

## **DOWNEND & BROMLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT DOWNEND BAPTIST CHURCH, SALISBURY ROAD THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2016**

**Present:**

Members: Councillors Mike Baker, Janet Biggin, Ben Burton, Kate Conner, David Crowley, Peter Hingley, Kathy Morris, Sheila Ottewell, Martyn Poole and Raj Sood.

Officer: Angela Hocking.

Police: PC James Rochford and one PCSO.

#### **139.1 Welcome**

In the absence of Cllr Riley, Cllr Biggin took the Chair and welcomed members.

#### **139.2 Apologies**

Received from Cllr Jon Hunt and Cllr Graeme Riley.

#### **139.3 Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011**

None received.

#### **139.4 Items from the Public**

None received.

#### **139.5 Items from the Police**

PC James Rochford reported on an increasing number of car key burglaries, where thieves are breaking into homes and taking the car keys, subsequently stealing the vehicles. People need to be vigilant, especially when the door to their property opens from the inside as thieves have ways of overcoming this. In addition, there have been five instances of indecent exposure around the Westerleigh Road area.

Cllr Ottewell reported that graffiti is ongoing. The Police confirmed that they are hoping to carry out more school visits to discuss this with the young people of the parish. A new multi-agency partnership initiative called Families in Focus was highlighted which is aimed at improving the lives of families with multiple difficulties.

Cllr Biggin advised of a free offer by the Friends of Page Park to micro-chip dogs. This is set to take place on 30 January, 10am-2pm.

#### **139.6 To approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 10.12.2015**

**RESOLVED - the Minutes of the Council meeting of 10 December 2015 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.**

#### **139.7 Matters Arising**

HSBC have apologised that there has been a mix-up with the setting up of the new bank account. However, they now confirm that it is hoped all formalities will be completed in the very near future.

Clerk has emailed members with the outcome of the consultation decisions on the 2016/17 Council Tax Base and Local Council Tax Reduction Support grant allocations.

### **139.8 Urgent Actions**

Since the agenda was sent out, Councillor Riley has resigned as Chair of Downend & Bromley Heath Parish Council. As such, members discussed whether it was prudent to appoint a new Chairman immediately, or to place the item on the agenda for February's Council meeting. The new Chair and/or Vice Chair will remain in post until the Annual Meeting in May. Following a proposal by Cllr Morris, seconded by Cllr Conner, and vote,

**AGREED to elect a Chair of Council immediately.**

Cllr Baker thanked Cllr Riley for his help and support to individual members and to the Parish Council over the years.

**AGREED – Clerk will contact Cllr Riley to this effect.**

After discussions, Cllr Janet Biggin was nominated (Cllr Morris), seconded (Cllr Crowley) and elected unopposed.

**RESOLVED: Cllr Janet Biggin will serve as Chairman of Downend & Bromley Heath Parish Council.**

Following acceptance and acknowledgement to members, Cllr Biggin subsequently read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Due to the appointment of Cllr Biggin as Chair, a vacancy exists for Vice Chair. Cllr Ben Burton was nominated (Cllr Morris), seconded (Cllr Conner) and following a vote,

**RESOLVED: Cllr Burton is duly elected as Vice Chair of Downend & Bromley Heath Parish Council.**

### **139.9 Finance & General Purposes**

- (i) **Payment of accounts** – Members were circulated with a list of payments for authorisation.

**RESOLVED that all payments should be met. Invoices signed by Cllr Ottewell, Cllr Poole and Clerk.**

- (ii) **Spend to date against budgets / account balances** - It was **NOTED** that bank interest for December amounts to £4.13. Members received an up-to-date report showing the Council's spend to date. Total of all accounts as at 31 December 2015 is £134,779.04. **NOTED.**

(iii) **Recommendations from Committee meeting 14 January 2016**

- Form of Statement from SGC confirming takings received from the Christmas event of £515.90 requires countersigning by a qualified accountant.  
**AGREED that the Clerk will arrange for this to be completed by a qualified Clerk.**
- The Pensions Regulator require that a Declaration of Compliance is submitted confirming that the Council's legal duties have been met with regard to auto

enrolment. The Parish Clerk is already a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

**NOTED – Clerk to complete the Declaration.**

- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Policy – In view of the substances that could be used by the Man and His Tools group, SGC require a COSHH assessment to be completed to be certain that all appropriate measures of containment and safe use are followed. Papers submitted to F&GP by the Clerk were considered suitable and the appropriate documents will be passed to Cllr Martyn Poole who will ensure that all members of the group have sight of the information required. **NOTED & AGREED.**
- Budgets and Precept – In the event that taking over the sports pitches is deferred to 2017/18 by SGC, the appropriate funds will be ring fenced for the sports pitches to ensure a sustainable asset maintenance transfer.
- Pavilions – F&GP consider that SGC should be pressed to carry out repairs to the pavilions. SGC are responsible for the upkeep of these buildings, which have been left to deteriorate over the years. **AGREED & NOTED.**
- In Bloom – Funds for In Bloom are being kept within the allocated budgets. However, F&GP request that care is taken not to overcrowd the pavements with planters/poles etc. In addition, the group will be asked to bring their accounts and business plan to full Council in April.
- Friends of Page Park have received funding to restore the park totalling £2,182,114.

**139.10 To ratify budget and precept requirement for 2016/17**

Clerk circulated an updated spreadsheet to members for their consideration. Based on the information provided by South Gloucestershire Council, the proposed precept of £304,500 would mean a charge of £67.68 for a Band D property, ie, an increase of £48.09 per annum (although it was noted that this does not take into account any adjustment for changes to Special Expenses). Clerk reiterated to members that at a recent meeting of the Town & Parish Forum, the Chair of the group outlined that future precept requests may well be capped.

Cllr Baker raised concerns that SGC will also be increasing the Council tax by around 2% and the effect this would have as a whole. Discussions ensued and it was acknowledged that the precept for D&BH PC has remained more or less static for many years. However, with negotiations ongoing with SGC for the transfer of lease/licence arrangements for the three sports pitches, the Parish Council needs to secure the success of this new project for the remaining term of this Council and, therefore, needs to build its reserves to achieve this objective. A public consultation event has been held in an attempt to find out what priorities residents felt the Parish Council should focus on over the coming years. The management of the sports pitches was certainly the most significant matter brought forward. Furthermore, in November 2015 a petition was received from the Friends of Bromley Heath and King George V Park and Playing Fields in support of a rise in D&BH PC's precept in order to maintain the parks. As a result of the Parish Council undertaking to preserve the local green spaces of the parish, and to underpin its future business plan,

**Downend & Bromley Parish Council proposes that the budget for 2016/2017 is accepted based on the figures and calculations obtained from SGC as part of the Localism agenda. Calculations and negotiations are ongoing.**

Following a proposal by Cllr Ottewell, seconded by Cllr Conner, unanimous.

**RESOLVED to accept the budgets, as evaluated by Finance & General Purposes.**

**RESOLVED to request a precept from South Gloucestershire Council for 2016/17 of £304,500.**

**139.11 To discuss the creation of a Business Plan for Downend & Bromley Heath Parish Council, including significant categories to be incorporated and possible future office accommodation**

Cllrs Hunt, Burton, Ottewell and Baker have been appointed to draw up a Business Plan for D&BH PC based on suggestions from members and agreed by Council.

**AGREED that Cllr Conner will also join the working group.**

**AGREED that ALL members should feed ideas to the Parish Clerk, for collating and subsequently forwarding to the Business Plan Working Group. Members were asked for responses to be sent by THURSDAY 4<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY.**

**AGREED – Cllr Burton will set the agenda for the first meeting of the group and will circulate a suggested time/date/venue.**

**139.12 Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS)**

Clerk circulated details of the criteria that has to be met in order to achieve Foundation status of the LCAS. It is hoped to finalise this at full Council in February or March. However, in the meantime, Clerk pointed out one item that requires attention and participation from members - that of an Action Plan for the current year.

Although a Business Plan is to be drawn up, Clerk and members of Finance & General Purposes consider that in order to accomplish this each working group should forward to the Clerk their vision of what the group hopes to achieve over the immediate 12 month period. Clerk can then formulate this into an Action Plan which can be publicised on line, to comply with the requirements of the LCAS.

**AGREED to proceed with an Action Plan, as detailed.**

**139.13 To agree donor wording for Defibrillator in Downend Village and appointment of Guardian**

Bespoke wording for the defibrillator was discussed. In addition to the logo of D&BH PC,

**AGREED that it should read:-  
LIFE SAVING EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT DONATED BY  
DOWNEND & BROMLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL  
AND SUPPORTED BY MICHAEL NICHOLAS.**

**AGREED to appoint Cllr Martyn Poole as the Guardian initially, although this may well be changed in the future.**

**139.14 Localism, including meetings with SGC re. sports pitch opportunities following Submission of Expression of Interest**

Following two meetings with SGC and other users of the three sports pitches within Downend & Bromley Heath, these concluded with the idea of setting up a Community

Interest Organisation (CIO) for all three sites, with sub committees for each site and the Parish Council as the impartial primary lead. Notes from the meeting outlining the discussions were circulated to members. Clearly, there is much to consider as the Parish Council would be the main organisation financially supporting this venture.

Cllr Burton explained that none of the other user groups appeared to have received information on the income generated or indeed the expenditure potentially involved. Concern was expressed that D&BH PC could be giving funds over to a group who ultimately decide how the money should be spent, when this should ideally be the Parish Council's decision. An alternative approach would be that funding is provided on the basis of a loan, with the Parish Council sitting on the committee of the CIO.

**AGREED – Clerk to ask SGC to provide all other parties at the meetings with a breakdown of the full costs involved -v- income.**

**AGREED – Clerk to contact Gail Lambert at SGC to arrange collection of the key to the pavilions in order that a site visit can be made, prior to the next meeting of the interested parties.**

#### **139.15 To review the editing of the parish newsletter**

Cllr Hingley has requested that someone steps forward to help with the parish newsletter articles over the next six months or so whilst he concludes his studies at university. Cllr Ottewell and Clerk have recently compiled an article for the next edition. Clerk suggested that the issue going out at the end of February could have an article about the new Man and his Tools group, whilst the issue being distributed at the end of March should be informative about the precept increase.

**AGREED – Cllr Poole will create an article about Man and His Tools to be submitted to the Clerk in readiness for the deadline of 17 February.**

**AGREED – As recommended by F&GP, Communications Committee to meet to create the article in relation to the precept for 2016/1017. Deadline for receipt by Downend Voice is 16 March.**

#### **139.16 Members concerns, to be noted**

- Cllr Ottewell raised concerns about the large planters sited outside the BT building which could cause accessibility issues for wheelchair users.
- Cllr Poole explained that the Agency for the Coventry Building Society is shutting down leaving very few banking organisations within Downend.
- Cllr Baker queried the up-to-date situation with regard to the open space at Quakers Road. Cllr Poole confirmed that Chris Boulton from DBH In Bloom had visited site and the job appears to be far bigger than initially imagined. As a result the group will not be taking this any further. **NOTED.**
- Cllr Sood complained about the cleaning of Badminton Road and will send photographs to the Parish Clerk for action.
- Cllr Biggin has written to SGC about the rubbish behind the Post Office at Quakers Road. This has now been mostly cleared.
- Cllr Biggin advised that the old Bristol & West property in Downend is to become Ocean Estate Agents.
- Cllr Biggin stated that the Old Police station at Staple Hill is going to be called Arthur Page Court.

*(Cllr Morris left the meeting at 8.40pm).*

### **139.17 To Note the Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings of 15 December, 5 January and 19 January**

Members had been circulated with the Minutes from the meetings held, which were **NOTED**.

- (i) Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) and Policies, Sites and Places (PSP) Plan** – Cllr Baker has attended an event in relation to the above and all members have been circulated with information.
- (ii) Quorum of Committee** – As a delegated committee, the Planning Committee is able to make informed decisions on behalf of full Council on planning applications received in order that observations are received by SGC within the agreed timescales. However, there has been one occasion when no comments were made as the committee was not quorate. Clerk advised that a quorum of 3 is a legal requirement and an absolute minimum, as indicated in Standing Orders. If the meeting is not quorate, it cannot proceed. Legislation permits a local Council to delegate the performance of its statutory and legal responsibilities to a committee, a sub committee, an officer of the authority or another local authority. Therefore, when the Planning Committee cannot meet, the function can be devolved to the Proper Officer (the Clerk), lawfully. The Clerk can gather the opinion of Councillors and collate them to provide the Principal Authority with a comment on a planning application. Where there is any contention in the responses received, the Clerk could call an extra meeting so that the specific application can be discussed and comments submitted decided by the Councillors, or seek an extension of the application deadline. Cllr Baker has compiled a report which has been circulated to members of the Planning Committee for discussion at their next meeting. **NOTED**.

**Cleeve Hill Care Home** – Cllr Biggin attended the Hearing on 12 January at Cleve Rugby Club and reported on deliberations held with the Independent Inspector. Evidence from the site visit confirmed that the appeal site is clearly visible through the trees in views from Overnale Road itself, disputing the claim from the appellant that the Care Home would barely be visible from the public realm.

Cllr Poole queried the criteria with regard to the curtilage of shop fronts as more and more shops are displaying things outside on the pavements.

**ACTION – Clerk to ascertain the criteria from SGC.**

### **139.18 To receive and note reports from sub committees and working groups**

**Active Seniors:-** No report.

**Children & Young People:-** Cllr Hingley and Cllr Burton have met and consider that the playing fields are central to the future of the Children & Young People working group. As such, the group will focus their efforts on this specific project and will look to arrange a further meeting with outside parties.

**Communications:-** Meeting to be arranged to prepare an article for submission to Downend Voice about the precept increase, in addition to producing charts and a spreadsheet of budget/precept information for publication on the Parish website. It may be prudent to arrange a meeting with Gary Brindle about the Downend Voice article. **NOTED**.

**AGREED – Cllr Morris will circulate some suitable dates of a meeting to the Communications working group.**

**Events:-** Cllr Biggin has arranged a meeting for the Events group on 22 February. CHRISTMAS – Clerk reported that the Christmas motifs have been taken down and checked by SGC. It has been found that 5 of the motifs are faulty and not working correctly. In addition, some of the bulbs need replacing on the Christmas tree lights. Clerk has arranged for the lights to be taken away and a quotation for the necessary repairs is awaited. **NOTED.**

HEATHFEST will be held on Saturday 9 July at Bromley Heath Playing Fields, 1pm-6pm.

**Open Spaces:-** Report circulated by Cllr Conner. No questions were raised.

**AGREED that Cllr Crowley joins the Sports Pitches Working Group.**

**Traffic:-** Report circulated by Cllr Ottewell. Main items to note:-

- First are conducting a survey of bus usage in East Bristol. As the survey is designed for individual response, Cllr Ottewell suggested that Councillors respond directly.
- Request for a bus shelter received for Queensholm Drive (the site where shelters have been repeatedly damaged by buses in the past). Traffic recommend that the resident is advised that D&BH PC will not re-install a shelter at this location on safety grounds after four previous shelters have been damaged

**AGREED that Clerk will correspond with this resident, as detailed above.**

- Quakers Close – The streetname sign which disappeared from Quakers Close last year has still not been replaced. In addition, the road/pavement is not in a good state and is a constant worry to a disabled resident who is afraid of falling.

**AGREED – Clerk will chase SGC with regard to the sign and request action is taken for pavement and road improvements.**

- Cleeve Wood Road – Martin Woodhouse, Assistant Engineer, Traffic Management SGC, is reviewing the proposal to make crossing Cleeve Wood Road safer at the point where the Parish Walk crosses Cleeve Wood Road. “Slow” signs will now be painted on the road and “Bend” signs will be located at more appropriate places.

**AGREED to accept this solution. Clerk to notify South Glos. Council accordingly.**

EXTERNAL MEETINGS:-

**Town & Parish Council Forum:-** attended by Clerk and Cllr Biggin. SGC has agreed to take over the running costs of these meetings for the next 12 months. Other items discussed:-

- SGC will be issuing a consultation regarding the future of Libraries and public toilets. The consultation will run over a 12 week period.
- A representative from the Avon Pension Fund underlined scheme changes within the Fund. The calculation of future employers contribution rates was highlighted, and the end of contracting-out with effect from April 2016.

### **139.19 Correspondence**

- A new road name for the Methodist Church site at Badminton Road has been requested. The developer has put forward the name 'Princess Way' or 'Close' in honour of the birth of Princess Charlotte. D&BH PC have been asked for their views on this or to provide alternative suggestions.

**AGREED to put forward the names of either Charlotte Street or Wesley Way.**

### **139.20 Reports from South Gloucestershire Councillors**

Cllr Janet Biggin has attended:-

7 January - Management meeting at Lincombe Barn

11 January - Fairtrade Steering Group meeting

12 January – Open Hearing regarding Cleeve Hill planning application

13 January – Town & Parish Council Forum

13 January - Friends of Page Park Events meeting

**Chairman:**

**Date:**

*(Meeting closed at 9.10pm).*