

BRINDLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6 APRIL 2021 AT 7.30PM

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and Government Guidelines on public gatherings, the meeting was held virtually on Zoom.

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: P. Adams (Chairman)
D. Cotton
A. Pearson
M. Sutherland (from item 15)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M. Keeling (for agenda items 1 to 5)
Mrs S. Pearson
Mr S. Haynes (from agenda item 6)
Mrs T. Williams (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors: Mrs M. A. Turville and R. Turville.

Apologies were received from County Councillors: B. Jones and P. Hewitt.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To declare interests for this meeting:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
Councillor P. Adams	Item 13 – support for farmers and land managers	Personal
Councillor A. Pearson	Item 13 – support for farmers and land managers	Personal

The Chairman changed the order of some items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2021 be approved as a correct record.

The draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 9 February 2021 were noted.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

5. ROAD SAFETY

The Chairman welcomed Mark Keeling, Strategic, Community Infrastructure Manager to the meeting.

Chairman's Initials

68/2019-21

Mark had very kindly agreed to join Members to offer advice on the options/actions that could be considered to reduce speeding and on-street parking across Cannock Chase.

Mark informed the Parish Council that he recognised that visitor numbers to Cannock Chase had increased significantly through the pandemic which had led to an increase in the number of complaints about people parking in inappropriate and dangerous places.

Mark explained the different measures that could be used to reduce traffic issues:

Traffic Regulation Orders – Double yellow lines

A Traffic Regulation Order is a legal order which allows the highway authority to regulate the speed, movement and parking of vehicles. This would include measures such as speed limits, double yellow lines, weight restrictions and parking restrictions. There is a legal process to go through which takes a number of months because of the consultations that have to be undertaken. The District Council, parish councils, residents, police and utility services are all consulted followed by an advertising period. The process can be costly depending on the size of the scheme with five to six thousand pounds being standard. Most issues are identified by the community, noted by the County Council and prioritised in consultation with the County Councillor for the area. Accidents and injuries are also taken into consideration.

Once the Traffic Regulation Order has been introduced it becomes enforceable and the County Council has its own Civic enforcement team in partnership with Stoke on Trent (Clear Streets). In Staffordshire, moving Traffic Orders are enforced by the police and on street parking restrictions are enforced by Staffordshire County Council. The Police will deal with dangerous parking.

Trenches were considered a good idea and a good alternative to yellow lines.

Parking Permits

Parking permits prevent parking by motorists without a permit (residential permit) in designated areas. They are usually used in heavily parked areas such as houses adjacent to town centres or railway stations. The County Council do not generally place them in rural areas. There are associated costs as the scheme costs are passed on to residents who would be expected to contribute to both the scheme and the cost of a permit. Permits usually cost £50 annually. The number of permits available depend on the road space and other factors such as whether there are businesses on the street. The process is detailed on Staffordshire County Council's website. There is only one scheme in Cannock (Victoria Street) which works quite well. Mark said that he is not sure parking permits would suit a rural area because most of the cars are off street and residents would not necessarily want to pay for a permit. If residents do not want to pay for permits the scheme will not pay.

Mark advised the Council that Traffic Regulation Orders were the better option in respect of preventing parking but there is a balance to be struck as the County Council do not want to urbanise the Chase with too many double yellow lines. There are other options to consider such as installation of ditches which are successful in preventing parking. The County are however looking at the option of extending the yellow lines near to Go Ape.

The Parish Council agreed that the on-street parking issues needed to be taken on board alongside the car parking review arrangements. The Council said that it needed a voice on this issue as the parking situation was atrocious. The top of Kingsley Wood Road (which was cut off without public consultation) gets filled with parked cars regularly. The Police visit the area and have been helpful.

The Parish Council expressed the opinion that parking issues extend across the whole of Cannock Chase including Rifle Range Corner, Birches Valley (Go Ape), Slitting Mill and Stafford Brook Road (which gives great cause for concern when on street parking prevents moving traffic from getting through). This situation is considered to warrant double yellow lines in this area along with the area near Go Ape.

The Chairman asked that the Parish Council be included as a consultee on the parking review as the issue is very important to residents on both sides of the Chase.

Mobile Speed Cameras

The Chairman advised Mark that the mobile speed camera had visited Bower Lane and the Council would like it to visit Stafford Brook Road which would also monitor lorries going in and out the quarry.

Mark advised the Council that he would add Stafford Brook Road (the section between Penkrige Bank Road and Rugeley Quarry) to the list. He said he had also been looking at Go Ape and the area around Marquis Drive down to Brindley Village.

Mark explained that the camera vans have to have a safe place to park, and Members stated that a safe place had been identified and forwarded to the Safer Roads Partnership. There is a wide verge in Stafford Brook Road which is a good position as vehicles gather speed at this point.

Mark said that he would clarify the positioning of the speed van with the Safer Roads Partnership and would also enquire about Brindley Heath Road.

Other Issues

The Council expressed concerns about their expectation that parking problems will worsen with staycations being the norm this year.

Mark explained that the County was going through the Traffic Management Plans with various organisations to prepare for the Commonwealth Games. He said he would keep the Council up to date with progress.

Parish Councillors expressed the view that guidelines/rules/regulations should be reviewed and updated from time to time to accommodate changing patterns of living. As an example, there are a greater number of considerations before approval can be given for a mobile speed camera to visit a 40mph zone as compared with a 30mph zone. Delays will lead to situations getting out of hand on the ground as there is already conflict happening.

It was concluded that Staffordshire County Council, Forestry England, Cannock Chase AONB and the Police should collectively look at the big picture, communicate and adapt to changing needs and requirements.

At the end of the item Mark was thanked for his attendance before leaving the meeting.

6. POLICE REPORTS

No Police report was available.

7. PROGRESS REPORTS/UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

It was reported that Staffordshire County Council’s Environmental Advice Manager had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Council.

8. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman informed the Council that the Trustees of Etching Hill had lost their funding from Natural England and were looking to form an alliance with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. They were planning to arrange a meeting to establish whether the Trust would be willing to apply for grants on the Charity’s behalf. The Chairman also said there had been problems with people using the field without permission, which has been difficult to manage.

9. PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY

The Council discussed the arrangements for filling the parish councillor vacancy.

Resolved: That a physical meeting be arranged on Monday 17 May 2021, at the Church hall of the Church of the Holy Spirit, to meet applicants for the Parish Councillor vacancy.

It was confirmed that two applications had so far been received with an expression of interest from a third enquirer.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

a. Items of Interest/Requiring a Response

The following items of incoming post were considered:

Dignity in Care Awards – An email (dated 3 February 2021) from the Quality & Market Development Team at Staffordshire County Council advised that the County had opened nominations for this year’s awards.

The Staffordshire Dignity in Care Awards recognises groups and individuals who care for or support the vulnerable and who treat everyone with dignity, kindness, respect and compassion. Nominations are welcomed from anyone receiving care and support in Staffordshire, their families, friends, or those who provide support and care to Staffordshire citizens.

Members considered cases worthy of consideration and the Chairman invited Members to put their nominations forward to the Clerk.

b. Consultations

Cannock Chase District Council’s Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal

An email (dated 19 March 2021) from the Planning Policy Team advises that Cannock Chase Council is consulting on the Cannock Chase Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal. The closing date is 30 April 2021.

Members expressed strong views about not wanting to see the AONB, which covers the whole of the parish, developed. Sustainability is also important to ensure the area is managed and protected from harm. This includes cyclist paths etc. Concerns were also expressed about the Green Belt being eroded.

Members believed that infrastructure was not being expanded and enhanced to accommodate growing need.

The Chairman asked that Councillors forward their individual comments to the Clerk for inclusion in a collective response to Cannock Chase Council. The response should be circulated to Members before the submission.

11. PARISH WARD ISSUES – CHASE SIDE

a. Rugeley Quarry

The Chairman informed Members that lorries were continuing to fail to stop at the quarry entrance and were driving straight out of the junction.

The Chairman expressed concern about shooting activity within the quarry grounds because of the risk to public safety.

The Council agreed that the issues should be raised at a future liaison meeting with quarry management when circumstances allow. The County Council could also be asked to take the matter up.

The Chairman said that after twenty plus years the Council still didn't know whether the Bird Club were going to be able to take a lease of the adjoining land.

Tree regrowth was discussed and the responsibility for taking action.

12. PARISH WARD ISSUES – BRINDLEY VILLAGE

The Council acknowledged that residents in Brindley Village were having the same issues with on street parking and vehicular speeding as those in the Penkridge Bank area.

13. CANNOCK CHASE FOREST

a. AONB Sustainable Development Fund

The Council noted that the Cannock Chase AONB Sustainable Development Fund was open for applications to 17 May 2021. The fund support projects that contribute to conserving, enhancing and raising awareness of the natural beauty of the AONB, its wildlife, heritage and communities.

Councillor Pearson informed the Council that the fund was being used to install signage around the RAF camp.

b. Support for Farmers and land managers

The AONB Development Officer advised (in an email dated 16 February) that changes are being introduced to agricultural support in the UK and Cannock Chase AONB Partnership want to help farmers and land managers in the AONB to prepare for them. He asked that a notice be shared with Councillors and residents who might farm or own land in the AONB.

14. INVITATION TO MEETINGS/EVENTS

The Council noted the invitation to attend a Cannock Chase Council's Community Working Group meeting on 20 April 2021.

15. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

- There was no Parish Council representative at the Community meeting on 19 March 2021. The discussion points had been obesity, a Covid Community Recovery Plan, Support for Council’s Declaration of a Poverty Emergency, Climate Change agenda, apps related to obesity and better health.
- Parish Clerk’s Meeting with the Acting Managing Director. A paper had been circulated with details of the content of the meeting which included the ‘Welcome Back Fund’ and preparations for the Commonwealth Games.

16. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

- Councillor Cotton informed the Council about his site visit to Four Oaks Farm, where he had been generously escorted on a tour by the business owner.

The camping side of the business will continue this season under permitted development rights. Potential changes in the operation may involve use of the furthest field from neighbouring residents and greater use of the outer perimeter. Wardens will be on site and terms and conditions applied in respect of visitor group sizes and activities such as BBQ equipment, and the playing of music. A copy of the rules will be shared with the parish council in due course.

The owner is proposing to plant a large number of trees (over 1000) on the site.

Members continued to express concern about use of the field for a 1500 car park facility to serve Forest Concert events. Forestry England has obtained permission to use the land for this purpose and will manage the operation with support of stewards and the Police. Shooting Butts Road will be closed to traffic arriving and opened again as a point of exit.

It was confirmed that the Forest Concerts had been cancelled in 2021.

17. 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 6 April 2021). The budget statement showed the current financial position of the Council with reserves totalling £17,126.86.

Resolved: To note the financial position of the Council.

b) Community Infrastructure Levy – Notice Board Project

The Council agreed that a site visit would be arranged to consider the best position for installation of a notice board which should be of hardwood construction and sited in the area around the Tackeroo car park (entrance to Bracken Close).

c) To confirm/authorise cheques for payment

100181 (Year 2020-21)	Trudy Williams	£661.05	Gross Salary Jan, Feb, March 2021 (Fourth quarter)
--------------------------	----------------	---------	---

Chairman’s Initials

100182 (Year 2020-21)	One Another Ministries	£30.00	Electricity for Defibrillator January to December 2021
100183 (year 2021-22)	SPCA	£229.00	Annual Subscription 2021-22

Resolved: To authorise payment of the cheques listed.

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

No additional information.

19. SCHEDULE OF NEW MEETING DATES AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 17 May, followed by the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting on Tuesday 25 May 2021.

The Chairman thanked all present for their attendance before closing the meeting.

Signed.....

Chairman, Mr. P. Adams

Date.....