

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

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 26th February 2012**

### **PRESENT**

Cllrs Robert Bettley-Smith, Mandy Berrisford, Karen Burton, Simon Harrison (from min.48), Richard Head, Hayley Kerr, Frank Speed, and Jo Thomas.

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk)

35/12 Apologies for absence were received and accepted as valid reasons for absence under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 from Cllrs Ball (family), Hales (business), Speed (work) and Watkin (family bereavement). An apology for likely late arrival had been received from Cllr Harrison (family).

Apologies for absence had also been received from County Cllr Chapman and Borough Cllr Becket.

36/12 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items.  
There were no interests declared.

37/12 **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 26th January 2011 be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.**

[ Following the passing of this resolution it was noted that the minutes showed the date of the meeting as 23rd January in error ]

38/12 There were no members of the public present for public participation

39/12 The Chairman reported that he would be attending a meeting of the Rural Transport Scheme on 2nd March, and had been approached by residents regarding footpath issues.

40/12 The Clerk reported that recent media coverage regarding the use of a power of general competence by parish councils, had brought to light that such powers required parish councils to meet two criteria. Firstly, that a significant majority of councillors should have been elected (rather than co-opted) to office, and that the Clerk was required to have undertaken training to achieve competence in advising the council. The details of the necessary training had yet to be determined, but it might be useful to investigate such training in order to give the council more freedom of action in future.

41/12 Consideration of planning applications was deferred to allow for the arrival of Cllr Harrison who had reviewed the applications.

42/12 The Clerk advised members of the following Decision Notices which had been received:

11/00589/OUT Agricultural worker's dwelling, Heighley Castle Farm, Heighley Lane, Betley - REFUSED

11/00644/FUL Two storey side extension, 27 Betley Hall Gardens, Betley – PERMITTED

12/00002/FUL Retention of tree house and decking, 21 Ladygates, Betley – REFUSED

43/12 Members considered pedestrian safety on Main Road, Balterley following a letter raising the issue from a member of the public.

**RESOLVED that the Clerk write to Staffordshire Highways urging that a speed limit be imposed on that section of road, and pointing out the following factors contributing to the need for action:**

- a) the presence of an elderly persons' home at Doddlespool;
- b) the need for residents, visitors and staff to cross the road to reach the well-used bus stop;
- c) the development of a farm shop in the area which has led to an increase in turning movements from and on to the highway;
- d) the increasing number of residents accessing the highway following development in the area.

44/12 Members noted that the issue of highway safety had been a prominent feature of the Parish Plan, and the lack of progress – despite the efforts of the Parish Council – pointed to the need to refresh the Parish Plan and to identify priority areas on which the Parish Council could direct its efforts.

**RESOLVED that a Working Group of councillors and public be formed to refresh the Parish Plan, and that an initial meeting be facilitated by Cllr Richard Head on Monday 23rd April.**

45/12 Members considered progress on initiatives undertaken, or proposed to be undertaken, by the Parish Council.

46/12 Balterley pavements. The Clerk advised that he was awaiting quotations from both the County Council and a Contractor (R Aspinall) for the work required, and would be in a position to commission the work if a tender price within budget was received.

47/12 Bus Stops/ Shelters. The Clerk advised that he had been assured that the paving to access the Crewe-bound stop at Main Road/ East Lawns would be installed by 31st March, and that improvements at the Village Hall bus stop were to be considered for inclusion in the County Council's programme for 2012-13. He had also been advised by the County Council that safety issues at the Main Road/ East Lawns stop were under consideration.

48/12 Plaques on Parish Council benches. Cllr Hales was thanked for his having secured the plaques to the benches.

[ Cllr Harrison joined the meeting at this point ]

48/12 Members considered the following planning application:

**12/00008/FUL Two storey detached outbuilding/workshop, Servelaure, Den Lane, Wrinehill.**

**RESOLVED that the Parish Council has no objection to the application, but the local planning authority will need to satisfy itself that the proposal meets the requirements of Local Plan Policies S.3 and N.18.**

49/12 Members considered the following planning application:

**12/00048/FUL Conversion of farm buildings to three residential units, Ravenshall Farm, Main Road, Betley.**

**RESOLVED that the Parish Council notes with interest the contaminated land report supplied and has no further comment to make on that matter, but restates its support for the scheme as previously approved under application (11/00365/FUL).**

50/12 Members considered arrangements for an event to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Two meetings of the Working Party had been held, and an application to the Bonfire Committee had been prepared, which required the approval of the Parish Council before submission.

[Cllrs Daly, Harrison and Head declared personal interests in respect of the application to the Bonfire Committee as they were voting members of the committee, and in Cllr Daly's case its Vice Chairman]

A programme of events had been drawn up, with many local organisations contributing in different ways; indeed the majority of members of the Working Party were drawn from outside the Parish Council. A budget of £2,500 had been drawn up to cover the costs of the Young Persons Party, Tree Planting, Beacon Lighting Event and Commemorative Book, and an application in this sum had been prepared for submission to the Bonfire Committee.

**RESOLVED a) that the Parish Council formally receives and endorses the Report of the Working Party, and supports the application for funding to the Bonfire Committee;**

**b) that the Working Party be asked to give further consideration to the issues of insurance cover and provision of toilet facilities;**

**c) that the Clerk be asked to investigate the prospects for providing insurance cover through the Council's existing policy;**

**d) that the Clerk be asked to investigate the use of the community website to advertise and commemorate the planned events.**

51/12 Members considered arrangements for the Annual Electors' Meeting 2012.

**RESOLVED a) that the Annual Electors' Meeting be held on Wednesday 16th May;**

**b) that a demonstration of the website should feature;**

**c) that in view of the relatively low attendance in recent years no refreshments be provided.**

52/12 The Council considered area issues raised by members.

Balterley. Concern was expressed regarding the removal of bridges on paths within the woodland at Black Firs. The Clerk would investigate responsibility.

Wrinehill. Concern was expressed regarding the condition of the roadway under the railway on Checkley Lane. The potholing was so severe as to cause damage to vehicles. The Clerk would advise the relevant highways officers.

53/12 Members considered current highway issues.

**RESOLVED a) that the Parish Council did not feel it appropriate to fund a grit bin to be located at the Village Hall Car Park, but would welcome an application under the Community Chest scheme, and would be willing to provide materials for community use in gritting nearby pavements and highway access.**

54/12 The Clerk tabled correspondence received since the last meeting.

**RESOLVED a) that Cllr Burton be asked to prepare an application under the Community Paths Initiative for formal consideration at the March meeting;**

**b) that the Parish Council is unable to participate directly in the planting of Diamond Jubilee trees, as it does not have control of any suitable location for the species obtained, but would endorse an application for a pack of hedgerow species for use in strengthening planting on the boundaries of Laudy Croft.**

55/12 Members considered a request for financial assistance under the Community Chest scheme, which had been deferred at the last meeting pending further information.

**RESOLVED that the application (from the Madeley & District Community Association) be recommended for approval in the sum of £250.**

56/12 The Clerk advised members that there were no invoices to hand though he understood that an invoice for expenditure incurred by Cllr Ball was expected, and submitted the Financial and Bank Statements to date.

57/12 **RESOLVED a) that no payments were required;  
b) that the Financial Statement be received;  
c) that the Bank Statements be noted, and the reconciliation verified and signed by the Chairman.**

58/12 Members of the Laudy Croft Working Group advised that no maintenance work was currently required. A suggestion was made that wild flower seeds could be used to enhance the site, and it was agreed to give the matter further consideration at the March meeting.

59/12 Members considered issues relating to council communication, and items to be included in the next issue of the Parish Magazine.

60/12 The Clerk advised members that he was still awaiting a response from the Borough Council regarding permission to carry out works to the conifer on the Memorial Garden grassed area.

61/12 Date of next meeting: Thursday 22nd March 2012.

62/12 **RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following item under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Section 100A (Schedule 12A Part I 98, 9 & 12)) of the Local Government Act 1972, in that they relate to potential contractual arrangements for the supply of goods and services, and/or potential legal proceedings by or against the authority.**

63/12 The Clerk advised members that a further communication had been received from the Borough Council relating to possible contamination and planning conditions at Laudy Croft, correcting the errors contained in their initial document.

**RESOLVED that the Council declines to enter into the Section 106 Agreement proposed without a further meeting with the Borough Council to establish potential end uses for the site, and the scale of investigative and remedial works which might be required.**