

BETLEY, BALTERLEY & WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Councillor – you are summoned to attend a Council meeting on
**Thursday 27th June 2019 at 7.30pm at
Betley Village Hall (Committee Room)**

Gwyn Griffiths
Clerk & RFO
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AGENDA Thursday 27th June 2019

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declaration of Interest in Items on the Agenda
3. Public participation in any item on the Agenda
4. To consider the filling of the vacancy for a councillor in the Balterley Ward following the resignation of Cllr Terry Townsend
5. To approve the minutes of the meeting of 23rd May 2019
6. To review Action Points from the previous meeting
7. Reports
 - To receive any reports
 - a) Chairman & Vice-Chairman b) Clerk c) County Councillor d) Borough Councillors
 - e) Representatives on outside bodies
8. Clerk to report on matters dealt with as Urgent Business since the last meeting
9. To consider any planning applications to hand at preparation of agenda
 - 18/00928/AGR Prior notice of agricultural development: agricultural building, land off Checkley Lane, Wrinehill for Mr P Hatton
 - 19/00430/FUL Proposed single storey extensions to sides, Pear Tree Farm, Balterley Green Road, Balterley for Mrs S Singh.
 - 19/00492/FUL Two storey extensions with dormers, replace existing conservatory with brick built extension, erection of new porch and associated alterations, Green Valley Farm, Common Lane, Betley for Mr & Mrs D Griffiths

10. To receive the results of planning application determinations received
11. To consider any further planning applications, planning appeals/enforcement issues, progress of previous planning applications and other planning matters
Issues at Doddlespool
12. To consider whether the Council should mark the 75th Anniversary of the conclusion of World War II.
13. To consider any issues relating to HS2
14. To consider progress on the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan and related issues (if any)
arising from the Newcastle and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Local Plan.
15. To consider matters relating to speed monitoring including Community Speed Watch and Speed Indicating Devices, including the establishment of a Traffic & Police Liaison Working Group
16. To consider any issues relating to Council property or assets
Sandy Croft
Memorial Garden
17. To consider proposed revisions of Standing Orders (as circulated to members)
18. To consider the availability of contact details of members
19. Area Issues : a) Balterley b) Betley c) Wrinehill
20. Highway Matters
21. Correspondence
22. Financial Matters
 - a) Applications for financial assistance
 - b) Payment of Invoices
 - c) To receive the Financial & Bank Statements
23. To consider council communication
24. Any items for next/ future Agenda
25. Date of next scheduled meeting: Thursday 25th July 2019

BETLEY, BALTERLEY & WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd May 2019

131/19 PRESENT:

Cllrs Robert Bettley-Smith, Mandy Berrisford (from Min.139), Neil Bullock, Seb Daly, Richard Head and Tony Reah.

132/19 IN ATTENDANCE:

County Cllr Northcott.
Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk).

133/19 The first item of business was the election of a Chairman for 2019-20. Cllr Robert Bettley-Smith was nominated by Cllr Daly and seconded by Cllr Head. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED that Cllr Robert Bettley-Smith be elected as Chairman for 2019-20.

134/19 The next item of business was the election of a Vice-Chairman for 2019-20. Cllr Sebastian Daly was nominated by Cllr Bettley-Smith and seconded by Cllr Bullock. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED that Cllr Sebastian Daly be elected as Vice-Chairman for 2019-20.

135/19 Cllrs Bettley-Smith and Daly completed the appropriate Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

136/19 Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Ecclestone (away), Hales (work), Speed (other commitment), Walton (other commitment) and Watkin (family), and Borough Cllrs G and S White. An apology for likely late arrival had been received from Cllr Berrisford.

137/19 The Clerk advised members of the resignation of Cllr Terry Townsend.

RESOLVED that the resignation be received and that the Clerk take any necessary steps to advertise the vacancy.

138/19 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items.

No declarations were made at this point.

[Cllr Berrisford joined the meeting at this point]

139/19 The Council considered the appointment of representatives to serve on outside bodies and internal groups.

140/19 **RESOLVED a) that the following members be appointed to outside bodies:**

Conservation Advisory Working Group	Berrisford sub. Watkin
Madeley Locality Action Partnership	Reah
Rural Runabout	Bettley-Smith
Betley Trust	Hales
Village Hall Committee	Head

b) that the following members (or Clerk as appropriate) be appointed to internal groups:

Press Liaison	(Parish Magazine) Clerk to draft - to be approved by Chairman, Vice-Chairman & Cllr Head
Internal Accounts	(Other media) Chairman & Vice-Chairman Responsible Financial Officer (Clerk)

Sandy Croft Maintenance
Memorial Garden
Website
Speedwatch Co-ordinator

Berrisford, Bettley-Smith, Daly, Hales, Speed
Bettley-Smith, Daly, Ecclestone, Hales, Speed
Bullock, Daly, Head
Bullock

c) that members would only be expected to attend the Conservation Advisory Working Group when relevant items occur on the Agenda.

141/19 The Clerk outlined to members the requirement to carry out certain annual requirements: the appointment of a Responsible Financial Officer, Risk Assessment, consideration of Standing Orders, and schedule of meetings for the coming year.

142/19 **RESOLVED** that the Clerk (Mr Gwyn Griffiths) be reappointed as Responsible Financial Officer for 2019-2020, and that Mr T Dunlop be appointed as Internal Auditor.

143/19 The Clerk outlined to members the requirement for the Council to carry out an annual risk assessment. Members considered the Council's Risk Management Policy and the measures in place to address physical, financial and policy risks. It was noted that following a recent incident the policy regarding night time use of Sandy Croft had been reviewed, and that night time use had been prohibited except with explicit prior consent from the Parish Council. Consideration was also given to the management of the speed monitoring equipment following the resignation of Cllr Townsend. The Clerk would discuss the matter with former Cllr Townsend to establish future arrangements that were robust and which protected the Council against any risk.

144/19 The Clerk invited members to consider whether any changes to Standing Orders were appropriate. It was felt that some elements required review and possible updating.

RESOLVED that a copy of Standing Orders be supplied to all members for review, and that any proposed changes be considered at the next meeting.

145/19 **RESOLVED** that meetings in 2019-20 be held on the fourth Thursday of each month, but that no meetings be scheduled at this point for the months of August and December.

[It was noted that in 2022 the May meeting would need to be held at an earlier date, within 14 days of the elections in that year.]

146/19 Members considered the Annual Governance Statement for 2018-19 for submission to internal and external audit.

RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement for 2018-19 be approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

147/19 Members considered the Annual Accounting Statement for 2018-19 for submission to internal and external audit.

RESOLVED that the Annual Accounting Statement for 2018-19 be approved and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

148/19 **RESOLVED** that subject to the corrections set out below the minutes of the meeting of 25th April be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.

CORRECTIONS: Min. 113/19 - "allocation of secondary school places" to read "allocation of secondary school places";

Min. 121/19 - "gert" to read "get".

149/19 County Cllr Northcott presented his report to members, which included the following:

A County Estate Review was underway to review Public Rights of Way and to maximise the benefit of County Council sites;

The Council had approved its People Strategy and would develop its HR Strategy;

The most recent reported Claimant Rate was 1.7%;

Public Health Strategies were under review and there was a need to procure new services from 2020;

Staffordshire and Shropshire had adopted a Regional Permanence Strategy in relation to the care and fostering of children;

The Highways & Transport Capital Programme had been approved and included an extra £20k provision for each local member;

In the previous week 478 potholes had been repaired, with 207 new reports received. The apparent “overnight” inspection and resolution of a highway defect raised at the previous meeting had been checked and it would seem had been the subject of inspection in response to an earlier report, hence the rapid reaction;

A further Staffordshire Day had been held on 1st May and was believed to have brought in over £1M to the local economy. In 2020 it would be held in association with the 75th anniversary of VE Day;

The Community Fund had been subject to a reduction to £2,500 per councillor and would have to meet very strict criteria based on projects which “made a difference”.

Returning to highways matters although significant government funding had been secured there had been an underspend in the previous year as staff absence through sickness had restricted the schemes which could be progressed. The relevant cabinet member had pledged more staff support to ensure work could be completed. Gully works in the area would be scheduled between 24th June and 13th July and it would be helpful if necessary works could be identified and prioritised.

RESOLVED that the Chairman would co-ordinate the identification of gullies by GPS location and forward the information to Highways.

A motion at the last County Council meeting had expressed “concern at the impact on Staffordshire” and that there was a need to gain maximum benefit from the works. It was also the County Council’s view that - given current uncertainty - enabling works should be paused until a definite decision to proceed had been made.

150/19 In the absence of the Borough Councillors Cllr Northcott also updated members on Borough issues.

Cllr Simon White had been elected as Mayor in 2019-20.

The membership of the Cabinet was unchanged.

The Betley Court planning application had been approved at committee.

The SCC/NULBC Growth Deal had been approved and it was hoped that work on the Joint Local Plan would recommence shortly following the appointment of a new officer to progress the matter.

There remained a number of unfilled posts within Planning and although a recruitment process was underway it was difficult to secure applications. It appeared that HS2 was distorting the market for planning professionals and creating difficulties for local authorities.

The Planning Committee continued to receive bi-monthly reports on issues at Doddlespool and progress was awaited on the broader issues such as the role of the Environment Agency.

151/19 **RESOLVED** that the Chairman would write again to the MP, indicating that although some limited improvements were evident the Council was still very concerned at the hazard created by the baled waste on the site.

152/19 The Chairman indicated that most of the matters he had dealt with since the previous meeting would be considered under specific agenda items. However he had discussed some potential procedural changes with the Vice-Chairman and invited members to consider their adoption. The suggestions were that a series of Action Points should be identified from each meeting, and circulated to all members within a week to ensure progress; that the Action Points then form an annexe to each set of minutes; and that each subsequent meeting have an agenda item reviewing progress. In addition it was suggested that the pre-meeting briefing should initially involve only the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk from 7 (as confidential matters sometimes had to be discussed), with other members arriving between 7.15 and 7.30.

RESOLVED that the proposed changes be adopted.

153/19 The Vice-Chairman indicated that he believed all of the matters he had dealt with would be covered by other agenda items.

154/19 The Clerk advised members that a councillor had suggested that there should be an internal listing of councillors' phone numbers and e-mail addresses to allow easy communication.

RESOLVED that the Clerk be asked to draw up such a listing and supply it to all members and that consideration of the wider availability of such information be considered at the next meeting.

155/19 The Council's representatives on outside bodies presented their reports.

Cllr Daly advised that there had been no full meeting of the School Governors since the previous meeting of the council. There had been a Curriculum Meeting at which there had been some discussion regarding admission and catchment issues.

Cllr Head advised that the refurbished play area had opened as planned and was being heavily used. Following incidents on the site it had been decided that a night time closure policy should be introduced along similar lines to the council's policy at Sandy Croft. The policy had been publicised via the parish magazine. Although thought had been given to a joint statement the Trustees had taken the view that it might not be appropriate to attach the Chairman's name to such a statement and therefore two articles had been submitted.

Cllr Bullock indicated that the next Speedwatch training would be held on the morning of 6th July. The 3rd to 7th June was Volunteer Week and it was hoped that there would be police attendance alongside the speedwatch volunteers.

156/19 The Clerk advised members of urgent business dealt with since the last meeting of the council. In consultation with the Chairman he had arranged payment of two invoices relating to speed monitoring signage.

He had accompanied the Chairman to a meeting with a local resident who wished to raise an issue relating to admissions to the school.

[Cllr Daly declared a personal interest in this matter as a Governor and parent at the school.]

The number of applications to enter the school in September 2019 significantly exceeded the number of places available and as a consequence it appeared that one or more children resident within the parish and thus falling within the designated catchment area had been refused places and instead offered places at other schools. The resident felt this was seriously detrimental to the wellbeing of his child and raised issues regarding the ability of local infrastructure to meet local needs, particularly if there was to be any further housing development in the area.

It was stressed that the Parish Council played no role in either the setting or implementation of any admission policy which was entirely the responsibility of Staffordshire County Council. Members felt the key issue was whether the circumstances of 2019 were exceptional, or whether they were likely to be repeated in the future. The evidence available to the council suggested that a particular combination of circumstances had arisen in 2019, which were unlikely to be repeated.

The Chairman had indicated to the resident his willingness to write to the County Council outlining his understanding of the situation and the Clerk had been asked to supply the resident with details of the concerns previously expressed by the Council in respect of pedestrian safety between Wrinehill and Madeley.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the actions of the Chairman and Clerk be endorsed.

157/19 The Clerk advised that no items requiring further consideration had been raised at the Annual Electors' Meeting.

158/19 There were no planning applications requiring consideration.

159/19 The Clerk advised members of the following planning decision:

19/00130 Change of use, land for training of dogs, land off Checkley Lane, Wrinehill - PERMITTED

160/19 The Clerk advised members of the following matters relating to HS2:

"Highways Sub Group" meeting to take place in Stoke on Trent on 6th June.

A potential visit to local sites to review progress and method of work was still available, probably in late June/ early July.

Further documentation (none of which seemed to directly affect the area) had been lodged for public inspection at Crewe and Newcastle Libraries.

RESOLVED a) that a copy of the Minutes of the Highways Sub Group be requested;
b) that further details of the site visit be obtained with a view to member attendance.

161/19 Cllr Head provided an update on the Neighbourhood Plan. Work was still progressing, albeit slowly. It was hoped that a further Draft would be available within the next few days. At the most recent meeting two issues had arisen:

A potential conflict between housing policy and school capacity. However it appeared that the problem this year was a statistical anomaly and not evidence of an indicative trend.

The developing policy on highway speeds and safety. There were suggestions of both a 20mph zone within the centre of the village and also 40mph “buffers” at the entrances to the 30mph zone. On the latter in particular there were different views on effectiveness, and concerns that it could prove counterproductive. There was also a need to address the issue of safety of pedestrians crossing, particularly at the village centre and at the Village Hall. Data was key and the Clerk was asked to investigate sources of traffic data.

162/19 Members considered issues relating to Council property and assets.

163/19 The security arrangements at Sandy Croft were now in place and understood. The trees within the community orchard had received a feed of farm yard manure.

164/19 The Chairman had met on-site at the Memorial Garden with the contractor to discuss what works were necessary at the rear of the site. It was agreed that extensive thinning was required and it was understood that this would require two days work.

RESOLVED that the thinning of the rear section of the Memorial Garden be approved, to be carried out at the appropriate time and following an on-site meeting with Council representatives to agree a programme of works within the agreed budget.

Members noted that the brick memorial was in a state of disrepair and needed urgent works.

RESOLVED that the Clerk be authorised to approve necessary remedial works.

165/19 Area issues raised by members were considered. There were no matters requiring decision, however concern was expressed at the behaviour of some tractor drivers in the area who drove at excessive speed while distracted by the use of mobile phones and carrying passengers. The Clerk would forward these concerns to the local PCSO.

166/19 The Clerk tabled correspondence received since the last meeting.

A resident had asked whether the Parish Council had considered “adopting” the BT telephone kiosk in Betley. As the kiosk was still functional this was not an option.

A request for financial assistance had been received from a Stoke-on-Trent based charity. The Council confirmed its policy of not funding charities operating outside the parish.

A resident had written regarding the “parking buddies” and other issues relating to traffic and parking around the school. The Clerk would respond explaining the Council’s understanding of the situation.

167/19 The Clerk submitted to members a list of invoices to hand and payments due, and the Financial Statements to date. No further Bank Statement, beyond that provided to the previous meeting, was available.

RESOLVED a) that the Council authorises payment of the following :

Shires Pay Services	Payroll	£ 33.00	1354
Betley Village Hall Cttee	Hall hire	£ 180.00	1355
St Margaret’s PCC	Churchyard grant	£ 650.00	1356
G Griffiths	Salary/Expenses	£ 617.63	1357
Kirkwells Ltd	Neighbourhood Plan	£1,800.00	1358

b) that the Financial Statement be received.

168/19 Members considered issues relating to council communication.

169/19 Date of next meeting: Thursday 27th June 2019.