

BRINDLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 18 JANUARY 2011 AT THE BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE, BRINDLEY HEATH

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: P. Adams (Chairman)
R. Turville
K. Baker
D. Cotton
Mrs. I. Higgs
Mrs. D. Grice

CLERK: Mrs. T. Williams (Acting)

1. APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from J. Wilkes.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were none. Members agreed that they would prefer that declarations of interest are appended to each agenda item.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 December 2010 were approved as a true record.

The Chairman confirmed that he had seen the Clerk, Mr Young, who has again been asked to write up the minutes for the meeting held on 14 September 2010 and to enter a copy in the Minute Book. The Minute Book should then be returned to the Council.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Notice Board

The notice board for Brindley Village has yet to be installed due to its size and proposed location. It is too large.

b) Concerts in the Forest

This is an agenda item.

c) Bower Lane

Parish Councillors will continue to monitor the situation and report instances where vehicles are marked 'For Sale'.

d) D.V. Ward – Environmental Issues

- (i) Planning Application CH/08/0343 Oak Tree Farm, Slitting Mill – A letter has been received from Sue Prestwood (Planning Department) following a request for information on the reason the appeal date was changed.

She has checked the files and cannot find anything to suggest that the appeal date was changed for the Appeal Hearing. However, the venue was altered from The Civic Offices to The Rugeley Rose. It is normal practice for the Planning Inspectorate to assume that all Planning Hearings/Inquiries will be held at the District Council offices when they advise of the date. However, if the planning application which is the subject of the appeal is in the Rugeley district, they will always endeavour to hold the Hearing /Inquiry at a venue in Rugeley which is what was done in this instance.

- (ii) Environmental Health – It was suggested that Karen Sulway (Environmental Protection Manager) be asked to supply a further update on progress with the prosecution of D.V. Ward in respect of deposits of waste on Slitting Mill. She has confirmed that she is in the process of issuing proceedings against Mr Ward but did not provide any other detail on the case. The Temporary Clerk was asked to write asking for confirmation of the date when the prosecution is going to take place.

e) Kingsley Wood Road

Still no contact has been received from Jaclyn Lake of Natural England. Councillor Adams advised that he will not chase her currently as 'Right to Roam' has to be dealt with. It will be necessary to look back at the files to determine when a revision will take place.

f) Winter Gritting

Mark Keeling, Community Highways Liaison Officer has confirmed that he has no record of the removal of two grit bins from Kingsley Wood Road. He also said that his records have only ever identified the three bins which are currently on site. He thinks that three bins are sufficient, but suggests that when stocks allow, the older (smaller) grit bins could be swapped for newer larger ones.

It was agreed that the Temporary Clerk should ask Mr Keeling to arrange for the replacement of the three existing bins for new larger ones.

g) British Telecom – Telephone Box at the corner of Kingsley Wood Road

The paperwork has not been received.

h) Rugeley Quarry

The Chairman reported that he had had an interesting conversation with the Quarry Manager about unaccompanied loads. The Quarry Manager, Mr Evans agreed to ensure that an escort is provided for all wide loads into and out of the Quarry leading on to Wolseley Road (although this is usually the responsibility of the haulier). He also said that he would designate an appointed place for wide loads/lorries to park, near the entrance, in order to eliminate the obstruction problems to motorists.

Councillor Adams advised that in a month or so, he would contact Mr Evans again to inform him about the issues with the sheeting on the gravel wagons.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

- Staffordshire Office of the Lieutenancy – Letter received on 17/12/10 from Nick Bell, Clerk to the Lieutenancy and Chief Executive to Staffordshire County Council.
- Staffordshire County Council – Letter dated 15/12/10 from Ben Adams (Lead Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture) and Viv Evans (Chief Executive of SPCA).

- Local Government Boundary Commission – Letter dated 9/12/10 from Simon Keal, Review Officer on the Electoral Review of Staffordshire County Council. Closing date for views is 21 February 2011.

It was felt that the Parish Council were unable to formulate comments without further information on the detail.

6. URGENT BUSINESS

None

7. CONCERTS IN THE FOREST

The Chairman confirmed that he had attended a meeting with Mr O'Meara, Senior Licensing Officer to discuss issues surrounding the concert events. Mr Ness from Environmental Health was also in attendance.

The following problems were identified and discussed:

- The conditions for the start times of sound checks are not adhered to. Tuning is permitted from 3pm to 5pm. These times have never been followed as it usually begins much earlier, between 10am and 12 noon.
- The contact telephone line which should be provided by Forest Enterprises has been unavailable to the public on every occasion that a concert has been held. No one answers the line so it is assumed that it is not manned, and the Police just refer noise complaints back to Environmental Health. Mr O'Meara agreed to look into this point.
- People coming out of the concert spill onto Penkridge Bank Road, which creates a situation that is impossible to police. People jump out into the road and there has been a serious accident.
- No accurate and proper records have been maintained by Environmental Health Officers on monitoring of noise levels. This was accepted.
- Noise readings are less at the point where they are measured (spot 1 behind the stage) than at other locations including Etching Hill and Penkridge Bank.
- No consideration is given to wind speeds and wind directions and the affect this has on noise levels

The Chairman was given assurances that action would be taken to address the issues raised. It is hoped that the meeting, together with a meeting (to be arranged) with Forest Enterprises will lead to the following outcomes:

- The establishment of a direct line of communication to the event organisers
- A plan to devise a voluntary agreement with the Forestry Commission to define clearly the management arrangements for the concerts and in so doing prevent problems from arising
- A hot line to register telephone complaints and to provide access to Environmental Health Officers, who will investigate, measure, record and monitor noise levels
- The Council will endeavour to provide a member of staff to use the second SLM on a roving basis whilst the first unit remains in the Pingle. If the roving unit measures noise levels which are in excess of the set limit, the officer will request that the Forestry Commission take action to remedy the breach immediately
- Assurances that future concerns will be investigated and addressed
- A personal written response from Mr O'Meara to the Chairman on the issues discussed
- Another meeting will be arranged before the next concert is held
- Issue an out of hours telephone number for CCDC Environmental Health Department

It was decided that the review of the license application would be held in abeyance for the present.

Additional points made by Parish Councillors'

- It is thought that the maximum sound level at a set point must exceed 65dba on average over a period of 20 minutes for an offence to have taken place.
- It is thought that Environmental Health are able to choose from a set of parameters for measuring noise levels and that they have chosen to use the method of spot points.
- Some trees have been felled in the area.

8. FORESTRY COMMISSION LAND SALES

There has been publicity about this issue but the detailed proposals have not been made clear. It is not known yet whether the government has allowed any sales to go ahead.

General points were made that landowners can sometimes be difficult to identify when pockets of land become uncultivated or have fallen into disrepair.

9. PLANNING

Planning comments referred to the District Council (under delegated powers)

CH/10/0424 Birchwood, Kingsley Wood Road, Brindley Heath. Objections forwarded in letter dated 17 December 2010

CH/10/0429 Various locations around Cannock Chase Forest (Forestry Commission) – Variation of condition 6 of CH/10/0298. Objections forwarded in a letter dated 4 January 2011.

CH/10/0390 Former Shooting Butts Outdoor Centre, Penkridge Bank, Brindley Heath. No objections, notified in letter dated 18 December 2010.

CH/10/0351 Bentley Brook House, Rawnsley Road, Hednesford. No planning comments were submitted

Planning Applications Received

None

Planning Decisions made by District Council

CH/10/0394 Penkridge Bank Cottage, Penkridge Bank Road, Rugeley

Refusal (notification received on 17 December 2010)

A point was made that residents in Stafford Brook Road were not advised of the proposed development by the District Council, even though it would have affected them.

Other Planning Correspondence

Letter dated 8 December 2010 from Cannock Chase Council advising of a Planning Appeal:

CH/10/0240 Birchwood, Kingsley Wood Road, Brindley Heath.

Objections were forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate in a letter dated 17 December 2010.

(Three copies of this letter were forwarded along with three copies of the original planning comments made to the District Council in a letter dated 16 July 2010).

10. TRANSPORT LINKS

Resolved: That a letter be forwarded (to the appropriate company) highlighting concerns about the rail service from Hednesford Train Station, and the inconvenience caused to passengers when the service is failing to cope with periods of high demand.

11. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Nothing to report

12. INVITATIONS TO MEETINGS

Cannock Chase AONB – Next regular Parish Councils' Meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 May 2011. The venue will be confirmed.

Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent 2012 Conference – Thursday 10 February 2011. Cricket & Hockey Club, Cannock.

13. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

None

14. STAFFING MATTERS

Resolved: To approve the draft advertisement for the post of Parish Clerk.

Resolved: To set the working hours of the post at 4.5 weekly.

Resolved: To advertise the position in the Chase Post as soon as possible.

(Proposed by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Turville and unanimously agreed).

As a guide – Chase Post advertising costs are £64 + vat for 30 words in a 3cm wide x 4 cm box

The temporary Clerk advised that a model job description and contract of employment were contained within the Parish Councils' Toolkit. A contract of employment should legally be issued within 13 weeks of commencement of employment.

Timesheets for the Temporary Clerk were handed to the Chairman, although payment will be claimed on a 4.5 hours a week basis (5 weeks @ 4.5 hours per week - adjustment made for Christmas holiday period).

15. FINANCE

A framework for a budget for the financial year 2011/12 was outlined by the Chairman.

The District Council have advised that the likely recharges for the 2011 Parish Council elections are not yet available (neither are rough estimates). It is not known to what extent the Government will provide financial support in respect of the Parliamentary Voting Referendum and the potential level of subsidy for elections taking place on the same day. It was recommended that Parish Councils err on the side of caution in making estimates and assume that all seats may be contested. (A suggested method for establishing a cost (given by Steve Partridge, Democratic Services Manager) was to take the figure that the District Council recharged at the last full Parish Council elections (2007), divide this figure by the number of seats that were actually contested, multiply this by the total number of seats and factor in an allowance for inflation).

Resolved: To provisionally agree, as a minimum, a precept of £4000 (in the event that the figure is requested by the District Council before the next Council meeting).

A precept request letter has not yet been received from the District Council

Resolved: To approve the following cheque payments:

400150	Baptist Bible College	£ 25.00	Room Hire for 18/1/11
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200001 T. Williams £208.35 £187.74 Salary (4.5 hrs @ £8.344 x 5 wks)
£20.61 Expenses (stationary & stamps)

(Cheque 200001 is the start of a new cheque book)

It was confirmed by the Chairman that Mr Young will not need to prepare for an audit presently. He reported that audit arrangements for Brindley Heath Parish Council are three yearly (not annually) and it isn't due to take place this year.

The temporary Clerk was asked to write to Mr Young to find out whether he has in his possession a second cheque book, used between 3 July 2007 and 1 June 2010.

The change of postal address for the Council's Cooperative Bank account will be dealt with by the newly appointed Clerk (rather than the temporary Clerk).

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed that In the event of any future emergency meetings, the Chairman will personally inform all members of the Council about the date and details.

17. ITEMS FOR AGENDA OF NEXT MEETING

Precept
Forestry Commission Land Sales

18. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday 1 March 2011 at the Baptist Bible College, Brindley Heath. The start time is 7.30pm.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 9.15pm

Signed.....
Chairman, Mr. P. Adams

Date.....