

BADGER PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES
OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER
AT ST GILES' CHURCH, BADGER COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM

35. PRESENT

Cllr T.J. Lipscombe (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bond, Cllr. Mrs. S. Greenwell & Cllr. R. Greenwell

36. ALSO PRESENT

Claverley Cllr Richard Cotham, Gary Higgins, Smartwater Technology Ltd, & F.D Voysey (Clerk to the Council)

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. Mrs. E. Wakelin & parishioner Mrs. Y. Fletcher

38. OPEN FORUM

a) Discussion ensued between Cllr. Cotham from Claverley and Badger Councillors regarding the claim for a public bridleway through the Chase, Badger. Cllr. Cotham who farms close by, outlined the background to the issue and stated that a local nonagenarian who has lived here all his life, claims the route defined for the bridleway was originally a private way for horse-drawn carriages, and has never been dedicated as a public right of way. The Council understood that the landowner at one time negotiated for it to be a permissive path but for some reason this did not happen. Also about six years ago, as a result of problems with badger setts, for several months there were signs displayed for the route stating "NO ACCESS". Cllr. Cotham was thanked for attending the meeting and providing useful information about the claimed bridleway. See minute 46 a) for the Council's decision on what comments to submit to Shropshire Council.

b) Mr. Gary Higgins, Operational Director of Smartwater Technology Ltd gave a brief account of his background, having been in the Police Force until retirement four years ago when Divisional Commander at Telford. He then took up employment with the Smartwater company. He outlined the Smartwater Project and explained the use of the equipment. He gave the example of Cleobury Mortimer as a success story. Following its Council dealings with West Mercia Police and Smartwater, some grants were awarded to Cleobury Mortimer Town Council for the purchase of Smartwater Packs for its 1,200 homes enabling it to give one free to every household in its area. The introduction of the scheme resulted in a significant reduction in house robbery crime. Mr. Higgins explained that it was no longer possible for council's to buy Smartwater packs at the special price of £9.00 each and sell them on to their parishioners. However by entering the "We Don't Buy Crime" partnership a council can purchase £9.00 packs to distribute free of charge to households. Metal warning notice signs for display on roads entering the parish could be supplied for £100 each. If Badger Parish Council was interested in adopting the scheme under the "We Don't Buy Crime" project, Mr Higgins offered to arrange training (which would last about 20 minutes) to a few volunteer parishioners who could then call on all householders in the Parish to promote the scheme. Mr. Higgins was warmly thanked for presenting an interesting account of the Smartwater Scheme and advised that the Council will consider its adoption during formal session – see Minute 45 e).

39. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL / PECUNIARY INTERESTS NOT ALREADY DECLARED FOR MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED.

None were declared.

40. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BADGER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 21ST JULY 2016
Council agreed that the minutes were a true record and accordingly the Chairman signed a copy.

41. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING ON 21ST JULY 2016

a) Minutes 24 & 31a): The Council continued to be concerned regarding the poor standard of the cutting the grass for The Green at The Crescent, so the Clerk will ask the Highways Authority of Shropshire Council if it would be permissible for the Parish Council to arrange additional cuts , at its own expense, to those undertaken by its contractor.

b) Minute 28a): The Council thanked Cllr. Robin Greenwell for voluntarily repairing the lock to the Council's notice board.

c) Minute 31d): The owner of the land had not yet removed the disused, fallen fence on Stableford Bank so the Clerk is to inform Shropshire Council for it to take any appropriate action.

42. ADMINISTRATION

a) Council agreed that key holders for the notice board and keys distributed accordingly, should be the Chairman, Cllr G. Bond, Cllr. R. Greenwell, and the Clerk.

b) The Clerk highlighted from his Risk Management Annual Review presented to the Council, the benefits for all Councillors to be signatories to the Council's bank accounts, and recommended that this be put into effect from the new Council following May 2017 local elections. He also thanked Cllr. Robin Greenwell for his help by updating the Council's web site with all data required under Transparency Regulations. Cllr. Gary Bond pointed out that the Council owned four road signs and not two as recorded in section B1) of the Review, which the Clerk will allow for in the Council's Assets Register.

The Council unanimously approved the adoption of the 2016 Risk Management Annual Review.

43. FINANCE

a) The Council approved the following payments by cheque:-

- Clerk's salary & expenses	(cheque100367)	£310.97
- Clerk's Income Tax to HMRC	(cheque 100368)	£ 75.80

b) As at 1st September 2016, the Council's Community Account at Barclays stood at £9,118.15. After encashment of the cheques in section a) above the Community Account will be £8,731.38 in credit, of which £1,342.20 is Parish Plan Steering Group funds, leaving £7,389.18 belonging to the Parish Council. The Council's Business Premium Account remains at £1,551.78, and petty cash is currently £50.79.

c) Councillors noted that Mazars, External Auditors, have returned the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016, stating that the information in the Council's Audit Return was in accordance with proper practices. No matters came to their attention to cause concern, nor were there any issues raised that needed the Council's attention.

d) Before the beginning of the meeting Councillor Mrs. S. Greenwell conducted checks on bank accounts and petty cash and found that all was in order.

e) The Chairman has negotiated with Balfours Estate Agents that in return for including a small advertisement in the Council's newsletter, The Badger Bulletin, Balfours will meet the £15.00 cost for the production of the Bulletin. The Council agreed that the Clerk should pay Badger Print and then invoice Balfours for re-imbusement.

44. PLANNING MATTERS

There were no planning issues "on the table".

45. PARISH MATTERS

a) Shropshire Council has not yet been in touch with the Chairman to arrange a joint visit of a Building Inspector with Council representatives to inspect the condition of the old gymnasium at Stableford. The Clerk will contact Shropshire Council to pursue progress.

b) Councillors were concerned at the condition of the road by Stableford Bridge where a sunken hole had appeared, possibly due to a collapsed culvert, and was causing a serious traffic hazard. The Clerk was asked to raise the issue with the Highways Authority, and at the same time request the removal of the redundant signs (that stated no road markings), on the B4176 near the junction with Stableford Road.

c) The Chairman informed Council that he has arranged to meet a representative from Balfours Estate Agents in October 2016, at Town Pool, to discuss improvements to the area surrounding the Pool which belongs to its client. He will report back to Council on the outcome.

d) Councillor R. Greenwell agreed to submit a report to Council at its November 2016 meeting on the future operation and maintenance of the Council's web site.

e) Council decided that it was a well worthwhile venture to consider offering Smartwater Packs free of charge to all 54 households in Badger Parish. The cost of the project is likely to be around £800 which would include three metal signs to display on roadsides entering the village. The Clerk was asked to investigate the possibility of obtaining grants towards the costs and report back to Councillors by e-mail, who will then consider the way forward.

46. UNITARY AUTHORITY MATTERS

a) The Council decided to submit the following comments to Shropshire Council, regarding the claimed bridleway (BW) through The Chase, Badger:-

- The Council understands that in the recent past the landowner consulted Shropshire Council on the possibility of a "permitted way" but no agreement was reached.
- Due to problems with badger setts about six years ago a section of the track was closed with signs for a time displayed stating "NO ACCESS".
- While believing few horses and riders use it, several Councillors have seen horses riding the claimed BW route, two of them as recently as within the last year. Another Councillor stated that he had seen hoof marks along the track in question.
- In case not already approached for information/evidence the Parish Council will supply Shropshire Council with the name and address a former owner of the land over which the BW is being claimed.

47. CORRESPONDENCE

a) With regard to the closure of part of "Crescent " Road during the foul drainage work in November the Council wished the Clerk to clarify with Shropshire Council what the arrangements are to ensure there is vehicular and frontage access to all residences. Also what arrangements will be made for emergency vehicles as ambulances and fire engines are unable to travel under the low bridge along the road from the village towards Badger Heath.

48. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Councillors agreed to change the date of the next Council Meeting to Tuesday 8th November, at St. Giles' Church starting at 7.00 pm instead of the previously arranged Thursday 10th November 2016, so that the Chairman could attend.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.20 pm.