

BELMONT RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting to be held on 17th January 2013 At Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont

Present: Mr. P. Edwards Chairman
Mr. K. Baynham
Mr. A. Bridges
Mr. D. Cook
Mr. B. Hubbard
Mr. R. Loft
Mr. A. Myatt
Ms. D. Parish
Mr. M. Schoffer

In attendance: Mrs. E. Kelso Clerk
Mr. J. Bissett Herefordshire Council
Ms. R. Jackson Herefordshire Council
PCSO J. Cooke West Mercia Police
A. N. Other West Mercia Police
5 members of the public

001/13 Presentation from Herefordshire Council on the Play Strategy Review

It was agreed that this agenda item be taken first.

Mr. Bissett gave a presentation on the results of the play strategy review carried out last year which identified play areas within the parish (and other areas), the proportion and ages of children within the area and distance to travel on foot and by cycle to those play areas. It had been concluded that the parish was generally fairly well served by play facilities

When opened for public and member comments, the following points were raised:

- A long standing issue was recognised with lack of space for ball games for older children. The only existing space, adjacent to the Northolme Centre, is in a very poor condition as a result of poor drainage. The surface contains large ruts and is considered unsafe with one recorded incident of a child being injured. The site is well used with many children playing on the area during the weekends. It was also noted that children frequently played in the Northolme car park with footballs as the surface of the kick about area is so poor.

Members were reminded that several young people had attended a parish council meeting last year to ask for improvements to the surface of the kick about area.

Mr. Bissett and Ms. Jackson accepted and agreed that improvements to the kick about area should be considered a priority notwithstanding that an opportunity for further facilities might arise out of the application for a development of 85 homes on land at Home Farm.

- The nature of the former landfill site of Abbey View Park was such that it was probably not suitable as an alternative site for a kick about area. However, a feasibility study to establish this would cost in the region of £4,000.00.
- It was felt that the play strategy review definition of appropriate walking distance for a 9 year old was unrealistic.
- Poor design of the culvert designed to draw water running off the former landfill, coupled with lack of maintenance means that water running off the former landfill floods the kick about area.
- Considering other areas, Mr. Bissett was asked why Herefordshire Council had installed a “no ball games” sign on the small area of public open space at the top of Canterbury Close? It was reported that this area was not designated as a play area under the original planning consent and was to provide an area of wild flowers and habitat for field mice.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Bissett and Ms. Jackson for their presentation.

002/13 Public Participation

During the initial period of public participation the following points were noted:

- A request that the Parish Council consider precepting improvements to the kick about area at Northolme
- A query was raised about whether dogs should be on leads on Abbey View Park. The Clerk is to clarify whether that is the case or not.

003/13 Apologies, Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

There were no apologies for requests for dispensation.

Councillor Bridges and Councillor Parish both declared an interest in any payments being made to the Northolme Community Centre as directors of the Northolme Community Centre Association.

004/13 Minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2012

It was agreed that an amendment be made to Minute reference 173/12 reflecting that Councillor Hubbard abstained from voting on this item. Subject to this amendment, it was agreed that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes as a true record of proceedings at that meeting.

005/13 Report from West Mercia Police/Parish Watch

Members noted a report on an operation by the police on the Belmont Road in connection with mobile phone usage by car divers. In a 2 hour period, 15 people were spoken to with 12 using their mobile phone and two reading a Kindle.

Cyclists going to and from Rotherwas were also recently reminded of the requirement to be seen and to use lights in the interests of road safety.

Members were reminded to use the 101 number to ring the police for non emergency matters.

Concern was raised by a member of the public that two young boys had their names taken by police when reported for playing with a ball on a site deemed a "no ball games" site. Police in attendance confirmed that this was routine and not an indication that an offence had been committed.

Finally it was noted that following the appearance of graffiti around the Parish, police were in the process of identifying the culprits.

006/13 Clerk's Report

(a) Litter Bins

The two litter bins have now been installed on Abbey View Park and the handyman is to refurbish several others in the next few weeks, weather permitting.

(b) Abbey View Park Signs

These have been ordered by Amey on our behalf immediately before Christmas with delivery expected within a few weeks. An installation date is to be confirmed.

(c) Bulbs

Councillor Hubbard has kindly planted the daffodil bulbs as agreed on the land behind the shrub bed on the junction of Northolme Road and the Belmont Road.

(d) Grants awarded

Letters have been received from Dore Community Transport, Newton Farm Community Association and Northolme Community Centre thanking the Parish Council for grants awarded during the last two meetings.

(e) Landscaping standards

It was agreed at the last meeting to invite Amey to attend a meeting to discuss landscaping standards. In view of the play strategy review presentation, this will be deferred to a later meeting.

(f) **South Wye Partnership**

Councillor Myatt and the Clerk attended a meeting at Herefordshire Council on 27th December at the request of HALC to discuss working relationships with the South Wye Partnership in light of the South Wye Partnership's current review process and in light of issues raised by Lower Bullingham Parish Council in particular about the work of the partnership. At that meeting it was suggested that a way forward for the South Wye Partnership might be for Parish Councils – Belmont Rural, Lower Bullingham and Hereford City, - to take a greater role in the work of the Partnership up to and including the provision of funding. No detailed proposals were made but authority was given for the Clerk and Vice Chairman to continue the dialogue with Herefordshire Council and HALC to clarify their proposals prior to coming back to the Parish Council for these to be discussed.

(g) **Community Right to Bid**

Members has been provided with details of the Community Right to Bid which was enacted in the Localism Act 2011 and Herefordshire Council's proposal to put identified land/property on a register so that if/when that land/property becomes available for purchase, communities are able to consider making a bid for that property. Having established that there is no deadline for items to be added to the register, Members were asked to consider now whether they wish to identify any land/buildings. This will be an agenda item for a later meeting.

007/13 Report from Finance Working Party

Members noted the report from the Finance Working Party. It was agreed that Councillor Cook become a member of the Finance Working Party.

008/13 Correspondence

- (a) A copy of the results of the "Your Community Your Say" meetings for the Belmont area were provided to Members
- (b) A letter was received from the new Police and Crime Commissioner regarding the police precept requirements for 2013-2014 and inviting people to log onto a webcast on 15th January at 2pm. Unfortunately, the letter, dated 8th January, was sent out via second class post and was not received by the Clerk until the morning of January 15th so nobody was able to view the webcast.
- (c) An email has been received from Mrs. Joyce Clare on behalf of Belmont Community Centre requesting funding of £500 towards the purchase of a screen for a film and photo appreciation group to run at the Belmont Centre, £350 towards the cost of a licence to run the film appreciation group, £300.00 for stationery and consumable items to run a computer club and a further £332 towards the cost of purchasing computer equipment for the club. The total amount requested for the two activities amounts to £1,482.00. The request arrived too late to be included on the agenda for this meeting so will be an agenda item for the February meeting.

009/13 **Payments/Receipts**

(a) Payments

Authorisation was given to make the following payments:

| | | |
|--|---------|---------|
| Northholme Community Centre Association Room Hire for December meeting | | £25.50 |
| Amey Wye Valley Limited Provision of larger waste bin for Southholme Road | £482.71 | |
| VAT thereon | £96.54 | |
| Total payment | | £579.25 |

It was agreed that this payment be withheld pending confirmation of installation of the bin.

| | | |
|---|---------|---------|
| HSBC Invoice Finance (UK) Ltd Purchase of litter bins from Melba Products Ltd. | £697.80 | |
| VAT thereon | £139.56 | |
| Total payment | | £837.36 |

| | | |
|---|--|---------|
| Miss S. Kelso Work on website 27 hours @ £10.00 | | £270.00 |
|---|--|---------|

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---------|
| Cash Petty Cash Reimbursement | | £171.11 |
|----------------------------------|--|---------|

| | | |
|---|--|---------|
| Mr. R. G. Howells Installation of 2 litter bins on Abbey View Park | | £112.48 |
|---|--|---------|

(b) Receipts

The sum of £5.98 has been received in bank interest since the last meeting.

(c) Balances

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Current account: | £500.00 |
| Deposit account: | £48,518.24 |
| Petty Cash account: | -£46.11 |

010/13 **Planning Matters**

(a) Applications since the last meeting

There have been no planning applications since the last meeting.

(b) Planning Decisions since the last meeting

Ref: S122747/O
Site: Land at Home Farm, Belmont
Development: Site for residential development for up to 85 dwellings with access, associated open space, landscaping, infrastructure and parking provision
Comments: Application Refused.

Developers have indicated that they will be carrying out an Archaeological Evaluation of the site with effect from Monday 21st January which will involve digging trenches at various locations on the site.

011/13 Coppin Rise Play Area – Project Update

The Clerk confirmed that Big Lottery has confirmed that the grant funding of £10,000 will be paid into our account during week commencing 28th January.

It was further noted that one of the terms of the funding is that the Big Lottery are acknowledged and there is promotion of their funding in any advertising or news items. It was agreed to consider a formal opening of the play area to which the press could be invited. It was also agreed to consider signage for the site.

The Clerk confirmed that the project is being co-ordinated by Herefordshire Council and that the equipment will be installed during week commencing 21st January, weather permitting. A copy of the final plan was provided to Members.

Finally a notice to be delivered to households in the immediately vicinity of the play area to advise of the imminent installation was approved. Councillor Cook volunteered to deliver the notices.

012/13 Setting the 2013-2014 Precept

Having agreed the operating budget for 2013-2014 at the last meeting, Members considered proposals for the grants and projects element of the 2013-2014 budget. It was noted that potential projects put forward for the next financial year included:

- Replacement bus shelter
- Further landscaping of Abbey View Park
- Reserve for staff pension arrangements
- Support for potential extension at Northolme Community Centre
- Support for potential extension at Belmont Community Centre
- Support for Christmas Carol Concert
- Support for voluntary sector organisations working in the parish
- Additional footpaths, and
- Continuation of the quarterly newsletter and annual report.

Projected reserves to be carried to 2013-2014 were likely to be in the region of £25,000.

Members also noted that due to suggested changes in government policy regarding the setting of precepts by parishes, building reserves for larger projects in future might be difficult. It was agreed that in future, efforts must be made to seek external and/or grant funding for larger projects and

that it might be possible to seek external grant funding for a new kick about area on Abbey View Park.

Finally after due consideration, a total expenditure budget of £64,700 for 2013-2014 was agreed to be financed partly from reserves and partly from a precept of £50,000. Councillor Edwards abstained from voting. The Clerk was instructed to notify Herefordshire Council of the precept requirement accordingly.

013/13 To consider increasing the petty cash float to £125.00

Members noted a report from the Finance Working Party into the levels of petty cash float held by the Clerk which is used primarily to pay for mobile phone top ups, photocopying and stationery as well as some other ad hoc payments. Noting that the account and receipts are checked at each Finance Committee meeting and that the petty cash is held as an imprest system, it was agreed that float be increased to £125.00. Councillor Edwards abstained from voting on this matter.

014/13 To review the policy on grants made by the parish council

Members noted a report from the Finance Working Party regarding the provision of grant funding to outside bodies and agreed that in future any request for funding should be made using the formerly agreed application form to ensure all the required information is provided. It was also agreed that bodies who had received funding in the past should be reminded of the need to use the appropriate form. This should ensure that all appropriate information is provided and there are no delays in obtaining further information from applicants. The Finance Working Party would review all requests for funding prior to consideration from the Parish Council and would be authorised to request clarification or further information from applicants. Applicants would also be reminded of the need for feedback on the success of their project.

015/13 Website – project update and authority to convert to live status

Following the agreement at the last meeting for assistance to load documents onto the website, the draft site has now been populated with a number of documents and items. Although additional work may be required to refine it, and to keep it up to date. It was agreed that the site be converted to live status as soon as photographs of parish councillors are updated so that residents can view the contents through the www.belmontrural-pc.gov.uk web address.

It was further agreed that The clerk proposes places notices on the notice boards alerting residents to the new site and a sign in the library for those residents who access the internet there. The clerk was instructed to make the necessary arrangements and to notify Mr. Robinson who designed and maintained the Belmont Rural community website, and thank him for the work he has done in publicising the parish council through his site.

016/13 Proposal by Herefordshire Council to charge parish councils for paper planning applications

The Clerk reported that although Herefordshire Council had indicated its intention of withdrawing paper copies of planning applications in the past, a letter had been received in December indicating that with effect from 1st January, paper copies of planning applications would be charged to parishes at a cost of £4.00 per copy. This charge had caused considerable concern amongst parishes and a number of queries had been raised by parishes, particularly those who lack access to broadband. Points raised by parishes included:

- Concerns that the charge had been introduced without any consultation
- the charge appears to be a penalty introduced against those parishes and councillors without access to broadband and/or without IT skills
- most parish councils do not have access to A3 printers or colour printers where plans are complex or large
- The venues where parish councils hold their meetings generally are not broadband and/or wireless enabled
- It would be impossible for parish councils to approve purchase of paper copies in advance as is required by Local Government Legislation on expenditure by local authorities.

The Clerk had raised several of these issues with Herefordshire Council and had received no reply but requested authority to purchase paper copies should Members request it or if plans were large or complex. It was agreed to defer a decision on this pending receipt of a response from Herefordshire Council. Councillor Bridges agreed to pursue this matter.

017/13 Training

There were no reports from any training sessions attended since the last meeting.

Members were reminded that the training session on Neighbourhood Planning is scheduled for 31st January.

018/13 Parish Matters

- (a) It was suggested that the bus shelter outside Brook Farm Court would be much improved by cleaning and some routine maintenance and repainting, possibly avoiding the need for replacement in the near future.
- (b) Building work on the extension at Belmont Community Centre had been delayed due to the weather but it was hoped that it would restart within the next week or so.
- (c) Belmont Community Centre has received several small grants for IT equipment thanks to efforts by Mrs. Clare
- (d) Thanks to a grant from Morrisons, a raised bed has been installed at the Belmont Centre which will be used in part by the Mums and Tots group.

- (e) A tree by the library at the Belmont Centre has been removed and as a result the garden area is to be redesigned.
- (f) It was noted that Amey has installed piping above the culvert linking Abbey View Park and Jubilee Field. Some finishing off of this work is required.
- (g) Councillor Bridges gave a verbal report of his work as a District Councillor, including:
 - Raising issues of poor landscape maintenance and pruning with Amey and
 - Reporting anti social behaviour to the police in connection with a party
- (h) Councillor Parish felt standards of grounds maintenance were poor on Abbey View Park, leaving the area looking untidy and unattractive. She agreed to bring suggestions for improvement to a later meeting.
- (i) It was noted that the top of the litter bin in Sydwall Road needs replacing.
- (j) Councillor Cook noted that the passageway between the medical centre and Yarlinton Mill had not been swept again and wet leaves were making the surface slippery and hazardous. The Clerk is to request a litter pick and sweep.
- (k) It was noted that a new salt bin has appeared in Coppin Rise at the side of the play area. This was not considered a priority location as there are no gradients at this site. The Clerk was instructed to request that it be moved to Silver Fir Close where the steep slope at the junction Westholme Road is particularly hazardous in icy conditions. A bin for this location had been refused by Herefordshire Council in the past due to lack of resources.
- (l) Councillor Edwards presented his report on his work as a District Councillor, as attached to these Minutes.
- (k) It was noted that potholes close to the Tesco site had been temporarily filled.

019/13 Public Participation

During the final period of public participation, it was noted that a road sweeper had been observed in Abbotsmead Road on three consecutive days.

020/13 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 21st February at 7pm at the Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, commencing at 7pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

APPENDIX 1

District Cllr Phil Edwards Ward work Report to BRPC Meeting 17th January 2013

1. Chasing Planning Conditional work completions
2. Pressing for the proposed highways Agency Asda junction improvement works
3. Chasing Street Bin installation dates
4. Requesting street sign renewals & graffiti removals
5. Continuing to report pot holes & cycleway poor surfaces