

Minutes of the Meeting of Belbroughton and Fairfield Parish Council held by video conference on 6th April 2020.

Present: Cllrs. S Danks, A Hood, G Ingram, A Mabbett, Dr R Morgan, S Nock, G Parsons, S Patchell and, S Pawley. Clerk J Farrell. County & District Cllr. K May, County Cllr. S Webb. 0 members of the public.

86/20 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. B Allington, J Boswell and, A Homer.

87/20 Declarations of Interest None. **88/20 Dispensations** None requested.

88/20 Minutes

Council approved the minutes of the Council Meeting of 2nd March 2020 and the Extraordinary Council Meeting of 30th March 2020.

89/20 Reports

Chairman's report: Cllr. Morgan thanked all for taking part in this different medium for meetings. Co-operation appears to be making things work and we should continue in this manner.

Planning Committee report: Council noted that the 16th March meeting was cancelled due to the health crisis. One planning application had been dealt with by members via by e mail communication.

Financial Committee report: Council noted that the 16th March meeting was cancelled due to the health crisis. The monthly bank reconciliation was agreed and payments for March were approved by members via e mail communication.

Clerk's Report:

- Process:** 'Virtual meetings' are deemed legal until 7th May 2021 when the new Government legislation falls away or has been renewed.
An Annual Council meeting (in May) need not be held but councils may do so if possible via video conferencing.
Annual Parish meetings were not mentioned specifically in the legislation but clearly cannot be considered under present movement restrictions. Council has already postponed the 29th April meeting and agreed to consider a nominating a fresh date within three months.
The Chairman has approved the purchase of a Zoom.com license for 12 months at £119.90 which will enable unlimited time periods for Council and Committee meetings.
The latest date for submission of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return has moved from 30th June 2020 to 30th September 2020.
- Little Bell Hall Pool:** The surveyors report has been received and is with the Working Group to consider and in due course make recommendations to a full Council.
- Lengthsman Scheme:** The County Council has renewed the scheme for 12 months commencing 1st April 2020. The funding is unchanged at £3,048. However, currently W.C.C. are not permitting the scheme to be operative and our contractor Nigel Williamson has been informed.
- Parish Gardeners:** Following the health crisis Bernard Edwards has decided not to renew his contract with the Council. James Callaghan will not carry out his contract until safe to do so.
- Fairfield Recreation Playarea:** This is now closed until further notice with suitable posters on the railings. Ian Shorthouse will not be carrying out the weekly health & safety checks.
- Parish Council Tenants:** All thirteen farm tenants, the Fairfield Villa Football Club and, The Deli, Belbroughton have been advised of the three months rental break approved at the Extraordinary Council Meeting of 30th March 2020.

7. **P.C. Equipment:** The Chairman and Vice Chairman approved the purchase of a new laptop following the failure of the hard drive on the clerks existing machine. Cost £678 (including a three year warranty cost of £135.).

County and District Cllrs:

C. Cllr. Webb advised:

The review of the County Minerals Plan had been postponed due to the health crisis, The 'Pinches 4' quarry application to WCC required further information from the applicant and there would be an additional opportunity to respond when that information was available. Ringway is still working on highways maintenance but mostly on emergency jobs. She confirmed brown bins collections had been suspended for 2 months. However grey and green bins would be emptied as usual. Perryfields Housing Development - no further update - but confirmed that objections had been raised by both the District and County Councils concerning the traffic model in the application. The N.H.S. had no objections.

C. & D. Cllr. May advised:

Because of the health crisis many businesses qualify for either the £25k or £10k grant from the District Council however the details of bank accounts is not known for many and business owners should be referred to the B.D.C. website and encouraged to download forms and submit these to claim.

There are 300 Covid-19 cases now confirmed in Worcestershire with outbreaks also in one hospice and one care home. Pharmacies should not be charging fees for prescription deliveries and any knowledge of such should be referred to her for investigation.

Registration of deaths is now by appointment only.

Currently, no registration of births is taking place.

The peak Covid-19 activity period for Worcs. Adult and Social Care is now estimated to be between 27th April and 4th May.

The peak of infections in Worcestershire is estimated to occur on 13th – 14th April.

Estimated costs to an average District Council is £2m. Bromsgrove D.C. has a reserve of £4.2m.

Government support is likely for the some of the costs incurred.

Homeless individuals is a concern and referrals for assistance should be signposted to www.streetlink.org.uk

The District Council is to consider holding remote planning meetings.

Bins crews from the District Council are assisting Worcs. City Council as some 170,000 bins had not been collected.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. May for her work assisting the community both from a District and County perspective.

90/20 B4091 Stourbridge Road, Fairfield - Proposed 40 MPH Speed Limit – Consultation.

Council noted the County Council proposals for reducing the speed limit from the 'National Speed Limit' of 60mph to 40mph from the Stoneybridge island to the 'gateway' into Fairfield. It noted that the proposal was also to move the 30mph 'gateway' approximately 120 metres into the village.

Council approved its agreement with the proposal for the speed limit reduction but objected to the movement of the 30mph 'gateway' and would seek reasoning as to why this movement was felt necessary.

Action: the clerk to relay the response to the County Council including requesting an explanation for the 'gateway' movement.

91/20 Pinches 4 Quarry Wildmoor Lane, Wildmoor, Bromsgrove - Application

Proposal: Extraction of sand and gravel and subsequent infilling with inert waste to achieve full restoration – Consultation.

Council noted the draft response produced by Cllrs. Danks and Ingram and the Chairman thanked them for their work.

Council agreed that in addition to its objection to the application and concerns raised in the draft document it would also respond requesting that should the application be approved then a surety bond was put in place for a minimum of £500,000 to ensure planning conditions are adhered to especially land restoration requirement time scales.

In addition, there should be mention of the existing poor keeping of hedges by the operators and that the local area has had a large number of quarry applications over the years and the resultant detrimental impact on communities.

Council noted that the County Council had asked the applicant for further information, details unknown, and that when this was received and made public there would be another opportunity to respond.

Action: Cllr. Danks and the clerk would produce a final response and the clerk would send this to the County Council.

92/20 Health Crisis Impact on local business.

Council noted that local businesses would be encountering financial difficulties and was concerned that some may not qualify for assistance from Government, both national and local.

Council was aware however that the mechanisms for applying for assistance remain via the County & District websites <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help> bromsgrove.gov.uk/coronavirus

93/20 Villages upkeep

Council noted that activity was much reduced on tidying the villages and that it will need to have a plan in place for when contractors were able to resume work.

Council noted however that the dog waste bins emptying and grass cutting will continue at the moment as the contractors had advised the clerk that their operatives were sole working, taking necessary precautions, and thus were felt to be safe.

94/20 The Green, Belbroughton

Cllr. Pawley informed Council that the yew hedge and 13 replacement trees had been planted. There was a slight issue with the siting of some of the trees as they were placed too close to the adjacent development. This would be addressed in the coming week.

The contractor was short of seven of the fifty yew plants required and the missing ones would be sourced and planted up in the autumn when the product would be available.

The Working Group, which includes local residents, would meet again to assess the next phase of improvements but while a video conference was possible, as this was not urgent, a meeting may be delayed until movement restrictions were lifted.

95/20 Councillors' Items

Cllr. Mabbett advised that the hardstanding construction for the speed camera site at Stourbridge road was progressing well.

Cllr. Parsons questioned provision for local dental services. Cllr. Morgan advised there was guidance awaited from Public Health England which was due by 8th April. NHS locally have emergency sites available.

Cllr. Parsons questioned the availability of assistance for agric. businesses especially dairy units. Council felt they should refer to the previously mentioned websites and to the N.F.U., T.F.A. and R.A.B.I.

The meeting was closed at 8.40pm

To be Confirmed by future Council Minute:

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