

## BERKSWICH PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of Berkswich Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 6 July 2021 at 7.30 pm at Walton Village Hall

**Present:** Cllr Malcolm Millichap (Acting Chairman), Cllr Margaret Crossland, Cllr Graham Kilford, Cllr Ann Millichap, Cllr Alan Taylor, Cllr Tim Luker, Cllr Caroline Pearson, Cllr Ben Rowell, Cllr Mike Pascoe

**In attendance:** Two members of the public and Mrs Sue Fullwood as Clerk

Cllr M Millichap welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### Public questions

Two items were moved up the agenda as the members of the public wished to take part in discussions.

#### 21/107 i **Steps at Jacob's Ladder**

A member of the public raised the issue of Jacob's Ladder and concerns about barbed wire along the top of the fencing next to the steps and that it could be dangerous if someone slipped and grabbed the barbed wire to steady themselves. The bridge across the stream was also topped with barbed wire which could be dangerous to children wishing to look over the bridge at the water below. Cllr M Millichap confirmed that Staffordshire County Council were looking at the steps and had them on their list of works. The barbed wire issue would be raised with the County. **Action: Clerk** The member of the public added that if the steps were replaced properly like the ones on Cannock Chase, they could last for decades.

#### 21/107 iii **Parking at Old Croft Road**

Cllr Rowell declared an interest in that he is Chair of Governors at Walton High School (WHS). The second member of the public speaking as a representative of the football clubs, said measures had been taken to reduce congestion on Old Croft Road during football training: parents had all been asked to park considerately: some teams had been moved to the Oakridge Primary School field and the teams still using the WHS field had had their start and finish times staggered so that not all children were being dropped off/collected at the same time. In the past, WHS had offered to open their car park at their own cost, but people had still parked on Old Croft Road. Irregular maintenance of the footpath between the two fields made people reluctant to use the gate along there. Cllr Rowell would discuss the issue at the WHS Trust meeting on 7 July and report back to the Parish Council. **Action: Cllr Rowell**

The members of the public left the meeting.

**21/101 Apologies** received from Cllr Sue Francis and Cllr Andy Cooper of Stafford Borough Council **Resolved** that both apologies were accepted.

**21/102 To record Declarations of Interest regarding items on the agenda** Cllr Rowell had already declared an interest – see 21/107 iii above.

**21/103 Minutes of the Council meeting of 1 June 2021. Resolved** that the minutes of the Berkswich Parish Council meeting held on 1 June 2021 were a true record and should be approved and signed by the Chairman.

- 21/104 Minutes of the Council meeting of 29 June 2021. Resolved** that the minutes of the Berkswich Parish Council meeting held on 29 June 2021 were a true record and should be approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 21/105 Update on matter arising which are not agenda items**  
**Parish Council Summer Newsletter** – Cllr M Millichap had circulated a draft newsletter and had received suggested amendments from Cllr Pascoe, Cllr Taylor and the Clerk. Cllr Millichap would complete the newsletter and send to the printers by Friday 9 July.
- Village Hall meeting** – Cllr Pascoe reported that there would be a plaque for Mrs Bentley in the Hall to record her services to the Hall. A conifer had been cut down which had been blocking the path. Some bookings were coming back, but others weren't but the Village Hall was in a good position so fees for regular users would be cut for 12 months.
- 21/106 To receive reports from Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Councillors**  
No reports received.
- 21/107 Footpaths/Roads**
- 21/107 i Steps at Jacob's Ladder** – covered above.
- 21/107 ii Highways Issues at Milford**–The Clerk had chased the Highways department at Staffs County Council and had been told 'the local highway teams were focused on a number of corporate priorities.'
- 21/107 iii Parking at Old Croft Road**– covered above.
- 21/107 iv Grass/weed cutting including Brocton Lane to Path No. 7** – there needed to be a decision about which paths were cut when and by whom. Cllr M Millichap said that the Environment Group used to walk the Parish two or three times a year and see what work needed to be done. Cllr Rowell would circulate the map of footpaths he had to the Council members. **Action: Cllr Rowell. Resolved:** The Clerk should ask TGM to cut the path from Brocton Lane behind the bungalows (Berkswich 8 on Rights of Way map [staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/RightsOfWay/Footpaths](http://staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/RightsOfWay/Footpaths)). **Action: Clerk** Cllr Millichap suggested that the Rights of Way Officer should be invited to the September meeting to talk to the Council about Rights of Way and who was responsible for keeping them clear.
- 21/107 v Erection of Speed Indication Devices (SIDs)** –Cllr Kilford confirmed that the posts had already been installed on Main Road and the Council needed someone to get the devices up on the poles and to set them up. **Resolved:** The Clerk was authorised to liaise with Brocton Parish Clerk to identify someone to install the SIDs as soon as possible up to £300 cost. **Action: Clerk**

**Berkswich Parish Council**  
**Financial Report June 2021**

RECEIPTS	Total	Budget	Under / Overspend
Precept	14,021.00	26,535.00	12,514.00
Council tax support grant	-	1,231.00	1,231.00
SBC (Concurrent Function Allowance)	-	1,507.00	1,507.00
SCC Minor Highways Agreement	-	1,500.00	1,500.00
VAT refund	-	5,000.00	5,000.00
Interest Santander	-	185.00	185.00
Interest Teachers A/c	-	125.00	125.00
Interest Hampshire Trust	83.00	125.00	42.00
Misc. Receipts	-	50.00	50.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>14,104.00</b>	<b>36,258.00</b>	<b>22,154.00</b>

PAYMENTS	Total	Budget	Under / Overspend
Staff costs	2,023.87	10,500.00	8,476.13
Office costs	2,680.25	4,392.00	1,711.75
Maintenance costs	4,357.50	11,000.00	6,642.50
Additional maintenance	306.00	700.00	394.00
Play area equipment	107.88	1,600.00	1,492.12
Capital purchases	53.52	4,500.00	4,446.48
Community support	442.99	3,800.00	3,357.01
Projects	-	5,530.00	5,530.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>9,972.01</b>	<b>42,022.00</b>	<b>32,049.99</b>

**Funds Allocation**

Elections	£10,000.00
Replacement of Playground Equipment	£20,000.00
Professional & Legal Planning Advice	£40,000.00
Crime Prevention Measures	£25,000.00
Walton Coppice Maintenance Fund	£25,000.00
Hollybush Coppice Maintenance Fund	£10,000.00
Asset Replacement Fund	£34,000.00
Environmental Care incl: Milford Project	£31,000.00
General Reserve	£12,549.54
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£207,549.54</b>

Berkswich Parish Council  
 Bank Reconciliation as at 30 June 2021

Receipts			
Company	Description	Amount	Date Received
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>£0.00</b>	

Payments						
Paid to	Description	Invoice date	Cheque #	Gross Incl. VAT	VAT	Net
Mrs Susan Fullwood	Clerk Salary for May	31/05/2021	596	£596.57	£0.00	£596.57
SPCA	Annual subs SPCA & NALC	01/04/2021	593	£378.00	£0.00	£378.00
SPCA	Training - New Clerk 1-1	17/05/2021	594	£40.00	£0.00	£40.00
Mrs Susan Fullwood	Expenses Apr-May 21: flowers Kath, Mobile, stamps, Microsoft 365	01/06/2021	595	£113.18	£16.66	£96.52
TGM	Grounds Maintenance May 21	28/05/2021	597	£1,206.60	£201.10	£1,005.50
Mr N B Rowell	expenses May 21: zoom, ink cartridges, HP instant ink	01/06/2021	598	£57.28	9.55	£47.73
						£0.00
<b>Total Payments</b>				<b>£2,391.63</b>	<b>£227.31</b>	<b>£2,164.32</b>

<b>Cashbook</b>		
Opening Balance at 01.06.2021		24,391.48
Add:		
Receipts 01.06.2021 to 30.06.2021		0.00
Less		
Payments 01.06.2021 to 30.06.2021		2,391.63
Cashbook Balance at 31.06.2021		<b>21,999.85</b>
<b>Current Account</b>		
Bank statement Balance at 30.06.2021		21,999.85
Less: Unpresented Cheques	Chq No	Amount
		0.00
Add: Unpresented Receipts		0.00
Available funds in C/A		<b>£21,999.85</b>
Reconciles to Cash Book (check zero)		0.00

The bank reconciliation and expenditure were agreed as accurate and approved.

**21/108 iv Review and Approve Allocation of Funds**—deferred to next meeting.

**21/109 Planning Matters**— no planning applications received.

**21/110 Environment Group Update**—Cllrs Crossland, Taylor and Luker had met at St Thomas' Church and walked down to Main Road. They had considered planting bulbs in the section at the bottom of School Lane near to the hedge. Cllr Luker had suggested getting in touch with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. Cllr Pearson said that there was a self-seeding wildflower meadow at Shugborough which would be easier than planting bulbs in grassy areas. **Resolved:** Cllr Taylor to liaise with a resident on helping the Environment Group. The Clerk confirmed that Cllr Francis had asked to be involved in the Group. **Action: Cllr Crossland**

**21/111 Holly Bush Playing Fields**

**21/111 i Vandalism**—On two occasions someone had set fire to objects (paper and a plastic bottle) on the wooden tables under the large play equipment. Discussions were held around whether the park should be locked up at night and by whom. **Resolved:** As a first step Clerk to make notices saying the area is being monitored and further action will be taken if the damage does not stop. **Action: Clerk** The Clerk to contact the local PCSO to ask for help and advice. **Action: Clerk** Situation to be reviewed in September. **Action: Clerk**

**21/111 ii Playground Equipment**—deferred to September – not appropriate to purchase equipment while vandalism ongoing. **Action: Clerk**

**21/112 Walton Coppice Update** Cllr Taylor had circulated reports from Rob Keyzor on the Coppice, but had not had chance to read them. Payment for the reports to be held until Cllr Taylor confirmed he was happy with them. Reports to be discussed at the September meeting. **Action: Clerk**

**21/113 Queen's Platinum Jubilee** —Cllr M Millichap confirmed that he had booked the venue and catering for Saturday 4 June, and had asked the Co-op to consider sponsoring the wine to toast the health of the Queen. The WI had agreed to decorate the Hall. It should be stressed that places were for Parish residents only in the first instance. Cllr

Pearson suggested buying 100 commemorative mugs and the first 100 children to apply. **Resolved:** Cllr Pearson to investigate costs. **Action: Cllr Pearson**

- 21/114 Replacement for BKV planting boxes** – Cllr M Millichap had spoken to the volunteer who had been a part of Walton on the Hill's Best Kept Village entries and she had confirmed that the planting boxes had been purchased by volunteers and that she was happy for them to be replaced if necessary. Cllr Taylor and Cllr Pearson had looked at the planting box at Village Gardens and it was felt that it was not in need of replacement just yet. Locals seemed to adopt the boxes and plant them themselves.
- 21/115 Seat at the top of The Rise** Discussions took place as to whether a seat was necessary at the top of The Rise or if it would be subject to vandalism. **Resolved:** Clerk to determine if permission was necessary to put a seat on the highway. **Action: Clerk**
- 21/116 Boundary Commission Recommendations – Communication with Parish** Cllr M Millichap had drafted an article for the Parish Newsletter to raise awareness within the parish that residents would be in the Stone and Great Wyrley constituency if the proposals went ahead. Discussions took place over whether the Council should object to the proposals on behalf of the parish. Cllr Kilford proposed that the Council should write to object and Cllr Taylor seconded this. Cllr Rowell abstained and Cllr Pascoe voted against the proposal. **Resolved:** Clerk to draft a letter objecting to the proposals as we have no sense of association with Great Wyrley or Stone. **Action: Clerk**
- 21/117 Items for the agenda for the Trent Valley Collaboration Group and confirmation of representative**—discussions took place over whether the group had become too political. The September meeting would be hosted by Ingestre Parish Council (date TBC) and requested agenda items were Gullies and Litter. Cllr Taylor thought that gullies had already been covered in a previous meeting. Cllr Rowell suggested that items could be: Environment Group, clearance of footpaths, newsletters and responses to the Boundary Commission Review. **Resolved:** items to be forwarded to Ingestre Clerk. **Action: Clerk. Resolved:** Cllr Taylor to continue to be the representative and Cllr Crossland would like to attend too if possible.
- 21/118 Agenda items for the next meeting**  
The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup>. September 2021 at 7.30 pm at Walton Village Hall. Items for the agenda would include: Holly Bush Playing Fields – Vandalism and Playground Equipment; Walton Coppice reports; Queen's Platinum Jubilee ideas for children; Ex-Vauxhall site; Allocation of Funds; website (GDPR); Highways Issues at Milford; Footpaths – grass/weed cutting. **Action: Clerk**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.20 pm.