

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8th December at 6:30pm 2022
in Belmont Community Centre.

Present: Chair, Councillor Christine A. Fletcher,
Councillors, J. Appleby, M.P. Bennett, P.J. Conway, P.S. Conway, V. Hawes, J. Knight,
E.S. Mavin, L. Mavin, K. Noble, C.A. Lattin, and S.C. White.

Also present: Mrs S. Overton (Clerk) in addition Mr P. Marsden (Headteacher),
Mrs J. Ryder (teaching staff) and pupils from Belmont Community School.
Member of the Public (1)

22.92 To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Arthur C. Walker, Ann P. Watkins
and Mick Watson.

Received.

22.93 To Receive Declarations of Interest.

Members Please Note: - this is a standard item. If Members are aware of a personal or
prejudicial interest in relation to any item on the Agenda this should be disclosed at this
stage or when the interest becomes apparent during the consideration of an item in
accordance with the Code of Conduct for Members. This item is linked to your Declaration
of Members Interest forms please consult these forms when reading these Notes on agenda
items to ensure compliance with this item.

Declarations of Interest were received from:-

Councillor Patrick Conway
Belmont Community School

Councillor Christine Fletcher
Belmont Community School
Gilesgate and Belmont Well-Being Project.

Councillor John Appleby
Tree-Tops Children's Ward, University Hospital, North Durham.

Received.

The Chair suspended Standing Orders.

22.94 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

(a) Police.

There were no police present, however it was reported a more visible police presence was in
place during evenings following an increase in night crime in the area.

(b) Community Warden.

There was no Neighbourhood Warden present.

(c) Members of The Public.

A concern was raised by a member of the public regarding the poor street lighting in
Wantage Road causing walking difficulties for residents and problems for mobility users, the
matter to be reported to Durham County Council.

A concern was also raised regarding motorists regularly parking their vehicles at the exit and entrance to Wantage Road making it challenging for other drivers to navigate getting in or out. He was informed that a request has been made to Durham County Council to extend the existing double yellow lines already in place. The Chairman thanked the resident for his comments and the resident left the meeting. The Chairman called for councillors to be vigilant regarding the issues raised and suggested a polite reminder be placed in the Parish Newsletter reminding motorists to refrain from parking their vehicles near the exit at Wantage Road. The issues to be raised with Kevin Hall Sergeant 2158 in January 2023, a face to face meeting to be confirmed.

22.95 Presentation by Belmont Community School regarding planned visit to Shetland Islands.

A short presentation was given by pupils from Belmont Community School accompanied by the Head Teacher, Mr P. Marsden and member of teaching staff, Mrs J. Ryder regarding schools visit to the Shetland Islands with fifty students from years 7 to 10 in July 2023. The school asked if Belmont Parish Council would consider sponsoring one of the planned events on the island that the students could take part in. The Chairman thanked the students on their presentation and invited the school to return later in the year to give feedback regarding their trip. The staff and students thanked the Parish Council for their time left the meeting.

Following the presentation Councillor Mick Bennett proposed £500.00 towards equipment for the trip.

Councillor Stephen White seconded the proposal.

Agreed.

Unanimous.

The Chair re-imposed Standing Orders.

22.96 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of the Minutes of the meeting of Belmont Parish Council held on 10th November 2022 – Minutes attached*

Agreed.

22.97 To Receive Matters of Information, Clerk's Report, Correspondence Tabled Items – for information.

There was nothing to report.

22.98 To Consider Risk Management in relation to items on the Agenda.

Members please note: - this is a standard item. Risk Management has been considered when compiling these notes for December and has been incorporated into reports and presented to members.

Agreed.

22.99 To Receive Committee Reports:

(a) Finance – to consider financial matters

(1) To Receive Receipts and Payments during the month of November 2022 - see attached*
Received and Agreed.

(2) To Receive bank reconciliation during the month of November 2022 – see attached*
Received and Agreed.

(3) To Receive Donation requests for November 2022

a) Tree-Tops Children's Ward University Hospital North Durham -
Agreed:£50.00

b) Gilesgate and Belmont Well-Being Project (selection boxes for children)
Agreed: £50.00

c) Belmont Community School – Senior Citizens Xmas Party
Agreed: £100.00 towards refreshments.

d) Food hampers Spar Belmont

A member of the public approached Councillor Eric Mavin asking if Belmont Parish Council would consider match funding his donation of £400.00 for food hampers.

Agreed:£400.00 to be match funded for thirty five food hampers from the Spar Belmont.

(4) To Approve Precept 2023/2024

It was agreed to raise the Precept for 2023/2024 by 10% in line with inflation.

Agreed.

Councillor Bennett was thanked for his report.

A Special Full Parish Council meeting was held on Thursday 17th November to discuss Budget 2022/23, Priorities for 2023/24 and Precept 2023/24 – see attached

Agreed.

(b) Planning – Consider and make comment on planning matters * see attached
The Chair of the Planning Committee Patrick Conway gave a report to councillors regarding Weekly Planning Lists during the month of November.

Neighbourhood Plan Report

An update was given by Councillor Conway regarding the Neighbourhood Plan who reported a first discussion on 22 November had been held with interested members of the public regarding unallocated land and features & facilities with housing, further discussions have been arranged for 6th and 13th December 2022

Councillor Conway was thanked for his report.

(c) Communications

There was no meeting held this month

(d) Environment

Cemetery

Agreed: to amend the Cemetery Rules and Regulations following the councils decision to allow grave owners the choice whether they want their graves turfing after a year of interment, on the proviso graves are maintained to an acceptable standard otherwise the Council may have to review its decision. Councillor Noble to look into appropriate wording.

Update on Gardeners Contract

Four tenders were received for the position, at a meeting held by a small working group it was agreed Durham County Council was the preferred option. A meeting with Durham County Council to be arranged to agree an interim Service Level Agreement from 1st January 2023 whilst a Service Level Agreement is negotiated from April 2023 for the following year.

To Approve Sustainable Beds Project choice of plants for sustainable beds

It was recommended this years plants be purchased from Ravensworth Nurseries with an amendment to replace pampas grass with 'heuchera'

Agreed.

To Approve of project planting and all planting locations

Agreed.

To Approve NIB 2023 recommendation.

Proposed: Councillor Lattin proposed this year Belmont Parish Council does not enter the competition however the five Specials Categories be entered as usual.

Seconded: Councillor White

Agreed.

Unanimous.

A suggestion was made whether Ramside Hall Hotel would be interested in funding the five Special Categories (Cemetery, Belmont Scrambles, Belmont Allotments, Gilesgate School and Ramside Hall Hotel).

Agreed: A meeting to be arranged between Councillors Appleby, Mavin, Mavin and White and Ramside Hall Hotel Manager.

Update on Scrambles Area TPO Report

Councillor White gave an update to councillors which included the following points:-

(1) To examine how many trees need their ivy cutting around the bottom of the tree to clear for access and to check if County Council TPO Officer would be able to assist or know any Contractors who could.

(2) Speak with County Council TPO Officer to see what more is needed in order make this an acceptable Woodland Management Plan for Area TPO purposes.

(3) Send letters to all affected houses in Birkdale Gardens and Cheveley Walk explaining what the council is doing and what the issues are.

Councillor White forwarded an e-mail to all councillors with an attached report and was thanked for his work on the trees by the Chair.

A suggestion was made for signage to be placed to warn people to be wary of strong winds in stormy weather and to also place an insert in the Parish Newsletter to warn residents.

22.100 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Belmont

Nothing was reported.

Carrville

Councillor Knight proposed planting replacement trees where previously trees had been cut down near junction of Belmont Road next to bungalows and Coronation Avenue.

A concern was raised regarding a nearby fence causing visibility issues for motorists exiting the junction at Broomside Lane near the Travellers Rest, on to Pittington Road due to parked cars

A concern was made regarding the egress from Ramside View on to Bainbridge Street causing visibility issues caused by parked cars, a suggestion was made whether a nearby strip of land could be used for extra parking.

Ongoing speeding issues along Swinside Drive are to be put in the next Parish Newsletter to politely remind motorists to adhere to speed limits.

Gilesgate Moor

The Clerk to be informed of any issues raised by councillors regarding untidy kerbs and pavements who will subsequently forward concerns on to the new gardening contractor for attention.

For information, the proposed dog exercise area will not be going ahead due to opposition from various parties.

Councillor Appleby raised concerns regarding the increasing amount of rubbish from 3 nearby fast food chains.

22.101 Council business (any Item which has been brought to the attention of the Chairman for discussion during the meeting for approval or otherwise)

22.102 Date of next meeting Thursday 12th January 2022.