.

12.4 CNMPC Website – Cllr Laniosh

Cllr Laniosh would like to see that the meetings page on PC website is simplified and other issues to be discussed around being more user friendly. **It was agreed** that this would be discussed in the Communications Meeting when Cllr Masters sets it up.

12.5 PC Communications Group Strategy and Community Engagement – Cllr Laniosh

It was agreed that Cllr Masters would arrange a Communications Meeting to discuss the issues highlighted and the findings reported back to FPC.

21-03-13 Committee and Representative Reports.

To include any relevant feedback from working group leads:

13.1 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – No update

13.2 Environment and Highways Committee – (Cllr Hooper)

Railings at the War Memorial have been taken down to be powder coated. The bus shelters in the area were briefly discussed but the Chairman wanted this issue to be talked and discussed in next month's Highways and Environment Committee meeting and brought back to FPC then.

13.3 Whitford Vale and Perryfields Development – (Cllr Baker)

Previously discussed at point 3.2 whilst Cllr Webb was in attendance so nothing else to report.

13.4 Planning Committee – No report provided

13.5 Finance and Staffing Committee – (Cllr P Baker)

Cllr Baker reported that there is plenty of money to be spent on any Capital or Special Projects this year if required. The Clerk's appraisal was completed this week by Cllr Baker and Cllr McEldowney and **it was agreed** that Clerk would go up a spinal point from 1st April.

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- 13.6 Newsletter and Events Committee – (Cllr P Masters)** – Cllr Masters reported that the current News Magazine was very impressive and he had received a number of compliments regarding it.
- 13.7 Village Hall Management Committee – (Cllr Bate)** – A meeting was held with ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) which is a national charity speaking up for and supporting rural communities. They provide guidance and information on dealing with COVID when opening up venues when lockdown is eased. The Village Hall is opening on 12th April, initially only for children’s groups and will be cutting down on holding parties at the weekend, there will be one party on Saturday’s only for next six months to begin with.

This meeting ended at 21:10 hrs

21/03-14 Date and time of next meeting: Annual Parish Council Meeting 29/04/2021 @ 19:00

Excerpt of spreadsheet Mar 2021

Payee	How Paid	Inv ref	Description	Receipts	Gross	Vat	Net
Mar-21							
Salaries	S/O	v175-177	LP salary Mar 2021		1,064.53		1,064.53
Mr J Quinn	BACS	v178	Retirement Gift		60.00		60.00
Worcestershire County Council		r13	Lengthsman reimbursement	100.00			
Worcestershire County Council		r14	Lengthsman reimbursement	200.00			
O2	d/d	v179	office mobiles		40.42	6.74	33.68
Talk Talk	d/d	v180	Office phone and broadband		44.45		44.45
Allen Farnsworth	BACS	v181	Lengthsman Feb		200.00		200.00
David Webb	BACS	V182	Newsletters Spring and Autumn 2020		100.00		100.00
HMRC	BACS	V183	Month 10,11 PAYE & NI		142.07		142.07
Soldo Monthly Fee Zoom	Soldo	v184	Zoom		14.39	2.40	11.99
Soldo Monthly Fee			Microsoft monthly sub		7.99		7.99
Cartridge Save			Black ink cartridge		18.49	3.08	15.41
Viking			Laptop Riser		18.47		18.47
KOS	D/D	v185	Colour copies off printer standard charge		27.00	4.50	22.50
				300.00	1,737.81	16.72	1,721.09
			Total for year to 31/03/2021	58,584.39	41,092.82	2,682.55	38,410.27