

# **Belmont Rural**

## **Parish Council**

**Minutes of a meeting held on  
Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011  
At Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr. M. Schoffer	Chairman
	Mr. A. Bridges	
	Mr. D. Cook	
	Mr. P. Edwards	
	Mr. B. Hubbard	
	Mr. R. Loft	
	Mr. S. Taylor	
In attendance:	Mrs. E. Kelso	Clerk
	Mr. M. Klaskala	representing Amey
	6 members of the public	

### **103/11 Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies were received from Councillor Myatt and Councillor Powell.

A declaration of prejudicial interest was made by Councillor Hubbard with regard to maintenance and development of wild flower meadow and wetland – agenda item 11.

### **104/11 Minutes of the previous meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> August had been circulated. Subject to correction of a typographical error, it was agreed that the Chairman be authorised to sign the minutes as a true record of proceedings at that meeting.

### **105/11 Clerk's Report**

#### **(a) Weed spray**

It was reported that the passageway between Belmont Medical Centre and Yarlinton Mill has now been swept.

#### **(b) Litter bins**

The spare litter bin top has been used to replace one along CH7 which had gone missing. The second bin reported missing at the last meeting has been found. The Clerk is now

holding one spare bin should this be required. A proposal to install additional litter bins will be considered at the November Parish Council meeting.

**(c) Fencing of playbuilder site at Northolme**

Herefordshire Council has indicated that work on fencing the playbuilder site at Northolme should commence in Mid October.

**(d) Election costs**

It was reported that the charge to the parish council for the uncontested election held last May will be £70.13. An invoice is now awaited.

**(e) Budgets, expenditure and precepts**

Members were reminded that at the next meeting, a financial review report will be provided as an initial step in the budget/precept setting for 2012/13, when Members can put forward suggestions for services or facilities for local residents during the forthcoming year.

## **106/11 Report from West Mercia Police/Parish Watch**

West Mercia Police were not in attendance. On behalf of Parish Watch, Councillor Edwards reported that there were no items of concern since the last meeting.

It was noted that West Mercia Police had warned of an increase in thefts of vehicles from outside of homes where the thieves had stolen vehicle keys inside the property through open doors or windows. There were no reported incidents of this type from within the Parish but members of the public were warned to lock away car keys and not leave them within easy reach of windows or doors.

## **107/11 Correspondence**

- (a) A request for a memorial bench to be installed in the vicinity of the Northolme playbuilder site in memory of Eric Burford, a resident of Chichester Close has been received and it has been suggested that fund raising for the purchase price of the bench may not meet the full cost. It was agreed that a policy for the purchase and installation of memorial benches be considered at the next meeting. In the meantime, a site visit to consider a possible location has been scheduled for Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September at 9.45 am. Councillor Edwards was authorised to attend on behalf of the Parish Council.
- (b) The National Association of Local Councils has issued a briefing note with regard to the future of Standards of Conduct of Members of Local Authorities in England. Lord Lytton. The President of NALC has tabled an amendment to the Localism Bill for debate at the Committee Stage in the House of Lords. The amendments seek to achieve the following:
- A mandatory code of conduct for all councillors
  - A duty on the district/unitary council standards committee to monitor and enforce the conduct expected of parish councillors in the district/unitary authority area and

- No new criminal offences for councillors who fail to register and declare financial interests.
- (c) The Clerk was unable to attend an update on localities given by Herefordshire Council/HALC on Tuesday evening but the presentation and papers from the briefing are available on the HALC website and from the Clerk.
- (d) The Parish Council is to take part in a trial of a web based system for reporting defects to Herefordshire Council/Amey called PC-IRIS.

## 108/11 Payments/Receipts

### (a) Payments

Authority was given to make the following payments:

NWN Media Limited		
Distribution of quarterly newsletter		
Through the Admag	£18.04	
VAT thereon	£3.61	
Total payment:		£21.65
Northolme Community Centre Association		
Room hire for May meetings – original cheque		
Not received so cancelled	£37.50	
Room Hire for August meeting	£22.50	
Kraftimonkies holiday club room hire	£367.50	
Total payment:		£427.50
HSBC Invoice Finace (UK) Ltd.		
Purchase of litter bin plus one spare		
Top from Melba Swintex	£240.25	
VAT thereon	£48.05	
Total payment:		£288.30
South Wye Community Association		
Room hire for website working party		£15.00
Cash		
Petty Cash reimbursement		£86.12
Mazars		
External audit fee		£342.00
Ms. S. Kelso		
Distribution of Annual Report		£120.00
Minute ref. 114/11 refers		

**(b) Receipts**

Since the last meeting £22,500.00 has been received from Herefordshire Council, being the second instalment of the annual precept.

**(c) Balances**

Current account:	£500.00
Deposit account	£58,274.06
Petty Cash	(£11.12)

Current commitments but not yet invoiced or paid (and therefore included in the deposit account balance above) amount to £8,029.10.

**(d) Other financial matters**

The Clerk reported that external auditors Mazars have returned the Annual Return and indicated that there were no matters they felt should be brought to Members attention.

**109/11 Planning Matters****(a) Applications received since the last meeting**

Ref: DMS112006/F  
 Site: 35 Wyedean Rise, Belmont  
 Development: Subdivision of existing dwelling into two separate dwellings and extension  
 Comments: Plans have been circulated. Members expressed some concern that development will overlook neighbouring properties resulting in loss of privacy. Concern was also expressed that the development would be inconsistent with the overall design of neighbouring properties and parking for two dwellings was considered insufficient. Herefordshire Council has been notified accordingly.

Ref: DMS/111636/F and DMS/111637/L  
 Site: Chapel and Almshouses, Wenlock Close, Belmont  
 Development: Refurbishment of interior. Re-instatement of chimneys. Construction of basement extension to provide new lounge and dining area. Replacement of windows and doors. Hard landscaping and landscaping of grounds.  
 Comments: Plans currently being circulated.

Ref: DMS/111938/F  
 Site: 26 Dorchester Way, Belmont  
 Development: Proposed first floor extension above existing garage  
 Comments: Members considered this application at the meeting and whilst there were no objections in principle to the development, it was noted that there have been reported instances where buses and other vehicles have been unable to travel along Dorchester Way at this location because of vehicles parked on both sides of the road. As this application envisages conversion of the garage space into living accommodation, thereby reducing vehicle parking provision, it was agreed that a request should be made for the applicant to be conditioned to provide at least two parking spaces within the property boundary as a condition of planning approval.

Ref: DMS/111879/F  
 Site: 5 Romsey Drive, Belmont  
 Development: Proposed conservatory to rear of property  
 Comments: Members considered this application at the meeting. There were no objections to this proposal..

**(b) Notifications of planning decisions received**

Ref: DMS/111965/FH  
 Site: 10 Romsey Drive, Belmont  
 Development: Proposed ground floor single storey extension  
 Comments: Approved with conditions

Ref: DMS111433/F  
 Site: 6 The Meadows, Belmont  
 Development: Proposed extension and alterations to existing garage and formation of self contained annex  
 Comments: Application refused on the grounds that the proposal would have an unneighbourly and over dominant impact on the outlook and amenity of the neighbouring occupiers and that the proposed window in the rear elevation would result in an unacceptable risk of overlooking and consequent loss of privacy. Application also refused on the grounds that the character of the existing dwelling and the immediately surrounding area, it was considered that the resultant building would appear out of keeping with the character of the existing dwelling and its surroundings.

Ref: DMS/111513/FH  
 Site: 21 Northolme Road, Belmont  
 Development: Two storey extension to the side of the property  
 Comments: Application granted with conditions including the requirement that parking for two cars be provided within the curtilage of the property prior to first occupation of the extension.

## **110/11 Training**

Members were provided with the current training programme offered by HALC and advised to notify the Clerk of any booking requests.

## **111/11 Maintenance and development of wild flower meadow and wetland**

Councillor Hubbard presented this item which arose out of a request for consideration of the creation of a wetland and wild flower meadow on land behind Dorchester Way. Herefordshire Council, in response, had highlighted the land management plan for the area which had been supplied to Members, and had indicated that they would not wish to begin planting of bulbs for at least two years, preferring to cut and collect the existing area in preparation for additional planting if required at a later date.

In response to a question on the programme for cutting, Mikolaj Klaskala from Amey, indicated that cutting was scheduled to begin in October which was a little later than originally envisaged and it was his understanding that the grass would be collected

immediately rather than leave and collect at a later date to allow seeds to fall. However, this would be clarified.

It had been requested that consideration be given to removing some of the trees along the brook, which had been dry for several months, to reduce water take up. Mr. Klaskala said that a review by Amey had suggested that this would have no significant impact on water take up as the brook was dry right back to Clehonger where it was fed by a spring but he did agree to consider coppicing the willows along the brook.

Finally Mr. Hubbard suggested some suitable planting that could be carried out and would forward details to the Clerk.

## **112/11 Local Development Framework Core Strategy Briefing**

The Clerk reported that following the announcement of the preferred route for the proposed relief road, Herefordshire Council were proposing a further briefing on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. Briefings, which would consist of a 30 minute presentation followed by an opportunity for questions or comments, were being held by Ward and it had been proposed by Herefordshire Council that this briefing take place as part of the parish council meeting to be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Noting that this would therefore take up a substantial amount of the next meeting, it was agreed that Herefordshire Council be advised that a brief presentation and question and answer session could form part of the meeting, provided it was kept within a 30 minute maximum timeslot. In preparation for that meeting, the Clerk was instructed to obtain a copy of the current plan showing the options for the preferred western relief road route and to see if the Northolme Centre might be available earlier so that the meeting can start at 7pm rather than 7.15pm.

## **113/11 Abbey View Park signage**

The Clerk reported that she had obtained quotation for the supply of signs reminding dog owners of their responsibility to clean up after their dog which it had been proposed be installed at the entrances to Abbey View Park. A figure of £10.00 per sign had been quoted and a minimum of 7 would be required for all the entrances to Abbey View Park. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the Clerk be authorised to obtain 15 signs with fixing brackets for use on Abbey View Park and other areas to be agreed.

It was further agreed that a budget price for informational boards for Abbey View Park be obtained for inclusion in the budget for the next financial year.

## **114/11 Report from initial meeting of the Website Working Party**

Members have been provided with a copy of the initial report from the Website Working Party which recommended:

- that the parish council pursue the option of creating it's own website, rather than use another community site
- that a ".gov" domain be obtained to confirm that the site is a formal site for Belmont Rural Parish Council

- that the initial site be kept as an informational site only but with an option to develop into a more interactive site at a later date and
- that consideration be given to ensuring that maintenance of the site is sufficiently user friendly to keep the time required for updating to a minimum.

Members noted comments from a member of the public in attendance at the meeting that a community website managed by Mr. Colin James could be used for parish council purposes, and Mr. James comments that parish councillors could use the website forum as a means of communicating with members of the public, which he felt was more appropriate than the electronic noticeboard being proposed by members of the working party.

After a brief discussion, and noting in particular the recommendations of the National Association of Local Councils on this subject, it was agreed that the recommendations of the website working party be accepted and that the working party be authorised to progress this by obtaining a .gov domain name and setting up a draft site for Members approval at a later date. It was further agreed that a provisional budget of £100.00 be agreed to support this activity.

### **114/11 Annual Report Delivery Arrangements**

It was agreed to ratify the hand delivery of the Annual Report to residents which had taken place over the weekend of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> September and to accept and agree the payment of £120.00 to Miss S.Kelso for this work

### **115/11 Request for donation – Dore Community Transport**

Following a request from Dore Community Transport, it was proposed by Councillor Edwards and seconded by Councillor Hubbard that a donation of £100.00 be made to Dore Community Transport to continue their work of providing transport for those unable to access the public transport system. On a show of hands vote, 3 members voted for, 1 against with remaining members abstaining. The Chairman declared the resolution carried.

It was agreed that the Clerk request a copy of Dore Community Transport's account when making the payment and ask that any future requests include an indication of the number of parishioners accessing this service.

### **116/11 Parish Plan Questionnaire Results**

The results of the parish plan questionnaire have now been analysed and a copy was provided to Members. The Parish Plan Steering group will consider the presentation of these findings to Members of the public and are proposing updating the current parish plan to reflect the results of the questionnaire.

After a brief discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council accept the results of the parish questionnaire and that these form the basis for discussions on projects and work of the parish council in the forthcoming years.

## **117/11 Landscaping within the Parish**

Councillor Hubbard presented this item by explaining that he was disappointed with the standard of landscaping work carried out within the parish and suggested that local volunteers might be used to carry out small items of landscaping work such as adopting and maintaining flower beds or small areas of public open space.

Acknowledging that such work generally fell within the responsibility of Herefordshire Council, it was agreed that the Clerk approach Herefordshire Council on this subject and that the Clerk, Councillor Edwards and Councillor Hubbard be authorised to discuss how this might benefit the local community and Herefordshire Council.

## **118/11 Tesco Landscaping**

Councillor Hubbard expressed his dissatisfaction with the standard of landscaping of the Tesco site, noting in particular that despite numerous requests and promises by the local store manager, damaged fencing, missing shrubs and replacement trees for those damaged by inappropriate salt storage had not taken place.

Councillor Edwards reported that he too had approached Tesco on this subject several times, including writing to the Tesco Head Office and had been assured that work would be carried out during September but again there had been no action. Of particular concern is damaged fencing along the main Belmont Road which was felt to be extremely hazardous to pedestrians.

Members noted that there are no legal powers to require Tesco to maintain their site in a manner which is felt would be more appropriate for the entrance to this Parish and residential area but Herefordshire Council Highways Department could take action over the hazardous fencing which protrudes over the public footpath. It was agreed that if no action is apparent once the current work on the Tesco site is completed, that this be reported to the Highways Department.

## **119/11 Parish Matters**

- (a) Councillor Bridges reported that litter is building up in the gully alongside Abbey View Park at the Northolme end. He had completed a litter pick and had been advised by the police that patrols would be increased and that police would work with Community Protection Officers to complete checks and issue fines where possible. Councillor Bridges agreed to get an update from police and the Enforcement Officers on this initiative.
- (b) A recent announcement by Herefordshire Council was noted whereby it was stated that the preferred Herefordshire Council option was for a Western Relief Road.
- (c) Members noted that Argyll Rise and Belmont Haywood Country Park had been accepted as nominations under the Queens Jubilee Fields in Trust. Members were encouraged to visit the website to vote for their favourite option.

- (d) It was noted that a Christmas Carol Concert would take place on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December at the Northolme Community Centre, starting at 6pm. Volunteer support on the night would be welcomed, as would donations for the raffle.
- (e) Councillor Bridges reported that the Northolme Community Centre had developed it's own website which had gone live today. It was hoped this would be developed further in future.
- (f) Councillor Edwards presented a report of his actions as District Councillor since the last meeting, as attached to these Minutes.
- (g) The Clerk was instructed to check with Herefordshire Council when the promised hard edging to the Tesco roundabout would be installed and when the replacement shrubs for those damaged last year would be provided.
- (h) The Clerk was instructed to write to Herefordshire Council Highways Department regarding the traffic light sequencing at Asda. It was felt that changes to the sequencing was resulting in excessive delays along the Belmont Road throughout the day.
- (i) Some concern was expressed that the "keep clear" signs on the Tesco roundabout were inadequate and inappropriately placed as vehicles travelling around the roundabout would not be positioned to see the keep clear signs. Although some improvement had been noted since the signs were installed, the Clerk was instructed to write to Herefordshire Council Highways Department to relay the concerns expressed.

## **120/11                      Public Participation**

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

- (a) It was noted that several shrubs have self seeded on the capped landfill area of Abbey View Park. It was reported that the grass on this area is to be cut during the first half of October.
- (b) It was reported that vehicles are parking in Haywood Lane to access the Pools area, creating a hazard at a particularly narrow section of that road. The Clerk is to write to Herefordshire Council Parks Department to report this.
- (c) It was felt that the "give way" sign at the end of Haywood Lane was positioned too close to the main Belmont Road and that it should have been a "stop" sign rather than "give way". The Clerk will report this to Amey Hereford.
- (d) Some concern was expressed at the proposed access for those with disabilities to Belmont Pools/Belmont Haywood Country Park. It was noted that District Councillors are to deal with this issue.

## **121/11                      Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will take place at Northolme Community Centre on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November, commencing at 7.15pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21.45.