

# BELMONT RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Belmont Rural Parish Council Held on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont

**Present:** Mr. P. Edwards In the Chair (agenda item 1 only)  
Mr. A. Myatt In the Chair (agenda item 2 onwards)  
Mr. A. Bridges  
Mr. B. Hubbard  
Mr. R. Loft  
Ms. D. Parish  
Mr. M. Schoffer

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

### **065/13 Election of Chairman**

It was proposed by Councillor Edwards and seconded by Councillor Bridges that Councillor Andy Myatt be elected Chairman of the Parish Council. There being no further nominations and Councillor Myatt having indicated a willingness to act, Councillor Myatt was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Parish Council to hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

Councillor Myatt took the Chair and thanked Councillor Edwards, the retiring Chairman, for his many years of service as Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Parish Council and wished him well as the Mayor Elect of Hereford City for 2013/2014.

### **066/13 Election of Vice Chairman**

It was proposed by Councillor Edwards and seconded by Councillor Myatt that Councillor Adrian Bridges be elected Vice Chairman of the Parish Council. There being no further nominations and Councillor Bridges having indicated a willingness to act, Councillor Bridges was unanimously elected as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council to hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

### **067/13 Election of Parish Council representatives for 2013/2014**

The following were elected as representatives of the Parish Council for the forthcoming year:

- Footpaths Officer Councillor Phil Edwards
- Tree Warden Councillor Brian Hubbard
- Emergency Planning Co-ordinator Councillor Adrian Bridges



planned to rectify the damage to the surface and to note that the cut grass has been left in piles rather than collected.

(b) **Wild Flower Sowing**

The planned wild flower sowing is dependent upon the grass cut but as the cut and collect has been delayed, Amey has now advised that this is not an ideal time for wild flower sowing and it is proposed that this now waits until the autumn.

(c) **Coppin Rise Play area**

A report is awaited from the safety inspector with regard to the proximity of the boulders to the fencing. The safety inspection will take place on 5<sup>th</sup> June. Once this has been confirmed, the formal opening can be planned. In the meantime, the final report to Awards for All has now been prepared and sent by the Clerk.

(d) **Neighbourhood Development Plan**

Whilst there have been no further meetings of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Group since the last meeting, the Clerk has formally lodged the application for the entire parish to be designated as a Neighbourhood Development Plan area. Confirmation that Ted Bannister has been appointed as our contact by Herefordshire Council is awaited but has been advised informally.

The next stage in the process is for notices to go up around the parish advising of the proposal to designate the parish as a Neighbourhood Plan area. Members of the public then have a period of six weeks during which they can lodge comments or objections. The six week period started on 15<sup>th</sup> May and will run to 26<sup>th</sup> June. Comments can also be made via the neighbourhood planning website. At the end of the six week period a decision will be made as to whether the application for designation is to be approved.

(e) **South Wye Partnership**

There has been no further progress on this item since the last meeting. Herefordshire Council and the South Wye Partnership were to discuss the potential involvement of HVOSS as an alternative employing body for the Partnership Officer and there has been no feedback to date on the progress of these discussions.

Councillor Schoffer has obtained a briefing note from the South Wye Partnership Officer and this has been circulated to members.

(f) **Community Right to Bid**

Forms have been submitted by the Clerk for the land/buildings identified at the last meeting with the exception of the access to the river as details of the owner of that land are required before the form can be submitted.

(g) **Northolme Kickabout Area**

This area has now been cordoned off by Herefordshire Council/Amey for several weeks now and although some growth from the new seed is evident, results have been patchy and there are still large areas of bare earth. Amey has indicated that some re-seeding and topping off with soil is planned. Officers have been reminded that the school summer holidays start in a few weeks with several activities planned for that area during the summer months.

In the meantime an initial survey by Herefordshire Council into the drainage on that site has identified the very thin layer of topsoil on the play area and one suggestion has been to build up the soil level. Councillor Edwards has provided officers assigned with background information on the site to assist with investigations.

It was suggested that at this time of year, re-turfing of the area rather than re-seeding might be more successful. The Clerk was instructed to suggest this to Amey and seek further advice.

(h) **Repairs and Maintenance**

The damaged bench adjacent to the Parish Map has been repaired by the handyman who has also repaired the notice board door on the other side of the map which wasn't closing properly.

(i) **Belmont Centre Grants**

The Clerk has received copy invoices from the South Wye Community Association for the purchase of two laptops in connection with the Computer Club grant.

(j) **Grant to Northolme Community Centre Association**

The Kraftimonkies Holiday Club at Easter has now taken place and in accordance with the conditions of the grant, a report has been requested to confirm numbers of children attending and where those children reside. Evidence of acknowledgement of funding from The Parish Council has also been requested in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant.

(k) **Information Board**

The Clerk has had two informal discussions with suppliers of signs regarding the possible information board and much more work will be required before a definite proposal can be put to the Parish Council for consideration. Budget prices will depend largely on the nature of the content such as amount of text and images. It was agreed that the back of the Dorchester Way notice board be used as it is in the right location and will reduce the cost of a replacement housing unit and that quotes be obtained to replace the front notice board too as the quality of this is poor.

## 071/13 Correspondence

Other than routine items circulated to Members, the following items of correspondence were received since the last meeting:

- (a) A copy of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 for the South Wye Community Association has been received by the Clerk. Members wishing to read the statements should request a copy from the Clerk.
- (b) Information has been received from Herefordshire Council about the launch of two initiatives to promote healthy lifestyle. The first is a 3 month pilot healthy lifestyles phone line promoting healthy lifestyles by signposting callers to information on subjects such as:
  - Stopping smoking
  - Cutting down on alcohol
  - Being more active
  - Eating healthily
  - Maintaining a healthy weight
  - Mental well-being
  - Sexual health.

The second initiative is a Healthy Lifestyle Trainer service which aims to provide individuals with one to one support for those unwilling or unable to attend the usual support services such as gps surgeries, pharmacies, Halo etc. for activities such as losing weight, cutting back on smoking or alcohol or healthy eating.

- (c) A request was received from the Vice Chairman of the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comments on the local implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

## 072/13 Planning Matters

There have been no applications for planning permission since the last meeting.

It was noted that the date for the Appeal Hearing on the Lioncourt Homes application for outline permission to build approximately 85 homes on land currently forming part of Home Farm has been set to start on 23<sup>rd</sup> July at 10.00. The Appeal is expected to take three days and the venue will be confirmed.

## 073/13 Report from the Finance Working Party

The report from the Finance Working Party has been previously circulated to Members, and was unanimously accepted.

It was unanimously agreed to adopt the recommendation of the Finance Working Party that the Independent Internal Auditor, Mr. Ray Rose, be an ex-officio member of the Working Party.

## 074/13      **Payments/Receipts**

### (a)      **Payments**

Authority to make the following payments was given:

R. G. Howells Repairs to the bench and notice board in Northolme Road	£89.50
Northolme Community Centre Association Room Hire for the Kraftimonkies Holiday Club • It was agreed that payment be withheld pending Receipt of the report requested under the terms of the Grant	£238.00
Northolme Community Centre Association Hire of room for April meeting	£25.50
Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureaux Grant as agreed at the last meeting	£300.00
Cash Petty cash reimbursement	£103.00
Mr. R. Rose Internal Audit Payment and associated fees	£150.00

### (b)      **Receipts**

The following sums were received since the last meeting:

Herefordshire Council First installment of precept for 2013-2014	£25,000.00
HMRC Reimbursement of VAT on purchases during 2012-2013	£5,422.42

### (c)      **Balances**

Current account:	£500.00
Deposit account:	£58,561.07
Petty Cash:	£22.00

Budget commitments currently stand at £7,033.36.

### (d)      **Other Financial Matters**

- Changes in national insurance rates for this financial year have necessitated a small change to the standing orders in favour of the Clerk and the Inland Revenue.
- During the process of completing the Annual Accounts, it was established that an overpayment due to be claimed back by Royal Bank of Scotland during the last

financial year had not been taken from the current account as expected. The clerk is contacting RBS to clarify this.

### **075/13 Management Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

The Clerk presented the Management Accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 indicating total expenditure for the year of £70,179.86, financed partly from income of £55,590.72 and partly from reserves. As a result, reserves were reduced from £50,722 to £36,133.

There being no questions raised by members, it was unanimously agreed that the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 as presented to the meeting be adopted and that Chairman and Clerk be authorized to sign the accounts on behalf of the Parish Council.

### **076/13 Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

The Clerk presented the Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, explaining that this document represented the formal Accounts for the Parish Council, subject to external audit and based upon the Management Accounts approved under the previous agenda item (Minute reference 075/13). Dealing with each section in turn:

#### **(a) Section One: Accounting Statements for 2012/2013**

The figures outlined in Section One, representing the formal accounting statements for the Parish Council for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 were confirmed.

#### **(b) Section Two: Annual Governance Statement**

This section, as attached to these Minutes, was discussed in detail with each statement taken in turn and agreed as per the document attached to these Minutes.

#### **(c) Section Three: External Auditor Certificate**

This section is for completion by the external Auditors, Grant Thornton.

#### **(d) Section Four: Internal Audit Report**

It was noted that the Independent Internal Auditor, Mr. Ray Rose, has completed and signed this section as part of the Internal Audit process and did not raise any items that he felt should be brought to the attention of the Parish Council.

Finally it was agreed that the Clerk and Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return on behalf of Belmont Rural Parish Council.

### **077/13 Insurance Renewal**

Two quotations had been obtained by the Clerk for the Parish Council insurance policies for 2013-2014 for consideration, noting that a quotation from Aviva, obtained through brokers Came and

Company, indicated substantial savings over the existing insurer, Aon, for cover that was at least as good and in some cases better than the existing policy. A further discount of 5% was offered for a three year Long Term Agreement.

After a short discussion it was unanimously agreed to accept the quotation from Aviva and to enter into a three year long term agreement for a total cost for £2013-2014 of £604.20. The Clerk was instructed to make the necessary arrangements and to notify Aon that their quotation had not been accepted.

## 078/13 Repairs on Jubilee Field

Following on from discussions at the last meeting, a revised quotation had been obtained for works on Abbey View East and Jubilee Field as follows:

Quote one:	Localised raising of the footpath plus additional surface works	£1,109.35
Quote two:	Reduce fencing to one side of the culverted section from Abbey View East to Jubilee Field only. Revised quote:	£641.68
Quote three:	Replace suggested fencing with raised boulders Revised quote	£989.43

Although the revised quotation represented a slight saving, Members expressed surprise that raising the level of boulders by some six to twelve inches was quoted at a substantial additional cost. Concern was also expressed that the quotations for the work were submitted as a single line email rather than a detailed quotation indicating the extent and specification of the work proposed.

After some discussion it was agreed:

- **Not to accept** Quote One for the footpaths repair work on the grounds that it was felt this should be completed without additional charge to Belmont Rural as the drainage issues at these locations had been notified to Amey when the footpath was first specified
- To **accept** the revised quotation of £641.68 for bird mouth fencing on one side of the culvert section linking Abbey View East with Jubilee Field, and
- To request further consideration of the quotation for the additional boulders and for a revised quote to be supplied which indicated material and labour costs broken down separately. This latter item to be reviewed at the next meeting.

When discussing this with Amey, the Clerk was instructed to ascertain a start date for the new path section linking Abbey View East with Jubilee Field as agreed at the last meeting.

## 079/13 Training

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

It was agreed that the Clerk attend the Hints series offered by HALC over the next few months in preparation for the CiLCA, the first being Roles and Responsibilities and Law which will take place on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June at a cost of £50.00.

A workshop session on the use of Twitter and Social media has been arranged at the Belmont Centre for Members for Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May or Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June. It was agreed to hold two sessions, one on each date, for those unable to attend one of the sessions and for further training for those able to attend both. The Belmont Centre was thanked for kindly hosting the events.

### **080/13 Future meeting dates**

The Clerk presented options for dates for future meetings on both a monthly basis and a six weekly basis.

After a brief discussion, it was agreed that:

- Meetings continue to be held at six weekly intervals on the dates as attached to these Minutes, and
- That the venue for meetings alternate between Belmont Community Centre and Northolme Community Centre

Accordingly it was noted that the next meeting would be held at Belmont Community Centre, Eastholme Avenue, Belmont on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June, commencing at 7pm.

### **081/13 Purchase of additional shrubs for Westholme Road planter.**

Councillor Hubbard reported that work on the Westholme Road Planter had been delayed until the current display of Tulips has died back. However, he now felt that the original budget of £30 might not be sufficient and requested an additional £30.00 for the purchase of additional shrubs and compost. The request was agreed unanimously.

### **082/13 Request for funding of £750 to support Belmont and District Fun Day**

Members considered a request from Northolme Community Centre Association for a grant of £750 towards the cost of staging the Belmont and District Fun Day to take place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to offer a grant of £750, on the following terms and conditions:

- That Belmont Rural Parish Council be acknowledged in any marketing associated with this event,
- That if the event does not take place, the grant be repaid in full and
- That a report on the success of the event be made to the Parish Council no later than 6 months after the event.

**083/13 Parish Matters**

- (a) Councillor Edwards expressed disappointment that despite several requests, Amey have not yet attended to several required repairs to potholes, including close to the mini roundabout in Abbotsmead Road and the A465, a view supported by other Members.

It was also noted that potholes and damage to the surface of the Haywood Lane at Callow had occurred although believed to be repaired as at the date of the meeting.

The Clerk was instructed to write to Highways Manager, Clive Hall, to note the Parish Councils concerns. Councillor Bridges would also write in his District Councillor role.

- (b) It was reported that sewerage had overflowed in Abbotsmead Road again. Councillor Bridges had brought this to the attention of Welsh Water and it was noted that the inadequacy of the sewers had been raised as an issue with the Home Farm planning application. Members also noted the telephone number of Welsh Water to report sewerage overflow 0 0800 853968.
- (c) The dumping of rubbish behind 1 Forde Lane has been reported to the enforcement officers.
- (d) It was noted that the pavement surface in Dorchester Way was being broken up by the roots of the large conifer outside 54 Dorchester Way. Amey had agreed to remove this tree last year, citing "when resources permit" when asked for a timescale. The Clerk was instructed to write to ask when the work might commence.

**084/13 Public Participation**

During the final period of public participation there were no further items raised other than those discussed above.

**085/13 Report on Code of Conduct Complaint**

In accordance with standing orders, this item was discussed without members of the public present.

The Clerk reported that advice from the National Association of Local Councils suggested that the appropriate course of action would be a formal complaint under the Code of Conduct, which had been agreed at the last meeting and was progressing. A formal response had been received indicating that the matter should be dealt with within 12 weeks.

It was also noted that further requests for the offending website article to be removed had been refused both by the website administrator and author. Accordingly it was felt that further links to the website from the Parish Council website would no longer be appropriate.

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

ATTACHMENT 1  
REPORT FROM THE FINANCE WORKING PARTY

## Belmont Rural Parish Council

### Notes from the meeting of the Finance Working Party held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2013

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

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

**1. Review of Financial Records**

The financial records since the last meeting were checked and found to be in order.

**2. PAYE**

It was noted that changes in National Insurance rates had resulted in changes to the amounts paid to the Clerk and to the Inland Revenue with effect from end April. As a result, the April payments had been incorrect and a correction and then revised figures for the standing order would be required. A letter to Royal Bank of Scotland requesting changes to the standing orders in time for the May payment date was signed by two signatories and would be reported to the full Parish Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May.

**3. Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

The Clerk presented the draft accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 and draft Annual Return, explaining the processes for drawing up the accounts and how the sums indicated had been arrived at. The deficit of just over £14,500 was in line with budget expectations and had been funded out of reserves retained from previous years.

There were no questions on the accounts and it was agreed they be presented to the Parish Council for approval at the Annual Parish Council meeting.

**5. Annual Internal and External Audit**

The Clerk outlined the internal audit procedures as set out by the financial regulations, explaining that the internal auditor, Ray Rose, would review not only the calculations used to complete the annual management accounts, but also the processes of the parish council to ensure that appropriate checks and procedures had been carried out.

After some discussion, it was agreed that the Internal Auditor should be an ex-officio member of the finance working party and be invited to attend two or three meetings during the year and not just at the financial year end. It would be appropriate that he be paid in recognition of this additional workload and the Clerk agreed to discuss this with Mr. Rose over the next week before making a report and recommendation to the Parish Council at its May meeting.

It was also noted that immediately after the Annual Parish Council meeting, members of the public would have the right to inspect the draft Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 and all associated financial records supporting the Annual Return and had the right to question the external auditors on an "appointed date". Notices to that effect were placed on notice boards and the website over the past weekend.

#### 5. **Insurance Renewal**

As agreed at the last meeting, the clerk has requested an alternative quotation for the parish council insurance policies from a broker, Came and Company, who are highly regarded by other parish councils. A quotation is awaited and has been promised no later than 9<sup>th</sup> May.

In the meantime a renewal notice has been received from the existing insurers, Aon, indicating a renewal premium of £827.14 which is slightly reduced from last year (£867.70 2012/2013). A further discount of 5% is available if the Parish Council agrees to enter into a 3 year long term agreement.

It was agreed that the renewal invitation be put to the parish council at the next meeting but to await a quotation from Came and Company before recommending any final decision.

#### 6. **Review of funding application for Fun Day by Northolme Community Centre Association**

The application for funding from Northolme Community Centre Association for a contribution of £750 towards the cost of the proposed fun day was reviewed. It was agreed to request further information about funding sources, if any, for the remaining budgeted expenditure.

Subject to the further clarification, it was agreed that the application be put to the Parish Council at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May. If approved, it was agreed to recommend the following conditions of the grant:

- That the contribution from Belmont Rural Parish Council be acknowledged in any marketing in connection with the event
- That in the event that the event does not take place, that the grant funding be repaid in full
- That a report on the success of event be made to the parish council after the event (no later than 6 months after the event).

**7. Update on s137 expenditure and limits**

The Clerk explained how expenditure for which no other power existed could be made utilising the power of s137 (formerly the “free” resource) which enabled parish councils to spend part of it’s precept for which no other power existed. S137 expenditure is capped to a sum in the region of £6.35 per elector, giving a maximum expenditure in the region of £18,000 for Belmont Rural.

Power of Competence enables parish councils to spend precept funds on any (legal) project or activity without restriction so in effect supersedes s137.

**8 Any other business**

There were no other items raised so the meeting was declared closed.

ATTACHMENT 2  
ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2012-2013

**Section 2 – Annual governance statement 2012/13**

We acknowledge as the members of:

Belmont Rural Parish Council COUNCIL NAME HERE

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2013, that:

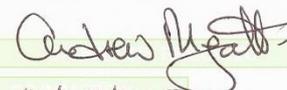
	Agreed –		'Yes' means that the council:
	Yes	No*	
1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law.
2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption <b>and</b> reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.	✓		has only done things that it has the legal power to do and has conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way it has done so.
4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the council's accounts.
5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council <b>and</b> took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.
6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of the council.
7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.
9 Trust funds (including charitable) – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting <b>and</b> , if required, independent examination or audit.	YES	NO	NA
			has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

This annual governance statement is approved by the council and recorded as minute reference

MINUTE REFERENCE

dated 14/05/2013

Signed by:

Chair 

dated 16/05/2013

Signed by:

Clerk 

dated 16/05/2013

**\*Note:** Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how the council will address the weaknesses identified.

# **Belmont Rural Parish Council**

## **Forthcoming Meeting Dates**

### **2013**

27<sup>th</sup> June - Belmont

8<sup>th</sup> August - Northolme

19<sup>th</sup> September - Belmont

31<sup>st</sup> October - Northolme

12<sup>th</sup> December - Belmont

### **2014**

23<sup>rd</sup> January - Northolme

6<sup>th</sup> March - Belmont

17<sup>th</sup> April - Northolme

29<sup>th</sup> May - Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting -  
Belmont