

# **BETLEY, BALTERLEY & WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th May 2010**

### **PRESENT**

Councillors Robert Bettley-Smith, Steven Ball, Mandy Berrisford, Johanne Cameron (from min.118), Sebastian Daly (from min.120), David Hales, Richard Head, Simon Harrison, Mark Morris (from min.120), John Price and Chris Watkin.

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Four members of the public  
Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk)

117/10 **Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2010-11.** Cllr Bettley-Smith was nominated to serve as Chairman (proposed by Cllr Head, seconded by Cllr Price); Cllr Head was nominated to serve as Vice-Chairman (proposed by Cllr Bettley-Smith, seconded by Cllr Price). There being no other nominations it was:

**RESOLVED that Cllrs Robert Bettley-Smith and Richard Head be elected to serve respectively as Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2010-2011.**

(Cllr Cameron joined the meeting at this point)

118/10 Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Chapman who had another meeting, and Borough Councillor Becket who was on holiday.

119/10 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items.

Cllr Bettley-Smith declared a personal interest in the item relating to the churchyard as a church attender.

All members declared a personal interest in the item relating to the Community Paths Initiative as walkers.

120/10 At this point the Chairman invited Mr M Smith, representing St Margaret's Church, to update members on the current position regarding the closure of the Old Churchyard and long-term maintenance responsibilities.

Mr Smith indicated that the Old Churchyard was now officially 'closed' i.e. unavailable for new burials. Thought was now moving to the next stage, and responsibility for its future maintenance. The Borough Council had been very supportive of the Church during this process, but had indicated that a health and safety review was necessary. This was considered to be practical by, and acceptable to, the Church.

(Cllrs Daly and Morris joined the meeting at this point)

The Borough Council had suggested that it would be necessary to install railings from the Church steps toward the Cricket Club. A specification would be drawn up, and prices would then be sought. A rough estimate of cost would be around £4,000. The work would have to be agreed by the PCC (Parochial Church Council), who would then need to seek a faculty for the fence and works in laying down unsafe memorial stones.

The standard arrangement would be for maintenance responsibility to transfer from the PCC to the Borough Council (formally via the Parish Council), but the PCC was concerned that the Borough Council could not commit to a standard of maintenance which they felt to be appropriate. The intention therefore was for the Borough Council to offer an annual financial contribution to the PCC, in lieu of adopting responsibility for maintenance, and for the PCC to continue to commission the work.

In response to a request from the Chairman Mr Smith gave an assurance that the Church would not serve notice on the Parish Council in respect of maintenance obligations before September.

121/10 The Council considered the appointment of members to serve on outside bodies and internal groups.

122/10 **RESOLVED** a) that the following members be appointed to outside bodies:

<b>Village Hall</b>	<b>Cameron</b>
<b>Conservation Advisory Working Group</b>	<b>Berrisford, Harrison</b>
<b>Standards Committee</b>	<b>Bettley-Smith (as Chairman)</b>
<b>Newcastle District Parish Councils Association</b>	<b>Cameron</b>
<b>Children &amp; Learning Partnership</b>	<b>Berrisford</b>

(to act as a point of contact; the Council would not seek to directly influence the meetings of the partnership)

b) that consideration of an appointment to the Betley Trust be deferred to the next meeting, and that the Clerk be asked to enquire whether the Council's past nominee wishes to continue.

123/10 **RESOLVED** that the following members be appointed to internal groups:

<b>Press Liaison</b>	<b>Cllr Harrison to liaise with parish magazine Chairman and Vice-Chairman to liaise with other media</b>
<b>Internal Accounts</b>	<b>Responsible Financial Officer (Clerk)</b>
<b>Notice Boards</b>	<b>Hales, Price</b>
<b>Grants/ Funding</b>	<b>Bettley-Smith, Head</b>
<b>Parish Council News</b>	<b>Cameron, Harrison, Watkin</b>
<b>Planning:</b>	
<b>Balterley</b>	<b>Ball, Morris, Watkin</b>
<b>Betley</b>	<b>Bettley-Smith, Daly, Hales, Harrison, Head</b>
<b>Wrinehill</b>	<b>Berrisford, Price</b>
<b>Laudy Croft Maintenance</b>	<b>Bettley-Smith, Hales, Price, Speed</b>
<b>Transport Co-ordinator</b>	<b>Speed</b>
<b>Traffic Working Group</b>	<b>Bettley-Smith, Daly, Head, Watkin</b>
<b>Memorial Garden Wkg Group</b>	<b>Bettley-Smith, Daly, Hales, Morris, Speed</b>
<b>Environmental Champions Group</b>	<b>Berrisford, Cameron</b>
<b>Website Working Group</b>	<b>Berrisford, Bettley-Smith, Daly, Harrison, Head</b>

124/10 The Clerk outlined to members the requirement to carry out certain annual requirements: the appointment of a Responsible Financial Officer, Risk Assessment, consideration of a review of Standing Orders; schedule of meetings for the coming year; and to consider the Return for internal and external audit.

125/10 **RESOLVED** that the Clerk (Mr Gwyn Griffiths) be reappointed as Responsible Financial Officer for 2010-2011.

126/10 Members considered a paper reviewing the Council's response to Risk Assessment, prepared in response to an issue raised by the External Auditor in the 2008-2009 audit.

**RESOLVED** a) that the Council receives and approves the paper submitted by the Clerk;

b) that the Council is satisfied that it has carried out an appropriate risk assessment, and that all necessary and appropriate measures are in place.

127/10 **RESOLVED** that no changes to Standing Orders be considered at this point, but that the issue be reviewed at the September meeting.

128/10 **RESOLVED** that meetings for 2010-2011 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.

129/10 The Clerk submitted to members the annual Accounting Statement and Governance Statement for 2009-2010, and outlined the steps required to be taken by the Council.

**RESOLVED** a) that the Annual Accounting Statement and Governance Statement be approved, and be signed by the Chairman;

b) that Mr Thomas Dunlop continue as Internal Auditor to the Council;

c) that the Council notes that it has addressed the issue raised by the External Auditor last year by adopting a written statement of Risk Assessment.

(Cllr Cameron left the meeting at this point, having a commitment with another local organisation)

130/10 **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of 22nd April 2010 be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.

131/10 The Chairman briefly adjourned the meeting to allow public participation. There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

132/10 The Chairman presented a report on his activities since the last meeting. He had attended a meeting of the Rural Transport Scheme on 7th May; all seemed to be running in a fit and proper manner. He had obtained a copy of the Small Bus Permit, which would be held by the Clerk. He had received representations from the public regarding the speed camera warning signs which had been erected, and which the members of the public felt inappropriate. He had explained that although the Parish Council had expressed concerns over the issue of speeding in the village they had not been involved in the decision to erect the signs. He had written to the resident who had assisted the Parish Council with facilities to provide water at the Memorial Garden expressing the Council's appreciation. Following an approach from a representative of the Village Hall it seemed that the Council's policy of holding the event to switch on the Christmas Lights on the Friday prior to the First Sunday in Advent would be appropriate i.e. Friday 26th November.

133/10 The Clerk advised members that in presenting his apologies to the meeting County Cllr Chapman had asked him to report a very successful event held as part of Local Democracy

Week, in which children from Betley Primary School had participated, and had impressed with their knowledge and thoughtful approach.

**RESOLVED that the Clerk be asked to forward Cllr Chapman's remarks to the school.**

134/10 The Council considered area issues raised by members.

**RESOLVED that the suggestion of placing a bench near the noticeboard on the A531 at Balterley be considered at the next meeting, and that comments on such a suggestion be invited through the relevant church magazines (i.e. both Betley and Balterley).**

135/10 The Clerk submitted details of correspondence received since the last meeting.

**RESOLVED a) that the Chairman, if available, be authorised to represent the Council at the LINK conference;**

**b) that the Clerk be asked to contact Betley Primary School regarding the vacancy as a Governor, and to indicate that the Council would nominate Cllr Ball if no other candidate had come forward;**

**c) that the material from CPRE be passed to Cllr Berrisford, and that any issues arising be taken at a future meeting.**

136/10 Members considered the effects of the recently introduced refuse collection arrangements, and were pleased to note that the system seemed to be working relatively well and that initial concerns seemed to have been allayed.

**RESOLVED to review the arrangements at the September meeting.**

137/10 Members considered the following planning application:

**10/00223/FUL Rear conservatory, The Rosary, Main Road, Betley**

**RESOLVED that the Parish Council supports the application.**

(Cllr Harrison declared a personal interest in the above application as he was acquainted with the applicant)

138/10 Members considered the following planning application:

**10/00263/FUL Detached double garage, The Estate House, Main Road, Betley**

(During consideration of this item the Chairman briefly adjourned the meeting to allow the applicant to clarify the circumstances under which the original application had been amended, and his attitude to any delay arising from the revision of the application)

**RESOLVED That the Parish Council notes that an amended application, featuring a revised location and design, has now been submitted, and asks the planning authority to note the Parish Council's different views in relation to the original and revised applications.**

**That, in respect of the original design and location, the Parish Council objects on the grounds that it is inappropriate in style and form and would have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area.**

**That, in respect of the amended design and location, the Parish Council is broadly content and has no objection subject to the following:**

**a) that the design and location of the development is precisely that indicated on the amended application as featured on the planning authority's website on 27th May 2010;**

**b) that the materials used, and the design of the garage, match the existing adjacent building on the site, in order to minimise the impact on the Conservation Area.**

139/10 The Clerk advised members that he had no Decision Notices to hand, and that there were no other planning matters to be dealt with by the Council.

140/10 The Chairman noted the low attendance at the annual electors' meeting, which presumably reflected general satisfaction with the work of the Council.

141/10 The Chairman reported that along with Cllr Hales he had examined, as far as was practical, the drainage in the Cracow Moss area. The conclusion they had reached was that there was no evidence that water from the development on the former sawmill site was creating problems. However in view of the recent dry weather it was felt important to continue to monitor the situation.

**RESOLVED that the Council continues to monitor the situation.**

142/10 The Clerk reported that Cllr Price had inspected the bench at Church Lane and, considering it beyond repair and potentially hazardous, he had agreed that it should be removed on health and safety grounds. It was agreed that the bench should be replaced; there was also discussion arising from the suggestion of providing a bench at Balterley.

**RESOLVED a) that prices be sought for a replacement bench, and the matter be discussed further at the June meeting;**

**b) that the Clerk speak to the Council's contractor to discuss terms for maintenance of the site around the Church Lane bench;**

**c) that local residents be invited to comment on the suggestion of placing a bench in Balterley.**

143/10 Members considered progress on the development of a community website, and a paper prepared by the Clerk setting out the options available from the Council's preferred supplier. Agreement was reached on the options which members would wish to see included, and issues which required further clarification.

**RESOLVED that the Council commits itself to a website on the terms outlined in the Clerk's report, to include pages listing local amenities/organisations and local events, subject to the Clerk being satisfied regarding the continuity of the site and other issues.**

144/10 The Clerk reported that although the Neighbourhood Watch/OWL scheme was still running the police no longer had any literature to promote the scheme. It could however still be accessed via the police website.

145/10 Cllrs Berrisford and Harrison presented a report to members on Newcastle Borough Council's arrangements for Local Listing, outlining the current large number of buildings already protected by national statutory listing and that a large part of the village was also protected by Conservation Area status.

**RESOLVED that no further action be taken at this stage.**

146/10 Cllr Watkin reported on the Supplementary Planning Document on Urban Design; there were no issues requiring the attention of the Council.

147/10 Members considered whether it was desirable to draw up a Forward Plan of Council Business.

**RESOLVED that the Clerk draw up a draft Plan for the June meeting.**

148/10 The Clerk submitted to members a list of invoices to hand and payments due, and the Financial and Bank Statements to date. He also advised members of the response received from Npower in respect of the level of administrative charge levied for the supply of electricity to the Memorial Garden.

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

DT Askey	Memorial Garden maintenance	£135.00	901
Npower Ltd	Electricity Supply	£164.56	902

**b) that the Clerk be asked to investigate possible alternative suppliers of electricity;**  
**c) that the Financial Statement be received;**  
**d) that the Bank Statements be noted, and that the reconciliation had been verified as correct.**

149/10 Members of the Laudy Croft Working Group reported that no further maintenance work was currently required.

150/10 Members of the Memorial Garden Working Group reported on a number of matters. A member of the public had suggested that planting against the fence on the eastern edge of the Garden would be attractive. Members had investigated the options for obtaining a water supply to the Garden, the administrative steps required, and the likely costs. It was also necessary to proceed with the acquisition of plants to allow summer bedding to be planted.

**RESOLVED a) that the Working Group be asked to consider the options for planting the eastern part of the Memorial Garden;**

**b) that the Working Group, in consultation with the Chairman and Clerk, be authorised to commence the procedure for obtaining a water supply to the Memorial Garden;**

**c) that the Working Group be authorised to obtain summer bedding plants as provided for under the Council's approved budget, to a maximum figure of £300.**

151/10 Members considered issues relating to communication.

152/10 Members noted that despite sections of roadway being marked out no action had been taken to repair surfaces in the Lakeside/ Roger Avenue area. It was agreed to review the matter at the next meeting.