

Minutes for Belmont Parish Council held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024  
at 6:30pm in Belmont Community Centre

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

Also present: Mrs S. Overton (Clerk)  
Members of the public (1)

Mrs S. Overton

Also present: Audrey Christie, Executive Officer (Durham County Council)

WELCOME by Councillor Fletcher (Chair)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reported that the Remembrance Sunday event had been very well attended. A member of the public passed on thanks from a resident who had attended the event praising how well it had gone. Councillor Mavin to pass on the positive comments to the Friends of Belmont War Memorial and all those involved with the preparations.

The Chair presented the resident who recently made a 'gavel' for use at parish meetings with a tin of biscuits as a token of thanks.

24.74 To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V. Hawes, J. Knight, L. Mavin, M. Watson and A.P. Watkins.  
RECEIVED.

24.75 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.

The Gilesgate and Belmont Wellbeing Project Councillor Fletcher.  
RECEIVED.

**The Chair suspended Standing Orders.**

24.76 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

(a) Police.

No report received.

(b) Community Warden.

A report was received from the Neighbourhood Warden and tabled at the meeting.

(c) Members of the Public.

A presentation was given by P. Lysaght from Go the Distance CIC and L. Forrest from Empowerher CIC looking to see if the Parish Council had any land available so that they could place a carriage on that they have recently acquired to convert into a cafeteria.

A power supply would need to be put in to enable hot meals to be served on a daily basis. The cafeteria would help young girls under 16 with social anxiety to gain skills in customer service and customer care. Food would be provided by local shops TESCO, LIDLE, ALDI and McDonalds any leftovers would go to the homeless. Other activities to be included would be Hair and Beauty and cake making activities. A comment was made for more activities to include boys to be considered.

The Chair thanked P. Lysaght and L. Forrest for their time and asked them to continue liaising with the Parish Council regarding their project.

The member of the public asked the county councillors to look into what Durham County Councils policy is regarding someone missing rent for a month as some councils make you pay for the whole year. He was informed Durham County Council would set up an easy payment plan for those struggling to make payments.

The member of the public raised a concern about a seat in the cemetery full of flowers preventing visitors from sitting down.

AGREED: to discuss at the next Finance and Assets meeting.

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

- 24.77 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of the Minutes of the meeting of Belmont Parish Council held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – Minutes attached\*

AGREED.

### Matters arising from the Minutes.

#### Members of the Public

24.62 – PG 1 Councillor Conway clarified that the area behind the ‘old’ Travellers Rest pub was designated for residents who were given a free parking permit. A couple of residents had contacted him regarding the matter as staff from nearby car dealerships were parking their cars there. Subsequently he spoke to the Tesco Manager who confirmed the parking permit was still valid and any problems arising he would sort it out.

24.62 – PG 1 The Chair informed councillors that no letters to garage owners blocking paths have been sent as she hadn't seen any evidence regarding this issue.

Councillor Lattin reported she had been contacted by a resident about Providence Place beside the pay for car park where cars regularly park on a hatched area blocking the footpath drop kerb. The cars are making it impossible for him to get his daughter's wheelchair out of his house and cul de sac. Councillor E. Mavin to forward the residents email (with photos) onto the Neighbourhood Police so they can inform the public that parking of this kind is not allowed.

- 24.78 To Receive matters of information, Clerk's Report, Correspondence Tabled Items – for information.

1. Six month interim internal audit report has been completed. no problems were raised.  
RECEIVED.

2. The grave owner has removed the wooden surround they placed around their grave after receiving a letter from the parish council requesting its removal.  
RESOLVED.

CDALC is wanting nominees for the Royal Garden Party 2025, invitations are in recognition of past service as chairmen of parish council and town mayors.  
AGREED: Councillor Fletcher plus one.

- 24.79 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.

- 24.80 To Review Priorities Document – see attached\*.  
Councillor Bennett gave a report on the priorities document to councillors which included:-  
A recap on the Neighbourhood Plan was given by Councillor P.S. Conway who said localities funding was uncertain for 25/26.  
AGREED: to transfer £4,000 from safety gates reserve to Neighbourhood Plan reserve which would increase present amount to £8.000.

BMX Track upgrade

AGREED: to use aggregate for upgrade and to look at possible external funding in the future to tarmac.

Rennys Lane underpass.

Councillor Noble informed councillors she had seen the plans for the metal fence and feels further consideration should be given to the location as she and residents feel that this would not solve the problem.

AGREED: Councillor E. Mavin to inform Durham County Council to cancel the fence.

Councillor Lattin reported the ongoing issue with litter in the underpass is disgusting.

AGREED: to put item as a standard agenda item on the Environment Committee agenda.

- 24.81 To Receive Committee Reports:  
(a) Finance – to consider financial matters – see attached\*  
A report was given by Councillor Bennett (Chair) which included the following:-

To Receive Receipts and Payments during the month of October 2024  
– see attached\*

RECEIVED AND AGREED.

To Receive bank reconciliation during the month of October 2024  
RECEIVED AND AGREED.

To Consider donation requests

Tree Tops Christmas Appeal

AGREED: £100.

The Gilesgate and Belmont Wellbeing Project

AGREED: £50.00.

Wag & Company North East Friendship for dogs.

AGREED: £50.00.

### Sports Pavilion

Councillor Bennett gave an update on the Sports Pavilion.

### BMX Track - Motion

Belmont Parish Council recognises the need to upgrade the BMX track for safe public use. As an interim solution, it is agreed to renovate, using aggregate, by selecting the lowest quote from MGL of £8,169 + VAT £1,634 total £9,803. As extensive enquires have been made and only two responses received, it is agreed to waive the requirement for three quotes, in accordance with para 5.13 of Financial Regulations. Funding to be achieved from in-year savings of £9,803.

Councillor E. Mavin moved the motion  
Councillor Fletcher seconded the motion  
AGREED.

Councillor Bennett was thanked for his diligent work on the Finance and Assets Committee.

(b) Planning – to consider and make comment on Planning matters – see attached\*  
Councillor P.S. Conway gave an update on planning matters.

1. Weekly Planning Applications for October 2024 – see attached\*  
RECEIVED.

2. Countywide Delegated for October 2024 - see attached\*  
RECEIVED.

3. Planning Report October 2024 – see attached\*  
Councillor P.S. Conway submitted a planning report to councillors for information.  
RECEIVED.

### 4. Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

Recommendations

The Parish Council is requested to:-

a) Reaffirm its commitment to the preparation of a NP.  
AGREED.

b) Prioritise the final preparation for 2025/26 and augment the NP reserve with an additional amount.  
AGREED.

c) Authorise the Chair and Vice Chair in consultation with the Chair of Finance and Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (NPWG) to progress procurement of a planning consultant to prepare the NPWG for external review.  
AGREED.

d) Agree use of the designated reserve to fund the consultant and that an application is submitted to Locality in 2025.  
AGREED.

e) Continue receiving reports from the NPWG  
AGREED.  
UNANIMOUS.

Richard Hornby, Gilesgate Residents Association (GRA) confirmed the next meeting of the NPWG would take place on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November in Belmont Club. Councillor Lattin has arranged for people to come along to support it.

Councillor P.S. Conway was thanked for his diligent work on the Planning Committee/Neighbourhood Plan.

(c) Communications – to consider communication matters.  
Domain address  
In progress.

#### Notice boards

The following locations for the new notice boards have been confirmed and will be made in aluminium.

1. The Scrambles entrance at the end of Cheveley Walk
2. The Blue house Car Park at the top of Carrville High Street
3. Belmont Library
4. The Shell Garage opposite Filby Drive, Carrville
5. Sharp Crescent Gilesgate Moor
6. Opposite the Baptist Church entrance, Sunderland Road
7. Gilesgate Residents Association – on the Duffy at Gilesgate

As long as the notice boards can have a header that says Belmont Parish Council and the Scrambles one can have their header, we will take responsibility for maintenance. The Gilesgate Residents Association will have ‘Community Notice Board’ as the header.  
AGREED.

#### Xmas tree

Lighting Ceremony to be held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November at 5:30pm Belmont War Memorial site.

#### Parish Newsletters

It was agreed not to put out a further newsletter until after the May 2025 Elections whereby newly elected councillors would be taking on new roles and responsibilities.  
AGREED.

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

Councillor Noble is looking to arrange a meeting with the Gardner Contractors in the near future.

Councillor Noble reported Durham County Council have tidied up Fellside Gardens and took tree stumps away.

#### Friends of Belmont Scrambles report.

Councillor White gave a report which included the following:-

He is checking with Durham County Council tree officer whether planning permission is

needed to take down trees following a concern from a resident regarding the condition of two Ash trees at the back of her garden in Cheveley Walk.

The Friends of Kepier Woods report.

Councillor Watson has raised concerns regarding a spiritualist group meeting in Kepier Woods near the wooden footbridge over the stream. Litter and ash have been left after meetings and are allegedly looking to have a fire pit. The owner of the land to be made aware of the issue.

24.82 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Belmont

The new Belmont School is now open, the Clerk to send a letter to congratulations to Helen Burton (Headteacher) and Belmont Primary school from Belmont Parish Council.

A question was raised when would the LINKS be getting resurfaced, the matter to be forwarded to Durham County Council for confirmation.

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

24.84 Date of next meeting Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024.