

Minutes for Belmont Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 12th December 2024 at 6:30pm in Belmont Community Centre.

Present: C.A. Fletcher Chair and L. Mavin Vice-Chair  
Councillors, Councillor J. Appleby, M.P. Bennett, P.S. Conway, P.J. Conway, V. Hawes, C.A. Lattin, E.S. Mavin, and S.C. White.

Also present: Mrs S. Overton (Clerk)

Member of the public (1)

24.85 To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Councillor J. Knight, K. Noble, A.C. Walker, A.P. Watkins and M. Watson.

**RECEIVED.**

24.86 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.

**RECEIVED.**

24.87 To Receive Miscellaneous Reports.

(a) Police.

A PACT report was received from Councillor E. Mavin and circulated to councillors for information.

(b) Community Warden.

No report given.

(c) Members of the Public.

No concerns were raised.

24.88 To Confirm and sign as a correct record of the Minutes of the meeting of Belmont Parish Council held on 14th November 2024 – Minutes attached\*

**AGREED.**

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

1. The Clerk reported £1,398.21 (Grant) had been received from the Rural Payments.

2. The Clerk rang Charlton Fencing for an update on the fence, the person dealing with it is on leave until Monday, the matter to be chased up.

3. Grant application form has been submitted to the Area Action Partnership for funding for defibrillator replacement pads.

4. Reported damaged grass from refuse collectors driving over it at front of the Community Centre.

5. The Clerk has amended the Cemetery Rules and Regulations to include “no flowers to be placed on benches” and a notice to be placed in the cemetery notice board for information.  
**RECEIVED.**

24.90 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.**

24.91 To Approve Budget 2025/26

It was recommended that the budget be approved and the Belmont Parish Council Precept for 2025/2026 be set at £110,051.

**APPROVED AND AGREED:** the precept form was signed by the Chair and Clerk and forwarded to Durham County Council.

24.92 To Receive Update on Pavilion Modernisation.

Councillor Bennett gave an update regarding the modernisation of the sports pavilion saying although £100,000 had been secured it wasn't enough to do all the work required.

**AGREED:** to look at further funding streams and report back at the next Finance and Assets Committee meeting on the 20th January 2025.

24.93 To Discuss replacement of "surf rider" play park item at Cheveley Park.

Councillor Bennett reported the "surf rider" a play park item at Cheveley Park had been identified as medium risk following a recent playground inspection report from Durham County Council. A discussion took place whether to repair or replace the item, the cost to replace it would be £5,076.00 and replacement £6,750.

**AGREED:** for the Chair and Vice-Chair to make a decision before the next full council meeting in February.

24.94 To Receive Belmont Community Association Update

Councillor L. Mavin gave a verbal report which included:-

- An area of the roof in the community centre was leaking
- The new sports hall was now up and running at the new school
- To look at putting in place a rota system for councillors to take on additional responsibility of Belmont Community Association for future parish councillors.

**RECEIVED.**

Councillor L. Mavin was thanked for her diligent work regarding Belmont Community Association.

24.95 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 November 2024

– see attached\*

**RECEIVED AND AGREED.**

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

To Consider donation requests  
Great North Air Ambulance.  
Councillor Lattin proposed  
Councillor E. Mavin seconded  
**AGREED:** £100.00

BMX Track

Councillor Bennett reported that repair work on the BMX Track had begun.

Ashdown Avenue Play Park.

Durham County Council are questioning who the owner of the play park is, as the play equipment is deteriorating and they would like to take the items away.

**The Chair suspended Standing Orders.**

The member of public reported a resident had actually bought a section of the land from Durham County Council. Councillor Fletcher to send a letter to Durham County Council for clarification and discuss at the next Environment Committee meeting in January.

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

Councillor Bennett was thanked for his diligent work on Financial matters.

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

Councillor P.S. Conway (Chair) gave an update on planning matters.

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

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

3. Planning Report November 2024 – see attached\*

Councillor P.S. Conway gave a report to councillors which included Planning Application Ramside DM/24/00522/FPA causing several complaints from residents about the height of poles holding netting at the driving range at Ramside Hall Estate. After further discussion councillors agreed it is a matter between Ramside Hall Estate and the Planning Officer and to let due process take its course.  
**AGREED.**

4. Neighbourhood Plan (NP) – see attached\*

Councillor P.S. Conway gave a report on the Neighbourhood Plan meeting held on 21st November which focused on sustainability and included:-

- Reducing manufacture of plastics
- Household chemicals
- Digging up of raw materials
- Use cars less and walk more

- Protecting green areas
- Building environmental friendly homes

Councillor P.S. Conway proposed the following recommendations to councillors:-

- Reaffirm its commitment to the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan
- Prioritise the final preparation for 2025/26 and augment the Neighbourhood Plan reserve with an additional amount.
- Authorise the chair and vice chair in consultation with the chair of Finance and Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to progress procurement of a planning consultant to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan for external review.
- Agree use of the designated reserve to fund the consultant and that an application is submitted to Locality in 2025.
- Continue receiving reports from the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Councillor P.S. Conway was thanked for his diligent work on planning matters.  
Councillor E. Mavin and L. Mavin were thanked for arranging everything.

(c) Communications – to consider communication matters.

#### 1. Notice Boards

Councillor Fletcher reported Durham County Council have got quotes for seven notice boards however didn't include headers in quote therefore making a shortfall of £2,520.00.

**AGREED:** to omit notice board for duffy and to look at available monies from the Scrambles budget for the Scrambles notice board Councillor Fletcher to ask Lyndsey Hunter (AAP) to remove duffy from list.

Councillor L. Mavin was thanked for organising/delivery of Xmas bags for those residents who are lonely at this time of year.

#### 2. .gov.uk Domain name

The Clerk to email Nick Danks (Madhouse Media) for a quote to set up email addresses for fifteen councillors, two office staff and domain.

Councillor L. Mavin was thanked for her diligent work on the Communications Committee.

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

#### The Friends of Belmont Scrambles.

Councillor White provided a report which included constant issues with Ash Die Back and that it was probably likely Belmont Parish Council will have to pay a professional to mow the meadow in the future.

Councillor White was thanked for his excellent report.

#### The Friends of Kepier Woods

Councillor Watson provided a written report in his absence which was circulated to councillors and included:-

- Undertaking a tidy up of Kepier Woods car park area and bank
- Planting spring bulbs around the carpark.

Councillor Watson was thanked for his excellent report.

24.96 To Receive reports from Ward Councillors.

Due to time restraints the Chair asked councillors to forward any ward concerns to the parish office.

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

Special dispensation for Councillor ----- if he cannot attend meetings due to personal reasons).

**AGREED.**

24.98 Date of next meeting Thursday 13th February 2024.