

Minutes of the Meeting of Belbroughton and Fairfield Parish Council held at the Fairfield First School on 5th February 2018.

Present: Cllrs. J Bradley, J Boswell, T Jones, S MacDonald, A Mabbett, P Margetts. Dr R Morgan, G Parsons, and, C Scurrell. Clerk: J Farrell. Six members of the public. County Cllr. K May.

038/18 Apologies – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. A Hood, S Nock and S Pawley

The meeting adjourned, with Standing Orders suspended, for the ‘Open Surgery’ and also to listen to members of the public identifying matters of concern relating to the evening’s agenda.

The meeting re-opened.

039/18 Declarations of Interest – None. **040/18 Dispensations** - None requested.

041/18 Minutes

Council approved the minutes of the Council Meeting of 8th January 2018 and the Chairman signed the minute book.

042/18 Reports

Chairman’s report:

Cllr. Bradley advised that Sharon Boss had decided to resign from the council due to the many other commitments she had. Council thanked her for her very active contribution and regretted her decision. After discussion Council agreed to consider at the March Council how it may look to change its working practices in view of the number of issues it had to handle along with its general workload.

He had attended the County Council annual budget meeting 24th January and confirmed that the County would be increasing council tax rates by 5% driven by a 3% need to cover adult social care. A fuller report on the 24th January meeting had been circulated.

Planning Committee report: Council noted the draft minutes of the Committee meeting held 15th January 2018

Financial Committee report: Cllr. Mabbett advised that the Committee were investigating the use of electronic banking facilities. Council noted the draft minutes of the Committee Meeting held 15th January 2018.

Neighbourhood Planning report: Cllr. Morgan advised that a meeting had been held 22nd January at The Bell Belbroughton with 36 people attending. Interesting discussions took place and the group decided to move ahead with the aim of forming a Steering Group. A further meeting will take place 26th February at the same venue when it is hoped that there will be sufficient enthusiasm and commitment from individuals to enable this ‘Steering Group’ to be formed. There would be further information gathering to assess if progressing a Plan was worthwhile.

Clerk’s Report:

1. **Vacancies** - There have been no applications for the Fairfield ward councillor vacancy which thus remains open, we now also have a vacancy in the Belbroughton ward following the resignation of Cllr. Sharon Boss last Friday.
2. **The Green, Belbroughton** – The proposed agreement with the adjacent developer still awaits completion. The Parish Council’s lawyers however advised 2nd February that they have now received acceptance of the terms from the developer’s lawyers and therefore will be drawing up the final agreement for completion.

3. **Velo B'ham Sept 2017** – Cllr. Morgan attended a meeting of 11 Parish & Town Councils' representatives at County Hall on 10th January - After receiving reports from Councils that meeting declared that the event was very poorly planned and recorded:-
 - a. *The route was badly planned with no adequate consideration of what diversion routes were available.*
 - b. *There was inadequate consideration of the effect of long periods of road closure on residents and businesses.*
 - c. *Advance publicity was inadequate to warn all types of road users of the road closures. There was no effective consultation with those affected.*
 - d. *Adequate steps were not taken to mitigate the effect of the road closures on residents. Advance notice to residents was patchy.*
 - e. *It was obvious that there was no consideration of how to deal with the traffic congestion the event caused. Accurate detailed information about the route was not available.*

Subsequently, the organisers CSM Ltd have informed the County Council that they will not hold an event in Worcestershire in 2018 as had been originally planned.

4. **Parish gardeners** – Both Bernard Edwards and James Callaghan have agreed to continue to contract with the parish council for the 2018 'season'.
5. **Bus Shelters** - A new bench has been installed inside the bus shelter on Stourbridge Rd. Fairfield.
6. **Fairfield Rec.** - The additional dog waste bin has been installed.
 - Pot holes – The County Council are to fill these. Date – to be confirmed.
 - A rotten litter bin post will be replaced by the Lengthsman.
7. **Speeding** - camera signage for Hartle Lane, Belbroughton – The County Council are still considering whether to grant permission.
8. **Footpath diversion** - No. BB 509 formerly Footpath 6 Belbroughton, near Brookfield Farm - order issued by the County Council to the public, which means there is a consultation period until 29th March 2018.
9. **Annual Parish Meeting** - The Fairfield W.I. will take a presentation slot.
10. **Road closure** – Mearse Lane Belbroughton, 14th March for up to 5 days for Severn Trent works.

County and District councillors:

Cllrs. May advised that she was speaking with residents of Dordale Rd. Belbroughton about possible 'fibre to premises broadband' investment for their homes.

Her Top Five updates:-

Open for Business

The Worcestershire Skills Show returns on 7th March 2018 at the Chateau Impney, Droitwich between 9am and 7pm. Entry is free.

The show is Worcestershire's largest careers event, providing young people from years 7-13 with the ability to interact with Worcestershire's largest employers from a variety of industries including: Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Hospitality, Advertising, Marketing Professional Services and Public Services.

Young people are given the opportunity to gain an understanding of the career pathways available to them and to find out about the skills and qualifications that employers are really looking for.

Children and Families

A new Social Work Academy has been launched by the Council. It is part of an on-going project to improve the confidence and skill levels of our social workers.

The Academy is a comprehensive information hub that all County Council social workers will have available to them. It will enable social workers at all levels of experience to easily access training and career development opportunities.

The launch of the Social Work Academy will hopefully help us attract the very best social workers to the county.

Health and Wellbeing

A new unit to support individuals to take the next steps of their recovery after they are discharged from hospital has opened in Worcestershire.

The Step Down Unit in Worcester, close to the Hospital, is aimed at supporting people from across the county who are being discharged from an acute hospital but need a period of assessment to understand what their future care and support requirements are.

It is one of the Council's top priorities to ensure that people live independently for as long as possible. During their stay at the Step Down Unit each person will have an individual solution developed for them.

The Environment

Work is now underway on of the Upton-upon-Severn flood alleviation scheme, designed to raise the A4104 and keep a link between the town centre and the A38 in all but the most severe floods.

Phase 1 is by the marina and involves raising and widening the road and footway. Works will continue into Spring.

Phase 2 during Spring/Summer will raise the road at Holly Green. Temporary traffic lights will be removed during the Upton festival weekends.

Phase 3 in Autumn will see new box culverts installed and existing ones strengthened.

Meanwhile at New Road in Worcester, works are continuing. New specialised drainage 'beany block' kerb units are currently being installed.

Works will soon start near the entrance to the cricket club, who have been kept fully informed and who are very supportive of the project.

Council News Update

The Tour Series Cycle race is to return to Redditch for its 7th year on 10th May 2018. Once again the town will host stages of both the men's and ladies tour.

Last year's event attracted 15,000 spectators and generated 5 million Twitter impressions. It was broadcast to over 60 countries.

In other cycling news, the organisers of Velo Birmingham have withdrawn their request to hold an event in September 2018, along the same route as in 2017.

They have announced that they will stage the event in the Spring of 2019 along a different route. No approach has been made to the County Council in connection with this new route.

043/87 Traffic Calming:

Cllr. Mabbett advised of a number of issues covering - Dropped kerbs/tactile pavements, Parking and Traffic issues which the working group had assessed and now suggested actions.

Many of these were longstanding and some awaited County Council decisions. C.Cllr. May advised that she had fortnightly meetings with W.C.C. Highways and would take forward matters relevant to the County Council. She also emphasised that the District Council had responsibility for parking enforcement including outside school premises.

Council approved writing to the Fairfield First School governors and C.Cllr Webb expressing concern at some parents parking on Stourbridge Rd. and requesting that the School highlights the problems in its newsletters.

Council requested members advise Cllr. Mabbett by e mail of their three preferred specific items that should be progressed from the listing provided.

Council thanked Cllr. Mabbett for his work in bringing the schedule of issues to the Council's attention.

Action: Members to contact Cllr. Mabbett.

044/18 Fairfield Recreation Ground

- a. Council agreed that Cllrs. Parsons, Jones and Margetts would investigate the flooding issue on the footpath and endeavour to seek a solution, members being mindful that previous research and options suggested had inconclusive evidence of being likely to resolve the issue.
- b. Council agreed that a new dog waste bin should be purchased and installed to replace the damaged unit adjacent to the car park. **Action:** the clerk to order and arrange installation.

045/18 First World War – Centenary

Cllr. Bradley advised that a further meeting will be held on 7th February with himself and Cllr. Boswell along with representatives from the church, The History Society and others to discuss possible events in Belbroughton. Cllr. Jones advised that discussions were also taking place in Fairfield initiated by the Community Association and these would be progressed.

Council approved initial funding of £500 for each ward to support events later in the year.

Action: the Working Group to report again to March Council.

046/18 Fairfield War Memorial

Council noted that the War Memorial Trust declined a grant request but advice had been received that the surface grime can be dealt with by a soft brush and water.

The memorial has been registered with both the Imperial War Museum and the War Memorial Trust by the Fairfield Community Association – Council thanked the Association for its work both on this and the grant application.

The cleaning work will be carried out by local residents volunteering, under guidance from the Parish Council as regards risk assessment.

Action: Cllr. Mabbett and the clerk to organise with the Fairfield Community Association

047/18 Communication

Council deferred a decision on using the 'All About Belbroughton' Facebook pages and requested that the Communication Working Group re-assesses the use of Facebook generally as a further communication channel. Cllr. MacDonald and resident Mr Conrad Palmer agreed to be available to add value to the Working Group's task.

Action: the next Comms. Working Group meeting to consider.

048/18 Spring Newsletter

Council requested that members supply the clerk with items for inclusion in time for a release prior to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Action: Members to contact the clerk with their submissions.

049/18 Councillors Items

Cllr. Mabbett wished to record thanks to C.Cllr. Shirley Webb for arranging the cutting of a hedge at the Brook Road Bournheath Road junction in Fairfield.

Cllr. Mabbett advised that there had been no response from the County Council on reviewing the speed limit on Brook Road.

Action: The clerk would chase WCC

13.

Cllr. MacDonald raised the issue of parish councils giving funds to the church which had been brought to members' prior attention by a note circulated by the clerk from the National Association of Local Councils which contrary to government opinion had felt that such payments were not legal. The Chairman advised, confirmed by the clerk, that this parish council had not funded any improvements to the fabric of the churches as being a places of worship and had in his view quite legally supported ancillary church buildings, the churchyard and clock maintenance and he did not suggest that there should be any change of policy in this respect. The Council agreed.

Cllr. Parsons advised that the County Council had agreed that school transport would now be provided from Fairfield to Catshill Middle School.

The Meeting was closed at 9.35 p.m.

Signed Chairman

DRAFT