

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 14th March 2024 at 6:30pm
in Belmont Community Centre.

Present: Chair, Lesley Mavin, Councillors, J. Appleby, M.P. Bennett, P.J. Conway, P.S. Conway, V. Hawes, C.A. Lattin, E.S. Mavin, K. Noble, A.C. Walker, A.P. Watkins and S.C. White.

Also present: Mrs S. Overton (Clerk)

Member of the Public (2)

23.111 To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Councillors Christine A. Fletcher, J. Knight and M. Watson.
RECEIVED.

23.112 To Receive Declarations of Interest.

Members Please Note: - this is a standard item. If Members are aware of a personal 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.

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

The Chair suspended Standing Orders.

23.113 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

(a) Police.

A PACT report was circulated to councillors for information.

(b) Community Warden.

There was no Community Warden present.

(c) Members of the Public.

Tesco crossing – The response from Brent Frankland is not considered satisfactory when Councillors and residents had a site visit with officers, in which they agreed to implement a ‘dwell’ in the lights and they are now stating that an assessment needs to be completed as the signal controlled junction is subject to capacity issues and the impacts of any changes to the signals needs to be fully assessed, including the option of increasing any timings – this was not explained at the site meeting, Chair to escalate concerns.

Leazes footbridge – concerns were raised by residents and members regarding the proposed demolition of the Leazes footbridge. Sight of the structural assessment report, that was undertaken in July 2023 by consultants on behalf of Durham County Council, has been requested but has not been forthcoming. Communications from Durham County Council state this report recommended the footbridge should be closed immediately, and that the bridge has deteriorated significantly, with some elements, such as the cantilever section that supports the central span, the half joints, the footbridge deck and the steel

parapets being beyond economical repair.

Action: Parish council to send a Freedom of Information request to Durham County Council requesting sight of the structural assessment report and potential costings for repair/ replacement of the bridge.

A member of the public raised concerns regarding the amount of HMO planning application being passed, Councillor PC to raise concern with Planning Committee.

The Chair re-imposed Standing Orders.

- 23.114 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of the Minutes of the meeting of Belmont Parish Council held on 14th December 2023 – see attached*
AGREED.
- 23.115 To Receive matters of information, Clerk’s Report, Correspondence Tabled Items – for information.
1. The Clerk is in the process of completing the Parish Paths Partnership Application Form for 2024 once clarification of costings has been confirmed.
2. The Clerk is in the process of completing the VAT Claim Form
3. The Clerk has applied for a free portrait of His Majesty King Charles III, a member of the Bowling Club has asked if it could be placed in the Sports Pavilion.
RECEIVED.
- 23.116 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 March and has been incorporated into reports and presented to members.
RECEIVED.
- 23.117 To Approve new increase to Cemetery Fees and Charges.
APPROVED AND AGREED: to commence 1st April 2024.
- 23.118 To Receive Trusteeship of Belmont Community Association update
RECEIVED.
- 23.119 To Receive feedback from Local Nature Recovery Strategy event.
Councillor CL attended the event and would be discussing this at the next meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Group
- 23.120 To Discuss speeding concerns Carrville High Street
A resident has emailed all Carrville parish councillors to raise concerns regarding the speeding on Carrville High Street and to request speed humps or other traffic calming measures be implemented
Action: County councillors have requested a site visit with Highways to consider options.
- 23.121 To ratify the following items following cancellation of February meeting.
SLA Highways Contract 2024 – AGREED.

New Cemetery Contract – AGREED.

Tree Works in Cemetery.

AGREED: £1,480.00

Opening of new Unity Trust Bank Account.

AGREED.

A vote was taken to open a third bank account which was recommended at our last full Council meeting to avoid exceeding the £85,000 limit, when the Precept is paid in early April.

IN FAVOUR

8

OPPOSED

3

ABSTENTION.

1

AGREED: to look into opening a third bank account.

Encroachment issue in cemetery

The resident has been sent a letter from the Chair and Chair of the Finance and Assets Committee with a six week deadline to remove the concrete block and metal fence post which he recently installed and caused an encroachment issue in the cemetery. If no response after deadline the parish council to consider legal advice.

23.122 To Receive Committee Reports:

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

To Receive Receipts and Payments during the month of December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024. see attached*

RECEIVED AND AGREED.

To Receive bank reconciliation during the month of December 2023, January 2024 and February 2024.July - see attached*

RECEIVED AND AGREED.

Refurbishment of the Pavillion was discussed

Finance committee to explore funding options, such as 106 monies and Sports Lottery funding and to arrange for the Community Property and Land (CPAL) to conduct a survey of the Pavilion.

AGREED.

Belmont Parish Council to fund repainting of seats around the bowling green as part of its annual programme of play park maintenance (Play Area Budget 2024/2025)

AGREED: Councillor MB to obtain a quote.

Donation to Belmont Bowling Club for provision of consumables.

AGREED: £50.00

To Approve £150.00 towards the cost of a basic fridge for Belmont Bowling

AGREED.

The Clerk to obtain two quotes for re-valuation of the Pavilion and Robing Room.

AGREED.

Councillor EM reported he had attended a site meeting with JA (Ramside Estates) to discuss possible ideas for land at Kirkstone Drive, a community garden was discussed as a possible option and to look to involving members of the community.

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

Weekly Planning Applications for February 2024 - see attached*

RECEIVED.

Countywide Delegated February 2024 - see attached*

RECEIVED.

Planning Report – see attached*

RECEIVED.

Queries were raised regarding the ‘Apollo’ bingo hall development

Action: Chair of planning to arrange a meeting with developers, GRA and members.

(c) Communications – to consider communication matters.

A meeting of the committee is needed to discuss the next newsletter, which will be jointly produced with Gilesgate Residents Association (GRA) and the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

AGREED: Chair of communications to email all members to arrange a suitable meeting date.

Cessation of Parish Website update

Durham County Council will no longer be providing a SLA for website hosting from April 2024 Members agreed to sign up to a new contract with ‘Madhouse Media Ltd’

AGREED: Chair to authorise Madhouse Media to begin the hosting of our Website and email accounts at their bronze level.

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

Members approved the increased charges for the disability play equipment, due to further ground levelling works required. It was agreed to keep the original disability access roundabout at an extra cost of £575, once the deductions for the fencing, which Durham County Council are now providing, are taken into account.

AGREED: Chair of EC to email GL Jones to confirm original specifications at increased costs.

AGREED: EM to email requesting a ‘hold’ on delivery and installation of picnic

table until we have confirmed installation dates for disability equipment

Councillor SW reported that he and a member of the Friends of Belmont Scrambles had been chopping down trees and vegetation in the wet flush area in an endeavour to retain without trees.

Northumbria in Bloom

Councillor SW reported volunteers were needed in preparation for the Northumbria in Bloom judging dates.

Councillor SW to clarify with judges the judging time allowed for the Specials entries.

23.123 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Belmont

Concerns were raised regarding the state of the road from the Links down to Buckinghamshire Road. The chair had followed this up previously and Highways said they would look to resurface once the building of the new school had been completed. Chair to consult with the highways team again regarding this issue.

Carrville

Pupils from St Leonard's school have produced a mural, originally intended to be placed in the Tree tops ward. This is no longer happening, and a new home needs to be found for it, members to contact John Appleby with suggestions as to where it can be placed.

Gilesgate Moor.

The area around the underpass at Renny's Lane is very littered
Chair is doing a community litter pick with KFC as part of 'The Great British Spring Clean' on 19th March she will ensure this area is prioritised.

Works to remedy the subsidence on the A690 near to the electricity training ground have started and trees have been removed Concerns were raised regarding the safety of motorists and whether crash barriers will be installed, Chair to email highways officer to request this.

Concerns have been raised regarding traffic and potential accidents at the bend on Moor Crescent, High Grange estate. Advice to be sought and a site visit to be arranged at the same time as the visit to Carrville High street.

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

23.125 Date of next meeting Thursday 11th April 2024.