

Berkswell Parish Council – Ordinary Meeting 14 June 2018

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council of Berkswell held in the Jordan Room, St John Baptist Church, Berkswell on 14 June 2018 at 7.15pm.

Topic	Action by
<p>1. Evacuation Procedure – the Chairman instructed those in attendance of the evacuation procedure.</p> <p>2. Recording of Parish Council Meetings – the chairman instructed those in attendance that, in the interests of openness and transparency, councillors and members of the public are reminded that the law permits any person to film, record, photograph or use social media in order to report on the proceedings of a meeting of the Council or its committees when they are open to the public.</p> <p>3. Open Forum Parishioners of Berkswell were invited to address the Council on any relevant matter for a maximum of three minutes. The following points were raised:</p> <p>a. The sign for Truggist Lane at the junction with Spencers Lane had fallen over, at the top of Truggist Lane where there was a serious accident a few days ago and had still not been replaced. Cllr Burrow reported that he had contacted Bruce Brant who said this would be attended to but when SMBC came out they looked at something else and went away. Council were advised that there is a danger of someone falling over the sign on the verge or the concrete lying around. Cllr David Bell agreed to sort this out with SMBC.</p> <p>4. Attendance: Cllrs Drake (Chairman), Cambage, Burrow, Edwards, Hitchcock, Lloyd & Howles, a substitute clerk (Judith Wilson), Cllr D Bell (SMBC) and 25 members of the public.</p> <p>5. Apologies for Absence: Cllr K Allsop</p> <p>6. Acceptance of Apologies: Apology was accepted</p> <p>7. Declarations of Interest</p> <p>a. The following declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda were received:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Cllrs Drake and Edwards declared that Item 24b referred to themselves and that they would leave the meeting when this item was discussed</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">ii. Cllrs Drake and Edwards declared an interest in the Berkswell Pre-school grant application at Item 15b as they are important tenants of the Reading Room</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">iii. Cllr Burrow declared that he was Secretary of Berkswell Society so would talk but not vote on the Berkswell Society grant application at Item 15d. He also declared that he owns a field behind his house which may impact discussion on Item 20c in which case he would not take part.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">iv. Cllr Cambage declared that her house backs on to the Barretts Lane proposed development which may impact discussion on Item 20c in which case she would not take part.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">v. Cllr Howles declared that she is a member of Berkswell Society and also as a committee member so she would talk but not vote on the Berkswell Society grant application at Item 15d</p> <p>b. There were no written requests for disclosing pecuniary interests</p>	

c. There were no requests for dispensations

8. Confirmation of Minutes

Keith Tindall raised a point on the minutes of 17 May and queried the reported action on Item 34g about night flying.

KT stated that the minutes make no mention of Dave Ellis being sent a letter of thanks, which he believed had been agreed, but state that the clerk was asked to write to all members of the group.

Cllr Lloyd confirmed that he had supplied a list of the group to the clerk to write to.

Cllr Drake took views from Councillors. Understanding of the agreed action differed, however, as Chair, Cllr Drake concluded the reality was that the letters have been sent and the minutes stand as written.

Council were asked if a letter gone to Gerard O'Regan who did a lot of work on airport matters? Cllr Lloyd confirmed that the letter had gone to the ACC Night flying Policy Sub-group specifically.

Cllr Burrow proposed that the letter should also go to Gerard O'Regan and this was agreed.

Consequently, the following minutes were agreed:

Annual Meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2018

Annual Meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2018 (confidential)

9. Matters arising from the previous meeting for attention: There were no matters arising from the previous meeting

10. Borough Councillor's Report and Parish Councillor's Opinion

a. Cllr Hitchcock raised a comment from a resident about the loss of wildlife and asked if anything been done to rectify the situation. It was thought that buzzards may have died from poison. A resident confirmed they had seen a buzzard in the area but the nests had gone. Cllr Drake commented there was no action for the Parish Council.

b. Cllr Drake reported that he had attended the Balsall Parish Assembly and that arising from this it had been proposed that the two chairmen should meet. Residents had supported this proposal. Cllr Drake has agreed to the meeting provided there is an independent observer. Cllr Bell (SMBC) has agreed to act as observer. There will be no formal agenda. Cllr Drake made it clear that he would not speak for the Council and is attending the meeting as an individual. Any matters for the Council will be brought back for consideration at a future meeting.

c. Cllr Lloyd advised residents to take note of the Community Watch Group. Council noted there is now a large group of interested residents via the Facebook page.

d. There were discussions about the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras to reduce crime. Cllr Lloyd suggested there could be a need for council funding in future, but one of the Community Watch organisers states they were hopeful of finding money from elsewhere.

11. Committee Appointments – Council noted that Cllr Drake has been appointed to the Berkswell Reading Room Committee.

12. Parish Assembly

a. The council noted the draft minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 24th May 2018 in The Jordan Room, which are available on the Parish website. The meeting was attended by 43 people of whom the majority

- were Berkswell Parish residents. Cllr Drake had presented a statement summarising the Council's activities in the last year. Residents were then free to raise any issues and a number of lively debates took place. There were no outstanding items for the Council.
- b. The Council noted that a resident has volunteered to act as Well Warden to keep the well clear of debris and also keep the exit filter clear. Councillors expressed their appreciation for this service.
 - c. A resident commended the Council for putting the minutes of the Parish Assembly on the website and urged Balsall PC councillors present to follow suit. Cllr Drake stated that he would not comment on the business of another PC.

13. Planning Applications

- a. The following list of planning applications had been received since the last meeting. Council noted that the response dates for both these applications had passed at the time of this meeting and there were no agreed actions.

Ref	Location	Proposal	Response Date
2018/01222	The Old Granary Hob Lane Burton Green Solihull	Change of use of existing outbuilding into holiday let	04.06.18
2018/01379	Lewis Wood House Tanners Lane Berkswell Solihull	Erection of a timber pre-fabricated granny annexe for ancillary residential use associated with the dwelling.	06.06.18

14. Financial Matters

- a. The following invoice payments were presented for approval having been examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates had been received, carried out, examined and represented expenditure previously approved by the Council

Invoices for Payment	Approval	Cheque No	Gross Amount £	VAT £
R Wilson - Clerk's Salary June 2018	Admin	002081	656.57	0
R Wilson – reimbursement of admin costs	Admin	002082	130.08	17.12
Councillor Allowances (3 councillors) – April to June 2018	Admin	002083 to 002085	403.92	0

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HMRC – PAYE April to June 2018	Admin	002086	641.57	0
G Wheeler – reimbursement of rail fare re Green Belt study	NDP	002087	28.00	0
S Bentley-Green – 4th instalment of 2018/19 grass mowing contract	Contract	002088	187.50	0
Kirkwells – NDP Final stage 2	NDP	002089	1,680.00	280.00
Stratford Upon Avon District Council – support for NDP draft consultation	NDP	002090	699.60	116.60
The Research Solution - support for NDP draft consultation	NDP	002091	327.84	54.64
St John Baptist PCC Berkswell – 6 x room hire	Admin	002092	150.00	0
Thistle Loo Hire – portable toilets for Parish BBQ	BBQ	002093	168.00	28.00
AH Bird - BBQ Band	BBQ	002094	400.00	0
Les Peacock – Road closure barriers/signs	Fete	002095	50.00	0
Total			5,523.08	496.36

In addition to the above, Council noted that payments had been made using Financial Regulation 6.6 in respect of the annual insurance premium to Zurich at a cost of £567.51 (cheque No 002079) as approved under minute 18 at the Annual Meeting held on 17 May 2018 and a payment of £132.00 (cheque No 002080) to A Pettifor & Son Ltd in respect of charcoal for the Parish BBQ as approved under minute 37c at the Annual meeting held on 17 May 2018.

All the above payments were approved.

Council also approved the signing of a cheque payable to Packington Estate Enterprises Limited in respect of Marsh Lane Nature Reserve for £38 (cheque No 002096) in respect of the 2018/19 subscription.

b. Payments received – none

15. 2018/19 Grant Applications - Council was reminded that, at the Ordinary Meeting on 15 March 2018, it was agreed that all grant applications received by 7 June 2018 would be considered at its meeting on 14 June 2018. This date had been set to give all potential grant applicants time to submit their grant claim. In the event that not all the Council's Grant budget (£7,000) is allocated on 14 June, a second tranche of applications would be considered in November 2018. The following grant applications had been received:

- a. 2nd Balsall Common Scouts - £2,394 for 6 new kayaks
- b. Berkswell Pre-School - £2,500 for equipment and books
- c. Berkswell Cricket Club - £2,000 for groundsman equipment
- d. Berkswell Society - £500 for replacement planters and plants
- e. Berkswell School – Council to note the school had requested help to fund essential drainage works following confirmation that waste from the school was causing pollution in the Well. This request has since been retracted following a commitment from Berkswell Charities to support the school on this matter.

Each of the applications were debated in turn

- **2nd Balsall Common Scouts** – in summary the group has been active for 30 years and has 50 scouts and 25 explorers. The group started with fibreglass canoes years ago, which were replaced with plastic ones which now need replacing in turn. In response to Cllr Drake's question it was noted that the

membership is approximately one third Berkswell, two thirds Balsall Common. The applicant confirmed that no other application has been made to another body and that the grant would cover the entire cost. The kayaks would not be used all year, mainly in summer, and the group would be open to a request from another local group (e.g. for a Duke of Edinburgh scheme) if they wished to borrow them provided the group had appropriate experience.

- **Berkswell pre-school** – in summary, the pre-school has been a registered charity since 1997 and the applicant took over last year as manager. It was reported that Government funding is 30% below hourly costs and the application is for funding for equipment and resources. The pre-school was Ofsted rated as ‘reasonable’ in May 2016, but they find it very hard to afford to maintain the quality and standard of equipment. The applicant reported that there had been some adjustments to the mix of items requested to include a higher level of IT equipment. A supporting parent (from the Bannerbrook area) stated that the school was bringing children on well, particularly through use of IT. Sensory equipment has been reduced to allow for more IT within the total application. The pre-school takes 20 pupils at present but has capacity for more depending on the age/ staff mix. Current families are from Berkswell (2 children/families) and also Meriden and Balsall Common. Cllr Edwards commented that some of the families in Balsall Common were in Berkswell Parish. Cllr Hitchcock queried whether it was a business making a profit and Cllr Edwards reminded him that it was a registered charity. Others confirmed places were government funded but this left a 30% shortfall as above. Preschool education was provided under government policy. This preschool is freeflow, child-led – planning is weekly or daily and adapted to the child’s interest and amended from day to day. Cllr Edwards explained the preschool was a charity, partly government funded, not a private nursery (business). It was noted that the pre-school is inspected by Ofsted and also liaises with Solihull education department.
- **Berkswell Cricket Club** – The applicant reported that this application follows on from a project funded 18 months ago to put a new cricket square at the Hornets football ground, this covered the ground work. The cricket club is growing rapidly with adult men’s, women’s, and children’s teams. There is high junior growth with approximately 100 members aged 9 to 19. The club participate in the national All Stars programme for 5-8 -olds, with 80 members involved this year. There are 200 juniors in total – at least 20-25 in Berkswell parish. The club believe there is a need for a second ground in the village and following the ground works which will come into use this year, they need equipment - scoreboard, screens, etc. at a total cost of £15k. The club have applied to several bodies – England Cricket and Airport Communities Trust, and ‘another Council’. They are

seeking a grant from Berkswell PC to provide a flat cover sheet and a ‘drainer’ for the wicket and a scoreboard which comes to £2,500 and asked if BPC would fund 80% of this cost.

- **Berkswell Society** – Cllr Burrow presented for the society. This application is to provide planters of flowers around the village. £500 would be sufficient to plant approximately 20 containers, and replace a couple as required.
- **Berkswell School** – Council noted that the school application had been withdrawn.

In summary Cllr Drake commented that the four applications total just over £7k, which is the grants budget for the whole year which the Council had anticipated would be allocated in 2 tranches. He sought views from the other members.

Cllr Lloyd asked whether the Hornets were due to apply – Cllrs Edwards and Burrow responded that they had received a grant at the start of the calendar year and were not expected to make a follow up application in the near future.

Cllr Cambage suggested that each application should be considered individually then the Council could review the total and whether to have one tranche or two. Cllr Burrow supported this approach.

A resident proposed maximising the number of beneficiaries within the parish across the schemes approved.

A Pre-school parent made a plea for no discrimination due to boundary. Cllr Burrow responded that Grant money comes from the precept paid by Berkswell Parish residents and must be spent for the benefit of Berkswell residents. However, for organisations who have some Berkswell residents and some non Berkswell residents who would benefit, the council looks at such issues flexibly taking a practical approach.

After careful consideration of the pros and cons of each of the applications, Cllr Burrow proposed the following grant awards:

- 2nd Balsall Common Scouts - £2,000
- Berkswell Pre-school - £1,250
- Berkswell Cricket Club - £2,000
- Berkswell Society - £500
- **Total - £5,750**

This was seconded by Cllr Cambage and was agreed unanimously (Cllrs Edwards and Drake abstained regarding the pre-school application and Cllrs Burrow and Howles abstained regarding the Berkswell Society application, all due to conflicts of interest).

The applicants thanked the Council for its generosity.

16. Council Policies and Procedures

- a. Standing Orders - Council considered and approved the following motion: “This Council accepts the Clerk’s recommended updates to the Standing Orders based on the NALC Model issued in April 2018. The new standing orders will be implemented with immediate effect”, on the understanding that the Clerk will act as the Data Protection Officer, which, at present is required by GDPR

Clerk

<p>legislation, but subject to any further guidance from WALC. Cllr Lloyd alerted Council to an error in the NALC version of Section 17 d ii and he quoted the relevant text. Consequently, the motion was also agreed subject to the inclusion of a correction to Section 17 d ii which NALC had declared had an error.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>b. Social Media Strategy – Council considered and agreed the following motion: “The Council agrees to form a working group of councillors and residents to consider the use of social media by the Council. The working party to report back to the Council on a monthly basis for guidance and authority to proceed.”. Cllr Drake proposed the working group would be himself, Cllr Edwards and an interested member of the community. An individual had come forward and, if confirmed, would be named at the next meeting.</p>	<p>RD/DE</p>
<p>c. Green Belt Policy – Council considered the following motion: “This Council confirms its commitment to protecting all Green Belt areas of the Parish (especially the strategic Meriden Gap) from further erosion. In the absence of very special circumstances the Council will take all practicable steps (within its authority) to preserve openness and resist urbanising influences.”. The motion was proposed by Cllr Lloyd and seconded by Cllr Hitchcock. Cllr Drake put the motion to a vote which resulted as follows: For – 2; Against – 3; Abstained – 2. Consequently, the motion was defeated but it was noted that all favour protecting the Green Belt as expressed in the first sentence. Council agreed to bring a revised motion to a future Council meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>17. Risk Management</p>	
<p>a. Council considered the “Managing the risk of the Clerk being unavailable” paper as circulated by the Clerk for approval. Discussion focused on the risk of the Clerk not being available to minute a meeting (arising under 17a). It was confirmed that, in such an event, any Councillor would take the minutes if a substitute clerk were not available. Council asked for a volunteer to ‘walk through’ the proposal to check it is fit for purpose. It was agreed that a Councillor would review this with the Clerk and do a dummy run. Cllr Burrow volunteered to do this.</p>	<p>Clerk/ AB</p>
<p>b. Council noted the draft ‘Meeting 3rd Parties’ policy which would be included as an appendix to the revised Standing Orders when approved. Cllr Burrow queried the need for two Councillors to be present when carrying out business as a Councillor – if acting ‘on behalf of the Council’ (eg to talk to someone about a planning item on the agenda), then 2 people should go. When acting as a Councillor, Cllr Burrow felt it was important he could go around and talk face to face with individual residents. He could speak ‘as a Councillor’ not ‘on behalf of the Council’. It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting and to amend the wording of the policy in advance of that. Cllr Burrow agreed to coordinate/circulate a further version, taking input from Councillors.</p>	<p>Clerk AB</p>
<p>c. Council noted the updated Risk Framework and that there are no RED rated items.</p>	<p></p>

<p>18. Actions Arising from Previous Meetings</p> <p>a. Council discussed the status of agreed actions from previous meetings as circulated (a copy is available on the Council website). Cllr Drake requested that all those with outstanding actions should provide updates to the Clerk following the meeting.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>19. Correspondence</p> <p>a. Council noted that last week was ‘Volunteers Week’, consequently council considered the following motion; “this council would like to thank all local volunteers for their hard work and agrees that some way of formally recognising those we consider have given major assistance to the Parish Council and/or community should be considered.” Cllr Burrow stated that he supported this and Cllr Drake proposed the Council ask Cllr Burrow to come forward with proposals of how this might be done.</p> <p>Cllr Lloyd pointed out that there were National and Borough schemes to recognise the contribution of volunteers, and that the council should respond to the invitations to nominate local people for awards. Cllr Burrow drew attention to the fact that the Council can award people ‘Freedom of the Parish’. They can also nominate people for the Solihull schemes.</p> <p>Cllr Hitchcock stated that honours should be reserved for exceptional endeavours.</p> <p>b. Council noted that Meriden Parish Council have approached Balsall Parish Council regarding the appointment of an Enforcement Officer. Council considered asking for Berkswell Parish Council to be included. Cllr Drake explained that this was an approach relating to Balsall Common where two thirds of Berkswell residents live, yet no-one had spoken to Berkswell PC on the matter. It was clarified that the Enforcement Officer would deal with parking in Balsall Common village. The Council’s consensus was to ignore the omission rather than to write to Meriden Parish Council about it. It was felt the Enforcement Officer would need to work with the police rather than be independent. Council voted on the proposed action with the majority 6:1 voting to ignore this and not in favour of contacting Meriden PC.</p> <p>c. Council noted the reply received from Gary Palmer (SMBC) to the Clerk’s letter on the Brownfield Register and agreed to discuss it at a future meeting.</p>	<p>AB</p>
<p>d. Council noted that Roger Monkman had resigned from his position as editor of The Bugle. Council considered and agreed unanimously the following motions:</p> <p>i. “This council declares its support for The Bugle as an important and valued local publication”</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>ii. “This council asks the Clerk to write to Roger Monkman thanking him for his years of service to the local community”</p> <p>e. Consultation of Unauthorised Developments and Encampments – Council considered the consultation paper circulated by Dame Caroline Spelman but agreed that no response from the Council would be made due to the tight deadline. Cllr Drake reported that he had responded as an individual. Residents were encouraged to respond if they wished by the deadline of 15 June 2018.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

<p>f. Council noted an invitation to meet the potential developers for Grange Farm. Council agreed it was inappropriate at this time to meet with them, especially as the proposed site is not in Berkswell parish. However, Council agreed to acknowledge their invitation and draw their attention to our latest draft of the NDP. Cllr Burrow agreed to draft a response for the Clerk to send.</p>	<p>Clerk/ AB</p>
<p>20. Ongoing References</p>	
<p>a. Review of inventory of land and assets – there had been no further progress to report</p>	
<p>b. Neighbourhood Development Plan</p>	
<p>i. Council noted that the draft NDP has been updated taking account of the consultation responses and authorised the Clerk to commence the Regulation 14 consultation on the updated draft of the NDP (summer 2018 version) as soon as the screening report is completed by SMBC. Cllr Burrow reported that the proposal is to start consultation on Monday 18 June and finish on Tuesday 31 July.</p>	
<p>ii. Council also noted that the NDP Web site has been updated with the consultation submissions and the responses/actions by the NDP Steering Committee. The Council noted the work undertaken by the NDP Steering Committee and community volunteers listed on the web site and thanked them for all of the efforts undertaken for the benefit of our community.</p>	
<p>iii. Cllr Burrow asked all to note that the Berkswell traffic calming report had been received and circulated to all councillors. Thanks were noted to all concerned.</p>	
<p>c. Local Plan</p>	
<p>i. Council noted that the Clerk had requested a revised quote prior to raising an order with LUC for a public facing report. Council confirmed that the Clerk already had authority to place the order.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>ii. Council considered an invitation from NALC to complete an important survey that seeks to make it mandatory for Principal Authorities to use CILs for planning matters rather than Section 106. If CILs are used then councils with Neighbourhood plans can benefit by up to 25% of the CIL receipts - that is not available with Section 106 money. The survey needed to be completed before 29th June. Council agreed the following motion: “The clerk is authorised to complete the survey reflecting the Council’s strong support for the CIL process”. In debate Council recognised this is not clear cut and surprise was expressed that a Local Authority could do away with CIL – eg Birmingham has zero rated it and Solihull are reviewing it.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>d. Governance Review – Council noted that SMBC’s initial consultation process has now been completed. The next steps are as follows:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Proposals Published – July 2018 • Consultation on Final Proposals – August 2018 • Reorganisation Order published – 31 October 2018 • Any changes become effective – 1 April 2019 	
<p>Cllr Lloyd commented that SMBC have changed the timescales – there is no requirement to decide within 12 months – they have taken 2 months off the timescale in which parishes can comment - it should refer to a “draft reorganisation order”.</p>	

It was understood that the next public meeting of the SMBC Governance Committee will be held on 27th June and any resident could ask to address it. The agenda is due out a week before.

Cllr Drake stated the Parish Council had taken no view but encouraged all parishioners to express their views.

e. HS2 – Council considered matters arising from the HS2 presentation to Balsall Parish Assembly on 31 May.

i. Cllr Lloyd reported the following:

- the presentation on haul routes was unclear. One map implied there would be a new route, not Hall Meadow Road, but this was not confirmed.
- there is no engagement meeting planned in the near future but Cllr Lloyd had given them dates in September and October. He hopes this will be the first of a series of meetings.
- there are matters of Parliamentary process which still haven't happened, including actions required by the select committee. The contractors were unaware of what was said in the House of Commons.
- there had been no local engagement, which is required.

ii. A resident raised the matter of an HS2 representative being in attendance at the Balsall Parish Assembly – Jonathan Lord had offered to meet Berkswell PC also, either alone or in partnership with Balsall PC. The resident's view was that if Berkswell PC wrote to request a meeting then it would happen. Cllr Burrow proposed to invite HS2 to a meeting of Berkswell Parish which was seconded by Cllr Hitchcock. Cllr Howles agreed and stated it should be to cover specifics, including:

- Haul route
- Design of viaduct
- Any proposals on diversion of footpaths
- Extension of Greenway
- Tree removal on the Greenway
- This is not an exhaustive list which should be made clear in the invitation

Council agreed that Cllr Burrow would draft an invitation for the Clerk to send.

f. Handyperson – there was no further progress to report

g. The Well – Council discussed the issue of the overflow pipe which has sometimes caused the Well to overflow. Cllr Burrow commented the matter was not urgent and the issue was mainly resolved by the voluntary maintenance activities of the Well warden. Council agreed that no action was required.

21. Removal and additions to Ongoing References

Removals: Review of Airport Night Flying

Additions: None

22. Training and Meetings – there was nothing to report

23. Heritage and Community

a. Village BBQ – Council noted the current status of preparations and that all arrangements were in hand.

AB/
Clerk

<p>b. Spinney Car Park: Ice Concerns - Council considered the following option; “the school are willing to close the car park if, in their opinion, that is the best action for particular day if the Council supply bollards etc to allow them to do that”. Cllr Cabbage raised concern whether the Parish Council would be responsible if there is an accident in icy weather – Cllr Burrow clarified that it is the driver’s risk. Council agreed that it was happy for the school to close the carpark using cones when judged necessary. Further action to be decided at future meeting.</p> <p>c. Spinney Car Park – Council noted that quotes have been requested from Greenline to level the island in the car park with additional soil and seed it for grass and install sufficient 3x3 or 4x4 inch posts to deter motorists from going on it. A response is awaited. The Scouts have confirmed that the underground drainage system they have installed is now sufficiently stable to allow finishing of the surface. A resident sought reassurance that the extra soil would not damage the tree roots. Cllr Burrow confirmed the soil will only correct sinkage.</p> <p>24. Council Administration</p> <p>a. Council website – Council noted that the Clerk has asked the website developer to speed up the implementation of the new council website as the recent ‘fatal error’ on the existing site has not been completely rectified resulting in a loss of functionality. The Clerk is awaiting some updates to the new website prior to requesting Councillors to review and feed-back comments on its design and content so that final amendments can be made prior to it going live.</p> <p>b. Councillor Allowances – council considered the following motions:</p> <p>i. “This Council notes the advice from the Clerk that, further to a due diligence check into the confusing relevant legislation and dialogue with WALC, it has been concluded that co-opted Councillors are not eligible to receive the Parish Basic Allowance (PBA), paid to offset the costs of being an ‘elected’ Councillor, despite co-opted councillors performing an identical role and devoting a large amount of personal time to council related activities. However, our two co-opted councillors have been in receipt of the allowance for some time. In light of these developments, payment of the PBA to these two councillors ceased at the end of March 2018. It must be noted that these payments were made and received in good faith in the belief that co-opted councillors were entitled to PBA. The relevant guidance is very unclear, indeed, the Councillors Handbook and the SMBC’s published scales make no distinction. The Council also notes that the financial impact on the Council is immaterial as other councillors have waived allowances which offset the payments made in error. The council believes the current legislation to be flawed and inequitable.”</p> <p>Cllr Burrow reported that he is giving up his allowance for the next year and has not taken all his chairman’s allowance, so the Council will not have lost any money. Cllr Drake commented that this makes co-opted councillors ‘second class’ councillors</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
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and, had he been aware, he would have ensured he was elected. Cllr Lloyd stated the legislation is unclear. Cllr Drake stated he accepted the best advice provided by the Clerk. At this point Cllrs Drake and Edwards left the meeting and Cllr Howles took the chair. Cllr Burrow proposed acceptance of the motion which was then agreed.

- ii. The following motion was then considered: “Council considered whether re-imburement of the payments to the two co-opted councillors, made and received in good faith, should be requested.”. Cllr Hitchcock commented that Councillors used to get reimbursed expenses not an allowance. The unanimous view of the Council was that the rule is disgraceful. Cllr Howles commented that the Council can’t ignore the rules now that the facts of the matter are known. Council agreed not to require repayment from the co-optees and confirmed that no allowances would be paid to co-optees from 2018-19.

25. Next Meeting

Ordinary Meeting of the Council, 19 July 2018 at 7:15 in the Balsall & Berkswell Hornets Clubhouse, Lavender Hall Lane, Berkswell.

Cllr Drake called the meeting to a close and thanked all present for their attention. He also thanked Judith Wilson for standing in as Clerk at very short notice.