

# Belmont Rural Parish Council

## Minutes of a meeting of Belmont Rural Parish Council held on Thursday 21st February 2013 at Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont

**Present:** Mr. A. Myatt In the Chair  
Mr. A. Bridges  
Mr. D. Cook  
Mr. B. Hubbard  
Mr. R. Loft  
Mr. M. Schoffer

**In attendance:** Mrs. E. Kelso Clerk  
3 members of the public

### 021/13 Public Participation

There were no items raised by members of the public in this period of public participation.

### 022/13 Apologies, Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

Apologies were received from Councillor Edwards, Councillor Baynham and Councillor Parish.

Declarations of Interest were received as follows:

Name	Nature of Interest	Agenda item
Councillor A. Bridges	Non disclosable pecuniary interest as a Director and Trustee of Northolme Community Centre	8 & 9
Councillor A. Myatt	Non <b>disclosable</b> pecuniary interest as a Trustee of South Wye Community Association and Director of Northolme Community Centre Association.	8, 9, 14, 15 & 17.

There were no requests for dispensation.

### 023/13 Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2013

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January had been previously circulated. It was agreed that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes as a true record of proceedings at that meeting.

## 024/13 Clerk's Report

### (a) Salt Bins

Following a request from the Clerk for the salt bin that had appeared in Coppin Rise to be moved to Silver Fir Close, a new bin appeared at the junction of Silver Fir Close almost immediately.

Subsequently, the Clerk has taken a call from a resident in Tavistock Drive, concerned that the slight incline on the junction of Tavistock Drive and Whitefriars Road rendered the road extremely dangerous during the snowy weather, particularly as the lady concerned has a severely disabled son and was concerned that emergency vehicles would not be able to safely enter the road. A further request was made to Amey for a small salt bin at this location and the Clerk has been advised that this has been added to the list for consideration according to priority.

### (b) Abbey View Park Flooding/Culvert

Members noted that Amey has now installed two overflow pipes to drain water from the holding area to the brook and reinstated the ground above the pipes. It was agreed that a site visit for Members be arranged to identify a list of potential items of work to complete this area which can then be discussed with Amey with a view to preparing a detailed plan for consideration, with costs, at the next meeting. The Clerk agreed to make appropriate arrangements for the site visit.

### (c) Landscaping Standards/grass cutting

No response has been received to our request for a representative from Amey to attend a meeting to discuss landscaping standards but this could be combined with discussions on the Culvert work on Abbey View Park. It has been confirmed that the postponed grass cut is now scheduled for the end of March, weather permitting.

### (d) Abbey View Park Signs

As agreed, Herefordshire Council has taken on the project management of this project and has ordered the signs on behalf of BRPC. The signs have been checked and delivery is expected with Amey shortly.

### (e) Community Right to Bid

It was agreed that this be an agenda item for the April meeting. Members were reminded that all land and buildings considered to be of community value should be considered, including those currently in the ownership of Herefordshire Council.

### (f) Southolme Road Litter bin

Installation of the replacement litter bin is still awaited. The cheque in favour of Amey is still held by the Clerk and will not be released until the bin has been received and installed.

(g) **Litter bins**

The litter bin at the end of Sydwall Road has now been replaced and the Clerk now holds several tops and liner sections as spares. Members were asked to check bins when out walking or nearby and to let the Clerk know which need to be repaired/replaced.

(h) **2013-2014 Precept**

Herefordshire Council has confirmed the precept for 2013-2014 as being £50,000 which will be paid in two instalments as usual. The net amount payable by Council Tax payers in Belmont Rural is £46,956 which is topped up to the precept amount by a government grant of £3,044. The Band D council tax for 2013-2014 amounts to £35.37 for the year (£31.00 in 2012-2013) which amounts to 68p per household per week.

(i) **Website**

It was confirmed that the website has now gone live and is available to members of the public who wish to view it. Notices have been placed on notice boards and there has been a request to provide a link to the BelmontVoice website and there is a link from the BelmontVoice website to our website. The former belmontrural.co.uk site has been de-activated.

It was confirmed that links and documents can be deleted from the site as well as uploaded.

It is now important that the website is kept up to date and Members were reminded that any events or news items should be forwarded to the Clerk to add to the site.

(j) **Brook Farm Court Bus Shelter**

Councillor Myatt has kindly cleaned the top of the Brook Farm Court bus shelter and a quote is awaited for some minor repainting/refurbishment work by the handyman.

**025/13 West Mercia Police/Parish Watch**

A representative from West Mercia Police was not in attendance but Members noted that there have been recorded instances of burglaries outside of the parish, including those when residents were in at the time. There have also been some minor instances of vandalism at the Belmont Centre.

**026/13 Reports from Finance Working Party**

Members noted reports from two meetings of the Finance Working Party, as attached to these Minutes.

**027/13 Correspondence**

Other than routine items that have been previously circulated, the following items of correspondence had been received since the previous meeting:

- (a) Letter from Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureaux requesting a donation/grant for 2013-2014. This will be placed on the agenda for the April meeting.
- (b) Herefordshire Council will be holding a series of consultation events on the Local Plan – Core Strategy (Draft), previously known as the Local Development Framework. This strategy looks to set planning policies that deliver growth in housing, employment and community facilities as well as protecting what is important within the County over the next 20 years. This next round of consultation runs from 4<sup>th</sup> March to 22<sup>nd</sup> April and there will be two parish council drop-in events to be held at the Town Hall on 6<sup>th</sup> March between 4pm and 8pm and again on 20<sup>th</sup> March from 4pm – 8pm.
- (c) The Chairman of Herefordshire Council, Councillor Barnett, is to set up an award for businesses to be nominated for a business award for supporting the community, known as the Herefordshire Diamond County Award. Members were asked to forward suggestions for nominations to the Clerk no later than March 10<sup>th</sup>.
- (d) The date of the next Parliamentary constituency boundary review has been postponed until 2018
- (e) There will be a Hereford Locality Meeting on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm at Brockington for the Hereford City Locality. It was agreed that Councillor Parish and the Clerk attend on behalf of the Parish Council.

## 028/13 Financial Matters

### (a) Payments

A schedule of payments was presented to the meeting. Approval was given for the following payments to be made:

South Wye Community Association		
Room hire at Belmont Centre for Neighbourhood Planning		
Training session held 31.1.2013		£27.00

Herefordshire Council		
Signs for Abbey View Park	£966.62	
VAT thereon	£193.32	
Total payment:		£1,159.94

Herefordshire Council		
Agreed grant towards footpath at Belmont Pools	£5,644.08	
VAT thereon	£1,128.82	
Total payment:		£6,772.90

Northolme Community Centre Association		
Room Hire for January meeting		£25.50

Mrs. E. Kelso		
Payment for use of home as BRPC Office		
Per contract of employment		£100.00

Cash	£82.30
Petty Cash reimbursement	

Herefordshire Council	
Contribution towards Coppin Rise Play Area	£13,093.37

(b) **Receipts**

Sum of £10,000 received – grant towards the cost of the Coppin Rise Play Area.

(c) **Balances**

Current account:	£500.00
Deposit account:	£55,431.50
Petty Cash	£42.70

Current commitments, including cheques authorised at this meeting amount to £28,744.01.

(d) **Budget Update**

Members noted the budget update as presented to the meeting.

## 029/13 **Planning Matters**

(a) **Applications Received since the last meeting**

The following applications were received since the last meeting:

Ref:	123493
Site:	Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont
Development:	Extension and installation of solar panels
Comments:	Members had no objections to this development

Ref:	130049
Site:	8 Northolme Road, Belmont
Development:	Construction of a single storey extension
Comments:	Members found the plans for this development very difficult to view but on a site visit by the working party it was clear that the proposed extension would block access to the garage and garage access, effectively removing 3 parking spaces at a location where on road parking would not be possible or safe. The planning authority has been notified accordingly.

(b) **Decisions since the last meeting**

None.

## 030/13 **Coppin Rise Play Area**

Members noted that with the exception of a litter bin, the play area has now been completed. Fran White of Herefordshire Council, who had project managed the installation, has reported that during

the installation process, two neighbours objected with the result that the fencing was changed slightly. The area is now due a safety inspection and if the inspection finds the boulders are too close to the fencing as a result of the changed fencing line, they will be moved outside the fencing at no cost to the Parish Council. Concern was expressed that individual comments should not have overturned decisions of the parish council and wishes of the greater majority. Overall the project has been delivered at approximately £1,000 under the original budget.

It is a condition of the grant from Big Lottery that publicity be given to their support and it is suggested that a plaque be installed on the fencing. Members considered a small plain sign to be installed on the fencing, noting the support from Belmont Rural Parish Council and the Big Lottery would be preferable. The Clerk was authorised to progress this item and order an appropriate sign provided the overall agreed budget of £14,000 for the total project was not exceeded.

Finally, it was agreed that a formal opening ceremony be considered when weather conditions improved, say at Easter, to which the public and press could be invited. A small working party will be formed to make the necessary arrangements.

### **031/13            Neighbourhood Planning**

Following the training session held on 31<sup>st</sup> January, members discussed the value of a neighbourhood plan for the Belmont Rural parish, noting that not only would a neighbourhood plan enable parish council planning policies to become formal planning considerations but would also bring the benefit of greater control over development and potentially a greater proportion of any Community Infrastructure Levy should this become available through local development. After some discussion on the extent of work required to produce a neighbourhood plan, and potential links with a new parish plan that would require similar community involvement, it was agreed to undertake a neighbourhood planning exercise to be combined with a new parish plan. A provisional budget for both activities was agreed at £5,000.

The Clerk was authorised to discuss the designation of the whole parish as the neighbourhood plan area with the Neighbourhood Planning Team at Herefordshire Council who will be providing support for this exercise.

### **032/13            South Wye Partnership**

A report from the Clerk and Vice Chairman on discussions regarding a revised partnership structure for the South Wye Partnership was noted. Whilst it was generally felt that there was insufficient evidence to suggest any real benefit to Belmont Rural residents at this stage, the Clerk and Vice Chairman were authorised to continue to discuss this with Herefordshire Council, HALC, Hereford City Council and Lower Bullingham Parish Council.

### **033/13            Purchase of paper copies of planning applications**

Councillor Bridges reported on the response he had received to his email to Herefordshire Council regarding the introduction of charges for paper copies of planning applications. It was noted that several of the questions raised had not been addressed and a further response was awaited.

Noting that some Parish Councillors struggle with computer skills and felt pressurised into buying

and learning to use a computer, it was agreed that the Clerk be authorised to purchase paper copies of planning applications if requested to do so by Members or where the application was considered sufficiently complex to require access to paper copies and plans.

**034/13            Application for Funding – Purchase of equipment for Belmont Community Centre Film and Photo Appreciation Group**

Members considered an application from the South Wye Community Association for funding towards costs associated with a Film and Photo Appreciation Group to be established at the Centre. Funding was requested for the following:

£350.00	towards the cost of the licence to run a film club for one year
£500.00	towards the cost of the screen and accessories (including items for children)
£850.00	Total amount requested.

The total cost of the project is £3,500. Of the balance of £2,650, £1,908 is funding from other sources, £300 is to be contributed by SWCA and the balance of £442 is to be funded from fund raising events planned later.

Mrs. Clare, in attendance at the meeting, confirmed that it was hoped that the group would be self financing after the first year. She also confirmed that although preliminary questioning of those attending the Centre for other events suggested the group would attract members, the equipment envisaged would be used for other events if the film and photo appreciation group did not attract sufficient members.

After a brief discussion, it was agreed to offer £850.00 as requested, on the following terms and conditions:

- That Belmont Rural Parish Council be acknowledged within any marketing or other material produced in connection with activities envisaged under the application
- That the applicant be required to produce receipts or receipted invoices to confirm the final purchase price paid
- That the applicant be requested to maintain sufficient information on the use of the equipment to provide a report to the Parish Council within six months of the grant being paid to include the following information as a minimum:
  - Details of activities that have taken place using the equipment envisaged under the application
  - Numbers of individuals who have benefited from activities using the equipment envisaged under the application
  - Whether the individuals who have attended activities using the equipment envisaged under the application are residents of Belmont Rural.

This information would help to ensure the Parish Council would be in a position to confirm value for money and community benefit in providing this grant.

Councillor Myatt abstained from voting on this item.

### 035/13      **Application for funding – Computers in the Community**

Members considered an application from The South Wye Community Association for financial support for computers to be purchased, and training sessions to be held at the Belmont Community Centre, as follows:

£332.00	part funding towards the purchase of a laptop
£400.00	to fund a computer course
£732.00	Total

Mrs. Clare advised that the intention as regards the computer course was to extent the current provision at the Centre which is run by The Hereford Academy for older learners. It was also confirmed that the equipment purchased would be made available to members of the public at other times as a condition of the Community Technology Grant that had been applied for in addition to the Parish Council funding requested.

After a brief discussion it was agreed to offer a grant of £732.00 on the following terms and conditions:

- That Belmont Rural Parish Council be acknowledged within any marketing or other material produced in connection with activities envisaged under the application
- That the applicant be required to produce receipts or receipted invoices to confirm the final purchase price paid
- That the applicant be requested to maintain sufficient information on the use of the equipment to provide a report to the Parish Council within six months of the grant being paid to include the following information as a minimum:
  - Details of activities that have taken place using the equipment envisaged under the application
  - Numbers of individuals who have benefited from activities using the equipment envisaged under the application
  - Whether the individuals who have attended activities using the equipment envisaged under the application are residents of Belmont Rural.

This information would help to ensure the Parish Council would be in a position to confirm value for money and community benefit in providing this grant.

Councillor Myatt abstained from voting on this item.

### 036/13      **Replacement shrubs for the Westholme Road planter**

Councillor Hubbard noted that having agreed to undertake an overhaul of the planter in Westholme Road, he felt additional shrubs were required to bring the planter up to an acceptable standard. It was agreed that he be authorised to purchase shrubs up to a value of £30.00.

### **037/13 Wildflower seed sowing – Jubilee Field**

Councillor Hubbard expressed concern at the location of the proposed wild flower bed on Jubilee Field, noting that he had considered requesting a rescission of the resolution agreeing to the location but had withdrawn that request on learning that Amey had consulted with experts in wild flower meadows to identify appropriate species for the location and soil type.

On request that the Parish Council confirm it's vision for Jubilee Field to be a wild flower meadow, it was noted that the land is owned by Herefordshire Council and a formal management plan for that land had been agreed some time ago to take into consideration the promotion of biodiversity and protection of the habitat of the Brown Banded Carder Bee. Any proposal to amend that plan would require it to be negotiated with Herefordshire Council. Adverse weather conditions last summer had prevented the management plan being fully implemented and it was therefore agreed to wait to see the results of the plan being implemented through the next year before agreeing any changes.

### **038/13 Application for funding – Easter Holiday Club at Northolme Community Centre**

Members considered an application from Northolme Community Centre Association for funding to provide four days room hire for a children's holiday club to take place at NCCA at a total cost of £238.00. Noting the success of this holiday club in the past, it was agreed to offer a grant of £238.00 subject to the following terms and conditions:

- That Belmont Rural Parish Council be acknowledged within any marketing or other material produced in connection with activities envisaged under the application
- That the funding be paid upon submission of an invoice for the room hire
- That the applicant be requested to provide a report to the parish council within six months of the date of the payment of the funding, to include
  - Details of activities that have taken place as a direct result of the funding provided
  - Numbers of individuals who have benefited from activities supported by this funding and
  - Whether the individuals who have attended activities supported by this funding are residents of the parish of Belmont rural.

### **039/13 Training**

Other than the Neighbourhood Planning training that had taken place on 31<sup>st</sup> January (see minute reference 031/13 above), there had been no other training sessions attended since the last meeting.

The Clerk reported that she had started work in achieving the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) qualification which would enable the parish council to consider Power of Competence status and she outlined the work required to complete the portfolio of evidence for this qualification.

**040/13 Parish Matters**

- (a) Councillor Bridges presented a brief report on activities as a District Councillor since the last meeting, as attached to these Minutes.
- (b) Members noted that the Northolme Community Association would be holding a Summer Fun Day on 20<sup>th</sup> July.
- (c) Some concern was expressed on the repair work needed for the footpaths.
- (d) Members noted a report from Councillor Myatt on activities, challenges and opportunities at the Belmont Centre, as attached to these Minutes.
- (e) It was noted that a tree in Abbotsmead Road requires staking.

**041/12 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April at Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont, commencing at 7pm.

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

# Belmont Rural Parish Council

## Notes from the meeting of the Finance Working Party held on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013

**Present:** Councillor A. Myatt  
Councillor D. Cook

**Apologies:** Councillor K. Baynham

**In attendance:** Mrs. E. Kelso (Clerk)

### 1. **South Wye Partnership**

It was noted that following on from the Parish Council meeting held in January, the Clerk and Councillor Myatt had attended a further meeting with HALC, Lower Bullingham Parish Council and Herefordshire Council officers to discuss the potential for partnership working. To date, discussions indicated that the model suggested was that parish councils would be permitted to join the South Wye Partnership as full members rather than observers and that funding towards the cost of the South Wye Partnership Officer was being sought, a figure in the region of £5,000 per parish council having been suggested.

Members suggested that this be treated in the same way as a grant request and that any financial contribution be considered in the light of the benefit to Belmont Rural residents before it be put to the full Parish Council for consideration. It was agreed that at this stage there is no clear evidence of benefit to Belmont Rural over and above what the Parish Council might achieve on its own merits but that it should be recommended to the Parish Council that the Clerk and Vice Chairman be authorised to continue to discuss this with HALC/Herefordshire Council and others.

It was further noted that Power of Competence would be required to meet the funding request in any event. Achievement of Power of Competence itself would enable Belmont Rural to undertake a wider range of projects itself without input from the South Wye Partnership but it was acknowledged that membership of SWP might open up alternative funding sources not currently available to local authorities.

Recommended: That the Clerk and Vice Chairman be authorised to continue to discuss this further with a view to establishing a clear benefit to Belmont Rural residents from any future partnership arrangement whether funded or not.

### 2. **Review of financial records**

Members confirmed that the financial records maintained by the Clerk were in order.

# Belmont Rural Parish Council

## Notes from the meeting of the Finance Working Party held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013

**Present:** Councillor D. Cook  
Councillor K. Baynham

**Apologies:** Councillor A. Myatt

**In attendance:** Mrs. E. Kelso (Clerk)

### 1. **Grant funding application – Belmont Community Centre Photo and Film Appreciation Society**

The grant application from Mrs. Joyce Clare on behalf of the South Wye Community Association (Belmont Community Centre) towards equipment for a Photo and Film Appreciation Society was reviewed. It was agreed that sufficient information was available on the form for it to be presented to Members at the Parish Council meeting to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> February.

It was further agreed to recommend that if the application is successful, the following terms be made within the offer of funding:

- That Belmont Rural Parish Council be acknowledged within any marketing or other material produced in connection with activities envisaged under the application
- That the applicant be required to produce receipts or receipted invoices to confirm the final purchase price paid
- That the applicant be requested to maintain sufficient information on the use of the equipment to provide a report to the Parish Council within six months of the grant being paid to include the following information as a minimum:
  - Details of activities that have taken place using the equipment envisaged under the application
  - Numbers of individuals who have benefited from activities using the equipment envisaged under the application
  - Whether the individuals who have attended activities using the equipment envisaged under the application are residents of Belmont Rural.

This information would help to ensure the Parish Council would be in a position to confirm value for money and community benefit in providing this grant.

## 2. **Grant funding application – Belmont Community Centre Computer Club**

The grant application from Mrs. Joyce Clare on behalf of the South Wye Community Association for equipment and other financial support for a Computer Club with associated training courses was considered. As the Clerk is also employed by the Hereford Academy and the Academy might provide a training course for the Community Centre, the Clerk declared an interest in this application.

In considering the application, it was noted that the pro forma invoice provided by the applicant was for equipment and did not include software. It was agreed to request further information on whether software was included in the price or would be a separate amount. The Clerk agreed to request this prior to the grant request being passed to the Parish Council for consideration.

Subject to provision of the additional information, it was agreed that the request be submitted to the Parish Council at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> February. It was further agreed to recommend that if successful, the grant offer be conditional upon:

- That Belmont Rural Parish Council be acknowledged within any marketing or other material produced in connection with activities envisaged under the application
- That the applicant be required to produce receipts or receipted invoices to confirm the final purchase price paid for any goods or services
- That the applicant be requested to maintain sufficient information on the use of the equipment to provide a report to the Parish Council within six months of the grant being paid to include the following information as a minimum:
  - Details of activities that have taken place using the funding requested by the application
  - Numbers of individuals who have benefited from activities envisaged under the application
  - Whether the individuals who have attended activities envisaged under the application are residents of Belmont Rural.

This information would help to ensure the Parish Council would be in a position to confirm value for money and community benefit in providing this grant.

## 3. **Review of Petty Cash Expenditure**

Members reviewed the current level of petty cash expenditure, confirming that the purchase of stationery was currently running at approximately £270 for the year to date with photocopying at some £250 for the year to date.

The petty cash account and copy receipts were checked and found to be in order.

Parish Matters- Cllr AM Myatt  
Submission to Belmont Rural Parish Council  
Thursday 21 February 2013

On behalf of the South Wye Community Association I am pleased to report that the Charity Commission has received our annual return for year ending 31 December 2012. A gross income of £35,000 and a gross expenditure of £25,200 were recorded. A draft financial statement for the year has been prepared and this is currently with the Association's auditor. The Charity Commissioners and Belmont Rural Parish Council will be in receipt of the approved statement as soon as it is available.

Work has restarted on the Belmont Community Centre main room extension and at time of writing the exterior walls and gable end are completed. In week commencing 25 February the builder intends to fit a large RSJ into a supporting wall to gain access to the main room. This will cause some disruption to the Centre's activities, but it is hoped to continue business, nearly as usual. Neither the Association, nor our solicitor has received any further communication from our neighbour about her erroneous claim to the Association's land. We deeply regret her claim wasted the Association's time and money, but our management committee has decided not to pursue the matter and let a sleeping dog lie!

Sadly SWCA reports that Slimming World no longer holds its meeting at the Belmont Community Centre having, in the words of its organiser, outgrown our facility. This has resulted in a substantial loss of revenue, but more positively has given the Centre the opportunity to diversify its activities. Currently two new groups have indicated they will be using our facilities starting in March. Three one hourly sessions per week of "Keep Fit" and a two hour session of Kung Fu are scheduled. The Association is supporting these new groups in the short term by offering reduced hourly rental charges.

The Community Cafe, which received a £200 grant from the Parish Council, is slowly growing in popularity and 18 people attended last week. The Association intends to put more effort into developing the Cafe and confirms its intention to hold it alfresco in the Spring when the weather permits. Volunteers have already started work and are clearing the May Gorin Memorial Garden to prepare it for a make-over. The Tots Group has kindly donated £300 towards the cost of this project and the Lunch Club another £100. The estimated total cost will be over £1,000 for fencing, slabs, turf, plants, etc and further funding is being sought.

As we discussed in previous Agenda items the Association has obtained IT equipment. The Association intends to allow permanent public access to it, which was stipulated in the terms and conditions of the grant application.

Lastly the Association awaits the results of the deliberations of Herefordshire Council to find out whether or not Belmont Library will be axed as part of the council's cost cutting exercises. We are currently led to believe that the Library is safe, but it must be noted that the Library rent contributes a substantial part of the Belmont Centre's regular income. Without the Library rent the Centre is unsustainable in the medium term. Fortunately the Association had the foresight to build up a reasonable contingency reserve of £12,500 in case of such an eventuality. However financial support will be required, from whatever source if, in the longer term, the Belmont Centre is deemed to be a desirable, useful, public facility worth saving for the benefit to Belmont Rural parishioners and the local community in general.

## District Councillor Report – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2013

**CH7 Footpath** – Trees have now been pruned, site visit with Amey to confirm satisfaction with this.

**Bins Ch 7** – Reported this has been emptied the last few weeks but it is suspected a resident is filling this up.

**Northolme Road** – Attic Conversion asked for the pile of building material to be removed. (2<sup>nd</sup> request)

**1 Arundel Close** – Rubbish left following the recent application enforcement informed.

**Multi Storey Car Park** – Will be closed from the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013 for approximately 25 weeks as part of the phase 12 of the refurbishment.

**Herefordshire Diamond County Award** – This is to recognise those businesses that have demonstrated a real commitment to making a positive difference in the local community.

## Future Activities in the Community

Belmont Summer Fun Day – To be held Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2013 Northolme Community Centre

### Action From Meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> January 2013-02-20

Mr Willmont,

At Belmont Rural Parish Council meeting last night 18 January 2013 and one 9<sup>th</sup> of the Parish, concern was raised

and discussions took place regarding the introduction of charge for planning applications in particular where hard copies are required.

My Parish Clerk wrote to you on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2012 and to-date has received no reply addressing the concerns

**From:** Willmont, Mike

**Sent:** 13 February 2013 08:36

**To:** Bridges, Adrian (Cllr)

**Cc:** Hamilton, Russell (Councillor)

**Subject:** RE: REF: Proposed Charging of Planning Material

Dear Councillor Bridges

Could I respond to your questions(in green):-

**the charge appears to be a penalty introduced against those parishes and councillors without access to broadband and/or without IT skills**

**The charge is not at all intended as a penalty but is part of an essential programme to both modernise and streamline the planning service making it more cost effective.**

**most parish councils do not have access to A3 printers or colour printers where plans are complex or large and in most cases you even need a plotter to print off the large ones**

**The aim of e-planning is to significantly reduce the need to print. All of the documents can be readily viewed on the computer screen.**

**The venues where parish councils hold their meetings generally are not broadband and/or wireless enabled and most organisations cannot afford to have this installed as it is not cost effective for one meeting every 6 weeks that requires this sort of access.**

**If the venue for the meeting does not have internet access our suggestion is that the applications are viewed or downloaded prior to the meeting. In any event all of the details continue to be available from the date of notification. Could not the clerk when they receive a notification e-mail the members giving them the opportunity to view the application details prior to any meeting?**

**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.**

**I'm not quite sure what you mean here but there is no intention to charge on a case by case basis and, as I said in my letter, I am happy to invoice on a six monthly basis. I can advise that our**

**records indicate that we notified Belmont Rural Parish Council of nine applications during 2012**

**□ What happens when we get a large application like the one recently received for Home Farm, there is no way that this could have been printed off or even projected at the meeting as this would have meant hours on one subject, so can you please confirm how these sort of applications will be addressed?**

**Of course it is for the parish council to determine how they operate. I believe that the documents on the Home Farm application, and thus on similarly large schemes, can be easily viewed electronically.**

**□ As there is a duty to consult Local Parish Councils on Planning Applications then why are these additional costs not been born by the applicant?**

**I set out the Council's duty in respect of notification my letter of 20 January 2013. There is a duty to notify but not a requirement to send a copy of the application. We provide a readily useable web link to the application details. The applicant's fees are set by government and we are not able to increase them.**

Sincerely

Mike Mike Willmont Head of Neighbourhood Planning

There has been a huge outcry from parishes on this subject and now much anger at the total silence on the subject

from Planning. Essentially, the main arguments are:

Therefore can you please provide me with a detailed reply to the issues raised above.

Thank you

**Councillor Adrian Bridges. Belmont Ward, Herefordshire Council**

**Email: [Abridges@Herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Abridges@Herefordshire.gov.uk) Mobile: 07982 425 895**