



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

held at CATSHILL VILLAGE HALL

GOLDEN CROSS LANE, CATSHILL, B61 0JZ

THURSDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 2015, 7.30pm

Present : Parish Councillors: O Sweeting (Chairman), G Blackmoor (Vice-Chairman), P Baker*, M Ball, J Bate, T Gillespie, B McEldowney, P Masters, M Shephard

In attendance: Clerk – R Powell, 2 members of the public and Sergeant Richard Field

15/09-01 Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting

15/09-02 Members' Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Bromsgrove District Councillor Brian Cooper and Worcester County Councillor Sheila Blagg.

Cllr P Baker apologised in advance for late arrival due to work commitments and arrived after minute no. 15/09-4.3

15/09-03 Co-option

The Parish Council will continue to seek to co-opt suitable candidates.

15/09 - 04 Open Forum

4.1 Two members of the public were present. The developer of the Co-op at Ivy Cottage and his partner wished to voice their concerns regarding the lack of footpath that had resulted from the fence being erected around the boundary of the development. They were unhappy with the situation and results of meetings with Highways and Worcester County Council and wished the Parish Council to be aware of this. The Chairman thanked them for their attendance and assured that the issue was an Agenda Item for debate within this meeting.

Following this discussion, the two members of the public left the meeting.

4.2 **County Councillor for Woodvale division, Sheila Blagg had sent her apologies.** Her report for August/September was circulated via email and hard copy. This detailed information regarding:

- **Regional Interchange Railway Station** – Worcester Planning Committee have approved a new station near Junction 7 of the M5 that will link the Cotswolds and Birmingham to the Bristol Line. The development is aiming to create 25,000 new jobs and boost the Worcestershire Economy by almost £3 billion.
- **Education Transport Application Tracker Goes Online** – This is an enhancement to services already available and allows users to track the status of their application, receive accurate updates, find out confirmed journey details and improve the customer experience when applying for education transport. It can be accessed via www.worcestershire.gov.uk/applicationtracker
- **Wheelchair Basketball Worcester Arena** – The University had been selected as the Standard Life GB Wheelchair basketball team training venue which was followed by selection to host the 2015 championships. European Teams played for both the European title and their place in the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games with team GB, men and women's teams, comfortably winning their first two games.
- **July Budget** – George Osborne presented his Summer Budget to Parliament on 8th July 2015 and the spending review will be published in the Autumn with a further £20billion reduction to be confirmed. The Chancellor announced the new National Living Wage of over £9 and hour by 2020 which will be introduced in April 2016 at £7.20 per hour. Road tax is to be reformed, £30 million national funding is to support Council's to pay Children fostering fees, the government intend to reduce the national Public Health Ring Fenced Grant by £200 million; an estimated year cut of £3.3 million for Worcestershire. Phase 2 of the Care Act has been delayed until 2020 with an expected cap on care costs.

- **Combined Authorities** – This is a legal structure that may be set up by local authorities in England, following a governance review. KPMG has been commissioned to investigate the implications and opportunities of a powerful new ‘super council’ for Worcestershire
- **Green Deal** – On the 23rd July this year central government announced there would be no further public funding for the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund (national cash back scheme) or the Green Deal Finance Company. Worcestershire County Council working with all district councils has successfully bid for funding from the Department of Energy and Climate Change Green Deal Communities Fund. The total amount of funding received is around £3.6 million and is to support thermal efficiency improvements to harder to treat properties.
- **Electric Vehicle Charge Points** – Worcester County Council have now installed a number of rapid charge points around the county to provide convenient charging in minutes for drivers of electric vehicles.
- **Bromsgrove Road Show** – This was the last of the six County Council public consultation events and holding it on a market day increased footfall but only 125 people were willing to engage with the average demographic of 30-60.
- **Bromsgrove Railway Station** – The build at this site is taking longer than expected due to an oversight by Network Rail and a change in standards for footbridges. It is now expected to be open in Spring 2016.
- **Ballast Phoenix Permit** – The Environment Agency (EA) has considered the application for an operating permit at Sandy Lane Quarry and Landfill site and a ‘minded to decision’ has been published. This is at draft stage and drop in sessions have been organised in order for the EA to explain their decision to the public and other interested parties.
- **Pepper Wood Fairfield** – This is one of the 30 footpaths in Fairfield under the oversight of the County Council footpaths team and is approximately 134 acres of ancient woodland acquired by the Woodland Trust as a ‘Community Woodland’ to be managed by a local self-sufficient group of volunteers. It remains one of just a few with a strong committed team.

In addition, County Councillor Sheila Blagg sent an additional update prior to the meeting to cover:

- The previous two issues raised by residents with the Parish Council regarding parking had been investigated. Milton Road sight lines at the junctions were found to be a problem with safety issues identified. Traffic regulations orders have been raised for consultation with public and partners. Birmingham Road parking was not considered to be causing safety issues and no action is being recommended except for the planned scheme at the Alvechurch Highway end of the Birmingham Road.
- Ivy Cottage meeting 22nd September with Worcestershire County Council Highways. WCC would not be interested in adopting or taking over the private land that currently forms the pathway; the developer will take the fence to the edge of the path, blocking it off and WCC will arrange for new signage to instruct that there is no footpath ahead. Parish Council are to consider whether to take on the land at the next (this) meeting.
- At the junction with Barley Mow Lane there is a drop kerb on the island that is to be removed by WCC as it is left over from before the island was constructed.
- The request for drop kerbs on Byron Way is considered to be desirable rather than needed and there is no funding available this financial year unless the District can fund them.
- Discussion of the installation of a crossing resulted in no suitable place being identified at the top part of Golden Cross Lane due to the restriction of housing driveways. Road widening and straightening would not be considered by the County Council at the location in question.

4.3 Community Representative, Sergeant Richard Field’s report was brought forward to this point in the meeting. His report included details on:

- Drastic Policing change in Bromsgrove – A number of police stations have been sold and policing has been centralised with Warwickshire for some services.

- Policing and its services will be dependent on the outcome of the conference in November. A project is being undertaken to discover where money can be saved and value for money offered. A funding cut will mean policing will be cut and services reduced but front line policing will remain the same as the Crime Commissioner has invested in this.
- Crime rates in Catshill are fairly level over the last five years, with an increase in burglary and vehicle theft
- An operation has been targeting inquisitive crime in the West Midlands and arrests have been made from this.
- Seasonal crimes include Anti-Social behaviour which has increased in the previous two weeks. There is an expected increase in this, house burglaries and car crime with length of light being a contributing factor.
- Catshill suffers from cross border crime
- Community policing is to stay, there will always be a role for it. They are interested in knowing what is of concern locally and try to be as visible as possible including PACT meetings, surgeries outside shops and attendance at events.
- Cyber crime is up 250%
- As crime trends change, the police change their approach. Members engaged in a discussion regarding groups within the area and were informed about the proactive policing approach including plain clothes operations and an emphasis was put on ringing the police or crime stoppers as an anonymous report.
- New Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators have been put in place for Worcestershire and bi-monthly meetings are being held in Bromsgrove.

Sgt Field asked for any questions and a discussion was carried out regarding:

The impact of switching off street lights to save money: This has not had much impact on crime apart from the city town centre where the lighting has been returned.

How far community police will go on this area to channel youth: Youth intervention is a key function of Sgt Field's department and they approach attempts to engage parents as well as children. Work is carried out in partnership with the sunrise project to target the underlying issues such as poverty and parenting styles. Sgt Field emphasised the importance of reporting crime as 'spikes' in data allow more action.

In addition, Sgt Field requested that any issues around speed enforcement be reported to the 'Safer Roads Partnership'.

Chairman O Sweeting thanked Sgt Field for his attendance at the meeting.

Sgt Richard Field left following this Agenda Item. Councillor P Baker arrived during this report.

4.4 **District Councillor for the Marlbrook Ward, Councillor Brian Cooper** had sent his apologies and informed the Council there was nothing new to report for the Marlbrook Area.

District Councillor for Catshill South Ward, Councillor Shirley Webb was in attendance and reported on the following:

- The Social Club Car Park has now been repaired and is being used. Both headmasters are pleased with the result. Shirley referred to the Legal document that was to be signed later in the meeting and will then be passed to the other interested parties to sign.
- Ivy Cottage – Shirley reported that the hedge was to be cut back to make the new recommended walkway safer. Both County Council and the Co-op will be erecting a sign to direct people down the alleyway and away from the footpath. Shirley spoke of educating parishioners as to the new way to walk and reported that her own Newsletter for Catshill South will be distributed shortly.

15/09-05 The meeting was closed for Open-Forum and re-opened.

15/09-06 Declarations of Interest

No member declared any declarable interest.

15/09-07 Dispensations

No requests for dispensations had been received.

15/09-15 With the agreement of the council Agenda Item 15 was brought forward to this point in the meeting.

To Consider the Council's position regarding the loss of footpath at Ivy Cottage on Gibb Lane
Extensive discussions took place between members as to the next step that should be taken regarding the loss of footpath by the Ivy Cottage.

It was agreed that authority to deal with and progress the situation was delegated to the Clerk working with the Chairman.

15/09-08 Approval of Minutes of previous council meeting

It was agreed to accept the minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held 30/07/2015 and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

15/09-09 Members' Questions

None had been submitted.

15/09-10 Chairman's Report

Councillor Owen Sweeting reported on:

- Attendance at Worcester CALC Area Committee at Bromsgrove Council House and Executive Committee at Worcester County Hall.
- There are a large amount of upcoming initiatives including those relating to cost cutting.
- Both bodies are proud of the fact that Clerk's are becoming qualified and there will be an injection of money put into both this and the training of Councillors in general.
- Cllr O Sweeting is to represent the Executive Committee in the NALC meeting at Birmingham. Amongst other items they will be tabling questions such as a request for an easier route to professional competence for Parishes and query the legality of Parish Council's working together to form corporate bodies.
- Barry Sheldon has a special agenda for the next CALC with an emphasis on Neighbourhood Watch.
- Sand Store – the doors have been vandalised and broken.
Members discussed the necessity to keep the store and decided that it should remain until it is proved that the Balance Pool is effective.

15/09-11 Clerk's Report: Emergency Actions, Update and List of Communications

11.1 Local Council Award Scheme – The Council have registered interest to complete the Foundation Award at a fee of £50. There is no time limit for completion. The LCAS is broader than the previous award, introduces greater professionalism and will be standardised across boroughs. It is acting as a catalyst to improve standards and encourage District and County Councils to recognise the importance of Parish Councils and the work they do. The Council will be working towards the Foundation Award.

11.2 Balance Pool Tree Planting – Update as to progress regarding the Tree Planting Trees have now been granted from the Woodland Trust Free Tree Programme. They are to be delivered w/c 2nd November. Our original box was 30 saplings but following Cllr M Shephard's meeting with Graham Cutler (Hagley Place Team Co-ordinator) a larger box has been requested. There is a lot more ground preparation work to be done before the planting can commence

11.3 Progress Baptist Church Garden The Licence has been signed by all parties and a copy returned to the Parish Council. A meeting was held on 22/09/15 with Russell Peach from Ground Maintenance regarding the next step.

11.4 Licence for Car Park – The Council are in receipt of the Licence Agreement for the Social Club Car Park Resurfacing which is to be signed by two Councillors. In addition it will be signed by Bromsgrove District Council, Catshill Middle School, Chadsgrove School and the Catshill and District Working Men’s Club Ltd. The Licence was duly signed by Cllr O Sweeting and Cllr M Knight.

11.5 Bonfire and Fireworks Event – Feedback from meeting regarding progress in the organisation of this event. A meeting was held with Carl Knowles (Project Manager), Cllr B McEldowney, Cllr O Sweeting and the Clerk. An action plan was discussed and jobs allocated. The balance for the fireworks is to be paid within the payments made this month. The date of the event is 31/10/15 and all volunteers from the Council are welcome. Admission is £2.00 per adult, £1.00 per child, £5.00 per family, under 3’s free. Adverts to be put in The Standard and the Parish Newsletter.

11.6 New Homes Bonus Scheme – The New Homes Bonus Grant Panel will recommend to Cabinet that we receive £3,500 of the applied for Grant for the replacement bus shelter. The date of the meeting is 7th October to discuss this and contact will be made shortly after with a decision. The Environment and Highways Committee suggested that a survey may be relevant to find out where the best place is to site a new bus stop.

11.7 Clerk Training - Jenny Maturi, Development Support Officer at Worcestershire CALC has provided a one-to-one training session 14/09/15. The fundamentals of Clerking were explained and the Clerk was able to ask questions. It was a valuable experience as a base for training.

Relevant correspondence available from the Clerk: includes weekly CALC Aug/September 2015, weekly updates from BDC Planning lists, WCC road works lists, Police & Crime Commissioner, Worcestershire Parish Newsletter.

Emails received since last meeting relating to – Upcoming training, IBA Consultation Event, Invitation to the RBC/BDC Parish Community Emergency Planning Forum

Items Carried Forward: Letter of thanks to Steve Mobley, further investigation as to Land Registry in relation to the War Memorial

15/09-12 Committee and Representative Reports

12.1 Environment and Highways Committee meeting held 10/09/2015, draft minutes to be circulated. Cllr M Shephard reported as follows:

- The original area considered for tree planting at the Balance Pool will not be viable due to the interference of the tree roots with the work that has been done. The area that has been allocated is larger and due to the fact that there is only a 50% expected survival rate of the wicks there has been a request for a larger pack of trees made to the Woodland Trust Free Tree Programme as per minute no. 15/09-11.2. Volunteers to assist with planting will be required in November.
- Baptist Church Garden – The clearing and levelling of the land prior to the planting has been discussed with Russell Peach of Meadowfields Ground Maintenance. The Council are to decide on the specifications of plants for the area with a garden similar to the Diamond Jubilee Garden being suggested. Russell will assist with the list and add his suggestions in addition to Cllr G Blackmoor and Cllr M Shephard.

- Bus Shelter – The Council are awaiting confirmation of the grant for the new bus shelter and will then continue with the progressive plan to add new bus shelters.
- War Memorial – **It was agreed** that this now be brought under the remit of the Environment and Highways Committee in order to provide it with a more formal footing for future works. Cllr M Shephard welcomed anyone from the current Working Party to join the Committee at their meetings.

12.2 **Planning Committee** meetings held 13/08/15, 27/08/15, 10/09/15 draft minutes noted. Cllr M Knight reported: These meetings included the consideration of Log Numbers 641 through to 646. All but one of these were recorded as 'No Comment' online via Bromsgrove District Council's public access website as the Council had no concerns. In relation to Log Number 643 considered 13/08/15 and relating to 24 Wildmoor Lane, Members recorded that they had concerns over the terracing effect that the extension would create and submitted this as a comment. In addition Members reviewed the Planning Log which includes updates of the Local Planning Authority Decisions and noted that Log Numbers 638,639,641,642 and 644 had all been granted throughout these meetings. Also, no further correspondence had been received regarding the signage for Singletons Nurseries at Lydiate Ash and Halesowen Road so this was escalated firstly to Dale Birch, Development and Control Officer the Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning. Members noted that at the Planning Committee completed that day (24/09/15) a response had now been received and escalated to Kath Burrell at Enforcements for further investigations. Members were informed at the Committee Meeting 27/08/15 that the site identified by Worcestershire County Council for use in Bromsgrove for the Worcestershire Local Minerals Plan was Wildmoor Quarry but it was felt this would not have a great impact on Catshill. Cllr T Gillespie had received information regarding the Planning Application process and reported at Committee Meeting 10/09/15 regarding the process with the additional agreement that more information be requested at Bromsgrove Planning Forum attended by the Clerk and Cllr M Knight (as per minute no. 15/09-12.3).

12.3 **Any other report** from Parish Council representatives including those for:

- **Newsletter** Cllr P Masters reported: Advertising has been secured and articles regarding Remembrance Parade and Bonfire included. Proof reading will be carried out by the Clerk and Cllr O Sweeting and any ideas of items to add should be reported to the Clerk. As the delivery of newsletters was so effective in the Summer, Cllr P Masters requested volunteers to carry out this process again.
- **Marlbrook Tip** Cllr B McEldowney reported: The Working Party met on 10/09/15. The Environment Agency are concerned with the lack of progress being made by Liberty. To date there has been no application to the Planning Department, therefore with a 13 week turnaround completion in January seems unlikely. If the Environment Agency feels work needs to be done for public safety they will intervene. It has been agreed that the next meeting be deferred until January.
- **North West Ward Association** Cllr G Blackmoor: no recent meeting to report upon.
- **Catshill Village Hall** Cllr O Sweeting reported on the recent management committee meeting including: The committee are seeking young residents to join. The committee now has internet banking and the new screen and projector have now been installed. It will now be possible to host conferences in the Village Hall.
- **Worcestershire CALC** – Attended 09/09/15 by Cllr O Sweeting as reported in minute no. 15/07-10.
- **War Memorial Working Party** Cllr P Baker reported: The War Memorial Working Party has not met recently. The Royal British Legion have raised money for the maintenance of the War Memorial. Quotes have been obtained and agreed with S Bright and Sons. The War Memorial has been cleaned, the names have been re-inked, and the statue painted white. The gates and railings have also been painted by a volunteer. The work has been completed with no involvement from the Parish Council.

- **Remembrance Day Working Party** Cllr P Baker: Notes from the meeting were circulated. It was noted that a Dedication Service be held on Sunday 25th October at 11:00am and the Remembrance Parade will be held on Sunday 8th November starting with a service at the Social Club at 10:00am. Cllr P Baker requested volunteers from the Council for stewards at the junctions of the road closures and to serve refreshments. Posters for the Parish Notice Boards are to be provided by Alan Kelly.
It was requested and agreed that the Parish Council purchase a wreath to the value of £25.00.
Cllr O Sweeting was asked to be present at the service and to complete a reading to which he **agreed**.
- **Bromsgrove Planning Forum** - Cllr M Knight reported on the forum attended by himself and the Clerk at Bromsgrove Council House on 15/09/15 (notes circulated via email and paper copy) including the process of Planning Applications and how decisions are made in relation to which applications are seen by the Parish Council.
- **Baptist Church Site Meeting** Cllr M Shephard completed his report in 15/09-12.1

15/09-13 Finance

13.1 **To receive the payments and receipts report of the Responsible Finance Officer and to approve bills for payment**

The current financial situation, including comparison of budget to actual income and expenditure to date, was noted. The payments schedule for August/September, as below, was approved.

13.2 **To note the change of details for the Unity Trust Bank Account**

This item was deferred to the next Finance and Staffing Meeting

Councillor G Blackmoor requested to leave the meeting at 21:30hrs

15/09-14 Discussion regarding the proposal for a Combined Authority in the West Midlands

This item was deferred to the next Full Parish Council Meeting.

15/09-15 To Consider the Council's position regarding the loss of footpath at Ivy Cottage on Gibb Lane With the agreement of the Council this item was considered at the beginning of the meeting.

15/09-16 To approve Clerk subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks and attendance at the SLCC Conference in October

It was agreed that the Clerk should subscribe to the Society of Local Council Clerks at a cost of £141.00

It was agreed the Clerk should attend the three day SLCC conference at an approximate cost of £200.00

15/09-17 To consider the possibility of a Community Event to mark the celebration of the Queen's 90th Birthday in June 2016

This item was deferred to the next Full Parish Council meeting.

15/09-18 Items for the next meeting

Members to contact the Clerk with any items for the next meeting.

15/09-19 Date, time and venue of next meetings

- Planning Committee – As and when required
- Finance and Staffing Meeting 8th October 2015, 7:30pm
- Full Parish Council Meeting 29th October 2015, 7:30pm all meetings at Catshill Village Hall

This meeting ended at 21:31hrs.

