

Berkswell Parish,

Parish Assembly 25th May 2017

Minutes of the Berkswell Parish Assembly held at the Hornets Clubhouse, Lavender Hall Road, Balsall Common at 8.00PM

- 1. Attendance** – a total of 35 people were in attendance.
- 2. Apologies** – Kay Howles, Richard Wilson, Malcolm Hickin, Ken Allsopp, David Bell, Jim Ellis, Alison Cambage and Keith Tindall
- 3.** The meeting was chaired by Andrew Burrow with Richard Drake taking the minutes.
- 4. Chairman's Report** – The chairman presented his report. Matters reported included:
 - a)** An analysis of the 2016/17 cash expenditure of the Parish Council totalling £42,316. In addition there were 4 cheques totalling £3817.07 that had not been cashed by recipients at the year end. The analysis demonstrated that the funds are spent for the benefit of all residents broadly in line with their location. (62% of spend for the benefit of Balsall Common residents who make up 63.5% of electors). The key financial slides are shown in the appendix to these minutes.
 - b)** The accounts had been audited with no adverse observations.
 - c)** A summary of work undertaken by the Parish Council during the year including the adopting of the Railway Station & planting of fruit trees on Riddings Hill (both jointly with the Berkswell Society), refurbishment of the Kelsey Lane bus stop, new posts on The Green, removal of dangerous trees and ongoing mowing/trimming.
 - d)** Other activities have included planning consultations, work on traffic issues, local footpaths, The Well pollution and aircraft routes.
 - e)** The Berkswell Parish precept is the lowest locally following a decision to reduce our reserves. As well as a number of specific reserves earmarked for projects we have a General Reserve of £57, 848. The Parish Council will continue to monitor our reserves to ensure we maintain a prudent but not excessive level.
 - f)** Major issues for 2017/18 are to undertake an NDP for Bekswell Parish and to engage consultants to challenge SMBC's approach to developments on Greenbelt and Brownfield sites.

Open Forum – a summary of matters raised by Electors

Virgin Media work – a resident commented that a lot of dirt was left on pavements in Balsall Common and that this would end up being washed into drains, potentially leading to flooding. There was also problems with the placement of cabinets. Residents were requested to provide photographic evidence of issues to support engagement with SMBC and Virgin. It was also suggested that direct complaints via the Virgin Media Twitter feed might generate corrective action.

Waste Lane/Hodgetts Lane Bus Stop – a resident suggested that this was unsafe. Andrew Burrow and Richard Lloyd agreed they would review to understand the issue and consider what action the Parish Council could take.

Timing of local plan – a resident asked about timing of the next stage of the local plan and how the Parish Council intended to respond to the next round of consultation. The meeting confirmed support for the engagement of consultants to enable an informed challenge of SMBC proposals for Greenbelt development and the rejection of Brownfield options.

New settlement – a resident asked what had happened to the proposal for a new settlement at Cornets End. It was advised that SMBC had not seriously considered this as they lacked the necessary resources to support a completely new development in parallel with their UK Central plans.

Balsall Common bypass – a resident asked the Parish Council to consider writing to our local MP as she appeared to not understand the nature of the proposal.

Local PCSO – a resident asked if the Parish Council would consider contributing to the cost of a PCSO for the local area. This request was linked to the closure of the Police Shop and the consequent reduced visibility of Police Officers locally and concerns about anti-social behaviour.

Appendix

Key slides from presentation by PC Chairman

Cash out

(Based on bank balances end March 2017)

Item	Expenditure	Comment
Clerk's salary and office costs	£11,832	£2,410 from 2015/16 but this includes a bit of Councillors expenses
Solihull Plan and HS2 costs	£6,767	
Grants to organisations	£6,000	Hornets, H of E School, Berkswell School
Insurance, legal, audit costs etc	£5,241	A whole host of things
Councillors expenses	£3,760	Current annual cost £3468
Hedges, grass mowing & tree planting	£2,997	Balsall Common tree/flower programme and horticultural maintenance of Council assets
Graveyard maintenance	£2,280	Open graveyard at St John's
Public safety	£2,206	Risk, tree and water assessments
Other	£1,233	BBQ, museum closure costs
Total	£42,316	

Un-cashed cheques at year end

Item	Expenditure	Comment
Grant to Jubilee Centre	£2000	
HMRC tax and NI	£1,642.83	
Room hire	£30	
Councillor Expenses allowance	£144.24	
Total	£3,817.07	

Included in published 2016/17 accounts based on brand new advice from external auditors

Reserves

Item	Expenditure	Comment
Kelsey lane bus shelter & railings/posts	£3500	Work completed
Removal of dead trees/branches	£3,708	Work completed
Berkswell village traffic improvement project	£12,882	£4,995 to be met by 3 rd party contribution. Work partly completed
Grant for new Scout House	£4,000	Committed in writing
Balsall Common security cameras	£5,000	Balsall PC leading the project. Project delayed & timing not known
Jubilee Centre (contingency)	£3,000	Nothing committed. Just in case.
Balsall Common centre study	£20,000	Depends on Balsall PC wishing to proceed. Nothing committed
General reserve	£57,848	
Total	£109,938	

