

## BERKSWICH PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of Berkswich Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 4 July 2023 at 7.30 pm at Walton Village Hall

**Present:** Cllr Alan Taylor (Chair), Cllr Caroline Pearson (Vice Chair), Cllr Sue Francis, Cllr Tim Luker, Cllr Michael Norris, Cllr Malcolm Millichap, Cllr Ann Millichap, Cllr Vicky Campbell and Cllr Bob Gilson

**In attendance:** Mrs Sue Fullwood as Clerk.

Cllr Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **1 Public session**

No members of the public were in attendance.

- 23/81 Apologies** – received from Cllr Beverley Hughes as she was away and Stafford Borough Cllr Peter Edgeller as he was at an SBC meeting. **Resolved:** both apologies were accepted.
- 23/82 To record Declarations of Interest regarding items on the agenda.** Cllr Francis declared an interest in item 23/91 i change of use application as the property was next to hers.
- 23/83 Minutes of the Council meeting held on 6 June 2023 – Resolved:** It was agreed that the minutes were a true record of the meeting.
- 23/84 Update on matters arising which were not agenda items**  
None.
- 23/85 Response to Draft First Homes Eligibility Criteria Consultation for South Staffordshire**  
A discussion took place around whether the criteria would have an impact on Berkswich Parish. **Resolved:** Clerk to send response that the council have no view on the proposals as there would be no impact on Berkswich Parish as it is in Stafford Borough. **Action: Clerk**
- 23/86 Response from Staffs County Council to the joint letter regarding speed limits in the Milford/Brocton area**  
Cllr Francis confirmed that she had shared the response with the member of the public concerned. It was agreed that the response was very disappointing and should have been copied to all those copied into the original letter. The issues had not been thought about and a standard response had been churned out. **Resolved:** It was agreed that the parish council should ask to see the evidence of average speeds from the SCC traffic survey and remind SCC of their view that the proposed 7.5 tonne weight limit on Brocton Road would simply displace the issue. **Action: Clerk**
- 23/87 Maintenance**  
**i The Phone Box**  
It was agreed that the phone box should be painted and the one pane of acrylic replaced with new glass. **Resolved:** Clerk to find someone suitable to do the work and the Chair and Clerk could agree expenditure up to £1000. **Action: Clerk**

## ii Noticeboards

The two green and white noticeboards on Old Croft Road and Bluebell Hollow needed the boards replacing, the noticeboard at Berkswich Primary needed a new pack panel and to be revarnished and the Milford Common noticeboard needed a lock repairing.

**Resolved:** Clerk to find someone suitable to do the work and the Chair and Clerk could agree expenditure up to £500. **Action: Clerk**

## 23/88 Review of Parish Fete Attendance

Cllr Pearson thought that it had been really good, that it was a great PR exercise and that it was good to be seen by parish residents. Cllr Pearson suggested a rota be set up for the 2024 event so that all councillors could enjoy the fete. Cllr Malcolm Millichap thanked Cllrs Pearson, Luker and Hughes for attending the fete on behalf of the council. Cllr Taylor had planned to attend for the last hour but a thunderstorm meant that the gazebo was taken down early. The crafts for children had been a success and it would be good to repeat this in future years.

## 23/89 December/January Meeting Date

The Clerk would be out of the country for the December meeting date and had checked with Cannock Chase Council regarding confirmation of the precept and it would be fine to do this in early January. It was proposed to change the date of the meeting from 5 December 2023 to 2 January 2024. **Resolved:** date change agreed unanimously.

**Action: Clerk**

## 23/90 Financial Matters:

- i. **Resources and Barriers** – A lengthy discussion took place regarding where the Council's finances and assets had originated from such as money from developers to manage Walton and Hollybush Coppices. Cllr Norris suggested using some of the Council's short-term investment as leverage to get bigger and better capital projects, for example as match-funding for grants. Cllr Taylor explained the Council's earmarked funds. Cllr Norris felt that the people who **paid** give money to the Council, for example through the precept, should get benefit from it quite quickly, the money should not be held onto indefinitely.
- ii. **Bank Reconciliation and expenditure for May 2023.** This document was re-presented as the final column had not been visible at the meeting on 6 June. **Resolved:** unanimously approved.

Bank Reconciliation as at 31 May 2023

Receipts			
Company	Description	Amount	Date Received
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>£0.00</b>	

Payments						
Paid to	Description	Invoice date	Cheque #	Gross Incl. VAT	VAT	Net
Trent Grounds Maintenance	Maintenance as per schedule for April 2023	29/04/2023	760	£620.64	£103.44	£517.20
Staffs Parish Councils' Association	Annual subs inc NALC 23/24	01/04/2023	761	£377.65	£0.00	£377.65
Zurich Municipal	Insurance cover for June 23 - May 24	25/05/2023	762	£1,188.50	£0.00	£1,188.50
HMRC	Ni May 23	31/05/2023	763	£6.61	£0.00	£6.61
Staffs Pension Fund (LGPS)	Pension Cont.s Empee and Emper May 23	31/05/2023	764	£295.36	£0.00	£295.36
Mrs Susan Fullwood	Clerk salary & expenses May 23	31/05/2023	765	£988.25	£1.80	£986.45
Staffs Parish Councils' Association	Good Cllrs Guide x 6 +carriage	05/05/2023	766	£27.53	£0.84	£26.69
<b>Total Payments</b>				<b>£3,504.54</b>	<b>£106.08</b>	<b>£3,398.46</b>

<b>Cashbook</b>		
Opening Balance at 01.05.2022		20,496.84
Add:		
Receipts 01.05.2022 to 31.05.2022		0.00
Less		
Payments 01.05.2022 to 31.05.2022		3,504.54
Cashbook Balance at 31.05.2022		<b>16,992.30</b>
<b>Current Account</b>		
Bank statement Balance at 01.05.2022		34,333.85
Less payments made	754, 756, 759, 760	2,723.31
Less: Unpresented Cheques	Chq No                      Amount	
	729                      £193.61	
	752                      £10,886.26	
	757                      £240.33	
	758                      £458.15	
	761                      377.65	
	762                      £1,188.50	
	763                      £6.61	
	764                      £295.36	
	765                      £988.25	
	766                      £27.53	
		14,662.25
Add: Receipts		0.00
Add: Unpresented Receipts		0.00
C/A balance carried forward 31.05.2022		31,654.55
Available funds in C/A		<b>£16,992.30</b>

iii. **Bank Reconciliation and expenditure for June 2023. Resolved:** unanimously approved.

**Bank Reconciliation as at 20 June 2023**

Receipts			
Company	Description	Amount	Date Received
HMRC	VAT reclaim 22/23	£12,245.86	26/05/2023
Walton Multi Academy Trust	Pathway trimming 2022	£78.75	30/05/2023
SCC	Grass cutting etc 23/24	£2,294.00	06/06/2023
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>£14,618.61</b>	

Payments						
Paid to	Description	Invoice date	Cheque #	Gross Incl. VAT	VAT	Net
TGM	Grounds Maintenance May 2023	31/05/2023	767	£1,253.28	£208.88	£1,044.40
Walton (Berkswich Village Hall)	Room hire April & May 23	31/05/2023	768	£90.00	£0.00	£90.00
Black Rose Solutions Ltd	Internal Audit 22/23	03/06/2023	769	£117.00	£19.50	£97.50
Staffs Pensions	Empee & Emper contributions June 23	30/06/2023	770	£295.36	£0.00	£295.36
Mrs S Fullwood	Clerk Salary & expenses June 23	30/06/2023	771	£984.97	£0.00	£984.97
HMRC	NI Cont.s June 23	30/06/2023	772	£6.61	£0.00	£6.61
<b>Total Payments</b>				<b>£2,747.22</b>	<b>£228.38</b>	<b>£2,518.84</b>

<b>Cashbook</b>																								
Opening Balance at 20.05.2023		16,992.30																						
Add:																								
Receipts 20.05.2023 to 20.06.2023		14,618.61																						
Less																								
Payments 20.05.2023 to 20.06.2023		2,747.22																						
Cashbook Balance at 20.06.2023		<b>28,863.69</b>																						
<b>Current Account</b>																								
Bank statement Balance at 20.05.2023		31,654.55																						
Less payments made	752, 757, 758, 761, 762, 763	14,145.75																						
Less: Unpresented Cheques	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Chq No</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>729</td><td>£193.61</td></tr> <tr><td>764</td><td>£295.36</td></tr> <tr><td>766</td><td>£27.53</td></tr> <tr><td>767</td><td>£1,253.28</td></tr> <tr><td>768</td><td>£90.00</td></tr> <tr><td>769</td><td>£117.00</td></tr> <tr><td>770</td><td>£295.36</td></tr> <tr><td>771</td><td>£984.97</td></tr> <tr><td>772</td><td>£6.61</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: right;">3,263.72</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Chq No	Amount	729	£193.61	764	£295.36	766	£27.53	767	£1,253.28	768	£90.00	769	£117.00	770	£295.36	771	£984.97	772	£6.61		3,263.72	
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C/A balance carried forward 20.06.2023		32,127.41																						
Available funds in C/A		<b>£28,863.69</b>																						

iv. **Budget Report for June 2023. Resolved:** unanimously approved.

#### **Budget Report June 2023**

RECEIPTS	Total	Budget	Outturn
Precept	13,872	27,745	-13,873
Council tax support grant	615	1,231	-615
SBC (Concurrent Function Allowance)	754	1,507	-754
SCC Minor Highways Agreement	2,662	2,200	462
Interest Stafford Railway BS A/c	0	250	-250
Interest Teachers A/c	0	200	-200
Interest Hampshire Trust	36	75	-39
Transfer from Reserves	0	0	0
Grants	11,211	0	11,211
Misc. Receipts (e.g. VAT reclaim & waylea	12,369	45	12,324
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£41,519</b>	<b>£33,253</b>	<b>£ 8,266</b>

PAYMENTS	Total	Budget	Outturn
Staff costs	5,689	15,050	9,361
Office costs	2,283	3,492	1,209
Maintenance costs	517	11,400	10,883
Additional maintenance	-	600	600
Play Area	-	590	590
Capital purchases	-	-	0
Community support	-	1,565	1,565
Projects	-	700	700
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 8,489</b>	<b>£33,397</b>	<b>£24,908</b>

#### **Earmarked Funds Allocation**

Elections	£10,000
Crime Prevention Measures	£24,000
Walton Coppice Maintenance Fund	£12,500
Hollybush Coppice Maintenance Fund	£10,000
Asset Replacement Fund	£45,000
Environmental Care	£35,000
General Reserve	£42,603
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>£179,103</b>

23/91

### Planning Matters

- i. **Response to application 23/37568/COU – Wyevern 198 Main Road - Resolved:** The Council had previously objected to similar applications at two adjacent properties for change of use and would object to this one on the principle that farmland should not be annexed into private property. **Action: Clerk**
- ii. **Response to application 23/37508/HOU - 38 Brocton Road – Resolved:** The Council had no comment to make on this application. **Action: Clerk**

23/92

### Reports from other Meetings

- i. **Environment Group** – The Group had met with the Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer from SCC and had discussed an application for hedgerow around the left-hand side of Walton Coppice plus more improvements to the right-hand side like bird boxes. He was keen for the Group to make it a community thing by possibly including a local scout group or primary school. Cllr Malcolm Millichap said that he thought an objection would be that opening the Coppice up would have a negative impact on the wildlife and be counterproductive. Cllr Luker agreed that any kind of pathway through the coppice would be disruptive. Cllr Norris thought it would be nice if people could access the coppice and suggested raised pathways similar to those at Staffordshire Wildlife Trust's Wolseley Centre. Cllr Taylor suggested an Open Day occasionally to let residents see what the money is being spent on. Cllr Campbell suggested educational boards around the coppice to show the nature that visited the coppice. **Resolved:** Cllr Luker to set up a meeting of the Environment Group and the Clerk with the aim of getting an application ready for the FiPL panel on 23 August.
- ii. **Village Hall Council of Management** – meetings were every other month and there had not been another meeting.

23/93

### Agenda Items for the Next Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 5 September 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Bromage Room, Walton Village Hall

Agenda items agreed were: the War Memorial – permanent railings for the steps; Clean Air; Projects and Expenditure for financial year 2024/25 (please bring ideas).

The meeting closed at 8:31 pm.