

Belmont Rural Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, held on Thursday 10th September 2015 At Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont

Present: Mr. A. Myatt
Mr. A. Bridges
Ms. A. Bridges
Mrs. L. Evans
Mr. R. Loft
Mr. J. Newman
Ms. D. Parish
Mr. D. Preedy

In the Chair

In attendance: Mrs. E. Kelso
Mrs. T. Bowes

Clerk
Ward Councillor, Belmont Rural

123/15 To receive Apologies, Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensation

Apologies were noted from Councillor Mark Schoffer

Declarations of Interest were noted as follows:

Name	Nature of Interest	Agenda item/Minute ref.
Mrs. L. Evans	Non Disclosable interest as a trustee of South Wye Community Association as payment being made to South Wye Community Association	Agenda item 6 & 15 Minute Ref.
Mr. J. Newman	Non Disclosable Interest as a trustee of South Wye Community Association	Agenda item 15 Minute ref.
Mr. A. Myatt	Non Disclosable Interest as a trustee of South Wye Community Association	Agenda item 6 & 15 Minute ref.
	Non Disclosable interest as property overlooks land under discussion	Agenda item 11 Minute ref.

There were no requests for dispensation.

124/15 Public Participation

There were no items raised during this period.

125/15 Minutes of the meeting held on 13th August 2015

Subject to the amendment of a typographical error, it was agreed that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th August as produced to the meeting as a true record of proceedings at that meeting.

126/15 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report was noted.

127/15 Correspondence

The following items of correspondence were noted:

- Herefordshire Council are conducting a survey of parishes who undertake litter picks as part of their drive to reduce littering generally. The Clerk has responded on behalf of the Parish Council.
- Balfour Beatty announced new guidelines for litter bins which appear to be inconsistent with this Parish Council's provision. A copy of the guidelines was provided to Members who were requested to pass their comments to the Clerk.
- The newsletter from Belmont & Newton Farm Safer Neighbourhood Team has been provided to Members.
- Funding workshops will be held in libraries during September and October. The Hereford session will take place on Wednesday 16th September from 10am to 1pm. Booking is not required.
- Hereford Civic Society will be holding an illustrated talk on the River Wye at the Kindle Centre on Thursday 17th September, starting at 7.30pm. HCS members are admitted free whilst visitors will be charged £3.00
- Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service offers a range of services for young people which parish councils can support or fund. This will be discussed as an agenda item at the November meeting.

128/15 Financial Matters

(a) To note report from Finance Working Party

The report from the Finance Working Party meeting held on 27th August was noted.

(b) Payments

Payments were authorised as per the attached payment schedule.

(c) Account balances

Account balances were noted as follows:

Current account:	£500.00
Deposit account:	£92,547.05
Petty cash:	£67.45

129/15 Planning Matters

(a) To consider planning applications now due for observations

Ref:	152447
Site:	57 Wyedean Rise, Belmont
Development:	Retrospective application for change of use of part of dwelling to allow use as a childminding business
Comments:	Members considered this application and expressed concern that the proposal to increase the number of children looked after by the applicant might lead to increased traffic in this small cul-de-sac and parking difficulties as the design of the cul-de-sac is such that on street parking is not available without blocking the entrance to other properties. Increased noise from the increased activity would also have a detrimental impact on the neighbouring properties. The property is located on a shared driveway and increased vehicle movements would impact on other properties sharing the driveway. Members recommended that the applicant be conditioned to provide additional parking for parents dropping off or collecting their children. The Clerk was authorised to notify Herefordshire Council accordingly.

(b) To note applications notified for permitted development since last meeting

None.

(c) Neighbourhood Development Plan Update

Members noted that a meeting of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group had taken place and Councillor Adrian Bridges and Councillor Des Parish had updated the draft plan provided by Kirkwells accordingly.

130/15 Training

Members noted a report from Transparency training attended by the Clerk and a report on the Planning Workshop attended by Councillor Aimee Bridges.

There were no further requests for training.

131/15 To consider response to Community Governance Review

Members considered their initial views to put forward in preparation for the Community Governance Review. After some discussion, it was agreed to put forward the following:

- Proposal to consider an amendment to the boundary of the Parish to include Belmont Abbey (currently falling within the Parish of Clehonger) and in particular the housing forming Woodfield Gardens on the grounds that this development was closer to the parish of Belmont Rural than the centre of the Parish of Clehonger, and
- Proposal to consider an amendment to the boundary of the Parish to include the new development off Mulberry Close as access to and from that development is only via Westholme Road, i.e. from within the Parish.

It was agreed that the Clerk put forward these suggestions to Herefordshire Council.

132/15 To approve Grant Awarding Policy

The Grant Awarding Policy as attached to these Minutes was approved and adopted.

133/15 To receive update on Management Plan for Jubilee Field

Members noted that the draft Management Plan for Jubilee Field has been forwarded to Balfour Beatty and a response is awaited.

134/15 To agree working party for Community Action Day

It was agreed to form an informal working party to put together proposals for a Community Action Day to take place next year. The following Members volunteered to form the working party:

Councillor Aimee Bridges
Councillor Des Parish
Councillor Derek Preedy

The working party will draw up proposals, with appropriate costs, for consideration at a later meeting of the Parish Council.

135/15 Parish Council response to Herefordshire Council's spending review

It was agreed that Members consider proposals by Herefordshire Council to reduce expenditure and put forward comments to the Clerk so that a consensus response can be prepared. Comments to be provided to the Clerk no later than the end of September.

136/15 To approve quarterly newsletter and questionnaire

It was agreed that the draft quarterly newsletter, including a questionnaire for residents on Parish Council spending priorities, be approved for printing and distribution to all households within the parish at a total cost of £452.00 for printing plus delivery costs of £120.00.

137/15 To receive report on future of Belmont library

Members expressed disappointment that despite requests for proposals for the forthcoming year for the future of Belmont Library, the Library service had not yet been able to provide any advice.

The South Wye Community Association are reviewing their options with regard to the future of the space currently occupied by the library service and the potential impact on revenue and the future of the Centre as a Community Centre should the library service withdraw. However, without a firm proposal from Herefordshire Council no formal action can be taken. In the meantime, the South Wye Community Association are to undertake a community consultation on the future of the Community Centre and draw up a business plan with a view to seeking further funding for the development of the Centre as a wellbeing centre.

138/15 Budget setting 2016-17

Members noted that the process of setting a budget for 2016-17 would be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting. Projects for consideration must be forwarded to the Clerk so that a draft budget can be prepared no later than the end of September.

139/15 To consider purchase of tablet PCs

After some discussion, it was agreed that in future members who wished to do so could receive agendas for meetings and supporting documentation electronically.

It was further agreed that to facilitate the use of electronic agendas and supporting papers, and to enable Members to carry out their function as a Parish Councillor during and outside of meetings, that tablet PCs be purchased by the Parish Council at a total budget price not to exceed £1,500.00. Members would be able to receive a tablet on loan from the Parish Council for use solely in connection with their role as a Parish Councillor. Training would also be provided to assist members to use the equipment and it was agreed that a Windows based system was preferable as most members were familiar with Windows systems.

Finally, a draft loan agreement was approved which Members would be required to enter into if using a tablet for parish council work.

140/15 Health & Safety Policy

The draft Health and Safety policy as presented to the meeting and as attached to these Minutes was approved.

141/15 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at Belmont Community Centre on Thursday 8th October, starting at 7pm.

BELMONT RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

Notes from the Finance Working Party
held on Thursday 27th 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 cash book, petty cash records, bank reconciliations and statements, PAYE and VAT records were checked and found to be in order.

2. To consider funding application from South Wye Community Association for library extension - £20,000

It was noted that this funding request has been withdrawn and will be represented by the applicants at some point in the future. However, it was also noted that given the expectation that a request will be forthcoming within the next financial year, provision should be made in the budget for 2016-17 for this item.

3. To consider draft application for a Public Green Spaces grant

At the parish council meeting held on 13th August, it had been agreed that the Finance Working Party draft an application for a Public Green Spaces grant towards the possible cost of a Community Action Day, if agreed, for 2016. The Clerk reported that she had raised several questions with the delegated grants team of Herefordshire Council but until a response is received it would not be prudent to submit an application. This item was therefore deferred to the next meeting.

4. Any other business

- **Spending Priorities**

A proposal to include a questionnaire as an insert to the next issue of the quarterly newsletter was discussed and an amendment suggested to the draft to be put to the parish council at its next meeting.

- **Budget Proposals**

Potential projects for consideration as part of the budget/precept setting process were discussed briefly. A suggested list for consideration so far included:

Extension to Belmont Community Centre	£20,000
Extension to Northolme Community Centre	£7,500
Commissioning a library service at Belmont	£20,000
Parish gates	£N/K
Parish Plan	£5,000

The Clerk reported that a starting point for proposals would be to submit an estimated budget for consideration but with the aim of refining this once the results of the spending priorities questionnaire were known. A final decision on the precept for 2016-2017 would need to be taken no later than the December Parish Council meeting.

- **Unity Bank**

The Clerk reported that she had received a response to some of her queries to Unity Bank regarding a possible transfer of banking provider to that bank. She is to telephone the bank in the near future in order to make contact with our possible account manager. In the meantime the timing of any transfer to a new provider was discussed and it was agreed that a transfer immediately after the monthly standing order payments would be preferable.

Subject to a satisfactory response to final queries, this will be put to the September or October parish council meeting.

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

Belmont Rural Parish Council
Meeting held on Thursday 10th September 2015
Minute ref. 128/15(b)
Schedule of Payments approved at the meeting

Payee	Detail	Net	VAT	Total Payment
Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureaux	Grant as agreed on 13.08.2015 - Minute ref. 110.15	£ 400.00	£ -	£ 400.00
Herefordshire Association of Local Councils	Training fee - Inhouse training held 6th August	£ 150.00	£ 30.00	£ 180.00
	Mileage for in house training	£ 2.70	£ 0.54	£ 3.24
	Training fee - Crystal Clear briefing - 17.08.2015. 1 delegate	£ 25.00	£ 5.00	£ 30.00
Cash	Petty Cash Reimbursement	£ 57.55	£	£ 57.55
South Wye Community Association	Room hire during July and August	£ 79.50	£	£ 79.50
Society of Local Council Clerks	Training fee - Digital Engagement 2015 - 1 delegate	£ 145.00	£ 29.00	£ 174.00
Payments by Standing Order this month:				
Salaries (net)		£ 860.31		
HRMC		£ 168.97	£ -	£ 1,029.28
Total payments this month:		£ 1,889.03	£ 64.54	£ 1,953.57

Appendix 3

Belmont Rural Parish Council

POLICY

APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT FUNDING

Policy

Belmont Rural Parish Council is keen to support local organisations providing local facilities and opportunities for the residents of the Parish of Belmont Rural. This document sets out the procedures to be followed by the Parish Council when considering applications for funding.

Background

1. Belmont Rural Parish Council, like all Parish Councils, is funded through collections via the Council Tax system. This means that the total amount of money available in any one financial year is limited to that received through the precept plus any amount brought forward from unspent funding in a previous financial year.
2. A Parish Council operates within a legislative framework which grants powers to the Parish Council. A Parish Council may collect money via the Council Tax system and use that money to undertake any activity for which it has been given the power to undertake. There is generally no limit to the amount that can be spent on a specific activity for which it is empowered, although the principles of common sense, value for money and “best value”¹ are expected and checked by the external auditors. Generally, a Parish Council can offer grant funding to any organisation or group to carry out any function or project for which it has the power under legislation to carry out itself.
3. For most activities for which there is no clear legislative power, a Parish Council can use funding under s.137 of the Local Government Act (sometimes referred to the “free resource”). The current limit of expenditure under s.137 is £7.36 per elector per financial year (approximately £19,894 for financial year 2015-16). Unspent s.137 funding cannot be carried forward to the next financial year.
4. In addition to the purely financial constraints, there is an over-riding principle that a Parish Council can only support or take part in activities which are broadly for the benefit of the residents of the Parish. This means that funding cannot be used to support something which is only of benefit to a very small number of individuals (or one individual) or is only of benefit to those outside the Parish, e.g. donations to an overseas charity would not be permitted unless there is a clear benefit to local residents.

¹ “Best Value” principles require a local authority to demonstrate that there is a need/demand for any project undertaken and that the project is carried out in an effective and cost efficient way. Although Parish Councils are not subject to a legal requirement to demonstrate best value, Belmont Rural Parish Council has resolved to adopt best value principles wherever possible.

5. The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet legitimate requests for funding from organisations in any one financial year and to ensure that funding is only made available to those projects for which the Parish Council has the power to support.
6. A decision by the Parish Council relating to any grant application must be considered a final decision and not subject to appeal, change or amendment other than in accordance with the Parish Council's standing orders.

Procedure

1. Grant requests for less than £100 in any financial year

- Applicant to submit a formal request in writing to the Parish Clerk for consideration at the next full Parish Council meeting.
- Copies of the letter of application to be circulated to Parish Councillors with the agenda for the meeting.
- The Parish Council may defer a decision on any application pending receipt of further information, if required.
- Applicant to be notified of decision as soon as possible after the date of the meeting.

2. Grant requests for between £100 and £999 in any financial year (to include multiple requests totalling £100 or more in any financial year)

- Applicant to be encouraged to submit a notice of intention to apply for funding at precept setting meeting each year
- Each project funding request to be considered in broad terms at precept meeting and included in "preferred list" for funding so that sufficient precept can be requested for the next financial year to meet those projects. Inclusion on the "preferred list" does not commit the Parish Council to supporting that project when a formal request for funding is submitted, nor will it preclude an applicant from submitting an application if the project is not listed on the "preferred list" for that financial year.
- At the relevant time, applicant to submit a formal application for grant funding to include as a minimum the information set out in the attached draft application form.
- Application to be considered firstly by the Finance Working Party ("FWP") with a view to ensuring the parish council has sufficient information in order to make a decision. The FWP may, but are not required to make a recommendation to the next full Parish Council meeting as to whether the request should be granted or not.
- The application together with any recommendation/report by the Finance Working Party will be circulated to Members prior to the Parish Council meeting at which the application is to be considered.
- Multiple applications for amounts of less than £100 totalling £100 or more in each financial year will be treated as an application for £100 or more when applications reach that figure. For example if an organisation submits an application for 3 separate amounts of £50 in one financial year, the procedure outlined in this paragraph 2 will apply from the third (and any subsequent) application.

3. Grant applications in excess of £1,000 in each financial year

- For an application to be considered, applicant must have submitted a notice of intention to apply for grant funding at the precept meeting in the preceding financial year. A resolution of the Parish Council as a whole may waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances.
- In all other respects the procedure will be as for applications for funding between £100 and £999 in any financial year.
- Multiple applications of £999 or less by any one organisation in one financial year will be treated as an application in excess of £1,000 when the total amount requested in any financial year exceeds £1,000.
- Special notice must be given on Notice Boards if the Parish Council is to consider a single application for funding in excess of £1,000.

4. Finance Working Party

- The Finance Working Party will have responsibility to review applications for funding in excess of £100.
- Appointed each year at the Parish Council annual meeting, the FWP will consider applications arising during that financial year amongst other tasks and will consist of (as a minimum):
 - Three Parish Councillors
 - The Responsible Financial Officer (usually the Clerk)
- The FWP may, if it wishes, ask others to attend panel meetings (including the applicant, if appropriate)
- The FWP may request further information from the applicant if required
- The FWP may make a recommendation to the Parish Council with regard to any request for funding it has considered; that recommendation to be available at the same time that the application is circulated to all Parish Councillors prior to a meeting.
- The Code of Conduct will apply to meetings of the FWP in the same way as it applies to all other meetings of the Parish Council.

This policy was approved by Belmont Rural Parish Council on
10th September 2015, Minute Ref. 132/15

Appendix 4

Belmont Rural Parish Council

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Introduction

Belmont Rural Parish Council recognises its responsibilities as an employer for providing a safe and healthy environment for all its employees, contractors, voluntary helpers and others who may be affected by the activities of the Council.

The Council will make every effort to meet its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all relevant Codes of Practice and Regulations as may be applicable from time to time. If appropriate, the Council will seek expert technical advice on Health and Safety matters

Policy

To provide as far as is reasonably practicable:

- 1) A safe place of work and a safe working environment.
- 2) Sufficient information, instruction and training for employees, contractors and voluntary helpers to carry out their work safely.
- 3) Care and attention to health, safety and welfare of employees, contractors, voluntary helpers and members of the public who may be affected by the Council's activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Clerk/Proper Officer to:

- 1) Keep informed of relevant Health and Safety Policy legislation and inform the Council accordingly.
- 2) Make effective arrangements to implement the Health and Safety Policy
- 3) Ensure that matters of Health and Safety are regularly discussed at meetings of the Parish Council.
- 4) Ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out of working practices and assets, meeting venues and proposed activities and maintain record of risk assessments.
- 5) Make effective arrangements to ensure that contractors and/or volunteers working for the council comply with all reasonable Health and Safety at Work requirements. In particular, all contractors will be given a copy of the Council's Health and Safety Policy
- 6) Ensure that work activities by the Council do not unreasonably jeopardise the health and safety of members of the public, employees, volunteers or others.
- 7) Maintain a central record of notified accidents.
- 8) When an accident or hazardous incident occurs take immediate action to prevent a recurrence or further accident and to complete the necessary accident reporting procedure.

Parish Councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers will:

- 1) Cooperate fully with the aims and requirements of the Health and Safety Policy and comply with Codes of Practice or work instructions for Health and Safety.
- 2) Take reasonable care of their own Health and Safety, use appropriate personal protective clothing and, where appropriate, ensure the appropriate First Aid materials are available.
- 3) Take reasonable care for the Health and Safety of other people who may be affected by their activities
- 4) Not intentionally interfere with or remove safety guards, safety devices or other equipment provided for Health and Safety
- 5) Not misuse any plant, equipment, tools or materials so as to cause risks to Health and Safety.
- 6) Report any accidents or hazardous incidents to the Clerk.

Insurance

Belmont Rural Parish Council will purchase and maintain insurance against liability for injury or disease to employees and volunteers arising out their employment under the provisions of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969 and where appropriate, take steps to ensure any recommendations of the Insurer with regard to Health and Safety are carried out.

Belmont Rural Parish Council will purchase and maintain insurance against liability for injury or disease to Members of the Public arising out of the activities of the Parish Council with a minimum sum insured of £5m, such insurance to be reviewed on an annual basis.

Belmont Rural Parish Council will ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, that any contractors carrying out activities on behalf of the Parish Council, any meeting venue or supplier of any kind holds public liability insurance with a minimum sum insured of £1m.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- 1) All incidents falling within the scope of this policy will be reported to the Parish Council at the next available Council meeting
- 2) This policy will be reviewed by the Parish Council at least on an annual basis.

This policy was agreed by Belmont Rural Parish Council at its meeting held on 13th September 2015