

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 6:30pm in  
Belmont Community Centre.

Present: Chair, Councillor L. Mavin, Vice-Chair, Councillor C.A. Fletcher, Councillors, M.P. Bennett, V. Hawes, C.A. Lattin, E.S. Mavin, K. Noble, A.C. Walker, M. Watson and S.C. White.

Also present: Mrs S. Overton (Clerk)  
Member of the Public (2)

23.82 To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors J. Appleby, P.J. Conway, P.S. Conway, J. Knight and A.P. Watkins.  
RECEIVED.

23.83 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 form please consult these forms when reading these Notes on agenda items to ensure compliance with this item.  
RECEIVED.

**The chair suspended Standing Orders.**

23.84 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

(a) Police.

None present.

(b) Community Warden.

None present.

(c) Members of the Public.

A resident raised a concern concerning the traffic lights opposite Tesco Extra saying there is no 'dwell' in the lights when crossing from what will be the new Home Bargains to Lidl making it challenging for pedestrians. Councillor LM to arrange a site visit with the appropriate officer to discuss the issue the resident to be invited to attend also. The resident also reported two street lights were not working in the Community Centre car park and another one on Moorfield, the matter to be reported to Durham County Council for attention.

A resident expressed concerns regarding work lorries exiting the new Bent House Lane Development just fifty metres from the traffic lights and questioned why the exit from the housing estate was on the traffic light junction. An email to be sent to the developers for a response, as the issue had previously been raised from the onset with the developers by all three county councillors.

A concern was raised regarding a property opposite the Dragonville traffic lights displaying a poster advertising 'Holi and Bang'. County Councillors to contact Durham County Council to request removal of the poster.

A resident raised concerns regarding the lack of response from Durham County Council with regards to ongoing issues concerning a property on Rowantree Avenue. The resident was asked to copy in the county councillors in regards to any follow up emails from Durham County Council.

### **The Chair re-imposed Standing Orders.**

- 23.85 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of the Minutes of the meeting of Belmont Parish Council held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 – Minutes attached\*  
AGREED.
- 23.86 To Receive matters of information, Clerk's Report, Correspondence Tabled Items – for information.  
(a) An invitation has been received from Haswell & District Mencap asking if any councillors would like to attend their annual carol service which is to be held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December at 2.30 pm in Durham Cathedral.  
  
(b) A concern was raised by a grave owner concerned about her loved one's grave which had become flooded due to the recent amount of rainfall. The owner was informed the water level would subside once the rainfall ceased.  
RECEIVED.
- 23.87 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 November and has been incorporated into reports and presented to members.  
RECEIVED.
- 23.88 To Receive Update Regarding Trusteeship of Belmont Community Association.  
AGREED: to defer until next meeting.
- 23.89 To Discuss Schedule of Meetings.  
The Chair proposed holding ten council meetings a year with no meetings taking place in August and January.  
AGREED.  
UNANIMOUS
- 23.90 To Discuss New Committee Structures Proposal.  
A discussion took place regarding a proposal for a new committee structure to alleviate the workload of the Environment Committee and the following were agreed.  
That the Finance and Assets Committee would not take on play parks until all current work was completed and signed off – i.e., the disability play area.  
AGREED.  
UNANIMOUS.

That there would be no further changes whilst this current council was in place.  
AGREED.  
UNANIMOUS.

23.91 To Consider Approval of Matched Funding Towards Christmas Hampers.

(A Member of the public has offered £400.00)

AGREED: to increase this contribution using parish council funds to enable the council to purchase the gift bag items.

AGREED: that the criteria for recipients should be those at risk of loneliness during the Christmas period.

AGREED: councillors to let chair know of any residents they feel would benefit, and if they would like to help with deliveries

23.92 To Receive Committee Reports:

(a) Finance – to consider financial matters – see attached\*

To Receive Receipts and Payments during the month of October 2023 - see attached\*  
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

To Receive bank reconciliation during the month of October 2023 - see attached\*  
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

The Chair informed councillors the Local Government Pay Agreement 2023 had been agreed and will be backdated from April 2023.

Priorities for Belmont Parish Council 2024/2025– see attached\*\_

A discussion took place to consider what projects are deemed essential/desirable in regards to the councils' priorities for 2024/2025 and what sources of external funding would be available.

AGREED.

AGREED: background research is needed in to the financial responsibilities of the pavilion, as the parish own it, but Durham County Council are responsible for the hiring out and so receive the revenue.

The Chair thanked the Chair of the Finance Committee for his usual diligence and hard work ensuring the reports were clear and easily understood, including financial plan for 2024/ 2025.

(b) Planning – to consider and make comment on Planning matters – see attached\*  
Councillor P.S.Conway gave a report on the following items.

Weekly Planning Applications for October 2023 - see attached\*  
RECEIVED.

County Wide Delegated for October 2023 - see attached\*  
RECEIVED.

Planning Report – see attached\*  
RECEIVED.

Public Sector Geospatial Agreement  
Following discussion with City of Durham Parish Council it has become apparent parish councils can obtain free access to Ordnance Survey data covering mapping, detail about individual properties and aerial photography more detailed than Google Earth. As a qualifying body for Neighborhood Planning the parish council would be able to share this access with Gilesgate Residents Association. In addition to the NP access could be beneficial to the Environment Committee. It is recommended the parish council pursue this the City of Durham Parish Council have offered assistance.  
AGREED.

The Chair thanked the Chair of the Planning Committee for his usual diligence and hard work ensuring the reports were clear and easily understood.

- (c) Communications – to consider communication matters.  
Councillor Mavin was thanked for her usual diligence and hard work on the Parish Newsletter.
- (d) Environment – to consider environment matters - see attached\*  
The Environment Committee Minutes were circulated to councillors for information - see attached\*

The Friends of Kepier Woods report was circulated to councillors – see attached\*

A meeting has been arranged to discuss more cost effective planting regarding the Gardening Contract, with Durham County Council. The Chair/Vice Chairs of the parish council and Environment Committee to attend.

It was agreed to chase up quote from local decorator for maintenance of rusting benches

The Chair to arrange a site meeting with Northumbrian water to discuss access issues with regards to the barrier at Renny's Lane. The Chair to look into acquiring a barrier further down the lane to resolve ongoing access issues.

23.93 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Belmont

A concern was raised regarding a property operating as a house of 'ill repute.

A site meeting to be arranged regarding a property in Devonshire road causing an obstruction from inconsiderate parking.

New lines have been put down at the Sportsman's Arms by Durham County Council.

Councillor EM reported the graffiti is getting cleaned up in Rennys Lane.

Councillor KN raised a concern regarding a parked car on the Links causing an obstruction, police have been informed and said there was nothing they could do.

The Chair reported a tree issue in the cemetery is not the responsibility of Belmont Parish Council but the house owners.

Carrville

The entrance area to Magdalene Avenue to be cleaned and tidied up by the Find and Fix team. A fencing works quote to be approved at the December meeting to replace untidy fencing in Moorfield.

Gilesgate Moor.

Councillor Fletcher reported a group of youths to the police who were lighting fireworks as she was delivering the parish newsletters.

Councillor MW said he had spoken to Sergeant Kevin Hall, Durham Police with regards to a resident's wall and gate being demolished by the police during a recent car chase. The Police advised resident to go through their Insurance Company as there would be no compensation available for the resident from the police.

An issue was raised regarding two street lights not working in Belmont Community Centre car park and another at the bottom of the field near to the BMX track, the matter to be reported to the appropriate department.

- 23.94 Council business (any Item which has been brought to the attention of the Chairman for discussion during the meeting for approval or otherwise).
- 23.95 Date of next meeting Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023.