

Belmont Rural Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, held on Thursday 1st May 2014 At Belmont Community Centre, Eastholme Avenue, Belmont

Present: Mr. A. Myatt Chairman
Mr. K. Baynham
Mr. A. Bridges
Mr. D. Cook
Mr. P. Edwards
Mr. R. Loft
Ms. D. Parish

In attendance: Mrs. E. Kelso

45/14 Election of Chairman

Councillor Myatt volunteered to continue as Chairman for the forthcoming year. There being no further nominations, it was unanimously agreed that Councillor Myatt be elected as Chairman of the Parish Council to hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

46/14 Apologies, Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensation

The following declarations of interest were received:

Name	Nature of Interest	Agenda item/Minute ref.
Mr. A. Bridges	Non-disclosable interest as a family members carries out work on behalf of the Parish Council	Agenda item 11.5/ Min. ref. 55/14(e)
Mr. A. Myatt	Non-disclosable interest as a member of the management committee/trustee of South Wye Community Association	Agenda item 10.2 Min. ref. 54/14(b)
Mr. P. Edwards	Non-disclosable interest due to location of partners home in proximity to property under discussion	Agenda item 11.2 Min. ref. 55/14(b)

It was noted that a corrections to the Declaration of Interests register had been made to correct a written declaration made against the wrong meeting date

There were no requests for dispensation.

Apologies were noted from Councillor Hubbard and Councillor Schoffer.

47/14 Election of Vice Chairman

Councillor Bridges volunteered to continue as Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year. There being no further nominations, Councillor Bridges was unanimously elected Vice Chairman of the Parish Council to hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

48/14 Election of Parish Council Representatives

The following representatives of the Parish Council were agreed:

- Footpaths Officer Councillor D. Parish
- Tree Warden Councillor P. Edwards
- Members of the Finance Working Party Councillor A. Myatt
Councillor D. Cook
Councillor K. Baynham

Election of the Emergency Co-ordinator and HALC representative was deferred to the next meeting to allow absent members to volunteer.

49/14 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present at the meeting and therefore no items raised during this period.

50/14 Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April 2014

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd April had been previously circulated. It was agreed that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes as a true record of proceedings at that meeting.

51/14 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report, as attached to these minutes was noted.

Members expressed concern at the delay in completing the agreed work to refurbish the bus shelter outside Tesco and to replace the bus shelter outside Brook Farm Court and felt it unacceptable that Herefordshire Council should delay the work any longer on the basis that their contractor has changed. It was agreed that a question be tabled at a forthcoming presentation to parishes by Herefordshire Council's Chief Executive and Leader.

Concern was also expressed at the proposal to substantially reduce the frequency of grass cutting within the Parish, noting not only that this will lead to public open space becoming overgrown and unkempt, but also lead to informal play areas becoming unusable by children. Again, it was agreed that a question be raised at the forthcoming presentation to parishes by Herefordshire Council's Chief Executive and Leader to ask if Herefordshire Council would reconsider reducing the grass

cutting where areas were of particular importance to local people.

52/14 West Mercia Police/Parish Watch

Members noted no report from West Mercia Police. Under Parish Watch, there were no items of note.

53/14 Information item: Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- Letter from Solicitor to Herefordshire Council Mr. Bill Norman on the application of the Code of Conduct and outlining a briefing meeting on 10th June. Concern was expressed at the use of the term “personal interests” in the briefing note and the Clerk was instructed to clarify whether the briefing note was still valid.
- A Councillors Guide to Insurance issued by the Parish Council’s insurance brokers, Came and Company.

54/14 Financial Matters

(a) To note report from the Finance Working Party

The report from the Finance Working Party meeting held on 29th April was noted.

(b) To authorise payments

The following payments were authorised:

South Wye Community Association Grant for MLPC Licence as agreed on 2.4.2014		£366.00
South Wye Community Association Room hire charges – various meetings		£58.00
Petty Cash Reimbursement		£66.63
HALC Training fees	£25.00	
VAT thereon	£5.00	
Total payment		£30.00
Broker Network Limited Insurance renewal		£591.21
Kimcell Ltd. Charge for Email setup for 2014/5	£50.00	
VAT thereon	£10.00	
Total payment		£60.00

Mr. R. Rose
Internal Audit fee £150.00

(c) Balances

Current account	£500.00
Deposit account	£86,166.08
Petty Cash	£58.37

(d) Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2014

The Clerk presented the management accounts for the year ended 31st March 2014 showing a surplus of income over expenditure of £29,696.78 for the year due mainly to lack of progress on capital expenditure items following the change of the public realm contract from Amey to Balfour Beatty. As a result, reserves increased from £36,133 to £65,830. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that the Chairman and Clerk be authorised to sign the accounts on behalf of the Parish Council.

(e) To receive the report from the internal auditor for the year ended 31st March 2014

The Clerk explained the internal audit process to Members and reported that the Internal Auditor had completed the internal audit for the year ended 31st March 2014 and had raised no matters which should be brought to the attention of Members. Mr. Rose has signed the Annual Return accordingly.

(f) Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2014

The Clerk presented the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2014, noting the figures in section 1 in accordance with the Management Accounts approved under 54/14(d) above, and the supplementary information as required by the external auditors. It was agreed that the Chairman and Clerk be authorised to sign the Annual Return on behalf of the Parish Council.

Turning to the Annual Governance Statement in section 2 of the Annual Return, Members considered each statement separately and indicated the response as attached to these Minutes.

Finally, the Clerk was authorised to send the Annual Return on the due date to the external auditors.

55/14 Planning Matters

(a) To note planning applications considered under delegated powers

None since the last meeting.

(b) To consider planning applications currently notified

Ref: P140672/F
Site: Tesco Stores Ltd., Abbotsmead Road, Belmont
Development: Proposed extension to dotcom facility, rain screen cladding to existing external ramps, extension to the dotcom service yard and the installation of new larger cold rooms
Comments: Members considered this application and expressed concern that an extension to the dotcom facility might lead to increased noise levels for neighbouring properties and questioned whether the noise attenuation fencing would be extended. It was also noted that increased vehicle movements would impact negatively on nearby properties. Furthermore, the proposals lead to a reduction in staff car parking spaces which could lead to congestion and potential for parking on the road in peak periods. The Clerk was instructed to pass these comments to Herefordshire Council accordingly.

Ref: P140402/F
Site: 7 Wheatridge Road, Belmont
Development: Two storey side extension
Comments: There were no objections to this development.

(c) To receive update on Neighbourhood Development Plan progress

Notes from the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group meeting held on 9th April were received.

(d) To consider appointment of planning consultants in connection with production of Neighbourhood Development Plan

Members noted the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group that due to the complexities of the NDP process, the engagement of planning consultants was recommended. Having discussed this with consultants Kirkwells, it was proposed that Kirkwells be appointed to assist with the NDP at a cost of £6990.00 plus travel and accommodation expenses for attending meetings in Hereford. After a brief debate, the proposal was agreed with Councillor Edwards abstaining from voting.

(e) To agree printing and distribution costs for a flyer advertising the Neighbourhood Development Plan briefing session at the Annual Parish Meeting on 29th May 2014.

It was agreed that the flyer advertising the Neighbourhood Development Plan briefing session which is to take place as part of the Annual Parish Meeting on 29th May be printed and hand delivered to all residents within the parish at a combined cost of £245.00.

56/14 Training

There were no reports from Members who had attended training sessions since the last meeting and no requests from Members to attend future events.

57/14 Ward Councillor Reports

Members noted the verbal reports from Ward Councillors.

58/14 Update on Abbey View Park

Having expressed some concern that despite efforts, obtaining a clear quotation from contractors Balfour Beatty to repair the flood damaged section of footpath on Abbey View Park and associated works, no quotation or explanation had been received. As instructed at the last meeting, the Clerk wrote to Geoff Hughes to outline the Parish Council's concerns and received a response to the effect that alternative contractors can be used to complete public realm works. Accordingly, it was agreed that the Clerk approach alternative contractors for a price for the work envisaged and, as indicated in Mr. Hughes letter, request that Herefordshire Council monitor the work.

59/14 Meeting dates for 20142015

It was agreed that meetings continue on a monthly basis, on the first Thursday of every month. The list of future meeting dates based upon this format and as attached to these Minutes was approved.

60/14 To consider request for litter bin at Northolme

Members noted a request from Northolme Community Centre Association for a litter bin to be placed inside or just outside the car park area at Northolme. After some discussion it was agreed to request that one of the litter bins in the children's play area be relocated to the car park area.

61/14 Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on Thursday 29th May at 7.30pm at Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont.

As agreed earlier, the next full Parish Council meeting would take place on Thursday 5th June 2014 at Belmont Community Centre, Eastholme Avenue, Belmont, commencing at 7pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

Clerk's Report

1. Replacement Bus Shelter

Both Clerk and Vice Chairman have been attempting to get this project moving but with limited success. Herefordshire Council has now instructed Balfour Beatty Living Places to undertake the required work and requested that this be treated as a priority. BBLP has confirmed that work has begun on the design of the civil works which, once approved by all stakeholders, will then need to go to the environmental team for an environmental impact assessment. BBLP are unwilling to provide even a rough estimation of when the shelter might be installed but the clerk has been advised that this could be several months.

2. Community Resilience Plan

This was to be considered at this meeting but due to pressure from other agenda items, has been deferred to July.

3. Balfour Beatty Living Places Presentation

The Clerk and Chairman attended a presentation by Balfour Beatty Living Places on the Annual Plan on Wednesday 23rd April. The presentation concentrated largely on the programme of road repairs and changes within BBLP to deliver the contractual obligations with Herefordshire Council. A copy of the presentation slides has been provided to members but the following items were highlighted:

- Many parishes expressed concern that BBLP had consulted Ward Members about the Annual plan but had not sought the views of parishes. Several parishes had not been updated by their ward members and felt BBLP should seek their views and not just that of the Ward Member.
- Funding for road repairs is considered "capital funding" as it improves the infrastructure. Capital funding has increased from previous years.
- Revenue funding covers other expenditure such as grass cutting and litter picking. Revenue Funding has been reduced from previous years.
- As a result of the reduction in revenue funding, work would be concentrated on statutory provision. Grass cutting, maintenance of flower beds etc. and litter picking are deemed "discretionary" and will therefore be reduced drastically, relying on lengthsman

scheme (where available), and voluntary support from community groups to maintain some amenity areas.

- With regard to grass cutting in particular, priority would be given to visibility splays and some grass verges and children’s play areas. Amenity grass (i.e. those areas that are not formal play areas) would have the lowest priority and receive no more than 3 cuts per year. In effect, this means grass being cut once every two to three months rather than every two weeks as previously.
- Litter picking and litter bin emptying will be on an “as and when” basis and not part of a regular schedule
- Public rights of way are to receive additional funding this year
- BBLP is currently recruiting a number of “locality stewards” who will provide the link between parishes and BBLP, covering a specific locality. Five stewards are already in place and covering the county until others have been recruited. For Hereford, the Locality Steward is Michael Gill, a former Public Rights of Way officer for Herefordshire. The Clerk has invited Mr. Gill to attend our June meeting and has suggested a preliminary meeting on site on Wednesday 7th May.

It seems likely that the informal active play areas within the parish (Wheatridge Road, Deerhurst/Wyedean Rise etc.) and the kickabout area at Northolme will be considered “amenity” land and rarely cut. The clerk asked if it would be possible to “purchase” additional cuts from BBLP for identified areas but the response was unclear. The clerk has raised this again by email with the locality steward but not yet received a reply.

4. **Model Standing Orders**

The working party formed to discuss amendment and adoption of the NALC revised standing orders has not yet met due to pressure of work for other items. It is anticipated that revised standing orders will be available for consideration for the June or July meeting.

BELMONT RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting Dates 2014-2015

2014

5th June - Belmont
3rd July – Northolme
7th August - Belmont
4th September - Northolme
2nd October - Belmont
6th November – Northolme
4th December - Belmont

2015

8th January - Northolme
5th February - Belmont
5th March - Northolme
9nd April - Belmont
14th May – Annual Meeting – Northolme

All meetings will take place at the Belmont Community Centre, Eastholme Road, Belmont or Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont as indicated above and will commence at 7pm unless indicated otherwise.

The agenda for each meeting will be available on noticeboards and on the Parish Council website approximately 3 working days before each meeting.