

The Annual Meeting of Belmont Parish Council held on Thursday 9th May 2024
in Belmont Community Centre.

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

Also present: Mrs S. Overton (Clerk)
Member of the Public (3)

24.01 Election of Chairperson for 2024/2025

Councillor MPB proposed Councillor CAF for Chair.
Councillor KN seconded Councillor CAF for Chair.
AGREED.

24.02 Election of Vice- Chairperson for 2024/2025

Councillor CAF proposed Councillor LM for Vice – Chair
Councillor MW seconded Councillor LM for Vice – Chair
AGREED.

24.03 Welcome by the Chairperson, Councillor CAF

Councillor CAF welcomed everyone to the meeting.

24.04 To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors, J. Appleby, P.J. Conway, P.S. Conway, J. Knight, C.A. Lattin, E.S. Mavin and S.C. White.

24.05 Notice of Annual Parish Meeting

The notices have been displayed for public inspection within the four Parish ward notice boards and on the parish website.

24.06 To Receive the Chairpersons Report for 2023 – 2024*

Councillor LM was praised for her excellent chairmanship over the past year, standing in as chair of the Environment Committee, chair of Belmont Community Association alongside her duties as Mayor of the City of Durham.
RECEIVED.

24.07 To Receive Declarations of Interest on items on the Agenda.

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.

24.08 To Confirm the Chairman's Discretionary Fund

AGREED: £50.00.

The Chair suspended Standing Orders.

24.09 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

a) Police.

There were no police present.

b) Warden.

There was no Neighbourhood Warden present.

c) Members of the Public.

Traffic Lights at Tesco.

Councillor LM reported a Time and Change is getting done on Damson Way to increase delay following a signals review undertaken by Durham County Council. Members of the public reported not enough time was being given by traffic signals to pedestrians when crossing from The Range to Home Bargains. A member of the public commented he had recently observed a woman with a pushchair trying to cross who gave up in the end. A discussion took place, Councillor KN suggested whether a one way system would help, members agreed it was not an easy problem to solve.

HMO'S

A member of the public raised ongoing concerns regarding the increasing amount of HMOs in the area and the impact it was having on the neighbourhood. The member of public was thanked for his work on HMOs and future work.

Leazes Bridge

Two members of the public voiced their concerns regarding the proposed demolition of the Leazes footbridge with one member of the public in favour of the proposal. A Freedom of Information Request for the Structural Assessment Report and estimated cost for the replacement of Leazes Footbridge has now been received from Durham County Council, a copy to be sent to the resident who had requested sight of the report. It was agreed as the proposal comes under Durham City Parish Council, Belmont Parish Council can only offer support.

Parking issues outside Belmont School

A member of the public reported that a disabled motorist had parked his car outside the school causing an obstruction, when confronted he said he could park there. Councillor LM and Councillor CAF to chase up enforcing regulations regarding parking restrictions..

A member of the public also queried the traffic lights at the junction of Broomside Lane and Belmont Industrial Park which remain on red when the green light is on for motorists turning right.

The Chair re-imposed Standing Orders.

24.10 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 11th April 2024. *

AGREED.

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

A request has been received from a resident for approval from the council to place a small memorial plaque on one of the benches in the cemetery.

AGREED: the Clerk to inform the resident that the parish council would be reviewing the current cemetery rules and regulations with regards to placing plaques and flowers on cemetery benches.

The Chair suspended Standing Orders.

A member of the public reported that a bench in the cemetery was full of flowers, concerns was raised regarding visitors to the cemetery wanting to sit on the seat, visitors ruining their clothes and setting a precedence for other benches.

The Chair re-imposed Standing Orders.

24.12 To Consider Risk Management in Relations to Items on the Agenda.

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

RECEIVED.

24.13 To Approve Appointment of Internal Auditor 2024/2025

Gordon Fletcher (C.M.I.I.A)

AGREED AND APPROVED.

24.14 To Approve Internal Audit Report 2023/2024

AGREED AND APPROVED.

24.15 To Consider, Approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement 2023/2024 (National Auditor)

AGREED AND APPROVED.

24.16 To Consider, Approve and sign the Accounting Statement 2023/2024 (National Auditor).

AGREED AND APPROVED.

24.17 To Approve date for Exercise of Public Rights.

The Clerk has set the date for the Exercise of Public Rights for Monday 3rd June 2024 until Friday 12th July 2024,

AGREED AND APPROVED.

24.18 To Approve Calendar of Meetings for 2024/2025. *

To amend to show no meeting will be held in April 2025 due to Purdah.

AGREED AND APPROVED.

24.19 To Receive and Approve ZURICH Insurance Renewal 2024/2025

The Clerk to inform Zurich the council wish to accept the 3 Year (LTA): £4,393.56 (including IPT) quote. The Clerk to include Belmont Parish Council Reinstatement Cost Assessment of the Cemetery Robing Room and Sports Pavilion.

RECEIVED AND APPROVED.

24.20 To Approve the following documents (the following documents are posted to the website).

1. Standing Orders
2. Code of Conduct
3. Model Publication Scheme
4. Cemetery Rules and Regulations

AGREED AND APPROVED.

It was also agreed to discuss the latest revised version of the Financial Rules and Regulations from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) at a later date.

24.21 To Appoint Representatives of Outside Bodies and Organisations

County Durham Association of Local Councils, (CDALC)

Area Action Partnership (AAP).

No representatives were appointed at this time.

24.22 To Receive Update on Traffic Lights at Tesco Junction.

This item was discussed earlier under Members of the Public.

24.23 To Receive update on Leazes Bridge.

This item was discussed earlier under Members of the Public.

24.24 To Receive Committee Reports:

a) Finance Committee and Assets Committee *

To Appoint Committee Chair/Vice Chair.

AGREED:- To Appoint Committee Chair/Vice Chair at the next meeting of the Finance and Assets Committee.

Councillor MPB gave a report on the following items:-

To Receive Receipts and Payments during the month of April 2024 - see attached*
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

To Receive bank reconciliation during the month of April 2024 - see attached*
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

Cheveley Park safety barrier

Councillor LM to chase up progress on the Cheveley Park safety barrier.

Sports Pavilion

Councillor Bennett has arranged a meeting with CPAL Property information Officer to discuss the proposed Sports Pavilion improvements.

Fence encroachment (Belmont Cemetery)

Councillor LM reported she had contacted the resident concerned who was very apologetic and was agreeable to any suggestions put forward by the council to resolve the issue.

AGREED: the resident to be instructed to paint the concrete block green to resolve the issue.

Tree issue (Belmont Cemetery)

Councillor LM gave an update on the situation and reported it was in the hands of Zurich Insurance who were dealing with it.

AGREED: to await for a response from the insurers regarding the engineers/loss adjusters report.

b) Planning Committee *

To Appoint Planning Committee Chair/Vice Chair.

Chair

Councillor MPB proposed Councillor PSC for the position of Chair of Planning Committee.

Councillor AW seconded Councillor PSC for the position of Chair of Planning Committee.
AGREED.

Vice Chair

Councillor MPB proposed Councillor CAF for the position of Vice Chair.

Councillor AW seconded Councillor CAF for the position of Vice Chair.

Weekly Planning Applications for April 2024 - see attached*

RECEIVED.

Countywide Delegated for April 2024 - see attached*

RECEIVED.

Planning Report April 2024 - see attached*

RECEIVED.

c) Communications Committee*

To Appoint Committee Chair/Vice Chair.

AGREED: to appoint committee Chair/Vice Chair at the next meeting of the Communications Committee.

Councillor LM reported the parish newsletters were now ready for delivery (before the 10th June).

Councillor LM was thanked for her excellent work on the parish newsletter.

d) Environment Committee*

To Appoint Committee Chair/Vice Chair.

Chair

Councillor MW proposed Councillor KN for position of Chair

Councillor VH seconded Councillor KN for position of Chair.

AGREED.

Vice-Chair

Councillor KN proposed Councillor MW for position of Vice Chair.

Councillor CAF seconded Councillor MW for position of Vice Chair.

AGREED.

Terracycle Blister Packs Recycling Scheme.

Councillor KN reported that at the last Environment Committee meeting members agreed to seek Full Council approval for £1,000 to purchase five large recycling boxes regarding the above scheme. This follows a proposal from Councillor CAL who put forward a possible collaboration with Durham City Parish Council and Belmont Parish Council over recycling of empty pill blister packs.

The Chair proposed a one off payment of £1,000.00 from Belmont Parish Council, to come from Contingency over a period of six months.

5 for
2 against
AGREED.

AGREED. place a write up in the Parish Newsletter regarding the scheme and to ask for support from MP Mary Foy.

24.25 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.
Belmont

Councillor ACW reported the Neighbourhood Warden had been out to see the resident who was dumping rubble following landscaping work on his garden, no remedial action has been taken so far. It was agreed to ask the Neighbourhood Warden to revisit the gentleman again in order to resolve the issue.

Due to time restraints any ward concerns to be forwarded to the parish office for attention.

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

24.27 Date and time of next meeting Thursday 11th July 2024.