

**Minutes of Berkswich Parish Council Meeting held on
Tuesday 1 March 2022 at 7.30 pm at Walton Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Sue Francis (Chair), Cllr Malcolm Millichap (Vice Chair), Cllr Margaret Crossland, Cllr Graham Kilford, Cllr Tim Luker, Cllr Ann Millichap, Cllr Mike Pascoe, Cllr Caroline Pearson, Cllr Ben Rowell and Cllr Alan Taylor

In attendance: Mrs Sue Fullwood as Clerk and 2 members of the public

1. Public questions

A member of the public asked when the work at Walton Coppice on trees T001 and T005 would be starting. Cllr Taylor replied that the Environment Group had visited the site the week before and marked up some trees which would need to be removed. He was going to prepare a schedule of works and hoped to go out to tender by Friday 4 March, with tenders required by the end of March so that a decision could be made at the April meeting. One of the specification items would be work on the two TPO trees. The availability of the providers could cause a delay. The second member of the public said that they had been concerned about the trees, particularly during recent storms, she thought that the tree behind their property was rotten inside. Cllr Taylor said that the surveys had been done by a very experienced company of tree surgeons and they had recommended reducing the crowns of the trees. Cllr Taylor confirmed that the Council would be implementing the recommendations of the report for trees T001 and T005.

The second member of the public asked if there was anything that could be done about the ex-Vauxhall Garage at the bottom of The Rise. The Clerk said that she had emailed the company which now owned the site in February for an update but had not received a reply. The last update received in Autumn said that they hoped to sell the site before the end of 2021. Clerk to chase a response. **Action: Clerk**

22/026 To note apologies for absence – Cllr Andy Cooper from Stafford Borough Council

22/027 To record Declarations of Interest regarding items on the agenda - There were no declarations of interest.

22/028 To approve minutes of the Council meeting held on 1 February 2022 – Resolved: agreed as a true record.

22/029 Update on matters arising which are not agenda items - There were no matters arising.

22/030 Review Grounds Maintenance Quotes for 2022 and agree supplier – The Clerk had circulated the quotes and a summary before the meeting. Cllr Pearson proposed that TGM should continue as the supplier for 2022 which was seconded by Cllr A Millichap and agreed unanimously. **Resolved:** TGM's tender accepted. Clerk to prepare agreement with TGM and inform unsuccessful bidders. **Action: Clerk**

22/031 Community Schools Project – Cllr M Millichap suggested that the Parish Council could have a competition for schools for the best idea to improve the environment within the Parish. The reward could be a trophy and/or a voucher. Cllr Rowell declared an interest at this point as Chair of Governors at Walton High School. Cllr Rowell said it was an excellent idea. Cllr M Millichap to liaise with Cllr Rowell in the first instance. **Action: Cllr M Millichap and Cllr Rowell**

22/032 Queen's Platinum Jubilee

i Purchase of new equipment – Cllr M Millichap suggested renaming the playing fields The Queen Elizabeth II park which was felt to be a good idea. Cllr Pearson and the Clerk had met several equipment providers and had three tenders to look at. The Clerk had prepared a summary of the tenders and shared all the information with Councillors ahead of the meeting. A vote was held on whether to replace some of the equipment at Hollybush Playing Fields and 9 votes were received for new equipment with one vote against. A decision would be made on which provider to use once site visits had been made to look at equipment. It was accepted that the new equipment would probably not be in place for the Jubilee long weekend. Deferred to April meeting.

ii Children's event – Cllr Pearson had shared prices for mugs to be given to local children, but she had not been able to find anywhere locally that made them.

Resolved: That mugs would not be purchased and the launch of the updated play area would be in celebration of the Jubilee, whenever the new equipment was ready.

iii The Queen's Green Canopy – planting a tree – Discussions took place around a potential location and species of tree. **Resolved:** A tall oak sapling would be planted at the playing fields towards the end of 2022. Cllr Pearson would look for a suitable tree at Brocton Nurseries. **Action: Cllr Pearson**

Cllr M Millichap was asked how preparation were going for the afternoon tea – he replied that ticket sales were slow, but some adverts had not appeared yet. Clerk to print posters for noticeboards. **Action: Clerk**

22/033 Milford Project – Fencing - The Clerk had emailed the landowner and he had confirmed that the farm and pools were owned by him. **Resolved:** Clerk to contact the landowner again, asking him to liaise with Staffordshire County Council to get the fence replaced. **Action: Clerk**

22/034 War Memorial Repairs – The Chair noted that the flags had been removed from the memorial. Cllr Taylor would work on a specification for the repairs. Item deferred to April meeting.

22/035 Walton Coppice – The environment group had met and Cllr Taylor would be preparing a specification in order of priority for the works to go out to tender. Work to trees T001 and T005 were the most urgent, then in order of priority and what else was within budget. The Environment Group had marked trees for removal with orange spots. It was hoped to go out to tender by Friday 4 March. **Action: Cllr Taylor/Clerk**

22/036 Engine Idling and Parking on The Rise – The Clerk had signed the Parish Council up for the SCC Clean Air Campaign and shared details on Facebook. Cllr Rowell said that Walton HS students had been asked to prepare something that could be emailed to parents.

22/037 Parking Near Football Pitches on Old Croft Road – The Clerk had shared an update from the Manager regarding parking and it was felt that measures to improve the situation had worked.

22/038 Dog waste – Cllr Pearson had received a complaint about dog mess in the area which seemed to be increasing. Clerk to put up stickers on noticeboards, trip rails, etc. **Action: Clerk**

22/039 Remote/Hybrid Meetings – The Chair asked the Council to vote of the following motion: "This Council supports the petition launched by ADSO and LLG on 5 January with regard to remote and hybrid meetings. We agree to write to the Secretary of State

for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities calling on the Government to change the law to allow councils the flexibility to hold such meetings when they deem appropriate within agreed rules and procedures.” **Resolved:** 9 Councillors agreed with the motion and 1 objected therefore the motion was carried. Clerk to prepare a letter for the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. **Action: Clerk**

22/040 Financial Matters

Cllr Rowell had prepared a letter to send to Virgin Money to change the address for current account bank statements from his to the Clerk’s. Signatories were sorted out on the Teachers Building Society account. Cllr Rowell would take the passbook into Stafford Railway Building Society to get it updated with the interest. The Chair thanked Cllr Rowell for sorting it all out.

i To approve Bank Reconciliation and expenditure for February – Resolved:
Unanimously approved.

Berkswich Parish Council Bank Reconciliation as at 28 February 2022

| Receipts | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| Company | Description | Amount | Date Received |
| | | | |
| Total Receipts | | £0.00 | |

| Payments | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------|----------|------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Paid to | Description | Invoice date | Cheque # | Gross Incl. VAT | VAT | Net |
| Mrs Sue Fullwood | Clerk Salary & Expenses Feb | 28/02/2022 | 656 | £885.95 | £0.00 | £885.95 |
| Staffs Pension Fund | Emper & Empee pension contributions Oct | 28/02/2022 | 657 | £283.99 | £0.00 | £283.99 |
| HMRC | Emper & Empee NI contributions Feb | 01/03/2022 | 658 | £38.23 | £0.00 | £38.23 |
| Walton (Berkswich) Village Hall | Hall use 1/02/22 | 26/02/2022 | 659 | £30.00 | £0.00 | £30.00 |
| TGM | Cut footpath 6 req. Oct 21 | 12/02/2022 | 660 | £63.00 | £0.00 | £63.00 |
| | | | | | | |
| Total Payments | | | | £1,301.17 | £0.00 | £1,301.17 |

Cashbook

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Opening Balance at 01.02.2022 | 17,321.27 |
| Add: | |
| Receipts 01.02.2022 to 28.02.2022 | 0.00 |
| Less | |
| Payments 01.02.2022 to 28.02.2022 | 1,301.17 |
| Cashbook Balance at 28.02.2022 | 16,020.10 |

Current Account

Bank statement Balance at 01.02.2022

18,997.44

Less payments made

Chq no.s

650,651,653,654,655

1,676.17

Less: Unpresented Cheques

Chq No.s

Amount

| Chq No.s | Amount |
|----------|---------|
| 656 | £885.95 |
| 657 | £283.99 |
| 658 | £38.23 |
| 659 | £30.00 |
| 660 | £63.00 |

1301.17

Add: receipts

0.00

Add: Unpresented Receipts

0.00

C/A balance 28.02.2022 carried forward

17321.27

Available funds in C/A

16020.10

ii To approve budget report for February – Resolved: Unanimously approved.**Budget Report February 2022**

| RECEIPTS | Total | Budget | Outturn |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Precept | 26,535.00 | 26,535.00 | 0.00 |
| Council tax support grant | - | 1,231.00 | -1,231.00 |
| SBC (Concurrent Function Allowance) | 1,507.00 | 1,507.00 | 0.00 |
| SCC Minor Highways Agreement | - | 1,500.00 | -1,500.00 |
| VAT refund | 2,878.42 | 5,000.00 | -2,121.58 |
| Interest Virgin (Santander) | - | 185.00 | -185.00 |
| Interest Teachers A/c | 154.56 | 125.00 | 29.56 |
| Interest Hampshire Trust | 83.00 | 125.00 | -42.00 |
| Misc. Receipts | - | 50.00 | -50.00 |
| Total income | 31,157.98 | 36,258.00 | -5,100.02 |

| PAYMENTS | Total | Budget | Outturn |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Staff costs | 9,743.23 | 10,500.00 | 756.77 |
| Office costs | 3,861.10 | 4,392.00 | 530.90 |
| Maintenance costs | 9,117.32 | 10,700.00 | 1,582.68 |
| Additional maintenance | 1,071.00 | 700.00 | -371.00 |
| Play area equipment | 198.48 | 1,600.00 | 1,401.52 |
| Capital purchases | 2,144.10 | 4,500.00 | 2,355.90 |
| Community support | 777.99 | 3,800.00 | 3,022.01 |
| Projects | 2,959.14 | 5,530.00 | 2,570.86 |
| Total Expenditure | 29,872.36 | 41,722.00 | 11,849.64 |

| 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 | £6,569.79 | |
| Total Funds | £201,569.79 | |

22/041 Planning Matters

- i Planning Application 21/35244/HOU at 80 Old Croft Road

22/042 Reports from other meetings

- i **Environment Group** – Cllr Crossland would be setting up a meeting for March. Cllr Luker said that Staffordshire Wildlife Trust had asked for support in publicising their 'No Mow May'. The Council voted on a motion to support the campaign – 6 voted for; 3

voted against and 1 abstained. The motion was carried and 'No Mow May' would be featured in the Council's newsletter.

- ii Village Hall Council of Management** – There was now a candidate for Chairman. Cllr Pascoe felt that the Village Hall may have financial problems in the future as families were tightening their belts with the cost of living increasing. He felt that the treasurer would be a very hard man to replace as he did so much unpaid work. Grants had been received of £28k and Cllr Kilford confirmed that another grant had been approved on 1 March for £3,200. The Village Hall would no longer be allowing parties on Sundays due to difficulties establishing which group was liable for any damage caused.
- iii Trent Valley Collaboration Group** – Berkswich Parish Council were hosting the next meeting of TVCG at the Village Hall on Friday 11 March 2022. The Chair and Clerk would be at the Hall for 9.00 am and donations of cakes to welcome other Councils would be appreciated, they should be dropped off to the Hall by 9.45 am.

22/043 Agenda items for the next meeting

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday 5 April 2022 at 7.30 pm at Walton Village Hall. Agenda items agreed were: War Memorial repairs; Walton Coppice; Queen's Platinum Jubilee - purchase of new play equipment and afternoon tea update.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.05 pm.