



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held at CATSHILL VILLAGE HALL

GOLDEN CROSS LANE, CATSHILL, B61 0JZ

THURSDAY 27th July 2017, 7.30pm

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

In attendance: Clerk – R Powell; Ms V Harman, Ms C Stark, Michelle Johnson (Community Liaison Officer, Network Expansion, Virgin Media) and Christopher Miles (Build Engineer, Virgin Media)

17/07-01 Chairman's welcome

Cllr O Sweeting welcomed all present to the meeting, including two members of the public who were interested in the vacancies on the Council, BDCouncillor Brian Cooper and two representatives of Virgin Media

17/07-02 Members' Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs J Bate, M Knight, and M Shephard and WCC/BDC S Webb

17/07-03 Co-option

It was noted that there were two vacant seats on the Council which it was hoped would be filled by Co-option. It was noted that interested parties were in attendance that night.

17/07-04 Open Forum

4.1 Members of the Public

Michelle Johnson and Christopher Miles gave a presentation about the roll out of superfast broadband from Virgin Media within the Parish. Members had the opportunity to ask questions and view maps in relation to the subject. Leaflets were left with the Clerk that included Frequently Asked Questions.

Michelle and Christopher left at this point in the meeting.

4.2 Worcs County Councillor for the Woodvale Division

Councillor Shirley Webb had sent her apologies and a copy of her report had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting (see attached)

Members took this opportunity to discuss the presentation that had just taken place with some concern voiced about the recent deal it was believed WCC had undertaken with BT which seemed to duplicate what was being offered by Virgin.

It was suggested that the portfolio holder could be asked to attend September's meeting and if feelings were strong in relation to this issue then a lead Councillor could be appointed to carry out further research into the subject.

It was agreed to bring this issue to the September Full Parish Council.

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

District Councillor Shirley Webb had sent her apologies and her report had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

District Councillor Brian Cooper reported that it had been quiet at District Level and the auditors continued to look at the books. In relation to Marlbrook there was nothing to report. There had been rumours of 165 houses being built in Marlbrook under Lickey and Blackwell Parish, but Cllr Cooper wished to assure residents that this could not and would not be happening due to the potential site being Green Belt.

Cllr Sweeting took the opportunity to ask Cllr Cooper's views on Catshill in Bloom and his thoughts in relation to North Marlbrook should the Parish Council become involved. Cllr Cooper thanked the Parish Council for considering it but felt that the area covered by the Parish Council within North Marlbrook was so small that there were not many areas for an initiative such as

this to take place. Cllr Cooper requested that any decision made in relation to this be communicated to him.

Cllr Cooper left the meeting at 20:11hrs

4.4 Any other community representative

No community representatives were present.

17/07-05 The meeting was closed for Open-Forum and re-opened.

17/07-06 Declarations of Interest

No member stated any declarable interest.

17/07-07 Dispensations

No new requests for dispensations had been received.

17/07-08 Approval of Minutes of previous council meeting

It was agreed to accept the minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held 29/06/17. The minutes were approved page by page and duly signed by the Chairman.

A member of the Parish Council took this opportunity to query the decision that had been made on 29/06/17 in relation to the purchase of a defibrillator and the price that was to be paid, stating that he had seen some that were priced lower.

The Clerk explained that the company that was to be used had also been used by BDC and that they have to go through procurement procedure when selecting who to use. In addition, the Clerk had requested further quotes and it was established that they came out at around the same price for an external defibrillator with mild variations in relation to installation etc. It was established that the lower priced defibrillators that were referred to were those that were to be installed indoors as opposed to the one needed by the Parish Council which would be installed outdoors.

Cllr Masters brought to the attention of the meeting that a fault had been discovered in a certain brand of defibrillators. The Clerk would establish if these were the make to be provided by the company being used by the Parish Council.

17/07-09 Members' Questions

Cllr N Ward had requested that the Parish Council consider the budget for this year's Christmas Party for the elderly.

Cllr Ward reported that the cost the previous year, funded by a benefactor, was £1200 which worked out at approximately £24 a head to include food, drinks, crockery, presents, a singer etc. Members discussed the pricing.

It was agreed that Cllr Ward would bring a breakdown of prices to the September FPC in order to establish if any amendments could be made that would reduce the price per head without affecting the quality, in the light that Cllr Ward hoped to attract more people to the event.

17/07-10 Chairman's Report

Cllr Sweeting reported that much of his involvement that month had been in the company of other Councillors or hard working Clerks so he did not wish to labour any points. There would be reports from the various people and the opportunity to debate the issues as the meeting progressed.

Cllr Sweeting had a very informative meeting in the area of the balancing pools on the potential for the construction of a footpath and the planting of a number of trees, which would be reported on later, but he wished to take the opportunity to thank Councillor Helen Jones for her assistance and for providing an officer with the relevant expertise.

Cllr Sweeting also attended the meeting run by Highways England to report on the traffic issues impending roadworks to the elevated sections of motorways in Birmingham would bring, and in doing so managed to secure an invitation to their structural laboratories in Birmingham to discuss the method of construction being used, which he was very much looking forward to. Cllr Sweeting wished to thank Cllr Shephard for his instruction on watering the Ivy Cottage garden and the opportunity to do so as he had had the opportunity to speak to many more parishioners than usual.

Cllr Sweeting noted that Cllr S Webb had a number of initiatives currently, meetings of which were taking place at the Pavilion on the Meadow. Cllr Sweeting had been led to believe that this was due to the Village Hall being in the ward of another Councillor. Cllr Sweeting hoped that this was not the case as the governing document of the Village Hall clearly states that the Hall must remain Non-political with no religious bias and for the use of the entire village.

Cllr Sweeting outlined items that would be discussed later including Catshill in Bloom and whether the Parish Council felt able to support it when they represent North Marlbrook too, and also the Christmas light initiative and co-ordinating this with the tree light switch on and the craft fair.

Cllr Sweeting had spent time with the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan who was progressing well and was virtually ready to begin the statistical analysis of the survey results. He had also recruited a new gentleman to the group who would become environmental lead and was well suited to the task.

Cllr Sweeting noted that all he had briefly touched on would be discussed throughout the meeting.

17/07-11 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 of interest received in relation to the vacancies, and reports of a broken fixing on the park at the bottom of Milton Road, which had been passed to BDC for attention. In addition, there had been contact from a resident who was concerned about the potential new builds that Cllr Cooper had mentioned in his report which the Clerk had responded to with the assistance of Cllr Gillespie and the Chair of Bromsgrove Planning Department, informing that there was no planning application in place and the suggested area was also Green Belt so no development would be happening there.

11.2 Meeting regarding suggested Balance Pool path and trees (06/07/17) (report circulated)

The Clerk projected a map of the area and reported regarding the outcome of the meeting (see attached)

Members discussed the situation of the suggested path, the pricing and the use of the area by residents as a comparison to this.

It was agreed to take this item to the Environment and Highways Committee.

11.3 Meeting regarding Neighbourhood Watch Scheme Co-ordination (24/07/17)

The Clerk had met with a Community Support Officer and the Watch Scheme Review Officer. It had been an interesting meeting which included further discussions in relation to Smart Water and the fact you could use it in smaller targeted areas rather than the whole Parish. There was also discussion in relation to the use of UV pens.

The Watch Scheme is volunteer based, separate from the Police but with the ability to be supported by them. A volunteer could cover a few houses or a few streets and if they wished to be registered as a co-ordinator this should be done nationally, locally and with the police team. They would then have access to resources, leaflets etc, attend meetings and can have training on how to administer an official Facebook page that could be supported by the police. Any signs for the area would be charged but this would be minimal.

The Clerk felt that the best approach was to write an article for the newsletter asking for anyone who would be interested in being involved, then work from there. There had also been discussions regarding 'We Don't Buy Crime' events that could be run with enough interest. Finally, the newsletter article should also include the link to CMS which anyone could access and provides live reports of crime within the area.

11.4 Feedback in relation to the recordings of meetings

The Finance and Staffing Committee had asked if further information could be found in relation to the allowance of recordings of meetings in view of how easily documents can be doctored using current technology and once uploaded to the internet are difficult to remove, with the concern that these could be used to reflect badly on the Council.

The Clerk had found the legal document that had led to this information in the Parish Council's procedures and there was no way of stopping this happening if Parishioners wished to record meetings, unless the recording was causing disruption or a Member of the Public had asked not be included. The Clerk had also contacted Worcester CALC for further confirmation and they had agreed with the Clerk's verdict. However, there was a suggestion that if the Parish Council were concerned, they could record their own meetings as evidence to counterbalance any Parishioner recordings. CALC had also sent some additional information which Cllr P Baker was reviewing in relation to the Parish Council's procedures and would update the next Finance and Staffing Committee with his findings.

11.5 Tarmac under notice board at Old Birmingham Road/Braces Lane junction. To include consideration of the addition of a flower trough at this location (decision required)

The Clerk had liaised with Cllr S Webb who had attended site with Richard Clewer from Highways and he had agreed to tarmac underneath Catshill and North Marlbrook's notice board. The Clerk had asked for the whole strip to be tarmacked and although it was Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish land, had emailed the Clerk at Lickey And Blackwell out of courtesy in relation to the action, it also being underneath their notice board. Cllr S Webb felt this area would then be appropriate for a planter, as requested by a resident. However, the Clerk wanted clarification from Richard Clewer, as he had originally suggested the area was too narrow for such an addition. No decision needed to be made in relation to this until further correspondence with Richard Clewer.

The Clerk would bring this item to the next Environment and Highways Committee.

11.6 Catshill and North Marlbrook Place Name signs

The Clerk projected an image of a suggested sign to be used on key points on entrance to the Parish. These were costed at approximately £160 per sign and the Clerk felt that additional sites in North Marlbrook should be discussed.

The Clerk would bring this item to the next Environment and Highways Committee.

11.7 Meeting with Cllr Webb regarding proposed initiatives including Catshill in Bloom, Christmas Light switch on and Dementia Friends

The Clerk informed Members that there would be a meeting on Monday 14th August 2017 at 10am at the Pavilion, The Meadows, Catshill with the Dementia Friends Society to plan going forward.

Cllr S Webb had outlined her plans to the Clerk in relation to Catshill in Bloom and a Christmas light switch on. A meeting to discuss the way forward with Catshill in Bloom would be held on 17th August at 6pm at the Pavilion on the Meadows. There was funding available to assist with the initiative and the applications would be made around April next year. Shops and Businesses in Golden Cross Lane had been approached and were interested in the venture and WillowBrook Garden Centre were also interested in sponsoring and being involved in the event. In relation to the Christmas lights, the Clerk outlined prices obtained for ex-display models but also highlighted that an email received that evening may mean that the suggested lampposts may not be able to be used. Bromsgrove Towns Centre Manager had discussed the Christmas event with the Clerk and had already approached businesses with a view to carrying out a 'best dressed window' display and residents that would be effected would be informed. The Bromsgrove Centres manager had suggested an informal meeting to discuss the way forward if the Parish Council were interested in being involved.

Relevant correspondence available from the Clerk: includes weekly CALC updates July 2017; weekly updates from BDC Planning lists, WCC road works lists and reports, Neighbourhood Watch Alerts, M5 J4A to J6 updates and newsletters, NRSWA, Bromsgrove and Redditch Parenting and Family Support Service Brochure, Bromsgrove Advertiser, Carers Careline Latest Newsletter, Major Renewal Scheme, Oldbury Viaduct M5, PCC updates, North Rural July Newsletter and links to new websites, Wellbeing in Partnership July 2017, Your Life Your Choice new website

Cllr M Ball left at this point in the meeting (20:58) due to a previous commitment and Cllr Sweeting wished it noted that an apology be issued to Cllr Ball as, due to the lengthy running of the meeting, he was unable to report back on his lead initiatives before leaving the meeting.

NB: The Finance and Staffing Committee that was to be held this month was cancelled due to lack of content for the meeting.

12.1 Planning Committee – 20/07/17 (Cllr T Gillespie)

Cllr Gillespie reported that due to lack of plans the meeting had been cancelled. One application had been received that was carried out under delegated powers for Mayfield Close. This was in Green belt and had a likelihood of flooding so the Committee had objected to the plans.

Cllr Gillespie reported that she had assisted with the issue in relation to Cala Homes in North Marlbrook and their false claim to be building houses in that area.

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

- **Neighbourhood Plan; Here to stay? Seminar – 20/07/17 (Cllr B McEldowney)**

Cllr McEldowney reported that it was a decent seminar with a number of speakers, including information in relation to good practice and legal updates following the Neighbourhood Plan Act coming into force the day before. There were many relevant points that would be applicable to the Parish's own plan.

- **Highways England West Midlands Update – 14/07/17 (Cllr P Baker)**

Cllr Baker reported about the meeting that was in relation to the action being taken to mitigate the effect of all the traffic that would be caused by the works that were currently taking place. M5 junction 1-2 needs to be repaired or it will eventually collapse. Lanes would be closed in this stretch and a lower speed limit enforced. It was not possible to close it off and have all traffic on one side as the bridge would tilt. The work here would be lasting for another 18 months. Cllr P Baker had made comment on the severe drop in speed limit in this area from 70mph to 40mph in relation to possible road traffic accidents.

Other work being completed included Spaghetti Junction's weekend structural work and another Smart Motorway upgrade in Coventry which would take 4 years to do and cost approximately £112 million. Once this was complete there would be masses of work on the Eastern side of the West Midlands to support HS2 route.

None of the work affects Catshill too badly. Cllr Baker had questioned the use of moving adverts on the side of the motorway in relation to distraction of drivers and had been informed this was under the control of the Local Authority rather than Highways.

- **Village Hall Management Committee (Cllr J Bate)**

In the absence of Cllr Bate, Cllr Sweeting reported that rotten fascia boards had been removed at the back of the hall and replaced, along with the addition of new guttering. The new Manager of the Hall was doing well and her husband was also getting involved in designing a Village Hall Flag in Parish Council colours. There would hopefully soon be guttering around the canopy at the hall entrance and a paved area running from the Parish Office to the smoking area. Due to the treasurer of the hall being unwell, losing his job and now being on a training course in Bradford for 3 months, one of the new Members of the Management Committee would be taking over the Finances.

- **Marlbrook Tip Update – 10/07/17 (Cllr B McEldowney)**

Cllr McEldowney provided a report in the meeting (see attached)

- **Newsletter (Cllr P Masters)**

Cllr Masters projected each of the photographs he had organised for the newsletter. Members needed to make a decision as to when to publish the newsletter.

It was agreed to aim for completion by the end of September and include adverts for the Bonfire, Remembrance Service and Christmas Meal in this edition.

It was agreed during this Agenda Item to move Standing Orders to extend the meeting to complete business.

- **3 monthly update regarding the resident garden in Barley Mow Lane (Cllr M Ball)**

Cllr Ball had left prior to this Agenda Item but Cllr McEldowney reported on his behalf that the garden referred to continued to improve.

17/07-13 Finance

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

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

17/07-14 To receive and agree suggested comments to the following consultations:

- **Consultation on NJC Pay Claim for 2018-19 – deadline for comment 31st July 2017 (Cllr P Baker)**

Cllr Baker had provided a report that had been circulated and contained three suggested comments (see attached).

It was agreed to submit the comments as presented.

Cllr Baker was thanked for an excellent report

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

- **Proposed cuts at Evesham and Malvern Fire Stations (Cllr M Ball)**

As Cllr Ball had left by this point in the Agenda, Cllr B McEldowney read out the report on his behalf for both of the above items.

Cllr McEldowney suggested he would work with Cllr Ball to provide a more formal response prior to the deadline date.

Cllr Sweeting wished apologies to be passed to Cllr Ball that the Agenda Item had not been covered before his need to leave.

17/07-15 To consider, and appoint a lead Councillor, for the following consultation (document circulated):

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

It was agreed that Cllr P Baker would be lead Councillor for this consultation

17/07-16 To review the following Policies (documents circulated); Cllr P Baker to lead

- **Equal Opportunities policy**

There were no recommendations to change the content of the policy.

It was agreed to endorse the policy as it stands

- **Donations Policy**

There were no recommendations to change the content of the policy.

It was agreed to endorse the policy as it stands

17/07-17 To discuss the possibility of implementing different road and speed signage around the school areas

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

17/07-18 Items for the next meeting

Members were requested to inform the Clerk of any items for the next meeting

17/07-19 Date and time of next meetings:

- Planning Committee (if needed) – 24/08/17
- Environment and Highways Committee – 07/09/17
- Planning Committee – 21/09/17
- Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – 27/09/17
- Full Parish Council 28/09/17

- All meetings at Catshill Village Hall, 7:30pm unless otherwise stated

Please note that the Parish Council Office will be closed for the month of August and re-open on Monday 4th September 2017. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk remain available via email and telephone during this time.

This meeting ended at 21:43 hrs

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

Minute no. 17/07-13.1

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

Date	Payment Voucher no.	Receipt Voucher no.	Chq No	Details	Receipts	Payments	VAT Paid
July	V050		online	Allen Farnsworth Lengthsman - June 2017 (to include postcrete and travel for installing dog bag dispensers as requested)		209	
	V051		online	Birmingham City Council - planting of Ivy Cottage garden		852.68	142.11
	V052		300920	Meadowfields Ground Maintenance Ltd - June 2017		237.6	39.6
	V053		d/d	Worcestershire Telecare - Lone Worker Service		33.85	5.64
	V054		d/d	EE - Office mobile - July 17		21.4	3.57
	V055		d/d	Talk Talk - Office Phone and Broadband (June 17)		42.48	
	V056		300921	Bromsgrove and Redditch CAB - Grant as per minute number 17/06-13.3		600	
	V057		s/o and online	Salaries		1109.78	
		R3		BP Services - small advert in Spring 2017 newsletter	30		
		R4		Phoenix Carpets - half page advert in Spring 2017 newsletter	60		
	V060		d/d	Unity Trust Bank Service Charge		18	
				sub-total	21452.6	15796.76	988.27

Bank Reconciliation and budget comparison as at 25/07/17					
Finances at start of year	50,195.66				
Add receipts	21,452.60			Bank a/c as at 25/07/17	37,722.80
		71,648.26		Deposit a/c, Co-op	21,171.61
Less payments		15,796.76		Less unrepresented cheques	3,042.91
		55,851.50			55,851.50
					0.00
RECEIPTS	Budget 2017/18	actual to date		u/p cheques	
Precept	42,346	21,173		V050	209.00
DCLG CTSG	-			V051	852.68
Interest	300			V052	237.60
Lengthsman*	2,104			V053	33.85
Donations/other/§	500	190		V056	600.00
Newsletter advert	300	90		V057	157.00
VAT refund	2,000			V058	178.22
Reserve Fund	6,000			V059	774.56
	53,550.00	21,452.60			3042.91
PAYMENTS					
Staff Costs	21,500	4,797			
Administration inc off	4,000	1,394			
CALC inc travel expens	1,200	1,042			
Audit	400	170			
Training	1,500	-			
Insurance	1,000	851			
Members expenses	400	25			
Elections	1,500	-			
Grants : NWWA, Scou	2,600	896			
Events - Fun Day/R Su	3,500	500			
Communications - nev	1,350	420			
Gardens (includes wat	2,500	1,503			
War Memorial (includ	1,000	69			
Lengthsman	2,500	785	budget/precept (intended expenditure)	11434.41	
Environment eg main	500	777	Specific reserve (capital expenditure)	15,700.00	
Neighbourhood Plan	2,000	1,580	Emergency Reserve (fixed capital)	31,760.00	
Capital Projects *	6,000	-	Discretionary Reserve	-	
Section 137	100	-		58,894.41	
VAT paid		988	unrepresented cheques	3,042.91	
			balance	55,851.50	
Total	53,550.00	15,796.76			

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

Reports:

County Councillor Shirley Webb

Woodvale Division - July 2017 Report

Gigaclear Deployment

Unfortunately, we still have delays with Gigaclear. Gigaclear have advised they will not continue to supply once Rowney Green is completed, Dodford one of the areas affected, WCC asking to negotiate to continue deployment.

Yarnold Lane

Resident issues with HGV – A meeting with residents to discuss and also to assess the condition of the lane. Advised to arrange a meeting with the owner, Parish Council and District Councillor Karen May. Highways assessed the lane for damage and will continue to monitor.

Bromsgrove Road

Pothole repairs completed, resurfacing to take place in October.

Fockbury Road

We will continue to monitor the parking area but will not be resurfacing at this time.

Fockbury Mill Lane

We have arranged to have the hedge cut back for extra visibility. (Perryfields end)

Rocky Lane

Hedges to be cut back on both sides and a bank created to make more space for passing vehicles.

Catshill Events

Currently arranging a Dementia Friends meeting to make Catshill Dementia Friendly. All welcome to attend if interested in participating. 14th August 2017 at the Meadows Pavillion, Meadow Road, Catshill.

Christmas Tree light switch on / craft fair date to be advised, preparation meeting for business's and residents interested in helping and to discuss Catshill in Bloom 17th August 2017 6pm at the Meadows Pavillion, Meadow Road,

Traffic Monitoring

I will be arranging monitoring sessions around the division after my holidays, apologies for not arranging sooner.

Halesowen Road

Requested a temporary 40mph speed limit whilst roadworks on M5 on.

WCC

I am currently sitting on two committees – Children's Services and Adult Social Care. I am looking forward to working on both panels and will report back to you periodically.

I am on holiday 26th July until 10th August (inc). Should you have any issues to report, please do so from the WCC website report function.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk

Balance Pool Meeting Report - Clerk

On Thursday 6th July myself and Cllr Sweeting met onsite at the Balance Pools with BDCouncillor Helen Jones and Martin Lewis from Leisure and Culture who manages the land. A lengthy discussion was had regarding the suggested implementation of a path across the area of land where the trees had been planted (see map below), where a natural one was already occurring.

It was established that any path that was to be laid in this area would need to follow the lie of the foul sewer and storm sewer in the area, picking up the drain points that occur across that section of land (see attached PDF map). Upon investigation it was established that this would not be able to end at Sandown Drive as per one suggestion as there is no access to the end of the road and infact would need to run towards and then near the fences of the boundary with the local properties and ending at the end of Epsom Road which is a considerably longer route. If any work was to be carried

out then any residents in the immediate area would need to be consulted as it would have an impact on an area of land so close to their homes. It is estimated that to create a path in this area would cost in excess of £10,000 to include tool and machinery hire and materials.

In relation to the planting of trees in the area, again, residents would need to be consulted as, in the long term, the outlook from their houses would be affected by their addition. There was no concern about the amount of trees the Parish Council are suggesting to obtain as the area of land is large and there is usually a 1 in 3 survival rate. However, any willows should be planted well away from the sewers and drains as their roots naturally find water and cause immense damage. To this end, the Clerk and Cllr Jones will be carrying out an investigation in the area to identify the lie of the drain covers in the area and subsequently the exact lie of the sewers in order to organise the removal of any willows that are currently planted in that area.

It had been suggested that if and when the pack is ordered, that the Parish Council request that the Oak's be removed from the pack and replaced with additional Hazel, Rowan and Hawthorn as their spread can be in excess of 8m and they can eventually meet a height of 12 metres in 20-50 years. If planting is to go ahead, the plants need to remain at least 5m clear of the houses and therefore to the left of the area on the map below (see blue rectangle).



End of Report

Rebekah Powell, Clerk to the Council

**Marlbrook Tip Cross Party Working
Group – Cllr B McEldowney**

10th July 2017

Updates:

Environment Agency (EA): Work has been complete on 5 of the Enforcement Notices, the 6th has been completed, but the EA are waiting for confirmation paperwork. 3 items are to be completed by the end of August 2017. These require planning permission.

Ruth Bamford (RB): There has not been a planning application received by BDC or any pre-application contact.

Tracey Lovejoy BDC Legal: read out a statement from Worcester Regulatory Service, who were not in

attendance. Liberty Construction is no longer employed to monitor the gas, water and leachate. With effect from 22 June 2017 EXEA are now employed to do this work. The first readings are due soon and copies will be received, by Liberty, BDC and WRS. They have recommended a new gas pipe be installed.

Questions from Representatives:

Roy Hughes: It would seem to be impossible to import the required 300 mm of restorations soils by the end of August, and complete the work, due to the planning process. **RB** Planning permission required, will be a major application requiring 13 weeks, and included in this will be a 3 week public consultation. Liberty Construction seems to think they don't require planning permission. BDC have had legal opinion, which say he does need planning permission. If anyone sees any lorries going to the tip, to phone her on **07852437802** right away.

Sue Hughes: On reading the report from issued by the EA "**Notice of variation with introductory note**" was surprised the so many of the operations, counting the lorry loads, checking the quality of material, record keeping etc. would be left to Liberty Construction to do. Considering past history, and how the site would be independently monitored.

Environment Agency: There would be unannounced visits on site to check. After the work had been completed the Construction Engineer will need to sign off the final levels, if it were over tipped, he will not sign the necessary form. If the work it not completed satisfactorily the **EA** might have to step in and do the work. They have powers, Section 15 of the Reservoirs act, to make sure the items on the Enforcement Notice are completed. They could also use Section 16 emergency powers to go on site if they thought the site was unsafe.

Mike Adams: Has a plan been received as to tell us where the soil is to go? **EA** hasn't seen one, he will check, the plan will need to include profiles and heights. He also said the **EA** are preparing in case the work was not done. The EA would get the work done and charge Liberty to recover the cost.

Ann Doyle: There seems to more equipment on site. **RB** will look into it, but says he might need the equipment to start the works.

Bernard McEldowney: Is there a monitoring scheme for importation of the topsoil. **RB** When we receive a planning application it would be part of the conditions.

Jill Harvey: We haven't had a meeting for 16 months and have received no information regarding the completion of the enforcement items. We would like to be told when each of the items has been completed. BDC will put this information on the "Marlbrook Tip" page on the council website.

Councillor Brian Cooper: What happens if BDC turn down the planning application. **EA:** Liberty could appeal and the Planning Inspectorate would be brought in and because it comes under the Reservoir Act, which is primarily to do with site safety, they might take a different view and grant it.

Keith Woolford: Why is the "puddle" classed as a reservoir? **EA:** It is legally designated as one. There are circumstances when you "discontinue". This means you physically have to change the reservoir and make it impossible to hold water. This is very expensive to do.

Ann Doyle: What will the site look like after importation? **EA:** The restoration soils will contain a seed mixture to stabilize the ground.

Luke Mallett: Might it have been cheaper for Liberty to discontinue the reservoir? **EA:** That would have be up to them to do it.

Charlie Batemen: Gave a historic view of the number, loads and miscounting of lorries. **RB** Apologised for past failures and said the monitoring condition to try and avoid this happening again, would be included in granting of the planning permission.

Next meeting will be sometime in September.

NJC PAY CLAIM 2018 – 2019

The pay claim submitted by the trades unions on behalf Local Government workers is a well-argued case substantially based on considerable loss of real earnings over the last seven years.

With pay rises having been frozen for a time then followed by a 1% increase each year, the average loss of income over this period compared with the RPI (Retail Prices Index) is around 21%.

The inflation rate is at present around 2½ - 3% so any pay settlement less than that would result in even more loss of real income.

If a settlement were reached that breached the Government's 1% limit then it would have to be paid for. This really could only come from either increased income or cost savings.

At present our clerk and assistant clerk are paid on NJC scales and receive an increment each year subject to satisfactory review. That helps offset the inflationary price rises but increments are for improvements in performance not for cost of living increases.

It is somewhat out of our remit to comment on issues that do not affect us directly. However, we have to work closely with other councils and we regularly see the results of cuts in service and the strains that councils and their employees are under. Added to this that employees are having to bear the brunt of Government wages policy with below inflation rises was probably reasonable for a time after the financial crisis in 2008 but to still have this policy in place 9 years later is now unwarranted.

As far as this parish is concerned, we can probably afford a settlement that compensates for inflationary rises i.e. greater than 1% and we should support a more generous settlement out of fairness and as an incentive for our employees.

However, the claim for a 5% increase to compensate for previous years would need us to consider a similar rise in the precept when we are under pressure to keep rises low.

There is an additional claim to delete spine points that pay below the Foundation Living Wage (this is not the National Living wage). However, that depends on the overall settlement as to what the value of these spine points would be.

Recommendations

- 1 That this Council supports a pay claim settlement for local government employees that is more in line with the current rate of inflation.
- 2 That it is an issue for the negotiators as to what that level should be and if an element of compensation for previous years is included.
- 3 That we support the deletion of spine points should they be below the National Living Wage but leave it with the negotiators to decide if any deletions are required that are below the Foundation Living Wage.