

Belmont Rural Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, held on Thursday 13th August 2015 At Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont

Present: Mr. A. Myatt In the Chair
Mr. A. Bridges
Ms. A. Bridges
Mr. R. Loft
Mr. J. Newman
Ms. D. Parish
Mr. M. Schoffer

In attendance: Mrs. E. Kelso Clerk
Mrs. T. Bowes Ward Councillor, Belmont Rural

103/15 To receive Apologies, Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensation

Apologies were noted from Councillor Derek Preedy and Councillor Lyndsey Evans

Declarations of Interest were noted as follows:

Name	Nature of Interest	Agenda item/Minute ref.
Mr. A. Bridges	Non Disclosable interest as a director of Northolme Community Centre Association as payment being made to NCCA	Agenda item 6 Minute Ref. /15
Ms. D. Parish	Non Disclosable Interest in connection with payment to Northolme Community Centre Association	Agenda item 6 Minute ref.
Mr. A. Myatt	Non Disclosable Interest as a trustee of South Wye Community Association	Agenda item 6 Minute ref. /15
	Non Disclosable interest as property overlooks land under discussion	Agenda item 11 Minute ref. /15

There were no requests for dispensation.

104/15 Public Participation

There were no items raised during this period.

105/15 Minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2015

It was agreed that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th July as produced to the meeting as a true record of proceedings at that meeting.

106/15 Amendment to Agenda order

In accordance with standing orders, it was agreed that agenda item 19 would be taken without members of the public present as discussions could include confidential items. In addition, due to the possible impact on other topics, agenda item 8, Training, and agenda item 12, To consider the use of electronic agendas, would also be taken without members of the public present.

107/15 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was noted.

Members expressed concern that yet again the road sweepers had been observed travelling in the middle of the road and not sweeping the kerb/gutter areas and not sweeping the side roads, particularly in Broadholme Road.

108/15 Correspondence

The following items of correspondence were noted:

- Notification from Herefordshire Council about their budget consultation which runs until 9th October. Members were reminded of the importance of responding as individuals. This item will be an agenda item at the next meeting so that a Parish Council response can be authorised.
- The budget consultation referred to above suggests that the library service at Belmont might be a service at risk of cuts. Not only does this impact on the provision of library facilities for local residents but might impact on the future viability of the Belmont Community Centre. The Clerk will be attending a meeting convened by the South Wye Community Centre on 20th August along with other stakeholders of the Belmont Centre to look at options for the future of the Centre.

- The Clerk has invited Herefordshire Council Library Service to attend a future meeting once further information on proposals for the library service at Belmont are available.
- A Community Governance Review is to take place in 2016-2017 of Parish Councils within Herefordshire. This will be an agenda item for the September meeting.
- Information Corner from HALC has been received noting in particular several revised Advice Notes from HALC, information on HALC services and forthcoming training opportunities. Members were requested to notify the Clerk if they wish to attend any of the training mentioned in the publication.

108/15 Finance Matters

(a) To receive the report from the Finance Working Party

The report from the Finance Working Party meeting held on 4th August, as attached to these Minutes, was noted.

(b) To authorise payments for August 2015

Payments as set out in the attached schedule were approved.

(c) To note account balances as at the date of the meeting

Current account:	£500.00
Deposit account:	£94,760.60
Petty cash:	£10.72

(d) To consider proposal to amend budget allocation for repairs and maintenance from £1,500 to £4,500 for current financial year to be funded from unallocated reserves

It was agreed that the budget allocation for repairs and maintenance be increased from £1,500 for the current financial year to £4,500 for the current financial year, such increase to be funded from unallocated reserves.

109/15 Planning Matters

(a) To consider planning applications now due for observations

There were no new planning applications since the last meeting.

It was noted that the two planning applications for Tesco Stores in connection with the proposed hand car wash operation had been approved by Herefordshire Council with conditions.

(b) To note planning applications notified for permitted development

None since the last meeting

(c) To receive update on Neighbourhood Development Plan

A revised draft plan had been received from Kirkwells and members were requested to review the draft and pass comments to the Clerk no later than Tuesday 18th August so that these can be passed back to consultants Kirkwells for comments.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Neighbourhood Development Steering Group be held on Monday 24th August, venue to be confirmed, to discuss the latest draft. A representative from the consultants Kirkwells would be requested to attend.

110/15 To consider proposal to offer a grant/donation of £400.00 to Citizens Advice Bureaux

After a brief discussion, it was proposed that an amendment be made to the original proposal to offer a grant to Citizens Advice Bureaux from £400.00 to £200.00. On a vote, this resolution was not approved and following a vote on the original proposal, it was resolved to offer Citizens Advice Bureaux a grant of £400.00 for the current financial year.

111/15 To consider an amendment to the Financial Standing Orders

It was agreed that Financial Standing Order clause 6.4 be replaced in its entirety with the following:

- 6.4. *Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council shall be signed by two members of council in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. If a member who is also a bank signatory has declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, or has any other interest, in the matter in respect of which the payment is being made, that Councillor must not sign cheques relating to that interest other than in circumstances where the Parish Council would not be able to function or would incur penalties if the payment were not made.*

112/15 To request volunteer support for Pride in Parish Scheme for Jubilee Field and receive update on Management plan for Jubilee Field

Members noted that the draft Management Plan for Jubilee Field has been sent to Balfour Beatty Living Places but not yet received any comment or agreement. Notwithstanding this, Members were requested to consider a request for volunteers to work on removing some of the brambles on Jubilee Field. It was agreed to defer this item pending confirmation on when the annual cut of the grass was to take place as it was felt that removing the brambles after the grass cut would be preferable. It was further agreed to invite the Locality Steward to the September meeting to discuss work on this site further.

Members also discussed a possible Community Action Day to be held possibly in the Spring when members of the public and families would be asked to take part in voluntary activities such as litter picking, clearing weeds, cutting back shrubs etc. as required. It was agreed that this be an agenda item for the next meeting when a working party would be set up to progress this. In the meantime

the Clerk was instructed to discuss the proposal with Balfour Beatty Living Places to ask if they would support a Community Action Day.

113/15 To consider application for a Public Green Spaces Community Grant

It was agreed that the Finance Working Party be authorised to discuss a possible application for a Public Green Spaces Community Grant with the delegated grants team of Herefordshire Council with a view to funding a possible Community Action Day, if agreed at the next meeting.

114/15 To receive update from South Wye Community Association on Wellbeing Centre proposals at Belmont

Members noted two reports from South Wye Community Association on a visit to the Kington Wellbeing Centre and how the model might help secure the future of the South Wye Community Association and Belmont Community Centre. A meeting of Belmont Community Centre stakeholders will take place later in the month which the Clerk will attend as representative of the Parish Council and report back to the next meeting.

115/15 To consider whether to apply for accreditation under the Local Councils Award Scheme

Members noted the criteria for accreditation under the Local Councils Award Scheme and agreed that although Foundation Status could be achieved quickly, there was no clear benefit to residents from this accreditation. It was therefore agreed not to proceed with an application for accreditation at this stage.

116/15 To consider amendment to the Parish Council standing orders

It was agreed that the Standing Orders approved in October 2014 be amended by the addition of the following clause 25(c),

Any references in this document to 'he', 'him' or 'his' shall be construed also to refer to 'she', 'her' or 'hers' respectively".

The Clerk will re-issue copies of the amended Standing Orders to Members and place a copy on the Website as soon as possible.

117/15 To consider Forward Planning and review of items for consideration this financial year

It was agreed that the following items be considered further as possible projects for this financial year and the following financial year:

Speed Indicator Device(s)
Parish Gates
Parish Plan

The Clerk will obtain budget figures for each project with a view to inclusion in budget projections and the precept request for 2016-2017.

118/15 To set up a Parish Plan Steering Group

In furtherance of the proposal under the previous agenda item, it was agreed that the following form a Parish Plan Working Party:

- Councillor Des Parish
- Councillor Andy Myatt
- Councillor Aimee Bridges

In accordance with Standing Orders, the following items were considered without members of the public in attendance

119/15 Certificate in Local Council Administration

Members noted the Clerk's progress towards achievement of the Certificate in Local Council Administration. It was agreed that the Clerk would continue with the qualification with the aim of completing it no later than March 2016 whereupon the Clerk's terms and conditions of employment would be reviewed in accordance with the Clerk's contract of employment.

120/15 Training

(a) To receive reports from Training attended

Members noted the report prepared by Councillor Adrian Bridges and Councillor Aimee Bridges on the Planning and Community Action course attended.

(b) To consider requests for training

The Clerk's request to attend a one day course offered by the Society of Local Council Clerks in Cheltenham on Digital Engagement at a cost of £145.00 plus VAT and travel expenses, was approved. It was further agreed that the Clerk be authorised to attend the 'Crystal Clear' briefing by HALC on Monday 17th August at a cost of £25.00. This training is in connection with the new Transparency requirements.

(c) Other training matters

Members noted that a free seminar entitled "An Introduction to Planning" will be held at the Shirehall at 6.30pm on 2nd September. Members wishing to attend were requested to notify the Clerk accordingly.

121/15 To consider use of electronic agendas for Members

Members noted a report from the Clerk and Councillor Adrian Bridges on the use of electronic agendas and it was agreed that this be considered further at the next meeting when members would be asked to consider the purchase of a tablet for those Members who might wish to receive their agendas and supporting papers in electronic form.

122/15 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 10th September at 7.00pm at Northolme Community Centre.

BELMONT RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

Notes from the Finance Working Party
held on Tuesday 4th August 2015 at
Belmont Community Centre, Eastholme Avenue, Belmont

Present: Councillor A. Myatt
Councillor L. Evans
Councillor D. Parish

In attendance: Liz Kelso Clerk/RFO

1. Review of Financial Records

The income and expenditure account, VAT records, PAYE records, petty cash and bank statements were reviewed and found to be in order.

2. To discuss changing the parish council banking provider

Councillor Parish reported that she had investigated Barclays, Lloyds and NatWest and found none of those providers were able to offer the safeguards for parish council funds and/or a pre-paid debit card as required by the parish council.

The Clerk presented her findings into Unity Trust Bank which specialises in Local Council banking arrangements and offers:

- Access to electronic banking on an individual basis to suit the needs of the parish council
- Dual authorisation for e-payments
- A pre-paid debit card
- Clear audit trails to identify access and authorisation for payments
- Access for the Clerk/RFO to identify when payments are processed

There are some issues regarding costs to be clarified but it was agreed that subject to a suitable response to the Clerk's email, that a proposal be put to the full parish council meeting in September that BRPC switch banking providers from Royal Bank of Scotland to Unity Trust Bank.

3. To consider funding application from Citizens Advice Bureau

Noting that a donation to CAB was last made in December 2013 when a donation of £400 was offered, the request for funding from CAB was considered. It was noted that data submitted by CAB on service use within "Belmont" probably referred to the former Belmont Ward of Herefordshire Council, i.e. not just Belmont Rural. However, it was agreed that the

application be put to the parish council at the next available meeting with a donation of a similar level as the last payment to be discussed.

4. **To consider whether grant funding from the Public Green Spaces grant fund would be appropriate**

Members reviewed the grant funding available for Public Green Spaces and agreed that the nature of the grant and the requirements for monitoring etc. were not onerous. It was felt that provided an appropriate project can be identified and suitably costed for application purposes, an application for a grant from this fund be supported by this working party.

5. **To consider amendment to 2015-2016 budget allocation for repairs and maintenance**

In view of the recent decision by the parish council to fund repairs to the Abbey View Park footpaths, it was agreed that a proposal be put to the parish council at its next meeting that the budget for repairs and maintenance be adjusted from £1,500 to £4,500, such increase to be funded from unallocated reserves.

6. **To consider amendment to Financial Standing Orders**

The wording to amend the Financial Standing Orders to reflect the parish council's informal policy restricting the ability of members to sign/authorise payments where that member has an interest (Discloseable or otherwise) in that payment was agreed. It was further agreed that this be put to the parish council at its next meeting for consideration.

7. **Any other business**

- Members noted that Conclusion of Audit notices have now been placed on notice boards and on the website following the successful external audit of the Parish Council Annual Return.
- The Clerk drew Members attention to a change in the way electors can exercise their rights to view the accounts and supporting papers which will take effect from 2016.

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

