

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

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 28th July 2016**

### 243/16 PRESENT:

Cllrs Robert Bettley-Smith, Seb Daly, Graham Ecclestone, Dave Hales, Richard Head, Frank Speed, Terry Townsend, Ian Walton and Chris Watkin.

### 244/16 IN ATTENDANCE:

Borough Cllrs Bloor and Frankish.  
Three members of the public.  
Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk).

245/16 Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Berrisford (work), Morris (work) and Walton (family). An apology had also been received from County Cllr Loades.

246/16 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items.

A prejudicial interest was declared in respect of the item relating to licensing at Betley Court Farm by Cllr Speed (as the landowner). Cllr Watkin indicated that he no longer had a prejudicial interest in the same matter.

All members declared a personal interest in the same matter through their connections to Cllr Speed and his family.

247/16 **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 23rd June 2016 be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.**

248/16 The Chairman outlined the procedure for public participation and the meeting was then adjourned.

249/16 One member of the public wished to contribute.

The first member of the public referred to problems with the refuse collection service. There had been no collection of boxes or waste at his property since the start of the new system. There had been one emergency collection of food waste. He had contacted a local Borough Councillor and the refuse service but had received only excuses and empty promises. Different reasons had been given for failings and a complaint regarding evidence of vermin around food containers had resulted in the council suggesting that the resident should engage, and pay for, vermin control. The Borough Council had failed to meet its own standards and he was suspicious of the complaints procedure.

The Chairman noted that the resident had given a good example of a systemic failure of the new system.

250/16 The Chairman reported on activity since the last meeting. He noted that the special meeting of the Parish Council with representatives of the Borough Planning Department had been useful and informative. He had attended the meeting of the Safety Advisory Group

regarding the Betley Court Farm events; although the minutes of the meeting were confidential he was able to report on the outcome.

251/16 The Vice-Chairman had attended the meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Group.

252/16 The Clerk read out a report he had received by e-mail from County Cllr Loades including the following matters:

- \* Three projects to measure traffic flows were running in various parts of the parish, and information would be shared with the Council;
- \* He was processing an application for a 20mph zone around the school, and was looking at resolving other matters in the area;
- \* Planned pavement repair work had been deferred because of emergency works elsewhere;
- \* Traffic speeds on Common Lane would be revisited at the end of September;
- \* He had secured 'in principle' support from the Borough Council to support the works to extend the graveyard;
- \* Application for funding for speed signage had been processed;
- \* He had requested a joint meeting with Cheshire East to discuss cross-border rural public transport services.

253/16 Cllrs Bloor and Frankish were invited to report to the council, particularly on the matter of refuse collection which had been highlighted by a resident. The Chairman noted that difficulties in the first and second weeks might have been considered as inevitable 'teething problems' but the patience of residents wore out when there was no improvement.

The councillors set out the problems which had been identified. They had spoken to the Leader, the Portfolio Holder and relevant officers and there were clearly communication problems with different accounts being given.

Further lorries and agency staff had now been engaged but it was clear that preparation had been poor. The Council had also been caught out by the significant increase in recyclables - up 30%. Cllr Frankish would be asking for a review of project planning by the Borough Council.

The Chairman suggested that the Borough should write to all residents explaining:

- What went wrong, and why;
- What was being done to address the matter;
- To clarify the proper procedures for the future.

The Vice-Chairman commented that although collections from major roads had been reasonable this had been at the expense of side roads. Ladygates had missed three weeks; cardboard collection from his business address had missed five weeks.

Cllr Frankish also mentioned the following matters which had been raised with her:

- Betley Concerts noise issues;
- Burning of tyres in the Doddlespool area;

A road accident in which a child had been knocked from a bike. It was noted that such accidents should always be reported in order to provide a statistical basis for action.

254/16 Cllr Head advised members that the Village Hall curry night had been a success, raising in excess of £700. Quotes for replacing the tennis court fencing had been obtained.

255/16 Cllr Daly updated members on the position of the school, which had now entered into a firm alliance with St Luke's, Silverdale. He was now a governor of both schools.

256/16 Members considered issues relating to the Betley Concerts and Betley Court Farm Licensing. The Chairman outlined the conclusions reached at the Safety Advisory Group which had addressed the points raised by the Parish Council, including the provision of traffic warning signs at Keele Bank and Weston, additional police presence (including motorcycle officers), additional stewarding and signage, and restrictions on taxis picking up/ waiting on the A531.

**RESOLVED that the Council's position is neither to support nor object to the proposed variations to the licence and that it is pleased that its representations have been observed.**

257/16 The Clerk notified members that no matters had been dealt with as urgent business since the last meeting.

258/16 There was no further information, other than that contained in the County Councillor's report, to hand on the current position regarding works to extend the burial ground however it was agreed that the matter should be retained on the agenda as a contingent item.

259/16 Members considered whether the Parish Council should compile, and submit to the Borough Council, a Register of Assets of Community Value.

[Cllr Ecclestone declared a prejudicial interest in this matter as licensee of a property which might be included in such a Register and withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item]

**RESOLVED a) that the public houses within the parish be submitted to the Borough Council as assets of community value;**

**B) that further consideration of appropriate properties/ assets be deferred to the September meeting.**

260/16 Members considered the following planning application:

**16/00518/FUL Application to vary house type on Plot 2, site of former Blue Bell Inn, New Road, Wrinehill.**

**RESOLVED that the Parish Council objects on the following grounds:**

**a) that the property represents inappropriate development on the site;**

**b) that it is of poor design, more appropriate to a housing estate setting than on a prominent site at the entrance to the village, and does not reflect the character of the village;**

**c) that increasing the size of the property will increase its adverse impact on the open nature of the Green Belt;**

**d) that increasing the size of the property will increase its purchase price, contrary to the aim of securing affordable housing in the area;**

**e) that increasing the size of the property will reduce the area available for landscaping, further increasing the damaging effect on the Green Belt.**

261/16 Members considered other current planning matters. The meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July with representatives of the Borough Council's planning department was considered to have been

worthwhile, both in reviewing past planning decisions and in outlining the way in which the Parish Council (and the Neighbourhood Plan process) could influence the Local Plan as it progressed. Members also noted that the developers seeking to obtain residential permission on the golf course site at Wychwood Village (Cheshire East) had appealed on the basis of non-determination.

**RESOLVED that the Parish Council enthusiastically supports the Borough Council's observations on the application, and ask the County Council to also provide support and make their own representation as the highway authority; and that the Parish Council also enter an objection to the planning inspectorate highlighting the potential adverse impact on the parish.**

262/16 Members considered issues relating to the Laudy Croft site, which included the current condition of the site and an enquiry from a member of the public asking if cycling facilities could be provided on-site. The Clerk also advised that the insurers had confirmed that they were happy to continue with insurance cover on the current terms.

**RESOLVED a) that topping was urgently required to tackle weed growth on the site, and that the Clerk be authorised to commission the necessary work from the usual contractor;**

**b) that the use of the site for cycling would be incompatible with the Council's aim to develop the site for quiet public use and wildlife conservation.**

263/16 Cllr Head reported on progress on the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. A formal request for designation had been submitted to the Borough Council, a mailshot had been delivered to all households and the first of three Roadshow events had been held.

Cllr Daly reported on the most recent meeting of the Steering Group which Cllr Head had been unable to attend. The public questionnaire was currently being drafted. Two matters had been raised which required decision by the Parish Council: the provision of initial funding as costs were being incurred prior to an application for grant funding being possible, and the role of the Clerk to the Parish Council in supporting the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

[Cllr Daly declared a prejudicial interest in this matter as he had underwritten some of the costs incurred to date and withdrew during consideration of this matter.

The Clerk declared a prejudicial interest in the second part of this matter as it related to his terms of employment, and withdrew during its consideration.]

**RESOLVED a) that the Parish Council allocate a sum of up to £2,000 to support the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group subject to any sum attracting future grant funding being repaid;**

**b) that the Parish Council permits the Clerk to continue in the role of providing clerical support to the Steering Group to be remunerated in accordance with his current rate of pay by the Council.**

264/16 Progress on pavements and highways in the parish, in particular in relation to Bowhill Lane/ Church Lane and Common Lane, had been set out in the County Councillor's report earlier in the meeting.

Cllr Townsend advised members that he had reported the overhanging vegetation at Black Firs Wood to the landowner (Staffordshire Wildlife Trust) and had been assured that it was programmed for attention.

Members expressed disappointment that progress on pavement works at The Wilderness, which had been promised by the end of June, appeared to have been deferred indefinitely. In view of the dangerous condition of the pavement this was felt to be unacceptable.

**RESOLVED** a) that Cllr Loades be thanked for his efforts, but that the Council expresses its disappointment that funds had been diverted elsewhere to work granted a higher priority. In view of the dangerous condition of the pavement and its use by elderly people and children the Council would ask for a new date for works to be completed;

b) that the County Council be advised that any site meeting to discuss proposals for Church Lane/Bowhill Lane should involve members of the Parish Council.

265/16 Area issues raised by members were considered.

**RESOLVED** that works to clean the bench on Church Lane be authorised and the Clerk be authorised to meet any costs.

266/16 Members considered any necessary highways works.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk be asked to obtain a quote from the Council's regular contractor to carry out weedkilling and pavement clearing work on Main Road between Black Firs Wood and Back Lane.

267/16 The Clerk tabled correspondence received since the last meeting. There were no matters requiring decision.

268/16 The Clerk submitted to members a list of invoices to hand and payments due, and the Financial and Bank Statements to date.

269/16 **RESOLVED** a) that the Council authorises payment of the following:

G Griffiths	Salary & Expenses	£ 408.88	1241
Mh-p internet	Website	£ 72.00	1242
L Rimmer	Meml Gdn maintenance	£ 200.00	1243
Zurich Municipal	Insurance premium	£ 530.16	1244
CVS Cheshire East	Payroll services	£ 48.00	1245
S Dale	Neighbourhood Plan expenditure (reimbursement)	£ 706.00	1246

b) that the Financial Statement be received;

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

d) that the Council consider at its September meeting whether it should reduce the number of signatories required to sign cheques.

270/16 Members considered any necessary works at the Memorial Gardens and a policy for use of the flagpole.

**RESOLVED** that any applications to fly a flag be considered by the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman.

271/16 Members considered matters relating to council communication.

272/16 Date of next meeting: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016.