

BETLEY, BALTERLEY & WRINEHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd November 2018

320/18 PRESENT:

Cllrs Robert Bettley-Smith, Mandy Berrisford, Neil Bullock, Seb Daly, Graham Ecclestone, Richard Head, Tony Reah, Ian Walton and Chris Watkin.

321/18 IN ATTENDANCE:

County Cllr Northcott.
Borough Cllrs G & S White.
One member of the public.
Gwyn Griffiths (Clerk).

322/18 Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Hales (work), Speed (family) and Townsend (family).

323/18 Members considered the declaration of interests in agenda items.

Cllr Walton declared a prejudicial interest in any matters relating to Betley Court as an immediate neighbour.

Cllr Head declared a personal interest in any matters relating to Betley Court as a friend of the applicant and as a former tenant.

Cllr Daly declared a personal interest in any matters relating to planning and environmental issues at Duddlespool as the landowner was a former client of his practice. In the event of any substantive discussions relating to activities on the land he would regard it as a prejudicial interest.

324/18 **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings of 25th October be approved as a true record and be signed by the Chairman.

325/18 The Chairman outlined the procedure for public participation, and the meeting was adjourned to allow the public to speak.

One member of the public (the applicant for planning permission at Betley Court) wished to update members.

He had hoped to have submitted a fresh application by now but discussions with neighbours and planning officers had led to different suggestions on the appropriate precise location of the proposed visitor building. In the end he had decided to press ahead as per the planning advice given.

326/18 The Chairman advised members that he had been engaged in extensive discussions with the MP, Borough Councillors and other relevant contacts regarding the issues at Duddlespool which would be reviewed later on the Agenda.

327/18 The Vice-Chairman indicated that he had nothing to report that wasn't otherwise covered on the Agenda.

328/18 The Clerk reported that he had been unable to arrange the migration of the website to a new host within the necessary timescales and therefore suggested that the site be migrated over a period of time given the volume of information involved. Members accepted that this would be appropriate.

329/18 Borough Cllr Gary White presented his report to members which included the following matters.

Council had met the previous evening. A Council Plan for 2018-22 had been approved, setting out the Council's key priorities. The proposed changes to the recycling scheme had been approved and tags were appearing on bins setting out the changes including charging for garden waste. The "call-in" of the University

Growth Corridor plan had been rejected and the project would now be taken forward. This would include removing the golf course from the Green Belt. The Council was applying to take part in a business rates pilot having learnt from its previous lack of success. A new car parking strategy was being developed with the aim of encouraging footfall in the town centre. The developers had withdrawn from the Ryecroft scheme and the Borough and County Councils were funding a £70,000 study to provide specialist advice on future use of the site. This was likely to lead to an increased element of housing and a reduced retail component. Previous proposals to transfer the market to a private entity had been reversed and the market would remain a Borough Council facility. The Guildhall would be transferred for a 12 month trial period to Go Staffordshire with support from the Friends of the Guildhall and community groups with a view to developing a long term future.

Locally he had pressed Paragon to encourage them to lodge a new planning application (which was now to hand). He had also devoted a significant amount of time to issues in the Doddlespool area.

330/18 County Cllr Northcott presented his report to members which included the following matters.

A public consultation on an Educational Skills Strategy (Special Needs) was underway with a closing date of 23rd December. An OFSTED/CQC scoping report was under preparation on Children’s Support (Special Educational Need and Disability). As part of the budget process it had been agreed that the additional early validity on bus passes would end from Spring 2019 and there was to be a reduction in the senior management team. However the School Crossing Patrol Review had been “called in” for further consideration. Final budget proposals would go to the February 2019 Council meeting.

The County Council and the CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups) had committed to a new approach to Children’s Mental Health.

In the most recent period 313 pothole repairs had been repaired with 209 new reports meaning that progress was being made. Funding was in place for such work but staff shortages had impacted on the service which could be provided. This was noted and the Councillor thanked the Parish Council for reporting issues and pressing for action.

331/18 The Clerk advised on items dealt with as urgent business since the last meeting of the Council. He had arranged for the payment (signatories Cllrs Daly, Head & Watkin) of the invoices approved at the last meeting as follows (an error had been noted on cheque 1419; this had been corrected and reissued as cheque 1425):

SL Hurrell	Laudy Croft signage	£ 150.00	1417
Total Security TSL	Security services	£ 36.00	1418
L Rimmer	Memorial Garden maintenance	£ 220.00	1419
TA Dunlop	Internal audit	£ 30.00	1420
T Townsend	Noticeboard repairs	£ 37.00	1421
L Rimmer	Memorial Garden maintenance	£ 80.00	1425

The opportunity had also been taken to arrange payment of the following invoices:

Croft Castings Ltd	Memorial Garden signage	£ 230.40	1422
RBL Poppy Appeal	Donation	£ 50.00	1423
RS Caldecott	Memorial Garden Repairs	£ 200.00	1424

332/18 The Chairman reported on issues relating to activities at Doddlespool which had been raised by local residents, and on which he had been involved together with the M.P. and Borough Councillors and which would inform discussion on the following item.

333/18 Members considered a series of propositions tabled by the Chairman relating to the role of the Environment Agency, Staffordshire County Council and Newcastle Borough Council in responding to planning and environmental issues in the Doddlespool area. Each proposition was considered in turn.

[Cllr Daly declared a prejudicial interest in this matter, withdrew from the meeting and took no part in the discussion of agenda items 333 to 339]

334/18 **RESOLVED: The Parish Council has no confidence in The Environment Agency due to their failure to use their enforcement powers in respect of containing, and then ensuring the timely removal of, baled and other waste on land at Doddlespool. The Parish Council considers the Environment Agency has failed in their duty to protect the environment in the locality. The Parish**

Council calls upon the Chief Executive of the Environment Agency and the Defra Minister to investigate as a matter of urgency and report their findings to the Parish Council.

335/18 **RESOLVED: The Parish Council has no confidence in Staffordshire County Council's administration, with particular reference to their failure to deal correctly with activities on land at Doddlespool Farm, or to discharge their statutory obligations and carry out enforcement activities. The Parish Council requests the Chief Executive to investigate matters and invites the Chairman to respond to the Parish Council.**

336/18 Cllr Northcott advised members that a Planning Enforcement Notice had been served that afternoon regarding the export of soil from the site. Cllr Gary White also provided an update. He had attended the Planning Committee meeting which had considered the application for the trackway off Waybutt Lane. He had aired the previous history of the site and the past behaviour of the applicant. He had asked the committee to consider appropriate conditions to any grant of permission, and to ensure that any conditions were both monitored and enforced. Performance against conditions, and any breaches, would be included in a bi-monthly report to Committee. Both Councillors White had expressed concern at the lack of previous prosecution action and the Chief Executive would now be directly involved.

337/18 **RESOLVED: The Parish Council notes that the Chief Executive of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council is now directly involved in the Planning and Enforcement issues on the land at Doddlespool Farm. The Parish Council supports the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive in their decision to become involved, thanks them for their involvement and sees no reason, at this time, why their involvement should not result in a satisfactory outcome.**

338/18 **RESOLVED: The Parish Council thanks Councillors Gary and Simon White, Councillor Northcott and Paul Farrelly MP for their excellent work on behalf of the residents within the Parish, and for their support, with regards to the land at Doddlespool Farm, and for the actions already taken to address relevant issues and to improve the situation.**

339/18 It was noted that works had commenced on the trackway at Doddlespool very shortly after the grant of permission and it was felt unlikely that the conditions required to be met before the start of works could have been met, particularly in relation to Conditions 11 and 13. Cllr Gary White undertook to raise this with the Planning Department to see if there had been any breach.

340/18 The Clerk reported on the following planning decisions.

18/00299 Trackway, land off Waybutt Lane, Balterley - PERMITTED (subject to conditions, as referred to in Min.339).

18/00457 Replacement of roor door and window, 3 Ravenshall Barns, Ravenshall, Wrinehill - PERMITTED.

341/18 The Council received reports from its representatives on outside bodies. Cllr Reah had attended his first meeting of the local Locality Action Partnership (LAP). He had been struck by the relatively low-level issues within the parish compared to neighbouring parishes, and advised that the Borough Council's Streetscene service was to face a reduction of 75% in its budget. Cllr Bullock reported on his attendance at the recent Borough Council Parish Forum the details of which had been supplied to members by e-mail. The most significant item was that the Joint Local Plan timetable had now been put back by a year and the next consultation was now scheduled for October to December 2019. Cllr Head advised that there was nothing significant to report in respect of the Village Hall.

342/18 Members considered the following planning application.

18/00846/FUL Partial demolition, partial renovation and new build extension; changes to existing car park and landscaping, Broughton Arms, Balterley.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council has no objection in principle to what is proposed and welcomes the retention of the original 19th Century building. However the scale and form of the development is such that the Local Planning Authority needs to be satisfied that what is proposed is

necessary for the development of the business, that the design, materials and finish are appropriate to the particular location and that the development is consistent with Borough Planning Policy. The Borough also needs to be satisfied that the extension of the car park into the Green Belt is necessary and that there are exceptional reasons to justify an exception being made to that aspect of the Borough Planning Policy.

The Parish Council has serious highway concerns and the Highway Authority needs to be satisfied that the proposals do not represent a hazard. Specifically the Parish Council considers that the location of the car park entrance does not offer sufficient visibility and therefore there may be a need for additional speed limits on adjacent roads.

The Parish Council also notes that there is no Design and Access Statement associated with the application. The D&A Statement for the previous permission referred to a second vehicular entrance which did not appear on the plans submitted, and the Council would ask that any uncertainty in this area needs to be clarified.

[Cllr Ecclestone declared a prejudicial interest in the above item as the licensee of a potential competitor business, withdrew from the meeting, and took no part in the consideration of this item of business.]

343/18 The Clerk advised members of the receipt of a further planning application and invited the Council to determine how it wished to deal with the application.

RESOLVED that the application be considered at this meeting.

344/18 Members considered the following planning application.

18/00820/FUL Two storey rear and single storey side extensions, Green Valley Farm, Common Lane, Betley.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council has no objection in principle but the Local Planning Authority will need to satisfy itself that the scale, form, design and materials are appropriate to its location within the Green Belt and that the volume increase is within Green Belt policy.

345/18 The Clerk advised members that an appeal had been lodged against the refusal of planning application 18/00490 (Garage at Rosebank, New Road, Wrinehill). As a householder application it would be determined on the basis of material submitted to date and no further action was required.

346/18 The dedication of the war memorial feature on the Memorial Garden had taken place, and there was a general view that it was a valued addition to the local streetscape. A significant number of comments had been received to that effect. Cllr Bullock indicated that Cllr Hales wished to record his appreciation of the work done by members involved in the project and its success. Consideration was given to the form of remembrance in future years.

RESOLVED a) that in future years the Parish Council should obtain two wreaths, one to be laid at the Church on Remembrance Sunday, the other to be laid at the Memorial Garden on Armistice Day itself;

b) that the Memorial Garden wreath be removed on the Thursday eve of the Christmas Lights event;

c) that the Parochial Church Council be thanked for its role in the project.

347/18 The Clerk advised members that there was nothing to report in relation to HS2.

348/18 Cllr Head reported on progress relating to the Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that, as previously noted, the Joint Local Plan process had now been delayed by approximately twelve months. This would influence the timetable for the Neighbourhood Plan, but could allow the NP to be more influential in shaping the JLP.

349/18 Members considered issues related to the Council's property and assets. Arrangements for the Christmas Lights switch-on event were reviewed. It was confirmed that the electrician had checked the electrical installation and that all was in good order. Members noted that one of the benches at Sandy Croft had been

damaged beyond repair following an incident with the grass cutting machinery, having previously sustained damage from blowing over. It was also noted that there was an error on the information board.

RESOLVED a) That the Clerk obtain quotations for two benches for Sandy Croft, to replace the damaged bench and to provide a further bench, and that the Council's usual contractor be engaged to provide the necessary additional base, and to provide bracket fixings for all the benches;

b) that the Clerk investigate possible means of correcting the error on the information board.

350/18 Area issues raised by members were considered.

It was noted that the Council, when resurfacing New Road, Wrinehill had failed to reinstate the 30mph markings. The Clerk would draw this to the attention of the County Council.

It was noted that the grit bins had been filled.

351/18 The Clerk tabled correspondence received. There were no matters requiring decision.

352/18 The Clerk asked members to provide guidance on the Budget and Precept for 2019-20. In light of the continuing reduction in both funding and local services from both the Borough and County Councils, and the public consultation carried out in 2017 which showed support for a modest additional Parish Council precept to protect and enhance local services it was **RESOLVED** that an increase equivalent to £10 for a Band D property should be made in the 2019-20 precept to raise approximately £5,600pa.

353/18 Members considered meeting arrangements for early 2019, in view of the fact that the normal venue would not be available for the March meeting and that the Annual Electors' Meeting would need to be scheduled. Members noted that the facilities at the school, used for the current meeting, were satisfactory.

RESOLVED a) that the March meeting be held on the scheduled date of 28th March, using the school as the venue;

b) that the Annual Electors' Meeting be held on Thursday 2nd May;

c) that the School be thanked for providing a venue for the current meeting, and that a donation to the value of the normal hall hire cost be made to the school in recognition of their ready co-operation.

354/18 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 :

L Rimmer	Meml Garden & Bulbs	£ 640.00	1426	
Rogers Masonry	Memorial Garden stone	£1,010.40	1427	@
G Griffiths	Salary & Expenses	£1,020.45	1428	
G Griffiths	Salary & Expenses (Neighbourhood Plan)			
		£ 307.80	1429	
Betley Senior Citizens	Donation (Christmas Event)			
		£ 250.00	1430	
Mh-p internet	Website	£ 756.00	1431	
R Head	Neighbourhood Plan	£ 12.78	1432	

c) that the Financial Statement be received;

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

@ - Account was subsequently paid directly by the Parochial Church Council; the cheque (1427) was therefore

355/18 Members considered issues relating to council communication.

356/18 Date of the next meeting: Thursday 24th January 2019.