



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Catshill Village Hall

Thursday 19th October 2023, 7.00pm

Present: Cllrs B McEldowney (Chair), P Masters, M Amin,
K Burgess, J Parry, S Osman, S Khafajizadeh

In attendance: Clerk – Carol Blake

Apologies – Cllr's Laniosh

Members not present:

23/10-01 Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting

23/10-02 To receive apologies from any Member unable to attend

Apologies had been received from Cllr Laniosh.

23/10-03 Open Forum

3.1 Members of the Public

Two members of the public were present, Sarah Preston and Claire Howdall.

3.2 Worcs County Councillor for the Woodvale Division.

No update received.

3.3 Bromsgrove District Councillors for North Catshill, South Catshill and

Marlbrook Wards Cllr McEldowney reported that an agreement has been reached with the Core Theatre and Solihull MBC for them to run a number of shows, including pantomimes, at the Artrix over the new few months. Work is still going on with Bromsgrove Community Arts (BCA) for them to either fully take over running the venue sometime next year or to share the venue with the Core Theatre. The newly formed BCA – a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) – will be co-ordinating The Core @ Artrix's front of house and bar staff volunteers. The BCA is aimed at providing venues and facilities within Bromsgrove for groups to use for art activities, focusing on a community and volunteer-led approach. The group's trustees are prominent individuals from the arts world in Bromsgrove.

As a member of the Audit Standards and Governance Committee Cllr McEldowney agreed to become the Risk Champion for BDC. In that capacity a lengthy email was sent to the Acting Chief Executive of BDC Sue Hanley, asking her a number of questions in response to the recent problems being experienced by Birmingham City Council, which has effectively gone bankrupt, due to a long running equal pay claim. The main purpose of the email was to try and ascertain if BDC had potentially similar problems of unequal pay, which could have massive financial implications for BDC. Cllr McEldowney also asked if they had changed their policies and procedures in response to the previous similar equal pay claim which Birmingham City Council, experienced about 10 years ago, and which had then cost them £1 Billion to resolve.

3.4 Any other community representative

No update.

23/10-04 Declarations of Interest

None received.

23/10-05 To re- open the meeting Parish Councillors and the Executive Officer may only speak from this point forward

23/10-06 Dispensations

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

23/10-07 Approval of Minutes of previous council meeting and previous matters arising
It was agreed to accept the minutes of the previous Full Parish Council meeting held 28/09/2023.

23/10-08 Chairman's Report

The Chairman updated members on the various meetings he had attended during the month.

8.1 Remembrance Day – Cllr McEldowney attended a meeting at the village hall on 3rd October to discuss this year's service. The clerk will contact Daren Lacey to order a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council. **It was agreed** that Cllr Masters will lay the PC wreath this year. The weather will be monitored nearer the time of the event as to whether the gazebo needs to be erected if it is raining or whether outdoor seating needs to be arranged if the weather is fine.

8.2 Christmas Party Event – Phil Lacey has been contacted by a charity who is willing to fund and run a Christmas Party event this year. The charity has secured funding from various organisations; they are an official registered local charity and were involved in the Bromsgrove Ukraine effort. **It was agreed** to proceed with this idea, Cllr Osman will contact Phil Lacey and inform him of the Parish Council agreement to this.

8.3 Christmas Lights Switch On - **It was agreed** to ratify the £150 for this year's Christmas tree. Cllr Parry raised her concerns for this event and the Halloween event as Cllr Webb has withdrawn her participation due to the allegations made against her by Cllr Amin that are currently being investigated. Cllr Webb feels that it is prudent, while these inquiries are underway, that she severs all informal and formal ties with the Parish Council, its individual members, and employees. Cllr Amin offered his help with these events, but as he is a new Parish Councillor it was agreed that he would not have the knowledge or experience on who to contact and what needs to be done to ensure that these events comply with legal requirements. After a discussion Cllr Amin decided to step back from his PC duties and return when the disputes are resolved, he was upset and saddened that it has come to this and will continue with his query with Claire Fenton who is the Monitoring Officer at Bromsgrove District Council.

As it was not clear to everybody about whether Cllr Amin has resigned completely Cllr McEldowney will contact him to clarify his intentions and will confirm this to all Parish Councillors once it is has been confirmed.

8.4 Bonfire Event - It was agreed that the Scouts could keep 100% of the gate takings and vendor takings from this year’s event. The scouts will be asked to pay for the extra toilets and the Meadow rental fee of £1000. A full written breakdown of money collected from this year’s event will be required once it has been finalised. Cllr Burgess will be assisting in counting the money collected from the gates. Earlier this week the scouts had informed the PC that they would be removing themselves from participating in this year’s event due to recent comments made by Cllr Amin, that are currently under investigation. **It was agreed** that the clerk will email Phil Lacey to inform him of the decision taken by the PC in relation to the allocation of gate and vendor receipts etc, and he will be asked to clarify whether the Scouts are willing to reconsider their decision to withdraw from running this event.

8.5 Halloween Event - Cllr Parry raised her concerns about this event too, as previously reported at point 8.3. After Cllr Amin confirmed that he will be temporarily stepping down it was agreed that Cllr Parry will contact Cllr Webb, update her on the situation, and ask that she rethinks her proposal to remove herself from participating in the events and becomes involved again.

Cllr Amin left the meeting @ 8:20

23/10-09

Finance

9.1 The payments and receipts report to 16/10/2023 see below was received and noted.

The council’s accounts spreadsheet for Oct 2023 was circulated.

An excerpt from the council’s accounts spreadsheet for Sept had been sent along with the bank reconciliation to 16/10/2023 it is as follows:

Bank Reconciliation as at 16/10/2023			
Opening Cash Book balance		£102,483.02	
Add receipts between 1 April - 16 Oct 2023	52,551.05		
Less payments between 1 April - 16 Oct 2023	-38,773.57		
Cashbook balance at 16 Oct 2023		£116,260.50	A
Bank statements at 16 Oct 2023			
Unity Trust Bank	116,224.15		
Soldo account	36.35		
Bank balances at 16 Oct 2023		£116,260.50	B

9.2 Internal Audit quote for 23/24 - It was agreed to accept the internal auditor’s quote for £190.00 for this year’s financial audit.

9.3 Summer Plants quotation – It was agreed to accept the summer plants quotation of £420 plus VAT which is the same price as the previous year.

- 9.4 Winter plants update for Ivy Cottage Garden** – The Clerk reported that Birmingham City Council have not responded to her calls or emails regarding the replanting of the Ivy Cottage Garden for Winter. Cllr Burgess will contact Cofton Nursery to see if they will provide a quote and will feedback to members.
Cllr Parry will contact Willowbrook to see if they are interested in providing a quote too.

23/10-10 **Items for Discussion**

- 10.1 Purchasing a Wi-Fi shelter for skate park** Deferred until next meeting.
- 10.2 Purchasing another VAS sign for the area** Deferred until next meeting.
- 10.3 Costing for maintaining The Dock** – Cllr Osman has contacted the Parish Council gardener, and he is already maintaining the Dock. It needs some maintenance as the sleepers and the rocks have become dislodged, this will be looked at next year.
- 10.4 COVID memorial garden quotes** – Cllr Osman - Quotes have been requested and once received Cllr Osman will arrange a meeting to discuss what needs to be done and how much it is likely to cost.

23/09-11 **Committee and Representatives Report**

- 11.1 News Magazine** – Cllr Masters reported that the News Magazines have been collected from the printers today and will be distributed as soon as possible.
- 11.2 Junior Councillors** – Cllr Laniosh - Cllr Burgess and Cllr Laniosh attended a meeting with the Junior councillors on 2nd October. The number of new Junior Councillors made up of children from different year groups has increased. At a meeting held at Catshill Middle School with Cllrs Karl Burgess and Brett Laniosh in October, the group discussed a number of issues of concern. These included litter (the replacement bin on Millennium Walk was welcomed), threats from teenagers, vicious dogs and e-scooters. They also mentioned that vapes and alcohol were being offered to them. These issues and a request for more play equipment for younger children will be taken to the Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council for discussion at their next meeting.
- 11.3 Footpaths Working group** – Cllr Laniosh - On 17th October, the group installed a pedestrian gate on the previously blocked footpath that links Wildmoor Lane with Meadow Farm. Cllr Laniosh will be meeting the Public Rights of Way team from Worc County Council on 31st October. The November task for the group is to install waymark posts on the path that links Little Barnsley Farm and Millennium Way.

Meeting finished @ 21:10

Excerpt from accounts spreadsheet and half yearly budget figures for October 23

<u>Oct-23</u>							
JRB Enterprise Ltd	BACS	v098	10 Boxes of Dog waste bags		327.60	54.60	273.00
Bromsgrove District Council	BACS	V099	Recharge invoice for uncontested elections		389.20		389.20
Unity Trust Bank	d/d	v100	Bank charge, 2nd quarter		18.00	-	18.00
ICO	D/D	v101	Data Protection Fee		35.00		35.00
Water Plus	d/d	v102	Water Ivy Cottage Gardens		7.81		7.81
Talk Talk	d/d	v103	Office phone and broadband Sept 2023		49.95		49.95
Bromsgrove District Council		R7	Second half of 2023/24 precept	25,402.50			-
O2	d/d	v104	office mobile		17.28	2.88	14.40
Grenke	D/D	V105	Grenke Leasing for Copier		76.97	12.83	64.14
Worcestershire County Council		R8	Lengthsman Refund Aug 2023	252.25			-
Worcestershire County Council		R9	Lengthsman Refund July 2023	269.50			-
				25,924.25	921.81	70.31	851.50
				52,551.05	38,773.57	3,534.21	35,239.36

