

Belmont Rural Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 21st October 2010 At Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont

Present: Mr. P. Edwards Chairman
Mrs. B. Brown
Mr. D. Cook
Mrs. D. Killeen
Mr. R. Loft
Mr. A. Myatt
Mr. S. Taylor

In attendance: Mrs. E. Kelso Clerk
6 Members of the Public

113/10 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillor Newman and Councillor Schoffer.

Councillor Andy Myatt declared a prejudicial interest in connection with an application for funding for Santas Grotto at the Belmont Centre. Councillor Dawn Killeen declared a personal interest in the same agenda item.

Councillor Beryl Brown declared a personal interest in the application for funding from Kraftimonkies Holiday Club.

114/10 Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September had been previously circulated. It was agreed that the Chairman be authorised to sign these Minutes as a true record of proceedings at that meeting.

115/10 Clerks Report

(a) Training

The date for the in-house training session with Lynda Wilcox is 1st November.

(b) Commemorative benches

There has been no further action on this item since the last meeting.

(c) Tree planting

The kind offer of additional trees has been passed to Herefordshire Council for inclusion in the tree planning scheduled for next month. Andrew Middlecott of Amey is co-ordinating this project.

(d) Tree cutting

Trees along Westholme Road have been cut back today.

(e) Dog Fouling Notices

To date, no response from Herefordshire Council officers on the provision of no dog fouling notices.

(f) Litter bins

Councillor Taylor has confirmed that nearby residents have indicated that they do not wish the new bin to be located by the timber gateway to the Dorchester Way public open space. Regrettably this conflicts with local public open space users who have indicated that they would like a bin at this location for the disposal of rubbish and dog waste.

Councillor Schoffer has confirmed that residents in Westholme Road have been advised of the proposal to move a bin to the new location. The contractor can now be instructed to move this bin.

(g) Kerb Sweep

A partial footpath sweep took place on Monday 18th October.

(h) IT Equipment

A replacement laptop has not yet been purchased due to pressure of other work.

(i) Abbey View Park

The holes dug by children on Abbey View Park have been re-filled with topsoil.

(j) Salt Bins

Having requested two salt bins in recent weeks, Amey has indicated that 500 salt bins in total have been requested but they hold a stock of just 280 so not all requests will be met. There has been no indication as to whether BRPCs request has been accepted but bins are being installed in the first week of November.

(k) Litter picking

The Clerk has been researching the possible implications of employing a litter picker for the public open space areas within the parish. Insufficient information is yet available to put forward a proposal so this item will be discussed at the next meeting. In the meantime, the Clerk has spoken with Rob Hemblade, Parks and Countryside Manager, regarding Abbey View Park and the Playbuilder Site in particular with regard to increased scheduled litter picks as part of the ongoing parks maintenance works.

116/10 Report from West Mercia Police and Parish Watch

West Mercia Police were unable to attend the meeting but Councillor Edwards confirmed that PC Roger Bradley has been appointed as the officer for the Belmont area and a new Superintendent, Damien Sowerby, is to be based at the South Wye police station.

There were issues relating to house burglary in the immediate area in mid/late September which have not re-occurred within Belmont although rural areas have ongoing problems. A recent incident of youths at Barwood House resulted in one individual, known to police, being injured when leaving the Barwood House site after an incident of trespass.

Youths in the Northolme Centre car park have been creating a nuisance and leaving quantities of litter late at night. Sgt. Chris Payne has suggested closing off the Northolme Car Park at night. A proposal to install CCTV in the area will help with prosecutions in future.

Members and members of the public in attendance were reminded of the importance of calling the police non emergency line to report all instances of anti social behaviour so that police efforts can be targeted where required.

117/10 Correspondence

The following items of correspondence, had been received since the last meeting:

- (a) Notification of an IT Conference being organised by Community First at Bank House Hotel, Bransford on 3rd November.
- (b) Revised Dog Control Orders have been published. Members noted that the areas where dogs must be kept on a lead have been greatly reduced.
- (c) Two e-mails have been received relating to an item contained in the Newsletter which was published during the previous week. Both referred to the proposal to discuss the siting of a bench in Westholme Road and both were objecting to the proposal. Members noted that although there was a proposal to discuss this at the meeting on 9th September, that discussion did not take place as it was included within the general discussion on the commemorative benches offered by the Edwards Family. No decision was made as to location and the two correspondents have been notified accordingly.
- (d) Members noted correspondence from one individual disputing a report in the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th July, which were approved by Members as a true record of proceedings at the meeting in held on 9th September.
- (e) The Clerk has received an e-mail from Northolme Community Centre regarding the grant paid to the Centre in 2009 towards the cost of the external lighting. NCC has indicated that they have not been invoiced for this work and have agreed with Herefordshire Council that this will be funded by Herefordshire Council. Accordingly, under the terms and conditions of the grant payment, the monies become repayable to BRPC. The Clerk has requested a final closing statement from NCC, with invoices for any funding spent on the project in accordance with the grant terms and conditions, and repayment of any remaining funding, and will report further at the next meeting.

- (f) The Clerk has received three separate items of correspondence through Members from residents complaining about the litter and dog mess in and around the playbuilder site by the Northolme Centre. Herefordshire Council has agreed to increase the litter picking carried out at that site and to pay particular attention to the fenced area immediately adjacent to the site. In response to several requests, the Clerk has asked Herefordshire Council for a view on the re-installation of fencing around the site to act as a deterrent to dog owners who allow their dogs to foul the site, and for consideration to be given to replacing the “no alcohol zone” notice which was also removed with the fencing. It was also agreed to request that consideration be given to extending the fencing into the turning area to deter cyclists from crossing the grass at that point and damaging the recently re-seeded grassed area.

118/10 Financial Matters

(a) Payments

Authority was given to make the following payments:

Mazars LLP		
External audit for year ended 31.3.2010	£285.00	
VAT thereon	£49.88	
Total payment		£334.88
Pip		
Printing of Newsletter		£133.80
Northcliffe Media Midlands		
Distribution of Newsletter	£19.80	
VAT thereon	£3.47	
Total payment		£23.27
Northolme Community Centre Association		
Room hire for Kraftimonkies final session, Sept.	£45.00	
Room hire for September BRPC meeting	£22.50	
Total payment:		£67.50
Cash		
Petty Cash Reimbursement		£75.85

(b) Receipts

The second instalment of the precept payment has been received since the last meeting, amounting to £22,500.00. Bank interest totalling £3.59 was received on 30th September.

(c) Balances

Current account:	£500.00
Deposit account:	£42,052.55
Petty cash:	(£25.85)

(d) Other Financial Matters

External Auditors Mazars have now completed their external audit of the annual return and accounts for the year to 31st March 2010. There were no items of note within their report although they did note that the papers were received outside the deadline for submission of the report. In fact, the return was posted within the timeframe but not received until the day after the deadline.

(e) 2010 – 2011 Budget Review

The Clerk reported on expenditure against budget for the current financial year, indicating possible reserves of some £28,000 at the end of this financial year, assuming expenditure is in line with previous estimates.

The Clerks report was noted with no questions raised by Members.

119/10 Planning Matters

(a) Applications received since the last meeting

One application has been received within the last few days relating to Tesco Stores. It was agreed that plans be circulated to Members urgently and comments passed back to the Clerk to respond in accordance with delegated authority.

(b) Other planning matters

Members were reminded that that the second consultation period for the Shaping our Place consultation is currently in circulation and includes further discussion on the preferred option for the relief road, which may have implications for this parish. The Chariman reported that he had recently attended a public meeting on the proposals in Putson and had posted flyers on parish notice boards. Members were requested to return completed questionnaires to the Clerk urgently so that a consensus response can be drawn up in accordance with delegated authority.

120/10 South Wye Partnership – Presentation by Mandy Evans

Due to the unavailability of Mrs. Evans, this item was deferred to a later meeting.

121/10 Encouraging Local Democracy

- (a) At a recent meeting of the Parish Plan Steering Group, it was noted that progress against the original parish plan has not been updated for some time. It was agreed to propose that a newsletter or report be published which highlights the work of the parish council within the last year. Such a report is a requirement for Quality Parish Councils so if BRPC wishes to pursue Quality Status in future, such an annual report would be mandatory. One advantage of producing such a report would be to encourage local people to recognise the work of the parish council, perhaps with a view to encouraging people to attend meetings and to consider standing as a parish councillor at the next elections, noting that quality status can only be achieved if 80% of parish councillors are elected rather than co-opted.

The Clerk produced a draft report for consideration indicated that printing and distribution costs would amount to some £400 in total.

After some discussion, it was agreed to go print and distribute the annual report in the format produced to the meeting with the final content to be agreed by the Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman. Members were requested to forward any amendments to the draft as produced to the Clerk within ten days of the meeting.

(b) Information Evening

Members agreed that an information evening be held in February/March for all members of the public who might be interested in becoming a parish councillor. The evening would include basic information on how to become a parish councillor, what the role entails, some background information into Belmont Rural and some input from either HALC and/or the elections office, with the aim of encouraging local participation in the work of the parish council. It was further agreed that a budget of £300.00 be allocated for this event, to include room hire, advertising and refreshments. The Clerk was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

122/10 Parish Plan Budget Allocation

Members noted a report on the current status of the parish plan project, which included a brief questionnaire which is to be sent to all residents within the parish to be distributed as part of the annual report agreed above. Copies of the draft questionnaire were provided to Members and feedback requested within the next ten days so that a final proof version can be agreed by the Parish Plan steering group at the next meeting of that group.

It was further agreed that the sum of £1,500.00 be allocated to this project to include printing and distribution of the questionnaire. This budget figure does not include any additional time required of the Clerk in preparing the necessary documentation. A separate figure will be provided for this at the next meeting.

123/10 Maintenance of Notice Boards

Members noted that maintenance including wood treatment is now required for all notice boards, including the Northolme Board which also requires repairs to the roof. In addition the bench in Coppin Rise requires painting. The Clerk was authorised to make the necessary arrangements for this work at an agreed cost not to exceed £500.00.

124/10 Funding Request – Kraftimonkies Holiday Club

Members considered a request from Kraftimonkies Holiday club to fund a half term Halloween activity club and a pre-christmas event, both to be held at the Northolme Centre. It was noted that some 50% of those in attendance at the summer holiday club were from the immediate Belmont Rural area. Although the Halloween event was extremely close, no advertising locally had been noted. After some discussion, it was agreed to offer the meet room hire costs for the pre-christmas event only provided that appropriate advertising takes place, such as notices on notice boards, within the parish.

125/10 Request for Funding – Belmont Community Centre

Members considered a request from Belmont Community Centre for funding towards the cost of presents for the now traditional Christmas Santas Grotto at the Belmont Community Centre. After introducing this item, Councillor Myatt, who had declared a prejudicial interest, left the meeting. Councillor Killeen, who declared a personal interest, took no part in discussions or vote on this agenda item.

After some discussion, it was unanimously agreed to offer a grant of £400 towards the cost of presents for the grotto, subject to the event being advertised locally.

Councillor Myatt then returned to the meeting.

126/10 Newsletter Delivery Contract

It was agreed that it would be appropriate to continue with a hand delivery contract for the distribution of future newsletters, leaflets and flyers on behalf of the Parish Council and that tenders be sought for this work in accordance with the draft flyer and tender specification produced by the Clerk and presented to the meeting.

Bids will be requested to be delivered to the Clerk for consideration at the next meeting.

127/10 Naming of Dorchester Way Public Open Space

It was agreed that it would not be appropriate to include the Dorchester Way Public Open Space in the formal title of Abbey View Park as the land is separate from and distinctly different (not being formerly landfill) from the area currently known as Abbey View Park. It was suggested that some research into the history of the area might suggest an appropriate name.

Following discussion it was agreed to invite members of the public to suggest a name for the site as part of the parish plan questionnaire.

128/10 Parish Matters

- (a) It was noted that a loose kerb stone outside 3 Coppin Rise needs replacing/repairing. The Clerk was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.
- (b) It was also noted that a householder had reported being unable to cut back a privately owned hedge because of ill health. In the past Amey have cut it but are no longer doing so. Challenge Community Church can sometimes offer assistance in such circumstances and the Clerk agreed to pass this on.
- (c) Councillor Edwards provided a report on his activities as District Councillor, including:
 - Meeting with Tesco management regarding the poor state of their boundary fence, poor appearance of the site and increasing litter issues. To date, promises of remedial work have not been kept.
 - Meeting with Amey with regard to the list of works not yet completed prior to making a formal complaint as District Councillor
 - Attending a site visit with Amey regarding traffic regulations in connection with the country park, parking in Waterfield Road and speed restriction proposals
 - Attending a Shaping our Place consultation

- Contributing to a debate on Herefordshire Council/NHS merger and implications for funding. A total reduction in funding over nearly 40% over four years is anticipated.
- Noting the potential effects of the spending review, to be made public during December and anticipating substantial redundancies within Herefordshire Council.

129/10 Public Participation

During the final period of public participation, the following items were raised:

- (a) Concern was expressed at the poor condition of the Tesco Site and in particular the boundary fence
- (b) It was noted again that water lays across the footpath and road adjacent to the tanker entrance to the Tesco Filing station. The Clerk is to report this to Amey.
- (c) It was reported that the enforcement officer had acted quickly to deal with cars parking on grass verges. It was noted that matters for enforcement officer action should initially be reported to the "streets" e-mail address so that they can be recorded in accordance with Herefordshire Council requirements.
- (d) Maintenance work is required on the five-a-side football pitch adjacent to the Northolme Centre as the surface is uneven and potentially dangerous.
- (e) A broken kerb stone in Broadholme Road has not yet been repaired despite being reported several months ago.
- (f) Despite a promise to consult local people with regard to lighting levels on the mini roundabout at the junction of Abbotsmead Road with Broadholme Road, no consultation has taken place despite the issue being raised some 3 years ago.
- (g) Disappointment was expressed at the lack of police attendance at parish council meetings for members of the public to voice concerns.
- (h) Further concern was expressed at the constant standing traffic on the Belmont Road which now lasts well into the day and not just the morning and evening peak periods. An adjustment to the light sequence at the Asda roundabout was suggested and the Clerk was instructed to raise the matter with Herefordshire Council.
- (i) A request for funding for a Christmas Carol Concern was received. Due to Local Government Act regulations, this could not be considered at this meeting, This will be considered at the December meeting.
- (j) A complaint was received that when youths climbed into a garden, there was no response from local people when telephoned and the youths were not apprehended. The importance of calling the non emergency line so that police are given a picture of trouble spots was stressed.

130/10 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on December 2nd. This meeting will consider precept requirements for 2011-2012, and will take place at Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont and will start at 7.15pm.

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