

# BELMONT RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Belmont Rural Parish Council held on  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at  
Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont

**Present:** Mr. P. J. Edwards Chairman  
Mrs. B. Brown  
Mr. D. Cook  
Mr. R. Loft  
Mr. A. Myatt  
Mr. J. Newman  
Mr. M. Schoffer  
Mr. S. Taylor

**Apologies:** Ms. G. Powell

**In attendance:** Councillor Adrian Blackshaw Cabinet Member, Economic Development  
and Community Services, Herefordshire  
Council  
Mr. Kevin Singleton Herefordshire Council  
Two Members of the public

## **13/10 Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Edwards declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, payments and receipts and agenda item 11, Parish Newsletter.

Members noted apologies from Councillor Powell. In accordance with section 85 of the Local Government Act ("the Act"), Councillor Powell will cease to be a Member of this Parish Council upon the expiry of a period of six months from the date the Member last attended, which was confirmed as 17<sup>th</sup> September 2009. It was agreed that the Clerk be authorised to declare a vacancy under Section 86 of the Act if no request for special consideration and approval of absence be received within the six month period, and to notify the Elections Officer of Herefordshire Council accordingly.

## **14/10 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January had been previously circulated. It was agreed that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Minutes as a true and accurate record of proceedings at that meeting.

## **15/10 Clerk's Report**

### **(a) Footpath**

The order for the footpath section has not yet been placed as the Clerk is waiting for advice from HALC. However, the Clerk has checked the National Association of Local Councils/Society of Local Council Clerk's practitioners guide which indicates that best practice requires the commitment to be noted in the accounts, the order will be shown as a note to the accounts, matched (in part) by reserves.

Preliminary cash flow estimates for 2010-2011 indicate that cash reserves should be sufficient to meet expenditure provided no major capital/project expenses are incurred other than the footpaths prior to receipt of the second precept instalment in September 2010.

### **(b) Precept**

Confirmation of the precept has been received from Herefordshire Council. The Estimated Council Tax per Band D equivalent property for the parish for the year has been confirmed as £32.53.

### **(c) Banking arrangements**

The clerk has now visited three comparative organisations for discussion with the working party prior to making a recommendation for the full Parish Council at the next meeting.

### **(d) Grit Bins**

The Clerk has approached Herefordshire Council with regard to the positioning of grit bins at the locations identified at the last meeting with the aim of obtaining agreement for both the positioning and maintenance of the bins at no cost to BRPC.

### **(e) Parish Plan Review**

No further progress on this item since the last meeting but the draft questionnaire to be sent out to residents was handed to Members with a request that comments on the questionnaire be fed back to the Clerk as soon as possible.

### **(f) Notice Board**

The poor weather has prevented the notice board from being installed as planned but installation now scheduled for next Tuesday - 23<sup>rd</sup> February - morning.

### **(g) Standing Orders**

The National Association of Local Councils has published new draft standing orders for meetings. It was agreed that the new model standing orders be considered for adoption at the next meeting

(g) Clerk's absence

Members noted that the Clerk will be away from Hereford from Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February to Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March.

### **16/10 Report from West Mercia police/Parish Watch**

A representative from West Mercia Police was not in attendance but offered apologies and a verbal report delivered by The Chairman, noting that there were no issues of particular note with regard to activity within the Parish. A series of street PACT meetings are being arranged with links to the Environmental Protection Team in particular. The Chairman has passed on to West Mercia Police recent complaints regarding dog fouling, particularly in Dorchester Way.

Under Parish Watch, the Chairman reported ongoing problems with drink bottles and cans appearing behind the play area at Northolme. He also noted that the fencing belonging to Macdonalds at the end of Glastonbury Close has now been repaired.

Members noted with some concern reports on the closure of the front desk at the South Wye police station. Lack of signage indicating the location of the Police Station, lack of signage directing visitors to the entrance or giving information on opening times and finding the Station closed during stated opening hours were all cited as reasons why the Station was found to be poorly used by Members of the Public.

It was agreed that the Clerk be instructed to write to Superintendent Kevin Purcell to highlight general appreciation of the staff at the Station and concern at the proposed closure, and the lack of appropriate signage to the Police Station.

### **17/10 Public Participation**

During the period set aside for public participation, the following items were raised:

- Members noted a report that surface water drainage along Northolme Road by the tanker exit to the Tesco garage is poor.
- Despite several requests for the trees on the Tesco roundabout to be thinned, contractors Amey were recently removing lower branches from the conifers on the roundabout rather than removing one of the three trees. The Clerk was instructed to write to Amey to ask why the lower branches have been removed.

### **18/10 Correspondence**

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

- (a) Letter from Herefordshire Council regarding changes to the 449 Madley to Hereford Bus service.
- (b) Letter from Kraftimonkeys play scheme requesting funding for half term activity day(s) at the Northolme Centre. The activity will have taken place before the meeting so could not be considered. Kraftimonkeys has been informed and invited to make an application for Easter and summer holiday activities at the next meeting.
- (c) Letter received via Callow and Haywood Group Parish Council from a resident in Haywood Lane noting that the footpath from Haywood Lane to Westholme Road has become slippery with leaves etc. and requesting that it be swept. Clerk has written to the resident and requested that the path be swept by Herefordshire Council.
- (d) The Clerk has received HALC's regular "Information Corner" in electronic version with a hard copy due shortly. Members' attention is drawn in particular to the financial information attached to this communication.
- (e) A letter has been received from Herefordshire Council requesting information on how Parish Councils feel Herefordshire Council has handled the recent snow. Members were invited to pass their thoughts onto the Clerk so that a combined response can be prepared.

## **19/10 Payments/Receipts**

### **(a) Payments**

Authority was given to make the following payments:

South Wye Community Association Room hire for St. Francis Mums and Tots Group For January 2010		£84.00
Northolme Community Centre Association Room hire for January meeting		£14.00
Mrs. E. Kelso Annual payment for use of home as office	£100.00	
Anti virus software subscription for BRPC laptop	£53.89	
Total payment		£153.89
MA Edwards Distribution of newsletter		£110.00
Cash Petty cash reimbursement		£96.50

### **(b) Receipts**

None since the last meeting

**(c) Balances**

Current account	£500.00
Deposit account	£7,284.04
Petty Cash	-£46.50

Members noted that the deposit account balance has been adjusted to allow for current commitments, payments due at this meeting and payments falling due before the next meeting.

**(d) Other financial matters**

The Annual Review of the Internal Audit function and Annual Risk Management Review are due . It was agreed that initial work for these reviews would be carried out by a working party and a report and recommendation made to the next meeting.

**20/10 Planning Matters**

**(a) Applications received since last meeting**

Ref: DMCW/100066/FH  
Site: 7 Holmfirth Close, Belmont  
Description: Conservatory to rear of property  
Comments: Members considered this application and found no objections to the proposed development. The Clerk was instructed to notify Herefordshire Council accordingly.

**(b) Notification of decisions received since the last meeting**

Ref: DMCW092894/F  
Site: Tesco Stores Ltd., Abbotsmead Road, Belmont  
Description: Positioning of site cabin for the storage of chemicals and materials relating to the hand car wash operation on the Tesco car park and use of the car park for the had car wash operation  
Comments: Approved with conditions.

**21/10 Presentation on the Place Shaping Consultation**

Councillor Adrian Blackshaw, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Community Services and Kevin Singleton from Herefordshire Council gave a presentation on the background to the Place Shaping consultation which is currently being run in conjunction with the Local Transport Plan consultation, and highlighted issues relating to development within Hereford in particular and options that have been identified for Hereford.

Members had been provided with a copy of the Hereford section of the consultation document and Local Transport Plan options and raised a number of issues with Councillor

Blackshaw in particular relating to the relative low pay levels within Herefordshire and the impact this has on proposals to expand retail provision within the City and the definition of “affordable homes” within the housing proposals. Issues were also raised about transport problems and the impact these have on attracting both investment and tourism and options which included raising parking charges in conjunction with improvements to public transport.

After responding to questions from Members and members of the public in attendance, The Chairman thanked Councillor Blackshaw and Mr. Singleton for attending the meeting. Members were requested to provide the Clerk with feedback on the consultation by the weekend so that a formal response from BRPC can be formulated by the Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman.

### **22/10 Parish Freighter**

It was noted that the next visit of the Parish Freighter on March 20<sup>th</sup> is the last booking for this financial year and that an opportunity exists to make further bookings for the three month period April to June 2010 on 1<sup>st</sup> March. Herefordshire Council has advised that the cost of the service will increase from £38.00 per visit to £380.00 per visit from April 2010.

After a brief discussion, Members agreed that the increase in cost was not acceptable and no further bookings of this service are envisaged for 2010-2011. The Clerk was instructed to put notices up on the notice boards and on the Community website to inform Members of the public of this decision, after the last Freighter visit, and to offer the telephone number of the Full House recycling service as this charity are known to be able to collect unwanted but useable household items. Details of how the Herefordshire Council large item disposal service can be accessed, will also be included in the notice.

### **23/10 Parish Newsletter**

Parish Newsletter, prepared by volunteer Roderick Robinson, has been distributed to households approximately every quarter for some years. The newsletter contains a summary of decisions taken by the Parish Council over the previous quarter with items selected for consideration by the Editor. The final product is circulated to the Chairman and Clerk who check for accuracy before printing.

Members noted that a slight increase in cost is envisaged for 2010-2011 but this is considered acceptable as there has been no increase in printing costs for some years. The Clerk confirmed that the cost is within budget.

Members agreed that the newsletter is a very valuable method of communicating with residents and confirmed that the newsletter should continue to be funded for the forthcoming financial year.

## **24/10 Parish Matters**

- (a)** It was noted that delivery vehicles for Tesco frequently park on the footpath by the delivery entrance to the store and/or across the pedestrian footpath across Abbotsmead Road. The Clerk was instructed to notify the police.
- (b)** It was noted that a public meeting is to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> March at the Belmont Community Centre, commencing at 7pm, on the subject of the Belmont Pools and the Country Park.
- (c)** It was reported that some tree pruning has taken place at Belmont Pools which is understood to be related to potential root damage to the earth dams.
- (d)** Although some road cleaning has been noted, contractors working on the development off Mulberry Close are leaving Westholme Road in a muddy state and have been parking along Westholme Road causing an obstruction to other road users, whilst waiting to enter the development site. The Clerk was instructed to notify Herefordshire Council Development Control Officers of this.
- (e)** The number of vehicles parking on grass verges around the Parish appears to be increasing and considerable damage to grass verges has been noted. This was discussed with Enforcement Officers at a recent PACT meeting who are treating such action as a form of graffiti and vandalism and taking action accordingly. It is important that these instances are reported so action can be taken.
- (f)** Some households have recently received advertising material from a contractor offering to take scrap metal away. Members were advised to ensure that any contractor offering such services is properly licensed.
- (g)** Members noted that hedge-laying is currently taking place along the CH7 footpath behind Fountains Close. The project, which is being run by the Wye Woods Charity is to train people in the ancient craft of hedge-laying. The project will be restricted by seasonal weather and available funding.

## **25/10 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 at Northolme Community Centre, Northolme Road, Belmont, commencing at 7.15pm.