

Newnham on Severn Parish Council & Burial Authority

Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on Monday 28th November 2011 at 7pm in the Armoury Hall, Newnham on Severn – Page 1 (numbering of pages commences on this date)

Present: Cllr. F Bihlmeier – Chairman together with Cllrs D Edwards, W Anderson, J Baber, J Chapman, T Firman, R Mann, G Murray, District Councillor N Stephens and the Acting Clerk together with three members of the public

1. **To Receive and Accept Apologies for Absence**
Resolved to accept apologies from Cllr Larkham
2. **To Receive Declarations of Interest** – interests may be declared during the meeting if an interest becomes apparent
None
3. **Adoption of Minutes of Parish Council Meetings held on 31st October 2011**
Resolved to approve and adopt with one minor alteration and signed by the Chairman
4. **Presentation from FoDDC Community Engagement Officer Lena Maller**
Ms Maller explained the role of the new Community Engagement Officers and their specific specialities and geographic areas. She also reported on the library situation, Youth forum and access to funding. Furthermore she is available to help in any way she can in the future
5. **To Consider Matters Arising from Previous Parish Council Meeting and not on Agenda**
The Clerk reported that Mr Maycroft confirmed quotations in respect of: removal of the lilac tree in the sum of £35 and the fruit trees in the playing field £65, with the latter being replaced by trees donated by Mr Gregg. Whilst regrettable to fell any trees **Resolved** previously to proceed. Cllr Murray will provide a list of benches in order that the quote for £250 can be confirmed
6. **To Allow Public Consultation**
None
7. **To Receive the Clerk's Report**
 - To Consider method of delivery of Agendas and notices on boards. **Resolved** that initially all Agendas and previous Minutes will be issued by post with Cllr Baber dealing with the Notice Boards
 - In view of the high number of other issues these are attached as an appendix to the Minutes
8. **To Receive the Financial Statement**
 - To Receive and Approve the monthly financial statement – the monthly report could not be provided in full due to lack of clarity in the income and payments. Paper bank statements have been requested. Thus approval not possible
 - To Receive and Approve Payments – **Resolved** to approve payments as per monthly statement
 - Clerk reported that the signatories for the bank account now finalised and on line banking will cease forthwith

- To Approve the budget for 2012/2013 – **Resolved** initial figures to go to further meeting on 12th December
- To Consider the payment of £117.50 to Forest Operations – **Resolved** to make payment to Forest Operations
- To Cancel the payment for the Heritage Sign – **Resolved** to cancel cheque and not proceed
- The Clerk reported on a cheque received from SONG (Skaters of Newnham Group) in respect of a sign. **Resolved** to return the cheque to SONG and provide the sign as a donation. To have accepted the cheque would have contravened the VAT laws. The Clerk provided a note for all on the legal methods of purchasing and VAT. Prior to the next VAT reclaim the Clerk will ensure that no errors were made on the return for 2010/2011 and should any become apparent **Resolved** that these will be reported to HMRC

9. To Receive Reports from County and District Councillors

District Cllr Edwards reported as follows: i) a seminar will be held on 1st December for District Councillors covering the Localism Act which is exceedingly important legislation for all councils ii) gave an update on waste and re-cycling and the car parking charge issue for the market towns iii) advised of the importance for the whole District of Broadband and encouraged everyone to complete the on line questionnaire or in hard copy which is available in the library. District Councillor Stephens had no further issues to raise in addition to the matters above

10. To Adopt Following:

Resolved to adopt following the training sessions: Code of Conduct, Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures, Financial Regulations, Remit of Committees and Complaints Procedure

Resolved to agree Standing Orders which can then be adopted at the next meeting

11. To Consider Bollards on The Chains

No discussion as no quotations to hand. The matter to return to the Agenda when formal quotations are received

12. To Receive a Report from the Clerk Concerning Parking at The Beeches

The Clerk reported that at an estimated cost of £12,000 this project did not contain sufficient value for money for the Parish due to the limited rental value and access to a small number of parishioners. **Resolved** not to proceed at the present time

13. To Consider the Report on Safety of Play Equipment in conjunction with the s106 monies

Cllr Mann reported a meeting arranged for a group to consider the matter and liaise initially with Playdale to provide suggestions. The Clerk recommends a formal Working Party of the Council to be formed, consisting of Councillors and non-Councillors to take matters further following this initial meeting. Cllr Mann to report back to January meeting.

Resolved that the Councillors for this Working Party be Cllrs Edwards, Mann and Baber

14. To Confirm Purchase of a Notice Board

Resolved to obtain two further quotations for a stronger notice board and one which would be less vulnerable to vandalism. Clerk to provide for January meeting

15. To Consider a New Tree Report covering The Green and Station Road prior to work being

Planned

Cllr Firman to provide a map of trees to be surveyed for January Agenda

16. To Request that the Employment & Finance Committee commence the search for a new

Permanent Clerk

Resolved that the Employment & Finance Committee commence advertising for a permanent with assistance provided by the Acting Clerk, an advertisement will be placed on the GAPTC web site and a notice placed in the parish boards

17. To Consider Planning Application P2182/11/LBC – Greystones, High Street, Newnham. Internal alterations to dwelling to provide enlarged kitchen. Insertion of new door on side elevation – **Resolved No Objection**

18. To Consider Correspondence Received to Date:

- Invitation to Forest of Dean Forest Forum. Wednesday 7th December, 7pm at Beechenhurst Lodge.

19. Councillors Recent Issues and Matters for the Next Agenda

Cllr Chapman asked if consideration could be given to moving meetings of Council to the

WI Hut to make facilities more comfortable for all and particularly the members of the public – January Agenda

Cllr Edwards asked why Cllr Baber has contacted Mr Bob Watters, a senior LAG member, without reference to Council and specifically herself as a member of the LAG. Cllr Baber could not remember the exact detail but it was some months ago. Clerk reminded all Councillors that they should not contact outside bodies without reference and approval from Council in advance

20. To Note the Following Dates: As resolved in Item 8 an additional meeting to be held on 12th December to resolve certain outstanding issues and, specifically, finalisation of the Budget and therefore Precept request to District as this must be with District by 13th January

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm

Clerk's Report to Council – 28th November 2011 added as Appendix

1. **Handrail next to Red Lion House** – GCC Highways Dept advises that there is no capital for this project at the current time and although it is still “on the list” it will probably not be taken further until after March 2012. Highways will advise if the plan can be brought forward (and they are hopeful that this might be possible) – in the meantime it is removed from the Agenda
2. **Request from Doctor's surgery** – for action re the car parking space they have and which is used by some local residents for long term parking. This space can be used by patients at any time (even double parked) but please let the surgery receptionists know so that they can ask you to move if necessary. Clerk has spoken to GCC Highways and they will, if able, make the current road sign clearer by extra painting. It is however up to the surgery to take any further action. The new Surgery Newsletter is now on our notice boards
3. **Churchyard responsibilities** – the Clerk has had a meeting with Rev Stephenson and provided details. Cllr Chapman has agreed to assist the Clerk and examine various burial ground issues
4. **Broadband** – Posters are now up and questionnaires in the library – Mr Kenny has been in touch with District Councillor Brian Edwards
5. **Quote requested** for bench treatment and the gate at the cemetery from Mark Maycroft
6. **New contract requested** by Mark Maycroft to identify specifics of his job – will agenda for new year together with a long list of work given to him and for which Council has no quotes and he therefore has no authority to proceed
7. **Twinning Arrangement** – the application done previously was to LGIB who no longer administer twinning. Need to start all over again through CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions). Recommend that this is left until 2012 and then re-considered
8. **Forest Operations** – Clerk has spoken with Alan Davies. History is: he was asked to quote and was awarded the contract (verbal and written) so proceeded to make an application to FoDDC and negotiate with GCC Highways. Contract then withdrawn (again verbally and written), he was advised that other quotes had been obtained and his work was no longer required. He requested (on three occasions) copies of the Minutes but his emails were not answered. His concern is that the quotes received, after acceptance of his quote, were not like for like – the Minutes do not show due process and RFO recommends payment of £117.50 rather than receive a formal complaint which could not be defended
9. **Library closure** – Court has found that the decision was flawed and a new consultation must take place
10. **Councillor contacts with outside bodies** – need to stress, individual parish councillors should not contact outside bodies or contractors without a decision in Council as this can be seen to be acting as a parish councillor. Individual councillors cannot have power delegated to them (delegation can legally only be made to the Proper Officer under LGA 1972 s101 which can be jointly with a councillor). This does not apply to reports to GCC Highways to report pot holes or street light problem – but only using the public number of 08000 514 514 and only to report as a private individual not as a parish councillor. The situation is different for District Councillors and thus District Councillors Edwards and Stephens might well contact an authority or body on behalf of parishioners as a part of their normal role in representing the Ward
11. Clerk stressed that Cllr Bihlmeier is Chairman and not “Acting Chairman until May” as mentioned in an email. Such remarks cause confusion