

# BETLEY, BALTERLEY & WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the meeting held on 28th March 2013

### PRESENT:

Cllrs Robert Bettley-Smith, Steven Ball, Karen Burton (from min.93), Dave Hales (from min.93), Seb Daly, Richard Head, Frank Speed (from min.93), Jo Thomas (from min.92) and Chris Watkin.

### IN ATTENDANCE:

County Councillor Chapman.  
Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk).  
One member of the public.

90/13 Apologies for absence was received and accepted as valid reasons for absence under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 from Cllrs Berrisford (work) and Kerr (family). Apologies for absence were also received from Borough Cllrs Becket and Wemyss.

91/13 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items. No interests were declared at this point.

[Cllr Thomas joined the meeting at this point]

92/13 **RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 28th February 2013 be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.**

[Cllrs Burton & Speed joined the meeting at this point]

93/13 As he had other meetings to attend County Cllr Chapman was invited to give his report at this stage.

He reported that the County Council had resolved to oppose the High Speed Rail Link between Birmingham and Manchester (HS2) on the grounds that there was an inadequate business case, but accepted that it was likely to be built and therefore mitigation should be sought to minimise adverse impact on the county.

[Cllr Hales joined the meeting at this point]

A full-time officer had been appointed to deal with HS2 issues; it was felt that there would be no material benefit to the county overall, although there might be some benefit to Betley due to its closeness to Crewe, and that capacity issues could be addressed by enhancements to the existing West Coast Main Line.

He would be taking up a number of highways issues which had been drawn to his attention, particularly the state of drainage at Doddlespool (A531) which had been identified during gully clearing.

Finally Cllr Chapman advised that this would be his last attendance at a meeting of the Parish Council as he would be contesting his home division of Eccleshall, rather than his current Newcastle Rural division.

The Chairman and members thanked Cllr Chapman for his very good work on behalf of the community during his five years of office.

94/13 The meeting was adjourned to allow public participation.

The member of the public wished to speak on the subject of the collapsed wall at the rear of Main Road, Betley. He was one of the two households directly affected by the collapse. They had been involved in extensive dialogue with the County Council as the neighbouring landowner, but would prefer to see the wall restored rather than replaced by fencing which was currently the County Council's proposal. He also felt that the County Council should bear some responsibility for its failure to maintain trees on its property which had undermined the wall. He hoped that the Parish Council would be able to assist in securing a satisfactory outcome.

95/13 In light of the presence of a member of the public interested in the matter of the wall it was agreed to advance discussion of that matter to this point in the agenda.

96/13 The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk reported on a site meeting with representatives of Staffordshire County Council held to discuss the collapsed wall. During that meeting it had become clear that there was no immediate intention to remove the fallen rubble, but that urgent action [subject to any restrictions relating to the bird nesting season] was needed to remove certain trees which were undermining the wall. In principle the County Council would be willing to make a contribution to the costs of restoring the wall *in lieu* of providing replacement fencing.

**RESOLVED** a) that – in principle - the Parish Council would support any local group which sought to secure the restoration of the wall;  
b) that the Parish Council would gather further relevant information which might prove useful to such a group in considering options;  
c) that – if invited - the Parish Council would be willing to nominate councillors to represent it on any such group;  
d) that the Parish Council notes and accepts the Clerk's advice that it would be outside its legal powers to take direct responsibility for the restoration of the wall.

97/13 The Chairman reported on activities undertaken since the last meeting, primarily related to the collapsed wall. He anticipated being able to attend the April Rural Transport Meeting.

98/13 Cllr Head advised members that the Village Hall now had recycling facilities for users, and thanked members for their support of the event to mark the opening of the new kitchen and toilet facilities. The three items loaned from the Parish Council were now on display. In response to a question from a member Cllr Head advised that a lot of interest was being shown in the new kitchen facilities by potential hirers.

99/13 The Clerk advised members that no matters had arisen under the provision for urgent business since the last meeting of the Council.

100/13 Members considered additional information relating to the following planning application, which had been considered at the February meeting:

**13/00032 Extensions, Yew Tree Cottage, Deans Lane, Balterley**

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Council notes the additional information, relating to tree works to be carried out.

101/13 The Clerk advised members of the following Decision Notices received:

12/00794 & 13/00039 Extension etc, Lime View, Main Road, Betley – PERMITTED  
13/00073 Substitution of door for window, 12 Chamberlain Court, Betley – PERMITTED

The Clerk also informed members that he had been advised by Cllr Becket that 13/00065 Residential accommodation, site of the Blue Bell Inn, Wrinehill had been PERMITTED

102/13 The Clerk advised members that a response had been received from the Borough Council regarding the Certificate of Lawful Development which had been issued in respect of Buddleigh Farm, Balterley. The Borough Council stated that any failure to provide the entrance stewarding described in the description of use could be considered as a breach of the application, and could be subject to action by the planning authority. Members remained unconvinced that the Borough Council had acted properly, or that the requirements of the Highway Authority were achievable or enforceable in practice.

**RESOLVED that the Clerk be asked to enquire of the Borough Council how the requirement identified could be enforced on a Certificate of Lawful Development, which could not be subject to condition; and to express to the County Council the Parish Council's serious concerns regarding the hazard of potentially untrained persons being expected to regulate traffic at the entrance to the site.**

103/13 It having been agreed that the music event planned for August should remain an agenda item the matter was placed before members. As there was no substantive discussion members who had previously declared prejudicial interests were not required to withdraw from the meeting.

Cllr Head declared a potential personal interest in the matter (as an officer of the Village Hall Committee) as the Village Hall had been approached regarding a potential role in the event.

104/13 Members considered initiatives being undertaken or considered by the Parish Council.

105/13 Clearance of pavements and gullies. Members considered necessary works and the availability of the Neighbourhood Gang during April.

**RESOLVED**

- a) that the use of the gully cleaner be obtained for a further half-day, to be funded from the County Council's highways budget provision;
- b) that the Parish Council formally places on record its appreciation of the Borough Council's excellent work in sweeping paved areas and gutters throughout the area;
- c) that the Neighbourhood Gang be employed to secure further pavement clearing on the B5500 in Balterley;
- d) that the issue of sign cleaning be considered at the next meeting.

106/13 Bus facilities, Main Road/East Lawns. The Clerk advised members that funding toward the resiting of the bus shelter had been offered by the Bonfire Committee, and that a site meeting to discuss the matter had been scheduled for 17th April.

**RESOLVED that the Bonfire Committee be thanked for their offer of grant aid toward the cost of this work.**

107/13 Cllr Burton confirmed that the County Council had agreed that the Community Footpaths Initiative funding could be carried forward into the next financial year in view of the progress on sale of land in the area where work was planned.

108/13 Members considered the Council's potential role in a Community Speed Watch Scheme and noted comments made regarding the scheme's likely effectiveness. Although there was a widespread feeling that action on speeding was important there had been limited evidence of the community wishing to commit to support the scheme in a practical way. In addition the inflexible approach to training set by the police limited people's ability to get involved.

**RESOLVED that the matter be considered at the April meeting, with a final decision to be made on whether to progress the scheme or to abandon any involvement.**

109/13 Members discussed development of the village website.

**RESOLVED that Cllr Head will provide suitable photographic material for the Gallery section of the website.**

110/13 Members considered area issues raised by members, which included dog fouling and an incident of flytipping in Common Lane, Betley. As details identifying a potential source of the flytipped material had been found on site details had been passed to the Borough Council with a view to possible further action.

**RESOLVED a) that dog fouling signs be obtained within a budget of £100, to include generic warning notices and signs specifically referring to the actions of the Borough Dog Wardens in monitoring the area; and that the Clerk e-mail members with the direct contact telephone number for the Dog Warden;**

**b) that the Council endorses the action of the Chairman in notifying the Borough Council of the details of the flytipping incident.**

111/13 The Clerk tabled correspondence received since the last meeting. There were no matters requiring decision.

112/13 The Clerk submitted to members a list of invoices to hand and payments due, and the Financial and Bank Statements to date.

113/13 **RESOLVED a) that the Council authorises payment of the following:**

<b>G Griffiths</b>	<b>salary/expenses</b>	<b>£1,000.13</b>	<b>1084</b>
<b>Comm Ccl of Staffs</b>	<b>subscription</b>	<b>£ 22.00</b>	<b>1085</b>

**b) that the Financial Statement be received;**

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

114/13 Members of the Laudy Croft Working Group advised that no maintenance work was currently required.

115/13 Members considered Council communication, and matters to be included in the next issue of the Parish Magazine.

116/13 Members of the Memorial Garden Working Group advised that the contractor would be asked to trim back shrubbery which was growing across the pathway.

117/13 Members considered matters for future Agenda, and arrangements for the Annual Electors Meeting.

**RESOLVED a) that, following works carried out in the East Lawns area, residents be consulted on whether the existing benches should be refurbished or whether**

replacement would be more appropriate, and that the matter be considered at the next meeting of the Parish Council;

**b) that the Annual Electors' Meeting be held on Thursday 16th May.**

118/13 Date of next meeting: Thursday 25th April 2013.

119/13 **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 ) of the Local Government Act 1972 in that it relates to potential contractual arrangements for the supply of goods and services, and/or potential legal proceedings by or against the authority, and that it is considered to be in the public interest to exclude.

120/13 The Clerk advised that no further communication had been received from the Borough Council regarding land at Laudy Croft.