

BRINDLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 19 APRIL 2011 AT THE BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE, BRINDLEY HEATH

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: P. Adams (Chairman)
K. Baker
D. Cotton
J. Wilkes

CLERK: Mrs. T. Williams (Acting)

1. APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs. Higgs and Councillor R. Turville.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 March 2011 were approved as a true record (proposed by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Cotton and agreed).

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

a) Notice Board

Councillor Cotton reported that Sheila Simpson had said that the Parish Council may use the Slitting Mill Village Hall notice board at any time to display notices.

The suppliers of the notice board, Genite.com have confirmed that they will not exchange it for a smaller one as it is a made to order item. It was suggested that the notice board might be installed where the existing board is located, if this smaller one is taken down. The suggestion will be investigated.

b) Bower Lane

Cars marked 'For Sale' will continue to be reported.

c) D.V. Ward – Environmental Issues

Karen Sulway, Environmental Protection Manager has confirmed that Mr. Ward is the subject of a pre-trial review at Stafford Magistrates' Court on 27 April. Trial dates have been scheduled for 10, 11 and 12 May 2011.

d) Kingsley Wood Road

The temporary Clerk will contact Jaclyn Lake of Natural England to ask when she is going to deal with the revision of 'Right to Roam'. The Council would like this designation removed from areas which are close to property.

Enquires will also be made about the re-designation of the area from an AONB to a SSSI. This would be beneficial because of the higher level of protection available (for example, the Police would have more powers to stop nuisance)

e) Winter Gritting

Mark Keeling, Community Highways Liaison Officer, has confirmed that he is unable to approve the repositioning of two old grit bins (which are due to be replaced) further up the hill in Kingsley Wood Road. He cannot authorise 5 grit bins in one road and wouldn't want to leave them for the Parish Council to fill at its own cost either as this would be difficult to manage. The team who fill the bins would not know which ones they should be attending to, and which not.

Mark has confirmed that he will replace the bins at the end of the winter season, but has said that the bin near the start of the road looks like a newer larger bin, so only the other two smaller ones will now be replaced.

A 'Round Robin' letter will be sent to residents (asking them not to use the grit on their drives), at the start of the next winter season.

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

As previously reported, the light within the box is still on continuously. It was suggested that the contract be checked to ensure that the electricity supply has not become the responsibility of the Parish Council.

g) Rugeley Quarry

A letter (dated 7 March 2011) was sent to Mr Evans, Quarry Manager asking that he employs a road sweeper to clear the sand from the road surface of Stafford Brook Road in both directions from the quarry entrance.

Mr Evans provided the following information:

- Stafford Brook Road is swept 4 times a year going up to Kingsley Wood Road, which is in conjunction with SCC who also sweep 4 times a year.
- A general sweep is done fortnightly going in both directions in accordance with the Quarry's 106 agreement and this will continue as normal.
- There is also an agreement with the local residents steering group for 4 extra sweeps if deemed necessary.

A meeting will be arranged between the Chairman, Councillor Wilkes and Quarry Manager in due course.

No RSPB Officers have been spotted although they are thought to be present around the site 3 or 4 days a week.

Convoy escorts have been seen with wider loads.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

a) Update on correspondence/documentation from Mr. Young

The following has been received:

- Accounts and invoices back to 2007/8 (received 1 March 2011)
- Bank statements back to 2007/8, excluding two.
- Minutes back to February 2010 (except AGM Minutes 2010)

A Cheque book, minute book, paying in book and historic paperwork has not been made available.

b) General Correspondence

All incoming and outgoing correspondence is recorded in the Clerks Report. The letters were also circulated for viewing, and are otherwise accepted as read.

c) Specific Items of Post

- London Midland – Response to train travel issues. A letter dated 4 March 2011 was read out by the Chairman, and the content noted.
- Cannock Chase Council – Letter dated 22 March 2011 from Mr Richardson, Scientific Manager. Notification of two motorbike scrambling events on 10 April and 2 October 2011 at Lower Cliff Farm, Hednesford Road, Rugeley. The events are being organised and run by Midland Social Motocross Club. The Chairman, Ms Lucile Adams has offered to attend a future Parish Council Meeting to discuss the events if further information is required.

It was reported that no noise nuisance had been noted during the first event on 10 April 2011.

The temporary Clerk was asked to write to Mr Richardson, thanking him for letting the Council know about the events, for his concern and for monitoring the situation.

- Community Council of Staffordshire – Letter dated 30 March 2011 inviting the Parish Council to consider becoming a member. It was decided not to take up membership.
- Staffordshire County Council – Letter dated 14 April 2011 from Mike Maryon, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport. Tackling potholes has been a high priority and Neighbourhood Highways Teams had been diverted to assist. 2000 potholes have been fixed since March, and Neighbourhood Highways teams, who have now returned to their communities, will be contacting Parish Councils (twice between now and Christmas) to consult on prioritising a work program.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

No items.

6. ELECTIONS – MAY 2011

A Notice of Uncontested Election has been received from the District Council detailing the names of the persons who have been elected Parish Councillors for the new four year term.

These are:

Chase Side: Paul Adams and Dave Cotton

Brindley Heath: Ken Baker, Alan Pearson, Ann Turville and Ron Turville

The Representation of the Peoples Act 1985 allows elected members, provided there is a quorum (one third of the whole number of members with a minimum of three) to co-opt a person to the remaining vacancy. No further notices need to be given of the vacancy.

7. THANK YOU TO MEMBERS

This item was deferred as departing Members were not present.

8. PLANNING

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

CH/11/0052 Holford Equestrian Centre, Cotswold Road, Hednesford

Replacement of telecommunications installation with a 20 metre high monopole, 3 antennas and associated equipment cabinets. Objections and comments forwarded in a letter dated 9 March 2011

CH/11/0062 Friars Cottage, Kingsley Wood Road, Rugeley

Retention of boundary wall to front. No objections forwarded in a letter dated 22 March 2011.

Planning Applications Received

CH/11/0101 Stafford Brook Stables, Stafford Brook Road, Rugeley

Residential development. Erection of a single storey 2 bedroom dwelling

The collective comments of the Planning Committee will be forwarded to the temporary Clerk by 29 April 2011.

Planning Decisions made by District Council

CH/10/0403 Land to East of Stile Cop Road, Rugeley

Approved (notification received on 4 April 2011)

CH/11/0052 Holford Equestrian Centre, Cotswold Road, Hednesford

Refused (notification received on 6 April 2011)

Other Planning Correspondence

Letter from Planning Inspectorate dated 22 March 2011. Appeal decision for Birchwood, Kingsley Wood Road, Rugeley.

Other Planning Issues

- a) Birches Valley Car Park – It has been noted that the car park is being extended to an area which appears to be double the size. This work has involved the removal of trees and bushes which will have an adverse affect on the sound insulation afforded to Etching Hill and Kingsley Wood residents at concert time. The car park is now a very exposed blot on the landscape as viewed from Penkridge Bank Road, and has been heavily criticised by parishioners and visitors alike.

The temporary Clerk was asked to write to the Planning Department to ask for confirmation that planning permission is not needed for such work.

- b) Barkers – Surveyors have been seen looking around recently. It is not known if someone has purchased the site.
- c) It was suggested that either Mr. Heminsley the Planning Services Manager or the Chairman of the District Council Planning Committee be invited to a future Parish Council meeting to enable members to discuss planning matters and raise concerns about a number of issues, including some inconsistencies.

It was suggested that clarity on each of their roles would help determine the most appropriate person to invite.

- d) Swiss House Cottage, Penkridge Bank –The Clerk was asked to make enquiries about whether the occupants have received permission for the 32 ft static caravan (sited in front of the property) to be used as a temporary dwelling.
- e) Silver Trees Caravan Site – The numbers of caravans on the site appear to have increased. The Clerk was asked to enquire how many caravans are permitted on the site (as a maximum number) and how many caravans are sited currently.

- f) Site of former Play Group, Bow Street, Rugeley – The Clerk was asked to make enquiries with Cannock Chase Council about future intended use of the land as it has become an eye sore.

9. INVITATIONS TO MEETINGS

The Chairman, Councillor Adams volunteered to attend the Cannock Chase AONB Parish Councils' Meeting on 18 May 2011 at Tixall with Ingestre Village Hall, Tixall.

10. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

Councillor Baker reported that he had attended a recent Longdon Alms Houses meeting.

The Chairman confirmed that there had been no further meetings concerning Etching Hill Allotments.

11. FINANCE

a) Banking Difficulties

Changing the contact address for the Co-operative Bank account has proven very difficult to achieve as the Bank have not been very helpful. Mr. Young has attended a meeting with the Bank Manager at his local branch, and even he (the Bank Manager) experienced problems as head office did not wish to respond to his requests to sort the matter out.

Three letters have been referred to the Co-op. Two have requested that the contact address be amended (supplying two and then three signatures of signatories). A third letter asked for clarification on the procedure for changing the address, requested a list of members who are current signatories', and a change of signatories form.

No replies have been received to any of these letters.

It was agreed that the temporary Clerk should obtain details of suitable alternative accounts with a view to closing the account and opening a new one with another bank.

Resolved: To obtain details on suitable alternative bank accounts.

b) Accounts for Financial year 2010/11

The Cash Book, Bank Reconciliation, Budget and Statement of Variances for the financial year 2010/11 were presented to the meeting for information.

From these documents, section 1 and section 2 of the annual return had been completed.

Section 1 - Accounting Statement, and, Section 2 - Annual Governance Statement, were approved by the council and signed by the Chairman.

Resolved: To approve sections 1, and 2 of the Annual Return for financial year 2010/11

c) Appointment of Internal Auditor

It was agreed that Julie Hill be appointed to conduct the Internal Auditing of the accounts for the financial year 2010/11, at a cost of £19 per hour.

Resolved: To appoint Julie Hill to undertake the internal Audit for the financial year 2010/11

d) Budget

An updated budget for financial year 2011/12 was considered, amended and approved. Provision was made within the staffing budget for a final salary payment to Mr Young and also member expenses.

It was noted that the first half of the precept had been received and that two thirds of a VAT reclaim had been awarded by HMRC. The whole claim is worth £83, and the remaining £24 is being processed.

Resolved: To approve the budget for financial year 2011/12

e) Internal Controls

The Clerk reported that improvements to internal controls should be made through the following actions:

- Updating of Financial Regulations
- Updating of Risk Assessment
- Financial reporting to every meeting – provide members with a record of expenditure from the start of the financial year to date. This will be set against the budget figures to enable continuous monitoring.
- Appointment of a member to act as an internal auditor
- Implement recommendations of Julie Hill, Internal Auditor
- Contract of Employment for permanent Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer and an outline of duties of the Responsible Finance Officer (job description).

Resolved: To accept recommendations for improvements to internal financial controls.

f) Financial Regulations

The most recent NALC Financial Regulations (supplied by SPCA) were approved by the Council.

Resolved: To adopt standard NALC Financial Regulations without amendment.

g) Cheques for Payment

200004	Audit Commission	£82.25	Audit Fee for financial year 2009/10
200005	Baptist Bible College	£75.00	Replacement of Cheque 400147 For room hire for meetings on 26/10/10, 2/11/10 and 8/12/10 (written out to 'The White House' in error).
200006	T. Williams	£170.79	£150.19 Salary - 2 to 31/3/11 (4.5 hrs @ £8.344 x 4 wks) £11.16 Postage, £9.44 Stationary
200007	SPCA	£245.00	Annual Subscription for 2011/12
200008	Baptist Bible College	£25.00	Room Hire for meeting on 19/04/11

Resolved: To authorise payment of the cheques listed.

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

Staffordshire County Council has implemented a Local Councils email system and it would like all Parish Councils to use it (Clerk as a minimum). The Clerks email address is clerk@brindleyheath.staffslc.gov.uk.

Email addresses can be set up for all members who would like one (to incorporate members' names). This email system can be linked to existing personal email accounts which provides the advantage of having a

professional business address that can be automatically forwarded to a personal one (or used independently as a replacement).

Item for next agenda: Co-option of 7th Member.

13. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual General Meeting to be held on Tuesday 17 May 2011 at the Baptist Bible College, Brindley Heath. The start time is 7.30pm.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 9.20pm

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

Date.....