

**BERKSWICH PARISH COUNCIL  
MEETING  
Tuesday 6 July 2010 at 7.30 pm in Walton Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllr R Bennett (Chairman)  
Cllr I Bearne  
Cllr (Mrs) M Grayson  
Cllr (Mrs) B Holt  
Cllr B Jenkins  
Cllr B Martin  
Cllr B Morton  
Cllr J Remon

**In Attendance:** Mrs L Harrington-Jones (Clerk)  
PCSO P Davies  
Cllr T Reeves, Stafford Borough Council (SBC)  
And 2 members of the public

**Apologies for absence were received from:**  
Cllr J Francis  
Cllr (Mrs) S Francis  
Mr C H Kelly (Legal Advisor)  
Mr K C Kelly (Legal Advisor)  
Cllr F Finlay, Stafford Borough Council (SBC)  
Cllr L Bloomer, Staffordshire County Council (SCC)

**2342 Public Question Time**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no matters raised by members of the public.

**2343 Crime Report for June 2010**

PCSO Davies reported on two incidents that had both occurred on 26 June 2010. At Vision Garage, Milford Road, two wheels had been stolen from vans, and a car parked at Broc Hill had been broken in to and a bag taken. There were no witnesses to either incident.

Operation Cruise had taken place on 4 July 2010, when speed checks had been carried out on motorcycles using the main road. Four riders had been stopped and advice given.

There had been one incidence of antisocial behaviour at Milford Common during the month. The Chairman thanked PCSO for his report.

**2344 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1 June 2010**

Councillors agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2010 were a true and accurate record, and they were signed by the Chairman.

**2345 Clerk's Progress Report , Items not on Agenda**

The Clerk confirmed she had attended the Clerk's Day on 17 June 2010.

2327, Cllr Finlay had supplied notices about dog fouling and the Clerk had delivered a notice for display by a resident in Kitlings Lane. Further copies of notices were available.

2327, The Clerk had written to the residents of Walton Mead about overhanging branches.

2330, Cllr J Francis has now received a copy of the draft Statutory Declaration.

2331, No further suggestions for future projects for the Parish Council to support had been received.

2335, The Clerk had emailed SCC about additional signage at the top of Kitlings Lane.

2337, Mr K Kelly would be asked to prepare a report on the condition of the War Memorial for a future meeting.

An updated Action Sheet is attached.

Cllr Martin reported that Mayflower Security had prevented an unpleasant incident at Holly Bush Field the previous Saturday. A group of youngsters had arrived with tents and a quantity of alcohol, clearly intent on staying for some time. The Mayflower operative had removed them from the area, and Councillors agreed that the Clerk should contact Mayflower Security and thank them for the very good service they are providing to the area. PCSO Davies requested that the Clerk also supply Mayflower with the police mobile telephone number. **Action: Clerk**

#### **2346 Financial Matters and Financial Statement**

After discussion it was agreed to discuss this item at the end of the meeting.

#### **2347 Planning Matters**

No planning applications had been received since the meeting of the Parish Council on 1 June 2010.

#### **2348 Operation of the Maintenance Contract for Berkswich Parish Council**

The Clerk confirmed that Trent Grounds Maintenance (TGM) were contracted to cut grass verges fortnightly, and that all communication with TGM should be through the Clerk. She had agreed that TGM should be paid for the grass cutting they had done on 28 June 2010 before they were asked to stop work by three Councillors.

Councillors discussed the state of a number of the grass verges following the prolonged spell of hot dry weather, and the possibility of negotiating the substitution of other tasks for TGM to carry out instead of unnecessary mowing. It was agreed that the Maintenance Working Group, when revising the contract, should include some flexibility to cover similar situations. **Action: Maintenance Working Group**

It was proposed by Cllr Holt and seconded by Cllr Martin and agreed that where possible alternative work to mowing verges should be found for TGM while the present drought continues. It was suggested that TGM should be asked to trim School Lane and remove sycamores that had self-seeded. Consideration should also be given to trimming or removing trees in Walton Coppice that had been planted too close to residents' fences.

#### **2349 Funding by Berkswich Parish Council for local projects**

Councillors agreed that funds held by the Parish Council should only be spent within the parish boundary. A number of funding opportunities were discussed.

A draft proposal had been prepared by members of the Village Hall Committee and submitted to the Chairman, suggesting a contribution from the Parish Council of £50,000 towards the building of a new village hall, and an annual payment of £6,000 towards the cost of a mortgage. The Chairman had asked for further information to be provided, and Cllrs Holt and Morton were asked to provide a more complete proposal for the next Parish Council meeting. **Action: Cllrs Holt, Morton**

Cllr Holt proposed and Cllr Grayson seconded that a donation of £100 should be made to Berkswich Methodist Church, and this was agreed. Cllr Bearne declared a non-pecuniary interest and abstained.

**Action: Clerk**

Councillors discussed the condition and appearance of the bridge over the railway line at Milford and agreed that the Clerk should write to British Rail to confirm their ownership, and request repainting of the bridge.

**Action: Clerk**

Councillors discussed the possible re-siting of the war memorial and agreed to reconsider the matter at a future date if changes were proposed to the road layout at Weeping Cross.

Cllr Martin suggested that more equipment could be purchased for the play area at Holly Bush Field. Councillors discussed the condition of the equipment in the play area and whether some maintenance was required.

**Action: Maintenance Working Group**

It was proposed by Cllr Morton and seconded by Cllr Holt and agreed, that the building of a wall to protect the grass bank at the bottom of Kitlings Lane should be progressed as soon as possible, at an approximate cost of £1,500. The Clerk should obtain further quotations for the work.

**Action: Clerk**

### **2350 Parish Newsletter**

A draft copy of the Parish newsletter had been circulated to Councillors. It was proposed by Cllr Morton and seconded by Cllr Holt, with one abstention, that the financial report should be removed from the newsletter, and this was agreed.

It was agreed to include a report on the success of the Parish Fete, together with a request for residents to sweep gravel and pebbles off pavements that had spread over from drives. Copies of the newsletter would be delivered to Councillors for distribution as soon as possible.

**Action: Clerk**

### **2351 Walton Coppice**

After discussion Councillors agreed to postpone until the Parish Council meeting in September making a decision on ordering additional hedging plants to complete the boundary of the East Coppice.

The Clerk reported on her meeting with a representative of BCTV at Walton Coppice. They had walked the area, and he had been impressed with the work done to date. He had offered to carry out a number of tasks, at no cost to the Parish Council, including pulling up ragwort by hand; planting two groups of trees, one of 30 and one of 40, with tree guards, to complete the tree planting programme; brushing down the mature trees; supplying guards for the hedge plants which had been planted by volunteers. After discussion Councillors agreed unanimously that BCTV should be asked to proceed.

**Action: Clerk**

The volunteer who checks the Coppices regularly had reported that a number of trees from the original planting of the area were now growing against the fences of residents, and recommended their removal. Councillors agreed that TGM, and others, be asked to trim them back or remove them. Quotations are to be obtained.

**Action: Clerk**

### **2352 Clerk's Training**

The Clerk had requested that Councillors consider funding her attendance on a 'Working with your Council' course to be held in Shrewsbury in September, at a cost of £160.00, to assist with her studies for the CiLCA qualification. It was proposed by Cllr Jenkins and seconded by Cllr Remon, and unanimously agreed, that the Council should fund the Clerk's attendance on 'Working with your Council'.

**Action: Clerk**

Cllr Bearne suggested that the Clerk should contact the Clerk at Brocton Parish Council for her views on the benefits of becoming a Quality Parish, and this was agreed.

**Action: Clerk**

**2353 Financial Matters and Financial Statement**

“Resolved that the Council in accordance with its powers under section 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the following expenditure, which in the opinion of the Council, is in the interest of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure:-

“To purchase plants and a hanging basket as part of the entry for the Best Kept Village Competition 2010, to a maximum cost of £77.86.”

The above Resolution was proposed by Cllr Morton and seconded by Cllr Grayson and unanimously agreed.

It was proposed by Cllr Martin and seconded by Cllr Bearne that the accounts for June be approved, and this was unanimously agreed.

**2354 Correspondence and circulars received by the Clerk**

A list of correspondence received to 29 June 2010 had been circulated to Councillors, and the Clerk listed recently received items of correspondence.

**2355 Matters for the next meeting**

Hedging plants for Walton Coppice  
New Walton Village Hall

**2356 Crime and Disorder Implications**

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1988 places a duty on local authorities to consider crime and disorder implications and to exercise various functions on and to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. Minute No 2343 had a positive impact on crime and disorder and that all matters have been considered thereto.

**2357 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of Berkswich Parish Council will be held on

**Tuesday 7 September 2010  
at 7.30 pm  
in Walton Village Hall**

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance. There being no other business the meeting was closed by the Chairman.

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Signed by the Chairman

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Date