

OLD MILVERTON AND BLACKDOWN JOINT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 5TH. SEPTEMBER 2022, 8.00 P.M., AT OLD MILVERTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Councillors J. Emmerson (in the Chair), Rachel Pope M. Rayner and W. M. O. Tansey; County and District Councillor W.I.Gifford; and District Councillor Caroline Gifford.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillor Mrs. L. Keeling; County and District Councillor W. Redford; and District Councillors A. Boad, D. Russell, P. Kholer and Mrs. S. Syston.

2198. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes of the meeting on 4th. July 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2199. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

(a). Details were still awaited concerning traffic speeding and counting. Siting had been suggested, but it was recognised that this was included in a list of Countywide commitments.

(b). Notification had been received that the Forestry Administrator of Warwickshire County Council that it was not proposed to plant additional trees in Stoneleigh Road, owing to financial restraints, but if the scheme were to proceed, it would be necessary for the Parish Council to meet the total cost of £250.00 per tree.

(c). The conditions of footpaths within the verges of Stoneleigh Road could be regarded as dangerous since the paths had been cut back to their original widths and the Clerk had received notification that the Highways Engineer would inspect the problem and remedy any unsafe features

2200. RETIREMENT OF PARISH CLERK

After discussion with Parish Councillors Mr. Graham Cooper submitted his resignation as Parish Clerk with effect from 16th. October 2022, owing to various pressures and health issues. Regret was expressed, but the decision was fully understood.

WALC offered the services of (a) job evaluation and pay scale applicable for the sum of £200.00, then (b) preparing an application form, job description, person specification and job advertising, processing application forms, shortlisting, interviewing and if the Parish Council decided to appoint sending an offer letter, for the sum of £400.00. It was agreed to engage them accordingly.

Cllr Emmerson kindly agreed to process any necessary matters until a new Clerk had been appointed.

2201. CIL FUNDED PROJECTS

The Clerk had circulated summaries of the projects with a view to conducting an “e-mail exchange” of views on how to proceed initially, but none had been forthcoming. Reports were received on the status of the four projects adopted, as follows:

(a). Two “Welcome to Blackdown “signs on Stoneleigh Road, Blackdown. Costings were awaited from the Highway Engineers following the requirement for the sign nearer Blackdown Roundabout to be sited half way between Blackdown Roundabout and the enhance to Jephson Court; the suggested siting of the sign near Bericote Roundabout was satisfactory.

(b). Provision for a bench on the green area at the junction of Stoneleigh Road and Bericote Road. It was hoped that Cllr. Mrs. Keeling would select a bench from a reputable catalogue and a response was awaited from the Highways Engineer about its siting and fixing.

(c). Installation of illustrated footpath sign boards. Councillor Pope had suggested the provision of eight boards, but it remained to decide whether fewer should be commissioned initially and, if so, at which sites. A discussion took place on the durability of the signing and the necessity to obtain permission for their sites.

(d). Feasibility study into the provision of a footpath in the grass verge on Old Milverton Lane between Blackdown Roundabout and Old Milverton Village. It remained to be determined which stretch, if any, should be commissioned.

2202. ADOPTION OF MODEL COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT 2020.

It was agreed that Old Milverton and Blackdown Joint Parish Council adopt the Model Councillor Code of Conduct forthwith, as at Appendix A.

2203. SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

A draft of the Parish Council's initial observations to the District Council on the proposals affecting its area had been received from Ridge Planning; observations had been made which were still being assessed by them.

The Parish Council had been invited to consider the proposals as they affect its area with a view to checking on local features, and it was agreed that Parish Councillors meet separately to consider the matter.

There was a suggestion that a double-check be made to ensure that Ridge Planning arrangements posed no conflict of interests.

2204. DESIGN OF NEW WEBSITE

Cllr. Pope had been in touch with the Parish Council's Website Master and it appeared feasible to update the Parish Council's Site to make it more "exciting" and to transfer appropriate data from the existing website. It was agreed that its new title be either <omb.org.uk> or <ombparish.org.uk>.

2205. AUDIT OF 2021-22 ACCOUNTS

PKF Littlejohn LLP, External Auditors, had submitted its report on the 2021-22 accounts: it was stated that transfer between bank accounts should have been excluded from receipts and payments; prior to 2021-22 the Parish Council was exempt from the External Auditor's review and therefore no review had taken place to support the prior year comparatives; and that the Parish Council should ensure it had regard to the level of reserves held when considering future precept requests.

A separate message had been received querying whether the Parish Council wished to continue with the External Audit for 2021-22 when it could claim exemption. The Clerk had responded that it was intentionally arranged for an External Audit to take place every three years and the Parish Council endorsed this response and agreed that the existing arrangements should continue.

2206. MEETING ON 17TH. OCTOBER 2022

The meeting on Monday, 17th October had been earmarked as a Special Parish Meeting, but in view of other commitments and the little progress of contemplated CIL project details to report, it was agreed that this meeting should take the form of an ordinary Parish Council Meeting.

2207. REVIEW OF RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Warwick District Council Enforcement Team had inspected the developments at Quarry Park, Old Milverton Lane, and reported that an inspection of the site had taken place when one of the two owners had been interviewed and that the units in place were being operated in accordance with their authorised use. One unit, supplying cakes, operated at a very low level of retail, which at that stage, did not warrant formal action, and that the case had been submitted for closure.

2208. CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a). Councillor W.I.Gifford enquired whether any problems had been experienced with the new recycling arrangements: it appeared that any initial problems had been satisfactorily corrected.

(b). Councillor W.I.Gifford advised that Warwick District Council was applying new Building Standards to make homes more energy efficient.

2209. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS

The payments specified in the schedule including the Clerk's administration expenses totalling £136.98 and the audit fee of £240.00 were approved for payment and the cheques were signed later.

2210. ITEMS FOR FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Councillor Tansey volunteered to inspect the planter near Kent Cottage, which, it had been reported, was in a poor condition, to ascertain whether a replacement would be necessary

2211. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

CHAIRMAN