

# KINGS BROMLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the meeting held on

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2013 commencing at 7.45pm at Kings Bromley Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllr. G. C. Seddon (Chairman); Cllr. I. M. P. Pritchard; Cllr. S. R. Browne;  
Cllr. Mrs. P. Rothery; Cllr. Mrs. M. Gair; Cllr. S. Holland.

**In attendance:** Mr. I. Colclough (Clerk)  
Members of the public: Joy Hutchings, Chris Scott.

**Public Session:** This took place between 7.45 and 8.03pm. Comments were made that the HS2 Group posters that had appeared and attached to some telegraph poles were inappropriate and did not necessarily reflect the concerns of a good many of the parishioners. It was felt that the stated drop in property prices was over-estimated at this time and the other statements were designed to frighten parishioners into action. Some have houses for sale now and / or will want to sell in the future and this campaign is not helping. Comment was made that the council, SCC and LDC is against HS2 as a whole but needs to campaign using the arguments of economy and the impact on the environment. The HS2 Group needs to change the minds of MPs. Council was asked to consider these comments when it discusses HS2 later on the agenda. The members of the public then left the meeting.

Mention was then made of the forthcoming changes to GP funding by the NHS with local surgeries looking after their own budgets. The question was asked if the council wanted to debate this. It was suggested that those interested could find out the budgets themselves and this was not part of the remit of the council. It is all about 'best value'.

### 1. Apologies for absence.

County Cllr. Mrs. J. Eagland (other engagement). Cllr. W. Taylor (retrospectively)

### 2. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr. Rothery declared an interest in any discussion involving HS2 as her family had land over which the track will pass. All present councillors, except Cllrs. Browne and Gair, declared an interest on discussions around traffic issues on the two 'A' roads. The chairman asked that other councillors state an interest if an item is discussed subsequently.

### 3. Chairman's Opening Remarks.

The chairman said it was good to open the meeting tonight in daylight but commented that the frosts of late had caused noticeable damage to brick facings including those on the village hall boundary wall. He said that there was a lot of road grit lying in the channels and that perhaps the clerk would ask the highways team if they could sweep this up before it is washed into the drains. **Action: Clerk.**

### 4. Minutes of the General Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

These had been distributed previously. Minor amendments were identified; para 1 line 4 – delete Whittington PC, para 1 line 17 add "parishioners" after "pointed out that some", para 1 last line, add "had" after "the council had" and finally at the end of this line add "nor the HS2 Group".

With these amendments made and initialled by the chairman it was proposed by Cllr. Browne and seconded by Cllr. Rothery that the minutes be signed as a true record. All present on the 13<sup>th</sup> March were in favour.

### 5. Clerks Report.

a) Correspondence / emails received.

- i) Letter from Western Power Distribution re local events. This was placed in the circulation file.
- ii) Two letters from KB Horticultural Society re invitations to chairman

Initial:

and county councillor to attend the show on 27th July. Reply to be held in abeyance until after the elections in May.

- iii) Community Council of Staffs letter re Recycling scheme. This scheme involved collecting recycling to raise funds for the parish. It was pointed out that there are already several bins and the monies raised support local groups. Cllrs. Pritchard and Seddon said they would determine who currently benefits and would let the clerk know. Investigation can then take place around the income that these raise compared to that offered by the CC of S scheme. Cllr. Rothery added that this would raise vital funds for the parish council.

**Action: Cllrs. Pritchard, Seddon and Clerk.**

- iv) Smiths of Derby. Letter recommending maintenance work to church clock. The quotation was for £1725 – this was thought to be expensive and the clerk was asked to approach other contractors for a second opinion on the works identified by Smiths.
- v) Letter from LDC regarding a review of wards. The clerk read out this communication. Cllr. Pritchard said it was all to do with the balance of electors in each ward to ensure that there were equal numbers represented by each District Councillor. He will report back once more is known.

**Action: Clerk.**

**Action: Cllr.**

**Pritchard.**

#### Letters Sent

- i) Letter to Alan Howard re BKV competition 2013.
- ii) Letters to all village organisations inviting them to attend / send report for open parish meeting.

#### b) Finances.

- i) Financial statement: As at 26/3/13 – Current account £448.01, Reserve account £19,422.45
- ii) Payments Received: None
- iii) Payments to be made:
  - 300551 Clerk Salary £277.33 (net),
  - 300552 Clerks Expenses £91.33, of which cost of stamps purchased was £0 for March 2013 – Total £368.66
  - 300553 HMRC – Clerk income tax - £69.40
  - 300554 R B Hayward – grass cutting - £32
  - 300555 CC of S subscriptions - £330
  - 300556 Ian Colclough – BKV prizes from Amazon - £65It was proposed by Cllr. Gair and seconded by Cllr. Rothery that the above invoices be paid. All in favour.
- iv) Unaudited end of year accounts. These had been circulated previously. The clerk said that a quarterly check had been undertaken by Cllr. Gair and that all was in order. The clerk then ran through the accounts highlighting significant changes from the previous year. The bottom line showed a cash book balance of approx £1,600 more for 2012/13 than 2011/12. This was mainly attributed to savings in stationery and other admin costs. The chairman thanked the clerk for his report and also for identifying ways of making savings in these areas.

## 6. County and District Councillors Reports.

Cllr Pritchard said that a look at your council tax bill showed that the parish precept was actually £2000 less than we had claimed. However, this amount will be made up by a Government grant so we shall receive the full amount claimed for 2013/14, however, in future this grant element will be reducing so there may then be a need to ask for more precept in future. LDC will decide how precept monies are distributed next year.

He continued by saying he is very busy with the changes to the way benefits are distributed and the changes initiated by Government. LDC has a scheme in case people cannot cope. The national cost of welfare is £80 billion and some individuals are claiming up to £500 a week. He concluded by saying that LDC is one of the most cost effective local councils but that drastic action is required to keep costs down.

## 7. Highway and Footpaths.

a) Traffic issues.

(i) Weight restriction proposal. Cllr. Pritchard reported that a meeting with neighbouring parishes /has been set for 30<sup>th</sup> April and asked the clerk and others if they had historical information on anything traffic related. The chairman does have some electronic data and the clerk will look in to past files. Messages have been left for Mr. Gilmour who may also hold useful data. Once all the information is collate then a meeting will be sought with SCC. The chairman added that someone had run down the bollards on the build out and asked the clerk to report this to highways.

**Action: Cllr. Pritchard, Seddon and Clerk.**

(ii) Parking problems in Crawley Lane outside the school. Cllr. Rothery said she had received a complaint that farm vehicles were unable to pass the numerous parked cars near the school in Crawley Lane especially at drop off and pick up times. The chairman said this is a perennial problem and commented that perhaps users of large local vehicles ought to avoid the area at these times. He asked the clerk to write to the headteacher to request that parents park responsibly and point out the safety issues. It was also suggested that the local policeman be asked to monitor the situation.

**Action: Clerk**

b) Footpath issues. Community paths initiative – strimmer. Cllr. Pritchard thought the council already owned a strimmer – clerk to check asset register and report back. The clerk has completed the paperwork to obtain a grant towards the purchase.

**Action: Clerk**

## 8. HS2 latest.

Cllr. Gair said that the last meeting was on 20<sup>th</sup> March and was attended by AGHAST. A Mr Dan Mitchell from Warwickshire was very knowledgeable and has been fighting for over 3 years and has obtained some mitigation. He is able to argue with other engineers as he is from that background. Cllr. Browne said that many questions have been asked and HS2 said they will come back with answers. The main issue is that some questions could have been raised over 2 months earlier and over time people forget what was asked and what replies were made. A request was made that HS2 read their notes back to the meeting at the end. There was also a meeting involving SCC / Cllr. Janet Eagland and two representatives of HS2. With the possible route now known several more local parishes further along the line are interested and it has been suggested that these groups get together along with their MPs to produce a 'Staffordshire Want List'. A concentrated effort is required in the county as it is felt that other counties are doing better than us. The chairman said that the difficulty is the distribution of population with a high concentration in the Stoke area and South Staffs. Stoke want HS2 provided they can get a station. The fight needs to be made on economic and environmental grounds – genuine reasons are needed not simply "not in my back yard." It was suggested that the claims for compensation ought to be used as a lever – by making the claims as high as possible the project will become even more expensive and so may fail. Lobbying of Staffs MPs is the best approach. Cllr. Gair thought mitigation was now the best approach.

It was then proposed by Cllr. Holland and seconded by Cllr. Gair that the posters that have appeared on some lamp columns be removed as they were scaremongering and having a negative effect. This proposal was carried.

As for the proposed distribution of leaflets, the council is wary of lending its name to these. Cllrs. Browne and Gair had been asked to help with delivery but they said they need to see the content first. A Lichfield Mercury advert stated that the meeting with the MP on 19<sup>th</sup> April at the Cricket Club had been called by the parish council. Cllr. Seddon said that this was not the case and this was agreed by the other Councillors. Cllr. Browne was asked to contact the paper and asked them to print a retraction. **Action: Cllr. Browne.** Cllr. Browne then asked if the council could help out with a donation to CHADS but it was pointed out that the council cannot donate to private causes.

**9. Projects for 2013 funded from reserves: i) Slide. ii) Wildflower meadow sign.**

i) The chairman said that parishioners would ask why the council has spent, what could be around £6500 of the precept, on a slide when times are financially difficult. He thought that the reserves needed to be preserved for what could be difficult times ahead. The clerk highlighted the fact the several recent inspection reports had noted that the current equipment did not meet the current British Standard and if an accident were to occur could leave council open to a claim. Cllr. Holland said there were three options, take the equipment away, replace it or continue using it. The latter was not an option in his opinion. After further discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Holland and seconded by Cllr. Browne that the slide be replaced with a new one. Five were in favour and one against. The proposal was carried. The clerk was asked to obtain more photographs on the available slides and to clarify some details of the quotes already obtained. **Action: Clerk.**

ii) Cllr. Rothery said the sign was still work in progress but the metalwork from the old sign had now been removed so as not to be an eyesore when the BKV judges attend.

**Action: Cllr. Rothery.**

**10. Arriva update.**

Cllr. Browne reported that so far he had not had any information back from Arriva. Cllr. Eagland had asked him what options he thought there were. It really comes down to usage and his preference would be to take out some early and evening buses and to reinstate those lost from the daytime service. Nothing can progress until Arriva provide some passenger figures.

**11. Possible Purchase and Storage of Sandbags.**

Cllr Pritchard demonstrated an inflatable sandbag that was available from LDC. The bag self inflates when it comes into contact with water and comes along with a user pack containing many other items. He has been able to obtain 100 bags for free and to buy more in packs of 10 would cost £54. There would be a requirement to appoint a Flood Warden who would store the bags and other items and would receive training from the Environment Agency. Cllr. Rothery volunteered to do this and was thanked by the council. Anyone taking bags would have to pay for them. Cllr. Pritchard will go ahead and obtain the bags and organise the training. **Action: Cllr. Pritchard.**

**11. Annual Open Parish Meeting.**

The clerk asked about the provision of refreshments at the meeting. Cllr. Rothery offered to provide tea, coffee and biscuits. **Action: Clerk and Cllr. Rothery.**

**15. Councillor Reports for information only.**

None made.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.17pm.

Signed ..... (Chairman) Date 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013.