

BETLEY, BALTERLEY & WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2015

163/15 PRESENT:

Cllrs Robert Bettley-Smith, Mandy Berrisford, Seb Daly, Richard Head, Mark Morris, Jo Thomas (from min.169), Terry Townsend and Chris Watkin.

164/15 IN ATTENDANCE:

County Cllr Loades.
Three members of the public.
Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk).

165/15 Apologies for absence was received from Cllrs Ecclestone (holiday) and Speed (unwell). An apology for likely late arrival had been received from Cllr Thomas.

166/15 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items.

Cllr Bettley-Smith declared a prejudicial interest in planning application 15/00443/FUL as, due to historic events between the families, the applicant may consider that his (i.e. Cllr Bettley-Smith's) views on the planning application would not be impartial.

Cllrs Daly and Head each declared personal interests as friends of the Chairman, who were aware of the situation. Cllrs Hales and Morris each indicated that although they were aware of the situation they considered any connection to be too distant to constitute an interest.

167/15 **RESOLVED** that, subject to the correction of Minutes 135 (by the substitution of 'Watkin' for 'Watkinson') and 143 ('proceeding' for 'proc eeding') the minutes of the meeting of 28th May 2015 be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.

168/15 The Chairman outlined the procedure for public participation and the meeting was then adjourned.

169/15 A member of the public associated with the Premises Licence application at Betley Court Farm wished to update members. A Licensing Committee hearing had been held that day and had been somewhat traumatic for the applicants. They had thought that areas of concern had been ironed out, however at the meeting they found that a barrister had been engaged by a local resident to argue a case for total refusal which would also have affected the Show, Bonfire and Game Fair. At the end of a five hour meeting a compromise was reached which allowed licensing for the Show, Bonfire, Game Fair, Young Farmers' Ball (for 2015 only) and up to five other events per annum.

[Cllr Thomas joined the meeting at this point]

The member of the public expressed concern that the newly-elected Borough Councillor for the area had addressed the committee on behalf of a named individual resident, and asked whether this was appropriate given the councillor's responsibility to the whole community. The Clerk and County Councillor indicated that whilst it was open to the councillor to make any

representations she felt appropriate, declaring such a role on behalf of a named individual might be deemed unwise given the quasi-judicial role of the committee.

It was also reported that comments had been made to the committee regarding the participation or otherwise of the Parish Council. Since the Parish Council was not a consultee in respect of licensing concern was expressed that such comments might not have reflected the true position of the Council.

170/15 Members considered the vacancy for a single one member in the Balterley Ward. It was agreed that it would be desirable to seek an application from a Balterley resident.

RESOLVED that a leaflet setting out details of the vacancy be prepared by Cllr Watkin in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk for distribution in the Balterley Ward.

171/15 The Chairman presented his report on matters since the last meeting. He had been unable to attend the most recent meeting of the Rural Transport Scheme. He had received representations regarding grounds maintenance at Main Road/East Lawns and had explained the difficulties caused by the split of ownership and maintenance responsibility between Staffordshire Highways and Aspire Housing, and regarding the condition of footways in the village and had explained that the Parish Council had been pressing Staffordshire Highways on this matter.

172/15 The Vice-Chairman advised that he had joined the Clerk and Cllr Speed at the site meeting to discuss planting on the Memorial Garden.

173/15 The Clerk advised that he had received a representation from a local resident regarding the timelag between meetings and the publication of minutes on the website. The Clerk explained the legal and practical difficulties in publishing draft minutes and indicated that the procedure followed by the Council was in line with normal practice. If a member of the public wished to make an enquiry regarding business transacted at a meeting then this could be directed to the Clerk, the Chairman or any other member present at that meeting, however the full legal record of business was only effective once minutes had been approved and signed by the Chairman.

RESOLVED that the Council maintain its existing practice in this matter.

174/15 County Cllr Loades presented his report to members.

On the Doddlespool drainage issue he was able to report that the necessary works were now number three on the county-wide priority list though he was unable to give a likely date for the work. A new Community Highway Liaison Officer had been appointed (Robert Steele) with effect from July 1st. He would welcome views on the possibility of the village school seeking academy status. The Vice-Chairman, as a school governor, advised Cllr Loades that although the school had been rated good with outstanding features it faced financial issues as it did not qualify for any significant additional funding through Pupil Premium.

Funding was available through Cllr Loades' Community Fund.

Work to resurface pavements throughout the village was proposed.

A meeting had taken place between the Borough Councillor, planning and residents to discuss the operations on land at Doddlespool.

175/15 There was no Borough Councillor report.

176/15 Members reported on outside bodies.

Conservation Advisory Working Group. A meeting was scheduled for 7th July.

Village Hall Committee. Work was continuing on planning Phase V of the improvement works, but the Biffa grant application had unfortunately not been successful. The reduction in landfill use nationally had adversely affected this as a source of grant funding.

Locality Action Partnership. No meeting had taken place since the last meeting of the Parish Council. Cllr Thomas reported that she was pressing the police for a response regarding the scheduling of local police surgeries.

177/15 The Clerk advised members that, since the last meeting, there had been no urgent business requiring action.

[Cllr Bettley-Smith, having declared a prejudicial interest, withdrew during consideration of the next item. In his absence the chair was taken by the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Daly]

178/15 Members considered the following planning application:

15/00443/FUL Ground floor front extension, erection of detached garage and oak-framed car port and new vehicular access Checkley Grange, Checkley Lane, Wrinehill.

RESOLVED that the Council has no objection to the application in principle, but would wish to make the following observations.

1. Section 3 of the Application states that work has not already been started when there is evidence on site of work having commenced;

2. Section 6 of the Application states that pre-application advice has not been sought from the local authority; however in conversation with a member of the Parish Council the applicant indicated that advice had been sought;

3. It is unclear whether the submitted plans indicate accurately the relationship of the structure to the rear of the existing garage to the main building.

The Parish Council would ask the Local Planning Authority to clarify these matters.

The Parish Council would also ask the Local Planning Authority to assure itself that the proposed new entrance meets all appropriate standards and does not create a highways hazard.

[Cllr Bettley-Smith reassumed the Chair]

179/15 Members considered the following planning application:

15/00475/FUL Link extension between existing garage and house, porch alterations Daisy House, New Road, Wrinehill.

RESOLVED that the Council has no objection to the application.

180/15 Members considered a draft plan showing a potential arrangement for the restoration of Laudy Croft to community use. Discussion centred on the practicality of the wild flower meadow and Christmas Tree plantation suggested and whether the provision of football posts were appropriate at this stage.

RESOLVED a) that the general principles set out in the draft plan be endorsed;

b) that external advice be sought on the creation and maintenance of a wild flower meadow and conservation area, and on the practicality of a Christmas Tree plantation;

c) that no provision for any sporting facilities be made at present.

181/15 Members considered appropriate works to improve benches in the East Lawns area. Unfortunately it became apparent that there was some confusion regarding which benches were involved. The Clerk advised that permission in principle had been granted for the Parish Council to replace the benches at Main Road/ East Lawns but that there were also two further benches at the Mere end of East Lawns which were the responsibility of Aspire Housing.

RESOLVED a) that consideration of works at Main Road/ East Lawns be deferred awaiting works to the trees in that area;

b) that Aspire be advised of the poor condition of the benches near the Mere and that they could constitute a hazard.

182/15 Area issues raised by members were considered. There were no matters requiring decision, but it was noted that streetlighting in Den Lane had been repaired.

183/15 Members considered highways issues.

184/15 The Clerk tabled correspondence received since the last meeting. There were no matters requiring decision.

185/15 Members considered the Annual Accounting and Governance Statements for 2014-15.

RESOLVED a) that the Statement of Accounts and Governance Statement be approved, and signed by the Chairman and Clerk;

b) that the Clerk be asked to establish with the External Auditor the basis of their policy on valuations within the Asset Register which seemed to be illogical.

186/15 The Clerk submitted to members a list of invoices to hand and payments due, and the Financial and Bank Statements to date.

187/15 **RESOLVED a) that the Council authorises payment of the following:**

P Brooks & Son	Meml Gdn maintenance	£ 100.00	1184
Elmside Plant Centre	Meml Gdn planting	£ 875.00	1185
Npower	Meml Gdn electricity	£ 69.30	1186
G Griffiths	Salary/expenses	£ 398.56	1187
TA Dunlop	Audit fee	£ 30.00	1188

b) that the Financial Statement be received;

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

188/15 Members considered any necessary works at Laudy Croft. No immediate works were required.

189/15 Date of next meeting: Thursday 28th May 2015 (Annual Meeting).