

BETLEY, BALTERLEY & WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2011

PRESENT

Councillors Robert Bettley-Smith, Steven Ball, Seb Daly, Richard Head, John Price, Frank Speed and Chris Watkin.

IN ATTENDANCE

Borough Councillor David Becket
One member of the public
Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk)

1/11 Apologies for absence were received and accepted as valid reasons for absence under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 from Cllrs Berrisford (family), David Hales (work), Simon Harrison (work), Mark Morris (work) and Johanne Thomas (other community commitment). An apology for absence had also been received from County Councillor Chapman.

2/11 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items.

Cllr Daly declared a prejudicial interest in planning application 10/00606 as the applicant was a client, and the application related to a livestock enterprise.

Cllr Ball declared a personal interest in the same application as he was acquainted with the applicant.

3/11 **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 25th November 2010 be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.**

4/11 **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 5th January 2011 be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.**

5/11 The meeting adjourned to allow public participation. No members of the public wished to participate in such participation.

6/11 The Chairman advised that he had little of substance to report since the last meeting. There had been a meeting of the Borough's Standards Committee which he had been unable to attend.

7/11 The Clerk reported on two matters. Although the Council had been advised that the Madeley LAP was next scheduled to meet in February, he had been provided with minutes of a meeting which had taken place earlier in January. The next meeting was scheduled for 7th March and he would be able to attend, and would advise Cllr Berrisford of the date.

He had received a phone call from the British Library regarding a copyright issue relating to a history of Betley published in the very early 1960s, and was expecting further details. When received, he would advise members.

8/11 Borough Councillor Becket reported on the following issues:

Local Area Partnership. He was unsure how the confusion over the date of meetings had occurred, but suggested it may still be worthwhile for the Parish Council to be involved in order to potentially gain access to funding sources.

Doddlespool. The recent developments in the area had a complex background, falling in two areas:

The Borough Council had erred in its handling of the storage building for machinery, which had resulted in local residents and the Parish Council being excluded from the possibility of commenting on the proposal. However it was likely that the scheme would have been permitted even if the Borough Council had acted differently.

As far as the operation of the farm shop was concerned then planning permission was only necessary if produce from elsewhere was brought in for resale. Officers were investigating whether this was the case, or if produce came exclusively from the holding.

Council Tax. The Borough Council was proposing no increase in 2011-12, which was also the case at Staffordshire County Council. The impact of the recent government announcements had been reduced by the fact that the Borough Council had been carrying out a continuous programme of efficiency savings since 2006.

Waste Management. The Council was one of five nominees for a government award, recognising the improvements which had been achieved in recycling rates, particularly in the area of food waste.

9/11 Members considered a report prepared by the Clerk setting out the Council's recent expenditure patterns and outlining a draft budget and precept for 2011-12.

RESOLVED a) that the precept for 2011-12 be set at £10,130;

b) that the draft budget as set out by the Clerk be approved.

10/11 The Clerk advised members that he had written to the Cricket Club as agreed by members at the previous meeting. He had received an acknowledgement, indicating that the Council's letter would be placed before the next meeting of the Cricket Club Committee.

RESOLVED that the Clerk be thanked for his work in the preparation of the letter.

11/11 The Clerk reported that there had been no planning applications to hand at the preparation of the agenda, but that one had been received subsequently (see min 13/11).

12/11 The Clerk advised receipt of the following Decision Notice:

10/00557/FUL Fencing at St Margaret's Church, Betley – PERMITTED

He also advised members that the planning application for additional car parking at the Hand & Trumpet, Wrinehill had been withdrawn.

13/11 The Clerk invited members to consider how they wished to deal with planning application 10/00606/FUL, which had been received since the publication of the agenda for the meeting.

(Cllr Daly withdrew during the consideration of minutes 13 & 14/11)

RESOLVED that, as the relevant issue regarding the application was clearly the securing of a safe means of access and that this could be determined through assessment by the relevant professional officers, the application be considered at this point.

14/11 Members considered the following planning application:

10/00606/FUL Formation of new access, land south of Checkley Lane, Wrinehill

RESOLVED That the Parish Council has no objection to the application in principle but requests that the planning authority, through the highways authority, establishes that the access is appropriate and does not constitute a potential hazard

15/11 The Clerk advised members that he had received in December notice of an application for a residential application on behalf of a member of the Council (Cllr Hales), which would have required the holding of a special meeting. After initial consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman – who both indicated that they felt they would have a prejudicial interest in such an application through their acquaintance with the applicant – the Clerk had contacted all members to gauge whether a quorate meeting was likely. The response received indicated that a quorate meeting would have been very unlikely and, after further consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, he had advised the Borough Council that the Parish Council would be unable to respond.

16/11 The Clerk advised members that their consideration of planning application 10/00704/AGR (Machinery store, land off Doddlespool Farm, Main Road), which had involved holding a special meeting, had been of no consequence as the Borough Council had failed to serve the necessary notices to the applicant, and that permission had therefore been granted by default prior to the date of the Parish Council's meeting. He outlined to members the procedures which applied to agricultural buildings, the degree to which they enjoyed permitted development rights, and the means by which local residents and/or the Parish Council could – under certain circumstances – make representations regarding such developments.

Members expressed concern that expense had been incurred in holding a special meeting to discuss a matter which had already been resolved, and felt that the costs should be reclaimed from the Borough Council as it was a consequence of their error.

RESOLVED that the Clerk write to the Borough Council seeking reimbursement of the costs associated with the special meeting.

17/11 Members were invited to consider their involvement in the Conservation Advisory Working Party.

RESOLVED that in the absence of the Council's representative (Cllr Harrison) consideration be deferred.

18/11 Members considered the development of the community website, and noted that little progress had been possible since Christmas.

RESOLVED that the Vice-Chairman and Clerk liaise in order to progress the matter by the next meeting.

19/11 Members considered the Parish Council's potential role in marking forthcoming public occasions.

RESOLVED a) that with regard to HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee (2012) the Parish Council supports marking the event through the lighting of a beacon in principle, and that the matter be considered further at the March meeting;

b) that with regard to the royal wedding in April 2011 the Parish Council agrees to make a grant application to fund an event to the bonfire committee in the sum of £1,500, and that the matter be considered further at the February meeting, to include consideration of whether another village organisation/ or organisations might wish to participate or lead on such a project.

20/11 Members were invited to raise any area issues. There were no matters identified.

21/11 Members considered ways of improving the availability of grit within the area during severe weather.

RESOLVED that the matter be considered further at the March meeting.

22/11 The Clerk submitted details of correspondence received since the last meeting.

RESOLVED a) that the letter from the Cricket Club requesting permission to erect a banner on the Memorial Garden, delayed in the post, be noted, and that the Chairman reply assuming that a risk assessment had been carried out and that the Club had adequate liability insurance;

b) that the Chairman liaise with members regarding attendance at the Mayor's Ball, and that the matter be considered further at the February meeting;

c) that the Clerk complete the County diary of events including the Betley Show, Bonfire and the Christmas Lights switch-on;

d) that the Council declines to enter the Best Kept Village competition;

e) that the Parish Council would support in principle an event to mark the British Legion's Poppy Week Initiative, but felt it would be more appropriately co-ordinated by a body other than the Council.

23/11 The Chairman reported to members on his review of the licence agreement from Newcastle Borough Council allowing the Parish Council to place a bench at Balterley. He felt that the agreement contained a significant number of irrelevant clauses, which were presumably standard to all such licences, but that it would be wise to seek clarification.

RESOLVED that the Clerk be asked to clarify the relevance and applicability of some of the standard clauses.

24/11 The Clerk submitted to members a list of invoices to hand and payments due, and the Financial and Bank Statements to date.

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

G Griffiths	salary & expenses	£628.96	933
Betley Village Hall	hall hire	£ 16.50	934

b) that the Financial Statement be received;

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

25/11 Members of the Laudy Croft Working Group reported that no actions were required.

26/11 Members considered material for the next issue of the church magazine.

RESOLVED that the following items be featured: the forthcoming Parish Council elections; County Council financial support for the bus shelter repairs; the budget and precept.

27/11 Members considered the Memorial Garden Maintenance Contract for 2011.

RESOLVED that the existing contract with DT Askey be extended for a further year, subject to increasing the fee to £1,100.

28/11 The Clerk reported that he had still been unable to secure additional tender prices for the installation of a water supply, but had been advised of two further potential contractors who would be invited to tender.

29/11 Date of next meeting: Thursday 24th February.