

BETLEY, BALTERLEY & WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2014

PRESENT:

Cllrs Robert Bettley-Smith, Stephen Ball, Karen Burton (from min.110), Seb Daly, Dave Hales, Frank Speed, Jo Thomas and Chris Watkin.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Borough Cllr Becket.
Three members of the public.
One representative of United Utilities.
Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk).

108/14 Apologies for absence was received from Cllrs Berrisford (work), Harrison (holiday), Head (family commitment) and Kerr (health).

RESOLVED that, in accordance with the Council's policy on absence and in view of potential future absences, the apology from Cllr Kerr be accepted as a valid reason for absence under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

An apology for absence had been received from Borough Cllr Becket who was chairing a Borough Council meeting.

109/14 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items.

Cllr Speed declared a prejudicial interest as landowner in Item 14 (Licence Review, August Music Event). All members declared a personal interest in the same item through friendship with Cllr Speed.

[Cllr Burton joined the meeting at this point]

110/14 **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 27th March 2014 be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.**

111/14 The Chairman then outlined the procedure for public participation, and the meeting was adjourned to allow public participation.

The representative of United Utilities updated members on works being undertaken and invited any question or comment. It was suggested that United Utilities branding could be placed on the signage for the contractors' vehicles to make it clear that the site traffic was linked solely to the drainage improvement works.

112/14 The Chairman reported to members on matters dealt with since the last meeting. He had attended a meeting of the Rural Transport project on 4th April. Following the resignation of the previous Secretary a new Secretary had been appointed. Otherwise matters were proceeding satisfactorily. Along with the Vice-Chairman he had attended the Licence Review Hearing, which had been adjourned without any discussion; he would report fully at the appropriate point on the agenda.

113/14 The Clerk advised members that officers of the Reading Room had expressed their appreciation following approval of Community Chest funding for the relocation of the

defibrillator. He also informed members that officers of the Borough Council had responded to a request for an explanation of their policy regarding the treatment of empty properties for Council Tax purposes by stating that it had been a political decision, and that an explanation should therefore be sought from councillors.

RESOLVED that the matter be raised with the area's Borough Councillors.

114/14 Borough Councillor Becket had asked the Clerk to report on two matters:

In relation to the Premises Licence Review he was pressing for Common Lane not to be used for either access to or egress from the event.

A Review of Electoral Arrangements was scheduled for the summer, which would probably suggest a move to "all-out" elections rather than the current election by thirds. He would be suggesting that the Review should also address the size of the Council.

115/14 Cllr Ball, the Parish Council's representative, advised that a meeting of the Betley Trust was scheduled for the following week.

116/14 The Clerk advised members that no matters had been dealt with under the Council's provisions for Urgent Business since the previous meeting.

117/14 There were no planning applications to hand, and no further developments to report regarding planning issues at Buddleigh Farm and Old Hall Farm. A member also reported that members of the public had questioned works currently underway at Old Hall Barns.

RESOLVED a) that the Clerk be asked to clarify the nature of works at Old Hall Barns;

b) that the Borough Council be urged to clarify whether it intended to take any further action in relation to works at Old Hall Farm.

118/14 Members considered potential future use of the Laudy Croft site. The Clerk advised that no further response had been received from the Borough Council but it appeared that Borough officers might be willing to provide further advice on how to progress the issue.

119/14 Members were advised that work on dressing bricks at the collapsed wall, Main Road, Betley had been completed. The next meeting of the Heritage Trust was scheduled for 6th May and that the funding from the County Council had been transferred into a holding account at the Borough Council. The contractor engaged to carry out the work had withdrawn but an alternative contractor was being arranged.

[Cllr Bettley-Smith declared a personal interest in this matter as a Director of Betley Heritage Trust Ltd]

120/14 It was confirmed that Cllr Thomas would be representing the Parish Council at the May meeting of the LAP (Locality Action Partnership).

121/14 Members considered initiatives being undertaken or considered by the Parish Council. There were no matters requiring decision or further action at this point.

122/14 The Chairman reported on the recent Premises Licence Review meeting which had been held in connection with the music event at Betley Court Farm, which had been adjourned on legal advice before any discussion had taken place.

[Having declared a prejudicial interest Cllr Speed withdrew during consideration of this item]

Members considered the decision to adjourn the meeting, without any prior advice, which had led to considerable inconvenience to attendees.

RESOLVED that the Clerk contact the Borough Council recording the Parish Council's dissatisfaction with the way in which the hearing was convened and conducted to the inconvenience of residents and councillors.

123/14 Members considered a report prepared by the Clerk relating to the Borough Council's Community Chest scheme and the Parish Council's grants provision.

RESOLVED that the Community Chest scheme continue to be administered in line with the existing scheme and with a budget of £820 for 2014-15.

124/14 Cllr Burton advised that the landowner's consent had now been obtained for the planned work under the Community Footpaths Initiative.

RESOLVED that Cllr Burton be authorised to seek prices for appropriate works to install the kissing gate as approved.

125/14 Members noted that the Community Speed Watch equipment was now being deployed on the A531 on a regular basis and the scheme seemed to be working well. Two further sites had been approved at The Wilderness and near The Hand and Trumpet. The scheme was eligible for fixed warning signs, which themselves could act as a potential deterrent to speeding. Unfortunately such signs would have to be locally funded and only four were allowed, even though there were five routes into the 30mph zone!

RESOLVED that quotes for signage be sought to allow the Parish Council to consider whether it wishes to provide support for such signage.

126/14 Members considered area issues raised by members. There were no matters requiring decision.

127/14 Members considered highways issues. It was noted that a schedule of works had been submitted for a visit by the Neighbourhood Gang which had been scheduled for April. However it was unclear whether the planned visit had taken place and there was certainly no evidence of the programmed work having been carried out.

The Clerk was able to report that a sum of £1,230 had been received from the County Council as reimbursement of highways works commissioned by the Parish Council in 2013-14.

128/14 The Clerk tabled correspondence received since the last meeting. There were no matters requiring decision.

129/14 The Clerk submitted to members a list of invoices to hand and payments due, and the Financial and Bank Statements to date. He advised members that payroll arrangements seemed to be working well and that the precept for 2014-15 and associated payments had been received. A year-end budget out-turn summary had also been provided to members.

130/14 **RESOLVED a) that the Council authorises payment of the following:**

CVS Cheshire East	payroll services	£ 103.00	1134
CVS Cheshire East	payroll services	£ 48.00	1135
Npower Ltd	electricity (Meml Gdn)	£ 73.86	1136

b) that the Financial Statement and year-end budget out-turn summary be received;

c) that the Bank Statements be noted, and the reconciliation verified and be signed by the Chairman.

131/14 Members noted that no works were required at Laudy Croft.

132/14 Members considered works required at the Memorial Garden. The Working Group had authority to take any necessary steps to arrange summer planting as necessary.

133/14 Members considered Council communication, and matters to be included in the next issue of the Parish Magazine.

134/14 Members considered matters for future Agenda.

135/14 Date of next meeting: Thursday 22nd May 2014 (Annual Meeting)
Annual Electors' Meeting Thursday 15th May 2014.