

## **Minutes of the BELBROUGHTON and FAIRFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018 in The Church Hall, Belbroughton 7.30 p.m.**

**Present :** Parish Councillors : James Bradley (Chairman), Janice Boswell, Trevor Jones, Dr R Morgan, Paul Margetts, Simon Nock, Sue Pawley, and Chris Scurrell.  
Parish clerk & R.F.O.: John Farrell.  
Other attendees – Worcestershire County Cllr. Karen May  
Bromsgrove District Cllr. Margaret Sherry.  
Carol Hine Fairfield W.I.  
Mick Simpson West Mercia Police  
Paul Hardcastle (Parish footpaths warden), and 23 members of the public.

The Parish Council Chairman, James Bradley, welcomed all to the meeting advising that the Council presentations would be brief to allow time both for questions and the other presentations.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from County Cllr. Shirley Webb, and Parish Cllrs. A Hood, A Mabbett, G Parsons and S MacDonald.

### **2. Minutes of the 2017 Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017**

The Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting were approved as a fair record and were adopted.

The Chairman noted that the minutes had recorded the question and answer session with representatives of Velo Birmingham and he enquired of County Cllr. May as to whether there were plans for any future events in the coming years. Cllr. May responded that there were no plans for Velo B'ham to use the County roads.

The Chairman commented that Severn Trent appeared to be working efficiently on the installation of the pipeline under the Birmingham Resilience Project and that, as far as he was aware, no complaints had been lodged. Members of the public concurred with this view and the meeting agreed to record a note of appreciation to Severn Trent PLC / Barhale Ltd on their works to date.

### **3. Reports**

Parish Council Reports for 2017/18.

#### **Chairman's Report**

**Cllr. James Bradley**

#### **Review of 2017/18:**

He reported lots of effort with only some achievement with a fair ration of frustration on issues not moving quickly enough. For example the legal agreement with the Developer adjacent to The Green Belbroughton, has moved little during the year although the Agreement was now with the Developer to be finalised.

**1.**

### **Parish opinion Survey**

This was conducted successfully last summer:

A good response rate of 10% which is acceptable for these kinds of survey and gave us around 100 responses from each village. Admittedly only a minority of the populous but gives the Council a steer on issues. The number one issue for both villages being traffic, and secondly people's enjoyment of 'green spaces'. As regards development a significant number of responses indicated a wish, again in both villages, for 'sympathetic' development.

**Belbroughton Recreation Ground** – The Ground is not owned by the Parish Council. The Council has agreed to grant up to £20,000 to support improvements to the playground area. This is provided funds are matched resourced by the Recreation Ground.

**Fairfield Recreation Ground** – This is owned by the Parish Council, we are looking to provide more car parking places however, planning permission remains to be obtained. Repairs to the playground surface are due shortly.

**The Green Belbroughton** - The legal agreement has been signed by the Parish Council but awaits the Developer's signatures and completion.

**Little Bell Hall Pool** - The dam has not been repaired and pool remains drained. Repairs are unjustifiable on cost grounds. The Parish Council is open to residents' comments on what else could be done to improve the site.

**Glebe Fields Development** Aware that planning permission has recently been agreed by B.D.C. for nine houses, the District Council having picked up on comments by residents and the Parish Council and thus imposing certain conditions.

**Budget Outturn** A breakeven year, including covering the funds allocated for the Belbroughton Recreation Ground playground improvements.

**People** Thanks for their good service, to Cllrs. Sharon Boss and Gez Ingram who both resigned during the year. There remains a councillor vacancy in Fairfield, however Barb Allington was recently co-opted for the Belbroughton ward and I welcome her to the Council. Thanks to all other members for their work during the year and to John our clerk for his superb job in keeping us on the 'straight and narrow'.

### **Draft Parish Council Action Plan**

The Chairman advised that a draft action plan (circulated at the meeting to attendees, and is also available on the Parish Council website) has been produced in an effort for the Council to be rather more active on priorities. It has been agreed by the Parish Council but residents' comments on it are very welcome.

2.

**1. Purpose of The Plan** - to plot the future

**2. Role of the Parish Council** – to seek to maintain and improve our area as a place where people wish to live and work. To foster community spirit.

**3. Priorities:**

- i. Traffic** - to do what the P.C. is enabled to do, including working with WCC Highways.
- ii. Green Spaces** - A big plus for this area, including footpaths (Chairman thanked Mr P Hardcastle for his work.). Patches of land are owned by the P.C. which it aims to keep in good order.
- iii. The Green Belbroughton Adjacent Housing Development** – Agreement is for a £20k payment from the Developer for taking out certain trees on The Green and having access to put in a drainage link. The P.C. will consult with residents on improvements to the area, Cllrs. Sue Pawley and Paul Margetts will lead this and seek residents in joining the working group.
- iv. Neighbourhood Planning – active during 2017/18 Cllr. Morgan will update.**

**4. Other Activities:**

- a. Communication** - move to emphasise electronic communication for two way conversation with residents.
- b. Agricultural Holdings** - 85 acres owned and run well by farmers holding Farm Business Tenancies. The P.C. will be mindful of any National Govt. changes regarding the subsidy regime.
- c. Budget and Management** - We have maintained the Precept at £65,000 for the coming year.
- d. Grants to Village Bodies** – We will continue to seek bids from village organisations, the Parish council is aware that the income from the Scarecrow weekend in Belbroughton will be reduced.
- e. Parish Projects** – the Council will welcome for consideration requests from residents for projects that the community could benefit from.

**5. Effects of cuts elsewhere** – there may be items that are currently funded by the County and District Councils which may in due course require funding by Parish Councils.  
(C.Cllr. K May advised that there were challenges but no services were being 'cut'.)

**6. People** – A thank you to the Vice Chairman Cllr. Bob Morgan and the Committee Chairmen (Cllrs. Chris Scurrall, Alan Mabbett and Allan Hood) and the clerk for bringing the draft action plan together.

**Finance Report Cllr. Nock (Vice -Chair of the Finance Committee)** The Parish Council has balanced the books: Subject to both the internal and external audits which take place during May, the Council expects to report an overall surplus of around £650. In early June the detailed accounts will be published on our website [belbroughtonandfairfield-pc.info](http://belbroughtonandfairfield-pc.info) with paper copies available upon request from our clerk. Income is nearly £90,000 with the Precept, the amount collected on our behalf by BDC being £54 per household in band D – compared to the other 19 Parish Councils in Bromsgrove : e.g. Bournheath £49, Romsley £67, and Clent £91 . Thus this area is 'in the middle' .

The Precept is Unchanged for 2018/19. In Bromsgrove of the 19: 12 have looked for increases this year. At a £65,000 Precept we are the 4<sup>th</sup> largest Parish Council in Precept terms. The PC is in a fortunate and strong position.

**3.**

## Key Presentation Slides: Income & Expenditure:

### **'Ordinary' and 'Other' Income**

#### **Income**

Precept -	£65,000
Lengthsman Scheme -	£3,148
Meeting Room Rent	£1,200
Other Income	£20,256
Total -	<u>£89,604</u>

### **'Other' Income from the P.C. Assets**

• Agricultural Holdings rents	£7,767
• Parish Room Belbroughton rent	£4,800
• Investment inc. from Cash deposits	£4,543
• Fairfield Villa F.C. rent	£2,626
• Wayleaves	£520
• Total from Assets	£20,256
• Plus Grants from W.C.C. Cllrs.	£2,350

### **Major Expenditure items**

• Clerk salary ( <i>inc. on costs</i> )	£24,237
• Grass Cutting & Green Spaces	£10,414
• Footway Lighting	£5,223
• Lengthsman	£3,870
• Dog bins	£3,474
• Tree work	£3,040

### **Maintenance Grants Paid**

• Belbroughton Recreation Centre	£1,155
• Belbroughton Parochial Church Council	£2,200
• Fairfield Village Hall	£730
• Belbroughton Church Hall	£730

### **2017/18 Items Approved or Paid Out**

#### **Capital Grants:**

* Belbroughton Rec. Centre – Play Area upgrade	£20,000
* Fairfield Village Hall – projection equipment	£500

#### **Parish Projects:**

* New noticeboard located outside Fairfield V.Hall	£1,740
* First World War Commemorations in 2018	£1,000
* Footpath diversion – Nr. Beckett's Farm	£706
* Stourbridge Rd. Fairfield – B.T. box removal to enable W.C.C. to install a dropped kerb	£576

#### **Minor Grants:**

* Fairfield Community Association	£350
* Belbroughton Life Savers	£250

### **Agricultural Holdings Report Cllr. Nock**

The Council owns 85 acres of arable farmland in Wildmoor & Stoneybridge. Let under 13 tenancies at £90 /acre and is used for various arable cropping types. The income is used to fund the Capital & Minor Grants and Parish Projects. Council inspects the holdings during the year to ensure they are well maintained which has again proved to be the case. As well as providing a regular income the land is a significant area of 'Green Belt' in the Council's ownership and control.

### **Planning Report Cllr.Chris Scurrrell (Chair of the Planning Committee)**

46 planning applications were considered during the Council year. Recommendations made to District Council :

- 23 No Objection
- 14 No Objection but with conditions
- 9 Objected to

The Committee meets once a month.

### **County Cllr. K May**

She informed the meeting that she represented the Belbroughton part of the parish area. Currently due to elections she was in 'Purdah'.

1. The New Chief Exec is Paul Robinson from Derby City Council.
2. Michael Hudson is the new section 151 officer.
3. New Commissioning and Change director is Andrew Spice.
4. New interim Head of Adult Social Services - Avril Wilson from West Sussex C. Council.

She advised of various road resurfacing works due in coming weeks and would monitor progress.

2017/18 saw the area as 18<sup>th</sup> in Country for business starts with 1200 new business startups. 5g Broadband - part of County to be set up as a pilot area. Also, further work on poor reception areas continues notably Dordale Rd.

Childrens Services – unacceptably Ofsted. From December a new management set up will be in place.

She took questions and then thanked the attendees for their support.

### **District Cllr. M Sherrey**

She advised no services have been cut. The wholesale market will in future be run by the Council. Bromsgrove is now a dementia friendly area.

She took questions from the attendees.

The Chairman thanked both Councillors for their reports and their work for residents.

#### **4. Fairfield W.I.**

The Chairman firstly thanked the W.I. for the refreshments made available prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Carol Hine gave a presentation on behalf of the organisation.

There are 120 branches in Worcestershire. Fairfield was established in 1932 and has maintained a membership of between 30 and 40.

Meets at the Village Hall. 2<sup>nd</sup> Weds each month.

Major event is the Annual Produce Show 11<sup>th</sup> August.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Hine for the presentation.

#### **5. Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr. Bob Morgan gave a presentation updating the meeting and requesting the attendees think about how much say they would like on the future of the area.

##### **Presentation Slides:**

##### **Basic Principles: Planning at neighbourhood level**

Empowers Communities to take control.

Is Community NOT Parish Council led.

Can Inspire improving innovation and creativity.

Explore ways of enabling community development and maturity.

##### **What can a Neighbourhood Plan do ?**

Be expensive.

Divert precious resources.

Absorb energy of a community.

Divide a community.

Be ineffective if legally challenged.

Fail to engage with the community wishes.

Ineffectually absorb the time and enthusiasm of volunteers.

An initiative that fails because of change of national government policy.

##### **An Ambition**

Can we enhance the aspects of the villages that we like by sympathetic, sustainable development?

##### **Viability and sustainability**

Developing a safer place to work, play, live and progress to "maturity".

Developing a community that "cares".

Keeping schools viable.

Custom for village businesses.

Ensuring a good mix of ages to prevent an aging population dominating.

Increasing demand for facilities that benefit the community.

Greater voice at District and County levels.

More opportunities for local employment, reducing commuting and associated pollution.

Opportunities for affordable housing for people associated, past or present, with our communities.

"doing our bit" for the housing situation.

Protecting the green belt from overdevelopment.

## **Birmingham Housing Market Area**

### **Strategic Growth Study**

The national Planning Policy Framework and the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to work together through the “Duty to co-operate” across the relevant Housing Market Area (HMA) to identify and then meet housing need where it is sustainable to do so

### **A Strategic Growth Study into the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area** G L Hearn and Wood PLC February 2018

#### **Study Brief**

It has been established that there is a shortfall in planned provision to meet the housing requirements in the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Market Area

*Source Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) 2017*

The Birmingham Development Plan (BDA) contains a clause requiring adjacent local Authorities to work together to address the shortfall

*Source Black Country Core Strategy Review*

A series of studies indicates a major shortfall

*Source G L Hearn*

“consider the development potential and suitability of any large previously developed sites within the Green Belt that may lie in sustainable locations. “

“Should a shortfall remain ....undertake a full strategic review of the Green Belt within the HMA utilising a consistent Green Belt Review methodology, which assesses Green Belt against its five purposes”

#### **Purposes of the Green Belt**

To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

*To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns*

To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

#### **Recommendations**

Implications for Bromsgrove is that the report is suggesting further testing of the following scenarios:

1. Proportionate dispersal of a range smaller of sites of 500 to up a combined total of 2,500 houses in total.
2. South of Bromsgrove by the train station, South of Birmingham in and around the Wythall area.
3. Urban extension circa 1,500 - 7,500 houses on the South of Dudley in close proximity to Hagley.
4. New Settlement circa 10,000+ houses in the Barnt Green/ Alvechurch area.

### **Next Steps for Bromsgrove District Council**

Testing the strategic Review

Bromsgrove local Plan review

Issues and options consultation

Green Belt review methodology due Autumn 2018

Site selection methodology due Late 2018

### **Parish Council Position on Neighbourhood Plan progress**

Parish Council has approved some funding

Considering if Localities Commission to be approached for further funds

Steering Group formed and active with three open meetings held

Executive group identified but needs to be developed

BDC have approved an application to designate the Parish area

### **We need to :-**

Develop volunteers into an effective team

Identify areas where no experienced volunteers exist:

- Project planning

- Expert advice on the correct approach to plan development

- Cost the above.....Catshill will be spending Circa £15,000

Engage with the community at every stage

Engage with BDC and other active groups

Educate our community on the issues enabling informed judgements

Focus on how engagement and consultation can effect improvements in our community

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Morgan for the presentation.

## **6. We Don't buy Crime**

Mr Mick Simpson from West Mercia Police gave a presentation on the 'Smartwater' scheme taking questions from the meeting attendees.

The meeting then passed a motion by 16 votes in favour to 7 votes against, recommending that the Parish Council proceeds in principle to set up a 'Smartwater' scheme in the parish area.

The Chairman thanked Mr Simpson for the presentation.

8.



## 7. Footpaths

Mr Paul Hardcastle – volunteer footpath warden for the Parish Council gave a presentation covering:

### **Work overview:**

Strimming / Maintenance  
Reduced personal time  
WCC Strimming Programme  
Landowner improvements  
Winter ground conditions  
Fallen tree removals

### **Improvements:**

PH            5 new waymarker posts  
                 4 replacement stile stepovers  
WCC          3 replacement ditch crossings  
                 Widening and cutting back on bridle path Moorfields Farm to Drayton  
                 Steps near Drayton path bridge  
LO/WCC     New Gate near New Barn

### **ST Resilience Project:**

All paths have remained open  
Pipeline installed through footpath crossovers  
Awaiting surface re-instatement

### **New Path – Brookfield Farm**

#### *Current path*

dangerous stile on to main road  
“unpleasant” surface through farm area

#### *New path*

eliminates main road access  
by-passes farm area  
links to existing path system to create circulars

Application now passed all objection stages  
Gates etc. to be installed before final sign off

### **2018 – 19 Plans**

Continue WCC strimming programme  
Continued general maintenance  
Completion and opening of new path  
Drainage work on Drayton path  
Review possible surface works around Parish

Any problems or improvement suggestions  
Lynne and Paul Hardcastle 01562 730511

The Chairman thanked Mr Hardcastle for the presentation.

**8. First World War Commemorations**

Cllr. James Bradley advised that a group including councillors was assessing events for the commemoration of the centenary of the ending of the First World War.

A party 1.00pm June 30<sup>th</sup> will be held at Belbroughton Recreation Centre, the centre itself being a legacy of the war having been set up in the early 1920s.

Volunteers on the day would be very welcome.

Other events were planned for later in the year: e.g. a showing of film 'Warhorse' in October and further events in the church in November, which will be publicised in due course.

In Fairfield Mr C. Palmer advised that poppies had been sown both on the Recreation Ground and other areas of grassland. The war memorial would be cleaned and a service would be held at St Marks church.

**9. Residents Open Forum**

A resident recommended the 'Smartwater' Scheme as there had been a number of shed breakins over last winter. With £1000s worth of kit stolen. Fencing had been cut down to gain access via a field. He advised that all such crimes are reported and then picked up upon by the insurance companies who could adjust adversely future premiums paid by all.

A resident questioned the actions of the Developer as regards drainage rights over The Green, Belbroughton. The Chairman advised that the Agreement permitted the installation of drainage pipes under The Green running beneath the current path linking to High St sewers, with the requirement that the path was reinstated when the pipework was completed.

The Chairman thanked all for attending the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting.

The meeting was closed at 9.50 p.m.

Chairman..... Dated.....

**10.**