

## BERKSWICH PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Berkswich Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 4 June 2024 at 7.30 pm at Walton Village Hall

**Present:** Cllr Alan Taylor (Chair), Cllr Caroline Pearson (Vice Chair), Cllr Michael Norris, Cllr Beverley Hughes, Cllr Sue Francis, Cllr Vicky Campbell, Cllr Malcolm Millichap, Cllr Ann Millichap 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.

**24/72 Apologies** – received from Cllr Tim Luker as he was away. Stafford Borough Cllr Peter Edgeller also sent apologies.

**24/73 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2024 - Resolved:** It was agreed that the minutes were accurate.

**24/74 Declarations of Interest regarding items on the agenda.** None.

**24/75 Clerk's Report for May 2024 - Resolved:** the report was accepted.

#### **24/76 Speeding on Main/Milford Road**

Cllr Norris suggested that there could be an opportunity to replace the speed camera on the Lichfield Road just before Stockton Lane with a digitised camera. He felt that the road entering the parish on the Lichfield Road was quite wide and gave a sensation that one's speed was low. Cllr Taylor said that he had seen the Staffordshire Road Safety Partnership (SRSP) had replaced the camera on the Wolverhampton Road at Rising Brook with a new digital machine. Cllr Norris said that drivers seemed to modify their speed for the cameras but drove faster where there weren't any cameras. **Resolved:** Clerk to contact SRSP and ask when the camera before Stockton Lane would be replaced.  
**Action: Clerk**

#### **24/77 Flower Beds on Main Road**

The Clerk had asked for a meeting with TGM and they were happy to meet to discuss plans, but they had a backlog of work to do from all the Spring rain. Cllr Taylor suggested trees could be planted in the flower beds and Cllr Pearson suggested that some could be grassed over. Cllr Pearson added that if a shop was set up at the Walton Garage the business might like to sponsor flower beds. Item deferred to the July meeting. **Action: Clerk**

#### **24/78 Potential Speed Indication Devices at Milford**

The Clerk had asked SCC for a list of approved providers, but they didn't have one. The Clerk had emailed various companies asking if they were approved by SCC and if they could provide a quote for installation of a pole, but was still waiting for a response. The Clerk had chased SCC regarding their quote, but it still hadn't come through. Item deferred to the July meeting. **Action: Clerk**

#### **24/79 Arrangements for the Parish Fete**

Cllr Pearson confirmed arrangements for 16 June. The only potential issue was if it rained heavily on the day, Cllr Pearson felt it would be too difficult to get the gazebo dry again.

Cllr Gilson felt that it should be possible to squeeze the stall into a big marquee if necessary.

- 24/80 Changing to a .gov.uk Web Domain**  
Councillors had read the information provided by the Clerk. **Resolved:** Clerk to ask SCC why they are insistent about email addresses containing “staffslc”. **Action: Clerk**
- 24/81 Access Issues Within the Parish**  
Item deferred to next meeting that Cllr Luker is in attendance.
- 24/82 Potential Social Activities Within the Parish**  
Social activities had been suggested by a member of the public as something that the Parish Council could run. Cllr Pearson said that people may be confused by the set up at Brocton and thought the Parish Council set up a lot of events, but a lot were set up by Brocton Village Hall. Cllr M Millichap had seen an event advertised that the Barley Mow were organising at Milford Common on 3 August. All proceeds were to go to Macmillan. **Resolved:** Cllr M Millichap proposed that the Parish Council supported this event and had a stall selling homemade chutney and piccalilli prepared by Cllr A Millichap. Cllr M Millichap to get details from the Barley Mow and book a stall. **Action: Cllr M Millichap**  
Cllr M Millichap said that he was aware that Stone Town Council hold a small service in the park every year related to the Burma Campaign and wondered if a similar service could be set up in Berkswich. Cllr Gilson said he thought that Fr Graham would jump at the chance to hold a service at St Thomas’. **Resolved:** Cllr M Millichap to liaise with Fr Graham to explore the possibility. **Action: Cllr M Millichap**  
It was mentioned that the wreaths hadn’t been removed from the War Memorial in early May as per the schedule. Cllr Gilson would remove the wreaths and keep the ones he wanted for St Thomas’ church. **Action: Cllr Gilson**
- 24/83 Grant Application from Berkswich Primary School**  
Berkswich Primary School had completed a grant application form for litter-picking equipment and the Clerk had shared it with councillors. **Resolved:** grant approved unanimously. **Action: Clerk**
- 24/84 Telephone/Book Exchange Box**  
Cllr Francis reported that a member of the public regularly looked after the book exchange and asked a gentleman from Shugborough to come and collect when the box was overstocked. Cllr Francis suggested that the Council could purchase a gift for the member of the public to say thank you for looking after the box. **Resolved:** gift agreed unanimously. **Action: Cllr Francis**
- 24/85 Storage of Important Council Documents**  
Cllr Taylor felt that keeping the Council’s Deeds in a tin box was not adequate and asked for alternative suggestions. Cllr Norris agreed that it would be a false economy not to look after the documents. **Resolved:** Clerk to ask SPCA what other Councils do with their documents and to get a price for a fireproof box. **Action: Clerk**
- 24/86 Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24**  
Cllr Francis thanked the Clerk for her work on the Return.  
i. **Annual Internal Audit Report – Resolved:** approved unanimously.  
ii. **Annual Governance Statement – Resolved:** approved unanimously.  
iii. **Accounting Statements – Resolved:** approved unanimously.  
Clerk to send all required documents to Mazars as the external auditors. **Action: Clerk**

**Financial Matters:**i. **Revised Financial Regulations**

Cllr Taylor suggested that section 5.15, delegated authority for the Clerk should be amended from £500 to £750. **Resolved:** subject to the change above the revised regulations were agreed unanimously. **Action: Clerk**

ii. **Consolidation of short-term savings into two accounts**

Cllr M Millichap had noted that the Council were only getting 0.6% interest on one of their three savings accounts. **Resolved:** money from Hampshire Trust bank to be split into the Stafford Railway and the Teachers Building Society accounts until the £85k Financial Services Compensation Scheme limit was reached (£170k between the two accounts).

iii. **Bank Reconciliation and Expenditure for May 2024 – Resolved:** The bank reconciliation and expenditure were unanimously approved.**Bank Reconciliation as at 20 May 2024**

Receipts			
Company	Description	Amount	Date Received
Staffs County Council	FiPL Grant Walton Coppice	9192.02	29/04/2024
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>£9,192.02</b>	

Payments						
Paid to	Description	Invoice date	Cheque #	Gross Incl. VAT	VAT	Net
TGM	April Grounds Maintenance	30/04/2024	847	£1,235.50	£205.92	£1,029.58
Walton (Berkswich) Village Hall	Room hire 2.4.24	30/04/2024	848	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00
Black Rose Solutions Ltd	Internal Audit 23-24	23/05/2024	849	£147.00	£24.50	£122.50
Zurich Municipal	Insurance 1.6.24 - 31.5.25	22/05/2024	850	£1,316.70	£0.00	£1,316.70
SPCA	SPCA & NALC subscription 24-25	01/05/2024	851	£396.00	£0.00	£396.00
Staffs Pension Fund	Emper & empee cont.s May 24 minus Jan 24 overpayment	31/05/2024	852	£269.90	£0.00	£269.90
HMRC	Employer NI May 24 minus overpayment Jan 24	05/06/2024	853	£23.63	£0.00	£23.63
Mrs S Fullwood	Clerk salary and expenses May 24	31/05/2024	854	£1,037.70	£12.60	£1,025.10
<b>Total Payments</b>				<b>£4,446.43</b>	<b>£243.02</b>	<b>£4,203.41</b>

**Cashbook**

Opening Balance at 19.05.2024 22,072.29

Add:  
Receipts 19.04.2024 to 19.05.2024 9,192.02

Less  
Payments 19.04.2024 to 19.05.2024 4,446.43

Cashbook Balance at 19.05.2024 **26,817.88**

**Current Account**

Bank statement Balance at 19.04.2024 24,194.28

Less payments made 3,323.52

Less: Unpresented Cheques	Chq No	Amount	
	849	£147.00	
	850	£1,316.70	
	851	£396.00	
	852	£269.90	
	853	£23.63	
	854	£1,037.70	
			<b>3,190.93</b>

Add: Receipts 9,192.02

Add: Unpresented Receipts 0.00

C/A balance carried forward 19.05.2024 30,008.81

Available funds in C/A **£26,817.88**

- iv. **Budget Report for May 2024 - Resolved:** the report was unanimously approved.

**Budget Report May 2024**

RECEIPTS	To date	Budget	Less / more than budget
Precept	20,285	41,274	-20,990
Council tax support grant	705	705	0
SCC Minor Highways Agreement	382	2,750	-2,368
Interest Stafford Railway BS A/c	0	600	-600
Interest Teachers A/c	0	350	-350
Interest Hampshire Trust	26	70	-44
Grants	9,192	0	9,192
VAT Reclaimed	1,339	0	0
Misc. Receipts (e.g. VAT reclaim & waylea	44	300	-256
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£ 31,973</b>	<b>£ 46,049</b>	<b>-£15,415</b>

PAYMENTS	To date	Budget	Under / Over budget
Staff costs	2,617	13,203	10,585
Office costs	2,089	2,452	362
Maintenance costs	1,415	11,650	10,235
Additional maintenance	-	750	750
Play Area	-	2,610	2,610
Capital purchases	-	500	500
Community support	-	2,385	2,385
Projects	210	9,300	9,090
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 6,332</b>	<b>£ 42,849</b>	<b>£36,517</b>

**24/88 Planning Matters**

- i. **Ratification of Response to South Staffs Council's Local Plan**  
The Parish Council had been consistent in its objections on this issue and had written to SSDC five times with the same message. The decision was now in the hands of the Planning Inspectorate. **Resolved:** agreed unanimously.
- ii. **Ratification of Response to application 24/38959/FUL at WR Davies - Resolved:** agreed unanimously.

**24/89 Reports from other Meetings**

- i. **Environment Group –** Cllr Taylor reported that the FiPL grant application for Hollybush Coppice had been successful. Cllr M Millichap thanked the Environment Group for their work on the application. He felt that the Council could be eligible for a NALC Star Council Award for its climate response for the work at Walton and Hollybush Coppices. **Resolved:** Cllr M Millichap to investigate the application process. **Action: Cllr Millichap**
  - a) **FiPL Grant at Hollybush Coppice - Purchase Orders – Resolved:** all expenditure was agreed and orders to be placed as per the FiPL application project costs table. **Action: Clerk**
- ii. **Village Hall Council of Management**
  - a) **Request for donation towards road resurfacing –** Cllr Pearson reported that VHCM had asked if the Council would put money in towards the road surface repairs that had taken place. **Resolved:** it was agreed that the Council would have considered a grant application in advance of the repairs being done, but could not consider one retrospectively. **Action: Cllr Pearson**

**24/90      Agenda Items for the Next Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 2 July 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Main Hall, Walton Village Hall**

Agenda items agreed were: repairs to Walton Coppice Fencing; Barley Mow event; speeding on Main/Milford Road; flower beds on Main Road; SIDs at Milford; review of Parish Fete; Barley Mow Macmillan event; access issues; and moving to a .gov.uk web domain.

The meeting closed at 8:45 pm.