

ELLISTOWN AND BATTLEFLAT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting Held on Wednesday 23rd September 2015 at the Primary School, Ellistown, commencing at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllr Merrie, Cllr Pollard, Cllr Powell and Cllr Willett-Marshall

In Attendance

Mr P Goodman Clerk to the Council
2 consultants
5 members of the public

Cllr Pollard volunteered to chair the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

The apologies of Cllr Hyde were accepted.

2. Declarations of pecuniary interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. Planning consultations

The Clerk reported that there were no current planning applications but referred the Council to a number of planning permissions. Cllr Willett-Marshall informed that the owner of the post office/shop had volunteered to come to speak to a meeting of the Parish Council on his plans for the former Ellistown Hotel. It was AGREED to take up this offer.

4. Public participation and police report

The police were not present and had not sent a report.

A resident complained about the incomplete gold painting of the names on the war memorial.

A resident asked if the Council knew if there are plans to put a zebra crossing outside the school.

Cllr Willett-Marshall encouraged all residents to complain to the police when car drivers park on pavements or otherwise inconsiderately.

5. Meetings held on 15th July and 19th August 2015

These were agreed to be a true record.

The Clerk drew to the attention of the Council various actions taken since the July meeting including a County Council reply on footpaths responsibility (and lack of funding), on why the Neighbourhood Plan HAD to dovetail with the District Council's Local Plan, on his meeting with National Forest officers on 4th August to ascertain support that could be available to manage and develop the Beveridge Lane area and on the outcome of receiving Section 106 money leading to the provision of a trim trail at Pickering Drive Play Area.

It was AGREED to hold the Council's "away day" on Saturday morning of 17th October 2015.

6. Tribute to former councillor Penny Wakefield

Cllr Merrie suggested asking for the new community orchard that will be part of the new woodland to be dedicated to Penny Wakefield. He also suggested that the oak tree that needs to be felled be used to make a seat in the memory of Penny Wakefield and that a relative of Penny's be invited to plant the first tree in the new woodland. This was AGREED unanimously.

7. Notice of Parish Council vacancy

The Clerk informed that the District Councils Elections officer had reported that there had been a request that an election be held. The Council AGREED that it wished to keep the cost of the election to a minimum and did not require the production of polling cards.

8. Clerk's report

The Clerk reported:

- The second Parish Council newsletter of the year was ready and is being delivered by the Clerk and two of the councillors. He asked the Council's opinion on having colour on the front page of future editions. It was AGREED to have colour on the front page if there was a suitable photograph to include there.
- The Co-op Bank had informed that the level at which the Financial Services Compensation Scheme protects its savings in the event of a bank collapse is now £75,000. He was asked to investigate the Public Sector Deposit Fund with a view to possibly banking some of its finances in security there.
- He had put up notices regarding the closure (and alternative) footpath at Battleflat.
- A reply from the County Council regarding Whitehill Road. **There is nothing more that can be done and future enquiries should be directed to the County councillor.**
- The District Council had closed the file on More Hall (Ibstock Road) - Untidy Land - as three bungalows are now being built.
- Preparations for budget process (2016-17). He asked councillors to review the 2015-16 budget spend at the end of September (six months into the financial year) and be ready to in put into discussions on the budget needed for next year.
- Opening date of the Multi-Use Games Area - it was AGREED Saturday 7th November at 12.30pm and to invite widely from the sponsors and other supportive organisations. It was AGREED to pay for two hours supervised sport from sports leaders at NWLDC.
- Feedback on the possibility of more litter bin capacity in Whitehill Road - AGREED to ask for a larger bin to replace the small bin that lacks a lid.
- Meeting of the Clerk and Cllr Powell with two officers from LCC Highways. It was AGREED to place matting for the grass to grow through immediately beside the units as the Council cannot deny access to BT Openreach and other contractors. The Clerk was asked to find out whether the Parish Council could place large rocks round the perimeter of the grass to form a barrier and protect the grass and War memorial.

9. Report from Children and Young People Committee

Cllr Morrell was not present.

The Clerk felt that, as a formal committee of the Council, agendas should be set, minutes taken and reports received by the full Parish Council. Its role was to steer the strategic development of young people's opportunities within the Parish through the workings of a voluntarily run network of local providers.

10. Report from Young People's Council

Lauren Fox reported that the two days of Summer activities had gone well given that this was the first year. Attendance at Rushby Road had been best and there was a feeling that afternoon sessions are more likely to be successful in future. Young people had enjoyed their visit to the Wicksteed factory in August and had gained a wider appreciation of the types of play equipment that are available. The Young People's Council will now meet on a monthly basis in the school, facilitated by Lauren for as long as she is able.

11. Financial update

- 11i) The Council approved payments 30-60 and signed cheques for recent invoices.
- 11ii) The Clerk reported that the Council's accounts reconciled with the bank statement dated 28th August 2015. He asked for questions. There were no questions.
- 11iii) The Clerk presented a budget report profiling income and expenditure as of 28th August 2015. He asked for questions. There were no questions.

12. Confirmation of Internal Control Procedures

Cllr Morrell was not present. This item was deferred until the next meeting. The Clerk reported that the internal auditor will shortly be inspecting all financial records for the first half of the year.

13. Commissioning of an independent cost appraisal and preparation for procurement of grounds maintenance from 2016 onwards

The Clerk explained that the Association for Public Sector Excellence (APSE) had agreed to prepare the baseline information to allow the Council to put its grounds maintenance into a competitive framework. The Council's budget is non diminimus meaning that it is not a sufficiently large contract to require a full tendering process but the Council will want to get value for money. The Clerk had faced a challenging situation as the background is complex. He reminded the Council that their 2013-2016 contact is an "inclusive package" and part of that involved the transfer to the District Council of the former Parish warden. There is, therefore, a lack of baseline information required to draw up a bill of quantities and service level specification.

He therefore invite all councillors to be involved in the initial meetings with APSE so as to ensure clarity of what the Parish Council is responsible for.

It was AGREED unanimously to commission APSE to draw up an independent cost appraisal and prepare a process for procurement from 2016 onwards with a view to inviting interest from local private companies and local Council grounds maintenance teams.

14. Arrangements for Remembrance Sunday.

Cllr Powell explained that it might be difficult for this year to achieve a joined up approach to Remembrance Sunday due to the different requirements, and history, of Parish Council, Church and Scouts. It was AGREED to hold a tribute at the War Memorial on the morning of Sunday 8th November to tie in, if possible, with the timing of the service at St Christopher's church.

15. Arrangements for Christmas

The Clerk reported that no one had come forward and volunteered to take a whole-village approach to motivating effort for a more joyous Christmas period in Ellistown. Cllr Willett-Marshall supported Mrs Parry's wish to organise a "Santa sleigh" and Cllr Merrie agreed to get in touch with the Rotary Club at Ashby. The Council indicated to Mrs Parry that they will consider an application for Section 137 funding if she completes the appropriate forms in time for them to be considered at the October meeting.

16. Appointment of a tree warden

Cllr Powell explained that many Parish Councils have a volunteer tree warden who maintains the health of existing trees and seeks to pursue more tree cover. He would be interested in fulfilling this role for Ellistown and Battleflat.

It was AGREED that Ellistown and Battleflat Parish Council should have a tree warden and it was AGREED that Cllr Powell should fit this role.

17. Litter pick

Cllr Merrie had spoken to the District Council who would make available the equipment for a community litter pick in Ellistown during the October half term holidays. Cllr Merrie committed to himself being available and involved in leading the pick. It was suggested that volunteers meet at the War Memorial at 11.00am on Wednesday 21st October.

It was AGREED to support the proposal and the Clerk would liaise with the District Council over the loan of the equipment.

18. Teenagers swing at Rushby Road playing area

Cllr Merrie proposed that the Parish Council should respond to local need for a teenagers swing at Rushby Road children's play area by using the remaining Section 106 money and contributing the difference from Parish Council funds.

It was AGREED to contribute a maximum of £3,000 towards the cost of a teenagers swing at Rushby Road children's play area.

It was also AGREED to ask the District Council to quote for the cost of moving one of the existing seats at Rushby Road which was regarded in a potentially hazardous position.

19. Purchase of a salt bin

Cllr Merrie explained that residents at Battleflat were strongly in favour of having a salt bin due to their relative isolation and that fact that East Lane is too narrow to be on the County Council's salting route. He proposed buying a County Council salt bin at a cost of £325.00 and locating it in the vicinity of the Parish Council noticeboard in East Lane. He explained that the County Council would then fill it up every year with grit.

It was AGREED to purchase a salt bin to be located in Battleflat.

20. Progress of the Neighbourhood Plan

Gary Kirk described how the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to shape planning policy for the Parish going forward. It is in line with the emerging Local Plan and it adds additional local detail to that Plan. The District Council's Local Plan is out to consultation until 30th November 2015. From then Gary proposed putting the draft Neighbourhood Plan out to consultation for six weeks. After that point, once any the Neighbourhood Plan will be complete and can be sent to North West Leicestershire District Council prior to Independent Examination and Referendum..

Gary Kirk has circulated the Draft Neighbourhood Plan to all councillors. He now asked the Council to confirm that it was correct and complete. With one exception - that there is no public house physically located within the Parish Council boundary - the Council agreed that it is correct and complete.

Gary Kirk asked the Council whether they felt that there was a need for a further consultation event. The Council believed that there was not a need for a further consultation event. The Clerk should make arrangements for a copy to be deposited for consultation and the social event in the school after the Remembrance Day parade would provide a final, local, opportunity for residents to talk to Gary.

21. Reports from County Councillor and District Councillor

The County Councillor was not present and had not sent a report.

Cllr Merrie, as District Councillor, encouraged all Parish Councillors to look at the Local Plan. He also reported that Battleflat was being built upon and expressed disappointment that the application had not been called before the Planning committee.

Cllr Pollard asked Cllr Merrie to speak to the refuse collectors about why they were not dealing properly with refuse that had previously been separated, as per District Council instruction, by residents.

22. Date, time and place of next meeting

Wednesday 21st October, 7.00pm, at Ellistown Primary School.