

BETLEY, BALTERLEY & WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 26th February 2015

43/15 PRESENT:

Cllrs Seb Daly, Steven Ball, Mandy Berrisford, Karen Burton (from min.48), Dave Hales, Richard Head, Jo Thomas and Chris Watkin.

44/15 IN ATTENDANCE:

Borough Cllr Becket.
One member of the public.
Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk).

45/15 Apologies for absence was received from Cllrs Bettley-Smith (holiday), Harrison (work) and Speed (health). An apology for late arrival had been received from Cllr Burton (work).

46/15 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items.

Cllr Berrisford declared a personal interest in the Community Chest application from the Tennis Club as she sometimes played at the court. Cllrs Head and Thomas declared personal interests in the same matter as members of the Village Hall Committee at which the court was situated.

The Clerk advised that he had received a written declaration of a prejudicial interest from Cllr Burton in respect of the Community Chest application from the Tennis Club as the councillor was an officer of the club.

47/15 **RESOLVED that, subject to the addition of the name of Cllr Head in the list of apologies received, the minutes of the meeting of 22nd January 2015 be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.**

48/15 The Vice-Chairman outlined the procedure for public participation and the meeting was then closed to permit participation.

One member of the public was present and outlined a potential scheme for a community skate ramp facility. Progress would be dependent on identifying an appropriate location and adequate funding. At this stage the Village Hall was the preferred location but this was dependent on the approval of the Village Hall Committee.

[Cllr Burton joined the meeting during the above item]

49/15 The Vice-Chairman advised that he had been unable to arrange the planned meeting of the Memorial Garden Working Group.

50/15 The Clerk advised members that he had received a letter of resignation from Cllr Harrison who felt that work pressures meant that he was no longer able to carry out his duties to the Council as he would wish. The letter would be passed to the Chairman. As the Council's term of office ended in May 2015 there would be no time to arrange a byelection to fill the vacancy.

RESOLVED a) that the letter be received, and Cllr Harrison be thanked for his service to the council;

b) that, in view of the timescale, the vacancy be left open pending the election of a new council on May 7th.

51/15 No communication had been received from the County Councillor.

52/15 Borough Cllr Becket presented his report to members on the following matters.

Borough Council. Two councillors had resigned from the Labour Group and were now sitting as independent councillors. This meant that there was no longer a Labour majority on the Council. At the Budget Meeting on the 25th this had resulted in an amendment being carried, the effect of which was to restore the full level of Concurrent Functions Grant to parish councils. This would result in an extra £564 for Betley, Balterley & Wrinehill.

Gorsty planning application. Cllr Becket had submitted an objection to the application centred on traffic concerns. Over 1,000 objections had been submitted and it was felt that the local planning authority (Cheshire East) might well refuse the application.

53/15 Members reported on outside bodies.

Conservation Advisory Working Group. Cllr Berrisford would be attending the next meeting if appropriate.

Locality Action Partnership. Cllr Thomas reported on the recent meeting which had been of interest. The Reading Room was happy to host the police surgery at lunchtime at no charge, but would require £5.25ph for events in the evening or on Saturdays.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council would, in principle, be willing to fund police surgeries to be held in the evenings/ at weekends, but that formal approval would be a matter for the March meeting.

54/15 The Clerk advised members that, since the last meeting, there had been no urgent business requiring action.

55/15 Members considered the following planning application.

15/00043/FUL Single storey rear extension, Amberley, Main Road, Betley.

RESOLVED that the Council has no objection.

[Cllr Burton declared a personal interest in the above application as an acquaintance of the applicant]

56/15 Members considered the following planning application.

15/00078/LBC Retention of replacement staircase, Beehive Cottage, Back Lane, Betley.

RESOLVED that the Council has no objection.

[Cllrs Ball, Burton, Head & Thomas each declared a personal interest in the above application as acquaintances of the applicant]

57/15 Members considered the following planning application.

15/00079/OUT Outline application for bugalow & garage, land adj Old Farm, Main Road, Betley.

RESOLVED that the Local Planning Authority will need to ensure that the application has demonstrated the necessary very special circumstances to justify development within the Green Belt.

58/15 Members considered a report from the Clerk relating to the application for residential development on the golf course site at Gorsty, submitted to Cheshire East Council for determination.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council objects to the application on the following grounds:

- 1. The site is not included as a Strategic Location within the emerging Local Plan.**
- 2. Cheshire East has identified regeneration of Crewe as a key priority and a further isolated development in this rural location would detract from that aim.**
- 3. The site does not represent sustainable development, being distant from relevant facilities. The application refers to a bus route being diverted through the development, but neither the applicants nor the local authority have the powers to require such a diversion.**
- 4. The site lies within open countryside, adjoining the North Staffordshire Green Belt, and within the Area of Search for Green Belt extension already identified in the emerging Local Plan. Development would adversely impact the openness of both the existing Green Belt and the Area of Search for its extension and would be contrary to national and emerging local planning policy.**
- 5. The existing development included a Section 106 Agreement relating to the provision and maintenance of the golf course which should be honoured.**
- 6. The development would have a serious adverse impact on local traffic conditions on a network which is already heavily stressed.**

59/15 Members considered the report on the investigatory work carried out at Laudy Croft by Wardell Armstrong.

**RESOLVED a) that the report be received;
b) that a meeting be sought with Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council to establish their response to the findings of the report.**
nature of the site was such that it was unsuitable for grazing and that the Parish Council's intention that the site be open to community use would also make grazing inappropriate.

60/15 Members noted that the Community Speed Watch scheme would be restarting shortly with the extended day lengths.

61/15 Area issues raised by members were considered. There were no matters requiring decision.

62/15 Members considered highways issues. The Clerk noted the continuing difficulty in progressing matters with the County Councillor and Highways officers, particularly with regard to the flooding at Doddlespool. The Clerk and members had noted some evidence of investigative or other works in the Doddlespool area but it was unclear exactly what had been done. The Clerk would seek to establish what works, if any, had been carried out.

63/15 The Clerk tabled correspondence received since the last meeting. There were no matters requiring decision.

64/15 Members considered two applications for financial support under the Community Chest scheme toward the cost of refurbishment of the tennis court at the Village Hall, and equipment for the local First Responder service.

[Cllr Burton declared a prejudicial interest in this matter as Secretary of the Tennis Club and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration]

RESOLVED that grants of £210 be recommended for each application.

65/15 A member asked for advice from the Clerk on whether a discussion and decision taken while a member had withdrawn from the meeting could then be reported to that member, either at the meeting or outside. The Clerk advised that once a decision had been made then members were free to discuss that matter with anyone, including a member who had declared a prejudicial interest though the formal resolution of the Council could still be open to challenge or change until the approval of the minutes at the next meeting. The purpose of exclusion was to avoid any suggestion that a member with a prejudicial interest could influence the outcome of the Council's deliberations. Post-resolution discussion was therefore acceptable.

However, the Clerk emphasised that this applied to the normal business of the Council and that matters discussed with press and public excluded remained confidential even after decision and that this confidentiality would apply to members who had excluded themselves through prejudicial interest from confidential items.

[Cllr Burton rejoined the meeting]

66/15 The Clerk submitted to members a list of invoices to hand and payments due, and the Financial and Bank Statements to date.

67/15 **RESOLVED a) that the Council authorises payment of the following:**

Wardell Armstrong	Site survey (Laudy Croft)	£2,640.00	1173
G Griffiths	Salary/expenses	£ 394.61	1174

b) that the Financial Statement be received;

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

68/15 Members considered any necessary works related to the Memorial Garden. No works were currently required but it was felt that discussion of a general refurbishment and enhancement should take place at the next meeting.

69/15 **RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the next item under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Section 100A (Schedule 12A Part I) of the Local Government Act 1972 in that it relates to potential contractual arrangements for the supply of goods and services and that it is considered to be in the public interest to exclude.**

70/15 Members considered tenders received for maintenance of the Memorial Garden.

RESOLVED that the contract be awarded to Philip Brookes & Son on the terms outlined in their letter of 24th January 2015.

71/15 Members considered Council communication, and matters to be included in the next issue of the Parish Magazine.

72/15 Date of next meeting: Thursday 26th March 2015.