

Belmont Rural Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 1st March 2012 At Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont

Present:	Mr. M. Schoffer	Chairman
	Mr. A. Bridges	
	Mr. D. Cook	
	Mr. P. Edwards	
	Mr. B. Hubbard	
	Mr. R. Loft	
	Mr. A. Myatt	
	Ms. D. Parish	Agenda item 2 onwards
In attendance:	Mrs. E. Kelso	Clerk
	Mrs. F. White	representing Northolme Community Centre Assoc.
	1 member of the public	
Apologies:	Ms. G. Powell	

016/12 Parish Councillor Vacancy

It was reported that the vacancy created by the resignation of Stuart Taylor has been duly advertised and the Elections Office has confirmed that there has been no request for a full election, and the Parish Council is free to co-opt a candidate. The Clerk confirmed that the vacancy has been advertised and two individuals had indicated a willingness to act, although one candidate was not present at the meeting.

Ms. Des Parish gave a brief presentation as a potential candidate for co-option and then left the room. After a brief debate, it was proposed by Councillor Loft and seconded by Councillor Edwards that Ms. Parish be co-opted to the Parish Council to hold office until the next full elections are held. The Chairman declared the resolution carried and welcomed Ms. Parish to the Parish Council.

017/12 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were noted from Councillor Powell.

Councillor Edwards and Councillor Bridges declared a personal interest in agenda item 13, Minute ref. 027/12, as Members of another authority.

Councillor Bridges declared a personal interested in agenda item 7, Minute reference 022/12, and a prejudicial interest in agenda item 9, Minute ref. 024/12.

Councillor Myatt and Councillor Parish also declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 9, Minute ref. 024/12.

018/12 Minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2012

Minutes of the meeting held on 19th January had been previously circulated to Members. It was agreed that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes as a true record of proceedings at that meeting.

019/12 Clerk's Report

(a) Playbuilder Site, Northolme

Repair work believed to be completed although there is still damage to the grass area where the vehicles accessed the site. Whilst some areas will improve once the grass starts to grow again, the deep ruts on the kick about area need to be flattened. The Clerk was instructed to remind Amey of this requirement.

(b) Website

Although the website working party has not met, the Clerk has been progressing the option to find an alternative, cheaper, provider to obtain the .gov domain name. Several parish councils have been approached and all report having to pay some considerable sum to apply for the .gov suffix. E-mango, who provided the original quotation have been in touch to offer to work with us to reduce the cost by designing a simpler website. The Clerk was instructed to pursue this with E-Mango.

(c) Newsletter and questionnaire results

These have now been delivered to all homes.

(d) Jubilee Field

Herefordshire Council has confirmed that it is happy with the proposed name of Jubilee Field for the land behind Dorchester Way.

(e) Annual Risk Management review

It was noted that the Annual Risk Management review is now due and it was agreed that a working party be formed to undertake this task and report to the next Parish Council meeting with recommendations. Councillor Myatt, Councillor Schoffer and Councillor Cook volunteered to form the working party.

(f) Annual Internal Audit Review

Members noted that changes in legislation mean the annual internal audit review is no longer a statutory requirement. It was agreed that no formal review would take place this year but would be reconsidered for the next financial year.

020/12 Correspondence

The following items of correspondence have been received since the last meeting and not addressed elsewhere on the agenda:

(a) **Project 100**

Project 100 aims to plant 100 trees in the community in 2012 and has been developed by Amey to reduce their carbon footprint. Community groups and schools can apply for a maximum of 5 trees which can be planted in March or from November 2012. As the closing date for applications for trees is/was 29th February, the Clerk has made a provisional application for 5 small trees/shrubs. It was agreed to ratify this action and authorise the Clerk to confirm the application.

(b) **Warm Homes Healthy People**

The private sector housing team of Herefordshire Council has secured funding from the Warm Homes Healthy People fund and are running the Get Warm Stay Warm Project. Stay Warm Packs, consisting of thermal hats, gloves, slippers, gel handwarmers, thermo cards and torches are available from Kindle, Newton Farm Information Centre and Women and No. 14.

(c) **HALC Information Corner**

Members noted a copy of the latest HALC Information Corner which includes details of an important item regarding information held in private email accounts in the event of a Freedom of Information request being made.

(d) **Future of Childrens Centre**

Herefordshire Council is currently conducting a consultation exercise on the future of Children's Centres which is available online. There are also meetings being held throughout Herefordshire on this subject. The nearest one is at the Kindle Centre on Monday 5th March from 6.45 – 8.30pm. Places must be booked so Members were advised to notify the Clerk as soon as possible if they wished to attend.

(e) **Vision 2020 conference**

Belmont Rural has been invited to send a representative to the Vision 2020 conference being held at the Courtyard Theatre on Friday 2nd March. It was agreed that Councillor Brian Hubbard be authorised to attend on behalf of the Parish Council at a cost of £18.00.

(f) **Recent Bomb Scare Incident at Tesco**

The Clerk has received correspondence and telephone calls regarding the handling of the Bomb Scare at Tesco. Residents have complained at being unable to enter or leave the Estate and no provision for those who were affected. For example:

- one elderly lady complained that she was unable to attend a hospital appointment that afternoon

- parents were unable to collect their children from school, including one parent of a severely disabled child needing medication who had to walk to Barrs Court School and walk back with the wheelchair in very cold weather
- Vehicles were abandoned at Belmont Abbey or along Haywood Lane and residents walked back to their homes over the fields in the dark. No advice or information was given about when they might be able to return to their homes by road
- No provision for those unable to get home.
- At least one elderly person with limited mobility quite distraught at not being able to get home
- Some elderly residents in nearby properties very frightened with little information given out.

It was also reported that emergency vehicles were also not able to access the Parish area.

Councillor Edwards reported that although he was the formally appointed Parish Emergency Co-ordinator and had attended briefings held by Herefordshire Council as such, he had not been contacted during the event and had sought feedback from Herefordshire Council's Emergency Planning Team about the event.

There was further discussion on this item under agenda item 14 (Minute reference 028/12), Community Resilliance Plan.

(g) Community Technology Grant – Northolme Community Centre

Northolme Community Centre has applied for a Community Technology Grant to purchase IT equipment, including a projector and screen, for use by Centre users, including BRPC. Support from BRPC was requested in the form of a letter confirming that the parish council would make use of such equipment during it's meetings. The clerk has written a letter of support as the deadline was between meetings and it was agreed that this action be ratified.

021/12 West Mercia Police/Parish Watch

West Mercia Police were not in attendance at the meeting and had not passed on any reported incidents to Councillor Edwards as Parish Watch co-ordinator.

It was noted that two incidents of anti social behaviour in the vicinity of the roundabout between Abbotsmead Road and Broadholme Road in the early hours of the morning had been reported by a nearby resident.

022/12 Payments/Receipts

(a) Payments

Authority was given to make the following payments:

Mrs. K. Bridges	
Delivery charge for newsletter	£120.00

ABC Print (Hereford) Ltd. Printing for Parish Plan Update	£151.00
Mr. B. Hubbard Conference fee – Herefordshire 20/20	£18.00
Mr. A. Myatt Reimbursement for materials to repair noticeboard	£45.69
Cash Petty Cash reimbursement	£89.41
Northolme Community Centre Association Room Hire for January meeting	£25.50

(b) Receipts

None since the last meeting

(c) Balances

Current account	£500.00
Deposit account	£48852.82
Petty Cash	(£14.41)

Current commitments, included in figures above, amount to £13,599.60

(d) Other financial matters

At the request of the Inland Revenue, the payment date for tax and national insurance in respect of the Clerk's salary is to be moved to the 7th of the month following the date of payment. Inland Revenue systems have routinely been allocating the payments to the wrong month as they are paid too early.

023/12 Planning Matters

It was noted that there were no planning applications received since the last meeting and none responded to.

It was noted that Asda has submitted a planning application for an unmanned petrol filling station on land adjacent to the Asda store in Hunderton which was believed to originally have been for affordable housing. Some concern was expressed that this may cause further traffic delays for those travelling into Hereford from the Parish.

024/12 Queen's Diamond Jubilee

(a) Proposal to plant trees on Jubilee Field

Following the suggestion at the last meeting that one option to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee might be to plant trees on Jubilee Field, the Clerk has been in discussion with Herefordshire Council and Amey with regard to this proposal. Members noted that Herefordshire Council are not supportive of this project on the grounds that such planting could reduce the habitat of the Brown Banded Carder Bee.

The Clerk has suggested additional tree planting around the outside bowl of the land and reminded Herefordshire Council that this was envisaged during discussions on the management plan for that area. Amey/Herefordshire Council has indicated that no more than two or three trees might be planted as specimen trees but that all residents that might be impacted by the planting would be required to give their express permission for the trees to be planted and there must be a firm commitment from Amey for the upkeep/maintenance of the trees in future years before Herefordshire Council would approve of such planting. The Clerk has suggested a site visit attended by representatives from Herefordshire Council, Amey and BRPC to resolve these concerns. It was agreed that Councillor Edwards, Councillor Hubbard, Councillor Myatt and Councillor Schoffer attend such a site visit.

The Clerk reported that she has also sought to ascertain the potential creation of the wetland area, given the reservations expressed by Andrew Nixon on the reduction of the bee habitat as grounds for restricting planting. Again, Herefordshire Council were not supportive but it was hoped that the site visit envisaged above might resolve these issues although it was noted that the brook, which stopped flowing last summer, has not restarted sufficiently for water to be flowing in the brook at this point.

(b) Application for funding for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Fun Day

Northolme Community Centre in conjunction with Belmont Community Centre is proposing a joint fun day to commemorate the Jubilee. The Community Centre has requested:

- A commitment from BRPC to attend and perhaps have an information stand/table to publicise the work of the parish council and
- A contribution towards the cost of the event, in the region of £1,500.00.

Mrs. Fran White presented the request for funding and explained the plans for the day which envisage a 1952 themed children's tea party and fun day which would be open to all.

In accordance with Standing Orders, Members declaring a prejudicial interest in this agenda item – Councillors Bridges, Myatt and Parish - left the room. After a brief debate, it was agreed that a grant of £1,500 would be given to Northolme Community Centre towards the cost of the fun day/children's tea party to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

A meeting is to be held for all those taking part in the event on Tuesday 6th March at Belmont Community Centre and it was agreed that the Clerk attends on behalf of the Parish Council.

025/12 Forward Planning

It was suggested that a formal forward plan be created so that projects and appropriate funding and resources, can be programmed into a time frame. Noting the need for further community engagement on future projects, it was agreed to consider a list of potential projects arising out of the Parish Plan review project and the annual precept discussions for consideration at the next meeting.

026/12 Footpath Extensions

The Clerk and Councillor Edwards reported on a site visit with representatives from Amey with regard to providing a budget price for the following footpath extensions:

- Around Abbey View Park west. This has been requested in two sections: a continuation of CH7 and around the remaining section of the site, estimated at £11,000 and £14,000 respectively,
- From the tarmac path from Belmont Road to Flaxley Drive, extending to Sydwall Road – estimated at £6,800, and
- The “spur” from the existing footpath around Abbey View Park north towards the remaining entrance off Dorchester Way, along the top of Jubilee Field, estimated at £3,800.

It was agreed to request a detailed quote for the option to complete the CH7 footpath and for the extension to the footpath from Flaxley Drive to Sydwall Road for further consideration. When requesting the Sydwall Road quotation, the Clerk is to seek confirmation that this would not be considered part of the highway thus requiring additional lighting.

027/12 Equipment for Children’s Play Area, Coppin Rise

Members noted a provisional budget price provided by Mrs. White of Herefordshire Council for a similar toddler play area as might be considered for the Coppin Rise area and noted current advice that Herefordshire Council would require that nearby residents are consulted before any agreement to purchase or install equipment is made.

After a brief discussion, it was agreed:

- That a provisional reserve of £5,000.00 be allocated to this project pending the availability of a detailed quote once suitable equipment has been selected
- That the project be progressed by a consultation exercise with local residents to establish support for the installation of equipment at this site

A working party formed by Councillor Edwards, Councillor Cook and the Clerk will progress this item.

028/12 Herefordshire Play Facilities Strategy Consultation

Members attention was drawn to the Play Facilities Strategy Consultation, a copy of which is available online for those with access to internet. The strategy document is a particularly large document and comments are invited before early April. The Clerk requested that members forward

their comments so that a response can be drawn up. Councillor Edwards reported that the strategy was long awaited but he was disappointed to note that consideration had only been given to current equipped areas and did not address sites or requirements for active play other than through equipped sites.

029/12 Community Resilience Plan

Following on from the bomb scare incident at Tesco (see 020/12(f) above), it was noted that the parish council has been provided with a proforma Community Resilience Plan which is a form of contingency plan which communities are advised to prepare to help with major incidents and emergencies. Originally drafted in response to flooding issues, a CRP can be adapted to a variety of situations and the proforma has been put together by the Emergency Planning Team at Herefordshire Council and rolled out to Parish Councils to use if they wish.

It was agreed that a Community Resilience Plan should be drafted for Parish Council consideration and as the Parish Emergency Co-ordinator, Councillor Edwards agreed to begin the draft in consultation with the Chairman and Clerk.

030/12 Training

(a) Report on Training sessions attended

Clerk reported on a briefing session on Neighbourhood Planning and on Locality Working/Localism Act. It was agreed that before any decisions could be taken on whether to take advantage of any of the opportunities offered by the Localism Act or on whether to begin work on a Neighbourhood Plan, further internal training would be required.

(b) Forthcoming training opportunities

Two HALC sessions in March were brought to Members attention. Anyone wishing to attend was advised to notify the Clerk accordingly:

- Tuesday 13th March – “Enlightened” – an update on the Localism Act including General Power of Competence, Community Right to Buy, Community Right to Build etc. Being held at Brockington from 7.00pm (buffet from 6.30pm). Cost £25.00 per delegate for HALC members.
- Tuesday 27th March – “The Code” – an update on the proposed local voluntary code. Starts 7pm at Brockington. Cost £25.00 per delegate for HALC member.

031/12 Parish Matters

- (a) Members discussed the new LED lights that are currently being installed around the Parish, noting that the lights were said to be more economical, 70% more efficient and reduced light pollution as the white light is more focused and doesn't reflect into the windows of nearby houses. Opinions appear to be divided amongst members of the public some of whom like the new lights, particularly those who welcomed the reduction of reflected light into their homes. However, some have indicated that they do not like the lights as they feel they are duller than the previous yellow lights, create dark patches in alleyways which some

find threatening and in some cases light is no longer able to light private driveways which are some distance from the lamp post. There was also some concern that where private driveways serving several houses are no longer lit, this posed a potential hazard albeit that Herefordshire Council are not obliged to light private driveways. It was agreed that the Clerk request whether the angle of the lights could be altered where households were particularly affected by the change.

It was further noted that the cyclerroute/CH7 was scheduled to be replaced by LED lights and roundabouts would be changed to a white light to blend in with the new LED lights.

- (b) It was noted that the Belmont Centre were still waiting for further funding confirmation before progressing the extension to the Centre that is envisaged. Some smaller donations have been recently received towards this project.
- (c) Members attention was drawn to a recent television programme, Bees, Butterflies and Blooms and it was agreed that the creation of a wildflower meadow would be an agenda item for the next Parish Council meeting. It was suggested under this subject that perhaps wildflower seeds could be sewn on soil excavated from the new (and proposed) footpath extensions.
- (d) The Clerk was again instructed to raise with Herefordshire Council the poor quality of black bags given to households.
- (e) The Clerk is to try to ascertain a date for the additional hard shoulder promised around the Tesco roundabout.
- (f) The Clerk was again instructed to attempt to get shrubs that have died replaced. It was noted that Herefordshire Council have claimed that the damage has been caused by frost rather than poor pruning as has been alleged.
- (g) It was noted that two “no dog fouling” signs remain of the ten purchased recently. It was suggested that if they cannot be placed on the railings at the entrance to Abbey View Park, as originally envisaged, that Yarlinton Mill and Fountains Close would be appropriate locations.
- (h) District Councillor reports were received from Councillor Bridges and Councillor Edwards, a copy of which are attached to these Minutes.

032/12 Public Participation

There were no further items raised in the final period for public participation.

033/12 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 12th April at Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont, commencing at 7.15pm.

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