

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14th December 2023 at 6:30pm
in Belmont Community Centre.

Present: Chair, Councillor C.A. Fletcher,
Councillors: J. Appleby, M.P. Bennett, V. Hawes, C.A. Lattin, P.J. Conway, P.S. Conway,
A.C. Walker, M. Watson and S.C. White.
Also present: Mrs S. Overton (Clerk)
Member of the Public (2)

23.96 To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors J. Knight, K. Noble,
E.S. Mavin, L. Mavin and A.P. Watkins.
RECEIVED.

23.97 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.

23.98 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

(a) Police.

There were no police present.

(b) Community Warden.

A report was forwarded to all councillors for information, the warden to be thanked for his report.

(c) Members of the Public.

A member of the public expressed their disappointment at Durham County Councils recent response regarding traffic light issues at Tesco shopping complex. The Chair to arrange a site meeting with Durham County Council Highways Department and resident, to discuss issues raised.

Members were informed that a landlord of several HMOs in the area has been given until January 10th to put in retrospective applications for raising the roof on the top of the garages on two of his properties. The landlords justification to raise the roof was the boards were rotting, planning officers were questioned if they had really looked into the reason why he wanted to raise the roof. It was reported the applicant didn't turn up for the meeting and there was little information available, therefore committee members could only go off what is already there.

The Chair re-imposed Standing Orders.

- 23.99 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of the Minutes of the meeting of Belmont Parish Council held on 9th November 2023 – Minutes attached*
AGREED.
- 23.100 To Receive matters of information, Clerk's Report, Correspondence Tabled Items – for information.
(a) Grant from The Rural Payments Agency for £1,398.21 has been credited.

(b) The Senior Citizens Xmas Party had received positive comments, a letter of appreciation to be forwarded to the Head Teacher at Belmont Community School.
RECEIVED
- 23.101 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.
RECEIVED
- 23.102 To Approve Precept for 2024/2025.
It is recommended the Belmont Parish Council precept for 2024/25 be set at £108,211. The effect on Council Tax payers is estimated to be £36.87 per annum based on a Band D property.

PROPOSED: Councillor MP. Bennett
SECONDED: Councillor S.C. White.
APPROVED and AGREED.

Councillors agreed that the Gardener's Contract needs details itemising for clarification, the Chair to go through details with Gardening Contractors.
- 23.103 To Receive update regarding Trusteeship of Belmont Community Association.
Councillor PSC declared an interest and would not be taking part in the discussion. The key points were put to councillors which included staffing issues and no extra burden put on the office staff of Belmont Parish Council. Councillor PSC was happy to work with the Chair during the change over. A meeting to be arranged with the existing trustees of the BCA to look at forming a Working Group whereby the Community Centre Manager would report to that particular group. A vote took place to support the recommendation that Belmont Parish Council becomes the sole trustee of Belmont Community Association.
AGREED.
UNANIMOUS.
- 23.104 Royal Garden Parties 2024 request for nominations.
AGREED. Councillor CAF and Councillor LM names to be put forward for nomination.
- 23.105 To Discuss renewal of Cemetery Contract.
Councillor MPB proposed a one year Contract from 1st April 2024 with a 10% rise, the Chair to inform Cemetery Contractor of the councils decision.
AGREED.

23.106 To Consider approval for replacement of war memorial plinth (Friends of Belmont War Memorial).

Councillor MW sought approval from councillors, for the replacement of the war memorial plinth (like for like) which is on Belmont Parish Council land. Funding will come from the Friends of Belmont War Memorial Committee with no cost to the parish council.
AGREED.

23.107 To Receive Committee Reports

(a) Finance – to consider financial matters –

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

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

To Approve Donation requests.
Great North Air Ambulance.
AGREED:£50.00

Tree Tops Childrens ward, University Hospital North Durham.
AGREED:£100.00
UNANIMOUS.

Budget Report for 2024/ 2025 – see attached*
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

Budget for 2024/ 2025 – see attached*
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

(b) Planning – to consider and make comment on Planning matters – see attached*

Councillor PSC gave a report on the following items.

Weekly Planning Applications for November 2023 - see attached*
RECEIVED.

Countywide Delegated for November 2023 - see attached*
RECEIVED.

Planning Report – see attached*
RECEIVED.

Neighbourhood Plan – see attached*
RECEIVED.

(c) Communications – to consider communication matters.

The Local Heroes event had been a huge success and had received positive comments, councillors and helpers involved in the preparations were thanked for their assistance and time. Councillor CAF to download photos of the event for the parish website.

(d) Environment – to consider environment matters – see attached*

Remembrance Service

Councillor MW reported the Remembrance Service had gone very well, although Gardening Contractors hadn't tidied up the area, the Cemetery Contractor had stepped in to assist at no cost to the council.

Moorfield Park Update.

Councillor MW reported the Rainbow Picnic Table had had a 5% increase added onto the original quote, monies to come from Banks Group. Councillor MW reported G.L. Jones wont be commencing works on Quins Field until late April and their original quote still stands.

Moorfield Fencing

Councillor MW reported a quote has been received from Durham County Council for £1,300.00 to replace the section of fencing bordering the football pitch and houses. Councillor CAF to enquire how much money she had remaining in her Councillor Neighbourhood Budget to pay for the fencing and possibly other fencing issues

Rennys Lane

Councillor ACW reported the lock on the gate was unfit for purpose, Councillor LM is looking into moving the gate into a place further up, it was agreed to put issue on the next Environment Committee agenda for further discussion.

Scrambles

The gate at the Scrambles entrance has gone, a retaining fence has been placed in front. Councillor SCW to undertake a risk assessment on a Larch tree which has a severed tap root, tree surgeon to look at the tree in January/February to assess damage. It was agreed to discuss the issue at the next Environment Committee meeting in January.

23.108 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Due to time restraints any ward issues to be forwarded onto the parish office.

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

None.

23.110 Date of next meeting Thursday 8th February 2023.

The meeting closed at 8:35pm.