

BRINDLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2024 AT THE WHITE HOUSE, MARQUIS DRIVE, BRINDLEY HEATH

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: P. Adams (Chairman)
R. Turville (Vice Chairman)
Mrs M. A. Turville
A. Pearson
D. Cotton

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs T. Williams (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies and reasons for absence were received, accepted and approved under S85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 from the following Councillors: M. Sutherland and Mrs S. Pearson.

Apologies were also received from County Councillor P. Hewitt.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

<u>Member</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
None		

3. POLICE REPORTS

The Council received with thanks the Neighbourhood Policing Report for the month of September.

The incidents occurring in Brindley Heath and Etching Hill were categorised as follows:

Violence against the person – 4, Concern for Welfare – 3, Harassment – 1, Domestic – 5, Family Domestic – 1, Road Traffic Collision – 3, Transport Related – 4, Suspicious – 2, Missing Person – 6, Theft – 2, Drugs Crime – 1, Burglary – 1, Wildlife – 1.

The report acknowledged that burglaries and vehicle crime remained the forces top priority and were working to identify offenders and reassure the public. The Police were continuing to encourage the public to sign up to 'Smart Alert'.

The Council agreed that the Neighbourhood Policing Team were doing an excellent job of policing the Parish and surrounding areas. They were regularly seen out and about, appearing to patrol more than ever before, and the information and updates received through Smart Alerts were extremely informative.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

5. MINUTES OF LAST MEETINGS

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 30 July 2024 be approved as a correct record.

The draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 30 July 2024 were noted.

Councillor Pearson referred to the Quarry planning application (CH.20/04/709 M) and advised the Council that it was his understanding that the County Council had been in talks with Cemex and were preparing to set up a committee which would include parish representatives.

The Chairman and Councillor Cotton referenced how useful meeting at the Quarry used to be and that no meetings had been set up for some time. They pointed out that the signing up of the West Midlands Bird Club to land off Kingsley Wood Road has been ongoing for many years without resolution.

6. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Central Government’s Review of the National Planning Policy Framework – observations were submitted on behalf of the parish council on 23 September 2024.

7. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no report.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

a. Items of Post

Support Staffordshire’s ‘Rural Housing Enabler’

The Parish Council noted an email (dated 12 September 2024) from Support Staffordshire’s Rural Housing Enabler’ who is keen to support, as an impartial facilitator, local rural communities in meeting their housing needs. The Officer would like to meet parish councils online via Teams to discuss any potential housing developments within the parish and consider the help that could be offered.

The Council agreed there was no development potential in the parish given that it consisted mostly of Green Belt and National Landscape land with no capacity to support housing.

Severn Trent Water Neighbourhood Scheme

The Parish Council noted the details of a Severn Trent Water Neighbourhood Scheme which supported existing or new community driven initiatives through funding and hands on volunteering.

Local groups, organisations and charities were being invited to apply for up to £2,500 funding and 23-30 Severn Trent Volunteers (across two days) to support the delivery of their project.

The aims and objectives of the initiative/project should be to empower people, enhance place and promote a healthier environment.

The Council noted the details of the Neighbourhood Scheme for future reference.

NHS Urgent treatment centres and its strategy for urgent and emergency care

An email dated 11 September 2024 from the NHS Communications and Engagement Manager was advising town and parish councils that the NHS was running a period of engagement throughout Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent and staff were available to attend parish meetings or walks to talk about urgent treatment and emergency care.

The Council noted the information and called for Cannock minor injuries unit to reopen again.

Sustainability Grant Aid for Parish Councils

The County Council informed the Parish Council in an email (dated 27 September 2024) that it was eligible to apply for funding from the Climate Action Fund for a grant for a sustainability project. Each County Councillor had £1,500 to spend in their area (and more than one Councillor could be approached). Projects must fit into one of four categories (to reduce carbon impact, adapting to climate change, improving air quality and natural environment and reducing waste) and not be worth less than £500. A second phase invited bigger projects costing between £3,000 and £5,000 for circular economy or renewable energy.

The Council considered potential projects which could include the planting of trees or installing a recycling facility.

b. Consultations

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service – Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2028

The Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service was developing its new Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2028 setting out its priorities for the next four years and its approach to ensure it does not compromise on its commitment to protecting local communities, reducing risk and maintaining firefighter safety. Public feedback is invited via a survey by 5 November 2024.

The Council agreed that the consultation would be completed individually by Councillors rather than formulate a collective response.

Cannock Chase Council's Public Spaces Protection Order Consultation

This consultation was for information as comments had been requested by Sunday 6 October 2024

Cannock Chase Council was proposing to extend the current Public Spaces Protection Order for a further three years and include the following additions: anti-social use of motorised vehicles, unauthorised incursions on rooftops, public urination/defecation and disposal of drug paraphernalia, people abandoning possession which block doorways, thoroughfares and fire escapes and loitering which is likely to cause anti-social behaviour.

The Council had no objections to the Public Spaces Protection Order and its additions.

Cannock Chase Council's Polling District, Polling Place and Polling Station Review 2024

Cannock Chase Council is due to commence a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places in accordance with the Representation of the People Act 1983.

Representations are invited from stakeholders, partners and other interested parties such as electors, elected members, local political parties and organisations that have expertise on accessibility to people with different forms of disability. The Parish Council was invited to consider the review and make comments, if required, on polling places within the parish.

The Council noted that there was only one polling station located in the parish which was a portacabin on the car park off Brindley Heath Road. Shooting Butts and Forestry Commission used to be polling station sites but now people either make a postal vote or travel outside the boundary of the parish.

The Council agreed that Councillors make their own individual contributions to the Polling Review where required.

Staffordshire Commissioner’s Policing & Fire & Rescue Consultation

The Staffordshire Commissioner is inviting key partners to take part in a consultation to provide feedback on the priorities in his proposed Police & Crime Plan, and Fire & Rescue Plan 2024-2028. Links to the consultation had been provided with the agenda for the meeting and an online form was available to 21 October 2024.

The Council concluded that Councillors should complete the survey individually.

9. PARISH WARD ISSUES – CHASE SIDE

Felling of trees on protected land

The Chairman invited Councillor Cotton to update the Council on any new developments following the felling of trees on protected land off Stafford Brook Road.

Councillor Cotton advised the Council that he understood an officer had met with the landowners and had briefed them on the SAC and SSSI landscape protections and their responsibilities for looking after the site. He believed the landowners had sought permission to prune trees, and advice had been given on the work that could be done.

The Council suggested that a check be done on the time frame of the blanket TPO (thought to be six months) and to ask what the current situation was. It was also suggested the Council enquire as to the reason the land designation did not provide automatic protection of trees.

10. PARISH WARD ISSUES – BRINDLEY VILLAGE

Land off the Rugeley Road

Councillor Pearson had previously noted that an area of land off the Rugeley Road had developed a garden centre appearance with several greenhouses installed on site.

The Clerk reported that she understood the land had been turned into private allotments and that planning permission was only needed in circumstances where development (as defined by Town and Country Planning legislation) had taken place or where there had been a material change of use. The need for planning permission also depended on whether the land met the definition of agricultural.

Due to a question about commercial land use, Councillor Pearson said he would seek clarification from the Planning Department.

11. CANNOCK CHASE

The Parish Council discussed the extensive use of bicycles on Cannock Chase and that there were few areas left to enjoy a quiet and safe walk.

12. HONORARY TITLES

The Parish Council considered a National Association of Local Council’s Legal Topic Note (dated March 2013) on Honorary Titles and Officers of Dignity, which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

The Council had previously noted that under S.249 (5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1972 the admission of an honorary freeman must be by resolution made at a meeting of the full council specially convened for such purpose and passed by no less than two-thirds of the members of the Council. The section also required ‘notice of the object of the meeting’ to be given. This confirms the need for the agenda with the public notice and summons to members in respect of the Council meeting itemising a motion to confer the title of honorary freeman.

Resolved: That a Working Group be set up to recommend to the Council the arrangements that may accompany the statutory requirements for the granting of ‘Honorary Freeman’ to Councillor Paul Adams for his services to Brindley Heath Parish Council.

Resolved: That the Working Group membership consists of: Councillor R. Turville, Mrs M.A. Turville, A. Pearson and Mrs S. Pearson.

13. INVITATION TO MEETINGS/EVENTS

The Council noted the following forthcoming (external) meetings with no specific members nominated to represent the Parish Council:

- Staffordshire County Council Candidate Open Days – Monday 4th & Tuesday 26 November 2024
- Meeting to discuss new urgent treatment centres – Wednesday 9 October 2024 at Chase Leisure Centre.

14. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

a. To share information on meetings attended:

- Staffordshire County Council’s Communities Strategy on 20 August 2024
The Clerk attended this online strategy meeting.
- Staffordshire County Council’s Local Transport Plan session on 20 September 2024.
Councillor Mrs Turville had planned to attend the meeting but had not received details about the meeting venue from the organiser.

15. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

a. The parish representatives to outside bodies gave reports on meetings they had attended:

Slitting Mill Village Hall (M. Sutherland)

Councillor Sutherland was not available to give a report.

Etching Hill Village Hall (D. Cotton)

Councillor Cotton advised the Council that he had attended a meeting in September, and all was going well.

Chetwynd Charity (P. Adams)

Councillor Adams advised the Council that the Charity was seriously considering closing as insufficient students were coming forward to apply for grant aid. He said that if a decision was taken to close the charity consideration would need to be given to what to do with the funds held.

Charity for the Recreation Ground (P. Adams & D. Cotton)

Councillor Adams advised that a meeting arranged with Cannock Chase Council had needed to be cancelled due to illness.

He confirmed that the posts had been removed and the grass mowed.

Charity for an Allotment for the Labouring Poor (P. Adams & D. Cotton)

Councillor Adams reported that the allotments were running well, fully subscribed with a waiting list.

Longdon Cotton Alms-houses (P. Adams to 2028)

Councillor Adams advised the Council that all was running fine. He said there was sometimes difficulties in getting tradesmen to undertake work.

Cannock Chase Council's Standards Committee (R. Turville)

No meetings of the Standards Committee had taken place.

Cannock Chase AONB Conference (A. Pearson & Mrs S. Pearson)

Councillor Pearson and Councillor Mrs Pearson will be attending the conference in 2025.

16. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor Sutherland was not available to give a report.

17. WEBSITE

The Clerk advised the Council that following Councillor Sutherland's enquiry to Staffordshire County Council the Digital Team had agreed to take the Parish Council's website on and offer its WordPress template at a cost of £150 per annum.

The Clerk confirmed that she was working to transfer the content from the old Squarespace website to the new WordPress website. However, this job was labour intensive as it was a manual process and not digitised. The Squarespace website lapses on 22 October 2024.

Councillor Cotton suggested investigating the fees for obtaining library access to graphics to enhance the website. He also offered to take photographs if he could be given a list of suitable subjects.

The Council agreed that initially the focus would be on the transfer of existing content, with new content, especially historical material about the parish, being developed later.

18. BLEED KITS

The Council considered locations in the parish where publicly accessed bleed kits could be installed.

Councillor Cotton suggested asking the Rugeley Community First Responders to come to the next meeting to give advice on the options that were available. He said they had already been involved in installing them in various areas and may agree to installing kits purchased by the parish council for the benefit of the community.

Resolved: To invite the Rugeley Community First Responders to attend the next meeting of the Council to give advice on community bleed kits.

19. FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Financial Position of the Council

A breakdown of income and expenditure for the financial year to date was given in the Clerks Report (dated 3 October 2024). The budget statement showed the current financial position of the Council with reserves totalling £17,108.68.

The bank account balance on 2 September 2024 (taken from the bank statement) was £17,158.68 with unpresented cheques totalling £50 (payment made by the Clerk to 'Target Ovarian Cancer' in lieu of the internal auditor fee).

Resolved: That the financial position of the Council is noted.

b) Noticeboard Update

The Chairman invited updates from Councillor Pearson and the Clerk.

Councillor Pearson advised the Council that he had agreed to receive the notice board to his home and the supplier had contacted him with a view to making the delivery.

The Clerk advised the Council that she had attended a site meeting with the Principal Landscape & Countryside Officer at Cannock Chase Council where the position of the notice board (on the car park off Brindley Heath Road) and method of installation had been agreed.

The Clerk advised the Council that a price of £400 plus vat had been obtained from a contractor whose details had been provided by the Principal Landscape & Countryside Officer.

Resolved: That the contractor be asked to install the notice board at a cost of £400 plus VAT.

c) To authorise cheques for payment

Resolved: To approve following cheque payments:

100241	One Another Ministries	£30.00	Donation for use of room for parish meeting on 8 October 2024.
100242	Support Staffordshire	£25.00	Annual Membership
100243	Parish Online	£67.20	Annual Subscription
100244	Greenbarnes	£3,210.96	Supply and delivery of notice board

Resolved: To authorise payment of the cheques listed.

20. ANY OTHER ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

There were no items given.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held at The White House, Marquis Drive, Brindley Heath on Tuesday 26 November 2024.

Signed.....

Date.....

Chairman's Initials

23/2024-25