

BRINDLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 31 JANUARY 2023 AT THE WHITE HOUSE, MARQUIS DRIVE, BRINDLEY HEATH

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

IN ATTENDANCE: PCSO Chad Carrington (to end of item 3 - Police Reports)
PCSO Emma Beady (to end of item 3 - Police Reports)
Ms G. Adams (Parish Clerk)
Mrs T. Williams (Parish Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor A. Pearson and Councillor Mrs S. Pearson.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

<u>Member</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
No interests were declared		

3. POLICE REPORTS

The Council noted the Police report (that had been issued prior to the meeting) with information on the work of Rugeley Neighbourhood Policing Team for the month of January 2023.

PCSO Chad Carrington and PCSO Emma Beady were welcomed to the meeting.

PCSO Carrington advised the Parish Council that the Police had increased their presence in the Etching Hill area after a spate of car thefts. The Police have a specific team dedicated to working on vehicle thefts and although resources are limited, have had some good results with a number of offenders locked up. The offenders are often career criminals who prowl the streets at all times of the day (not in the early hours as was traditional for burglary) looking for vehicles. They like high performance, Fords, and keyless vehicles that are vulnerable to theft through their key signal being picked up on an electronic device.

The PCSOs advised the Council that vehicle trackers were useful but varied in quality. Thieves either remove the tracker or drive and park somewhere leaving the vehicle for several days and returning to see whether it had been found. He recommended the use of Fereday pouches, traditional steering lock devices, camera doorbells, making sure properties were secure, having external lighting, and being generally vigilant. He also suggested advising vulnerable neighbours and being neighbourly.

PCSO Carrington advised the Council that there had been a vast increase in the numbers of electric (Surrion) motorcycles that operate at speeds like motorbikes and are illegal. The Police are undertaking an operation on Cannock Chase, working with their own off-road bikes. He said that policing in this field of work was difficult and urged people to take photographs (not approach anyone) as they are often recognisable with the same bikes and clothing.

The PCSOs advised the Council that the new Chief Constable had last year changed the Policing model, moving back to a traditional method of local policing. There are three neighbourhood teams, and five response shifts of varying (but adequate) numbers who exclusively cover Cannock and Rugeley. The Rugeley team consists of Liz Dale (PCSO), Chad Carrington (PCSO), Sean Nichols (PCSO), Wendy Garratt (PC) and Darren Wilkes (PC) who cover the Rugeley side of Cannock Chase. The Hednesford team, which includes PCSO Emma Beady, covers the Hednesford side of Cannock Chase including Marquis Drive. He said it was a well policed area with officers sometimes coming from other areas such as South Staffordshire.

Staffordshire Police have the Rural Wildlife Team operating on Cannock Chase which PCSO Carrington is a part of. The team is working with Environmental Health who have been visiting Cannock Chase in relation to dog fouling. They check dog microchips and are supporting work in relation to off road motorbikes as well.

The Chairman informed the Parish Council that some people arrive purposefully to use the Chase as a dog fouling area and he hoped the County Council will re-dig the ditches when addressing the public car parks, as a deterrent against on street parking in inappropriate places.

PCSO Carrington advised the Council that police related matters should not be reported to officers directly, except for repeat issues they know about (such as motorbikes). He said the Force were no longer using Facebook and Twitter as a means for the general public to report incidents and crimes. From today (31 January 2023) reports should be made via live chat on Staffordshire Police's website, or by telephone to 999 and the non-emergency 101.

Cllr Sutherland said that there was a need to publicise that Facebook was no longer in use for reporting and would feed the decision back to County Councillors. Facebook had been seen as an accessible and successful way of contacting Staffordshire Police.

Councillor Turville asked Officers about tackling the issue of cyclists riding on the highway without lights and wearing dark clothing. This was a difficult issue to deal with as resources are stretched. Educating children and giving advice to cyclists where seen are generally the courses of action taken. Any incidents occurring may well be seen as the cyclists own fault, but cases are assessed on an individual basis.

Councillors asked about the safety statistic (of eleven) which are usually mental health related including concern for loved ones. Mental health related work puts the biggest demand on Police resources at present as mental health services are also stretched.

PCSO Carrington and PCSO Beady advised the Council that there had been 7 road traffic accidents in January but were not aware of serious collisions thankfully. They said the deer alerts had worked well over the previous two years although the deer were now getting used to them.

The Chairman asked the officers if they would continue sending a police report, in the event they were unable to attend future parish meetings, if possible.

The Chairman thanked PCSO Chad Carrington and PCSO Emma Beady for their time before leaving the meeting.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

5. MINUTES OF LAST MEETINGS

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2022 be approved as a correct record.

The draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 29 November 2022 were noted.

6. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Shared Service Agreement Going Ahead

The Parish Council noted that Cannock Chase Council and Stafford Borough Council had agreed to share nearly all their services after proposals had been approved by Councillors of both councils and the Local Government Association.

The Borough and District Councils have shared a number of back-office services for more than a decade and will be combining all remaining services apart from the running of elections and the council housing stock at Cannock Chase. The decision was aimed at improving service provision while saving taxpayers around £1.2 million.

Councillor Sutherland advised the Council that the front of house services will not be affected, and officers will remain in Cannock. He said the sharing of their Chief Executive had worked well following a secondment. The Chief Executive was very experienced, knowledgeable, accessible and the Council was considered to be in a better place than expected.

Councillor Sutherland explained that the Council was moving to a new way of working. The office line will be going through to officers’ mobile phones from 1 April 2023 with landlines removed from desks. Receptionists will continue to operate the main switchboard and be available in person to deal with enquiries in the reception. They are using social media to reach members of the public.

The Council discussed waste services and the issues with blue bags and bins.

7. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no report.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

a. Items of Post

Free room hire at Pye Green Community Centre

The Chief Officer at Hednesford Town Council advised (in an email dated 29 December 2022) that meeting room 2 at Pye Green Community Centre was available free of charge to constituted, community and non-profit groups. Terms and conditions apply, and groups will need to state how use of the free facility will benefit the residents of Hednesford.

Pre-loved Uniform Market

The Library Development Officer at Staffordshire County Council advised (in an email dated 25 January 2023) that the Pre-Loved Uniform Market was back in February for families to take advantage of donated school uniforms.

The next markets are on Wednesday 22 and Thursday 23 February between 10am and 3pm at the Salvation Army in Anglesey Street, Hednesford.

Neighbourhood Watch

The Volunteer Development Lead for Staffordshire Area Neighbourhood Watch (in an email dated 18 January 2023) was looking for assistance from parish councils in getting watch schemes started. He will offer support to each scheme and hopes to recruit coordinators from each district to form an association for Staffordshire Neighbourhood Watch Area.

The Parish Council noted the information but didn't nominate volunteers to the scheme. The Chairman suggested the community pages on Facebook would be just as effective.

Health and Social Care Partners across Staffordshire

An email (dated 9 January 2023) from Health and social care partners across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent advises the Parish Council that they are looking at how health and social care can work better together and to assist in the development of a strategy built on prevention, people and communities, personalized care, personal responsibility, and productivity. The Partners would like to engage with community groups in a face-to-face setting or a physical or online meeting.

The Chairman advised the Council that he believed the system was in chaos with insufficient trained staff to deliver the services.

The Council noted the information from Health and Social Care Partners.

b. Consultations

Boundary Commission for England's Review of Staffordshire County Council Division Boundaries

The Parish Council considered a Boundary Commission for England review of division boundaries for Staffordshire County Council.

A link to the Review documentation had been provided with the agenda for the meeting and the Council noted that the closing date for consultation responses was 20 March 2023.

The Commission stated that it was minded recommending that the Council had 62 councillors in the future and was asking for help on where the boundaries should be drawn.

Councillor Sutherland advised the Parish Council that the County Council had made its submission and was projecting no change.

Resolved: That the Parish Council notes the Boundary Commission for England's Staffordshire County Division Consultation and has no comments to make at this stage.

Boundary Commission for England's Review of Cannock Chase Council's District Ward Boundaries

The Parish Council considered a Boundary Commission for England Review of Cannock Chase Council's District War Boundaries and noted the recommendation to have 36 Councillors (five fewer than there are now) and 12 wards (three fewer than there are now). The boundaries of all existing wards should change except for Norton Canes. There will be twelve three-Councillor wards, across the district.

Councillor Sutherland advised the Council that meetings between the District Council and Boundary Commission had taken place and it had been agreed that the district couldn't be divided any more. They want to retain the hamlets of Slitting Mill, Etching Hill and don't think from a boundary point of view the Brindley Heath parish will be impacted. It was thought that Hagley might cease to be a district and that Rugeley will have three district wards: Western Springs, Brereton & Ravenhill and Etching Hill.

Resolved: That after considering the recommendations for new wards, ward boundaries and ward names for Cannock Chase the Parish Council accepts them, expressing the view that there will be little impact on the Brindley Heath parish.

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Board's Consultation on the provision of inpatient mental health services

An update from the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Board (email dated 20 January 2023) was noted.

The Council concluded that there was a definite issue with inadequate resources around mental health services and a lot of Police time was taken up with these cases.

Cllor Sutherland advised the Council that he was involved with a patient participation group and didn't feel the Clinical Commissioning Group were attentive to their views.

The Parish Council concluded that mental health services were in trouble but there was little that local councils could do to support improvement.

9. PARISH ISSUES – CHASE SIDE

No issues were discussed.

10. PARISH WARD ISSUES – BRINDLEY VILLAGE

The Parish Council noted Staffordshire County Council's notice of a proposal for a 40mph speed limit on the A460 Rugeley Road from 158 metres north of the junction with Walkers Rise to the existing 30/60 speed limit change approximately 65m north of the junction with Station Road.

11. CANNOCK CHASE FOREST

a. Cannock Chase AONB

The Parish Council noted (from an email dated 25 January 2023) the details of the Cannock Chase AONB Conference on Wednesday 8 March 2023 (from 9.30am to 3.00pm at Brocton Hall Golf Club). The provisional programme for the event had been attached.

Councillor Mrs Turville was interested in attending the conference but was unsure whether transport to the event would be available to her.

b. Ironman Competition

Some time ago County Councillor Mrs Wilson had been asked by the Parish Council for information on the County Council's income and expenditure for the Ironman competition as the Parish Council had wanted to know in monetary terms how the competition was beneficial to the County and District.

Councillor Mrs Wilson did not supply any figures but did refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer at Ironman in respect of getting answers to the parish council's request for the cycle route

to be varied to limit the inconvenience caused to Brindley Heath residents every year on competition day.

Resolved: That the Parish Council invites the Ironman Chief Executive to a meeting of the Parish Council after the Parish Elections in May 2023.

12. INVITATION TO MEETINGS/EVENTS

The following upcoming (external) meetings/ invitations were noted:

- Annual AONB Conference on Wednesday 8 March 2023 at Brocton Hall Golf Club

Councillor Mrs Turville was interested in attending the conference if transport was available to her.

- Cannock Chase Council Standards Committee meeting on Monday 24 April 2023.

Councillor Turville noted the meeting date as the Parish Council's representative.

13. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

- a. To share information on meetings attended

There were no reports.

- b. The parish representatives to outside bodies reported on the meetings they had attended:

Slitting Mill Village Hall (M. Sutherland)

Councillor Sutherland advised the Council that things were progressing very well with bookings back up and repairs getting dealt with. The gates for one have been refitted.

Etching Hill Village Hall (D. Cotton)

Councillor Cotton informed the Council that the Etching Hill Village Hall was going from strength to strength.

Chetwynd Charity (P. Adams)

Councillor Adams reported that he had been in consultation with the secretary and treasurer about how long the charity could keep going because of an insufficient number of applicants for grant funding. Grants consisted of £80 a year for three years.

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

Councillor Adams advised that the charity didn't know what Cannock Chase Council were going to do about the lease on the football pitch and the cutting of the hedge and the lawns.

Councillor Sutherland offered to make enquiries on these points.

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

Councillor Adams reported that the Charity had had to handover management to Staffordshire wildlife Trust because English Nature would not award grants directly anymore. Funding will be achieved after an in-depth process has been followed with Staffordshire Wildlife including a lengthy written agreement.

Longdon Cotton Alms-Houses (P. Adams to 2024)

Councillor Adams advised the Council that all houses were up to specification, and all was going well.

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

Councillor Turville reported that no meeting had taken place and the next one was scheduled for 24 April 2023.

Cannock Chase AONB Conference (A. Pearson & Mrs M. A. Turville)

The Cannock Chase AONB Conference would be held on Wednesday 8 March 2023.

14. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

There were no reports given under this item.

15. 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 31 January 2023). The budget statement showed the current financial position of the Council with reserves totalling £17,545.58.

Resolved: To note the financial position of the Council.

b) Parish Notice Board

This item is ongoing while a notice board at a reasonable cost is being sourced.

c) To authorise cheques for payment

100212	The White House	£30.00	Donation for use of room for parish meeting on 31 January 2023
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Resolved: To authorise payment of the cheques listed.

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

Councillor Turville asked whether it would be possible to arrange for the Community First Responders to deliver a basic training session on CPR.

Councillor Cotton said that he would make enquiries about arranging a session to take place prior to the start of a future parish meeting at 7.00pm.

17. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.

18. STAFFING ITEM

The Council considered a matter relating to staffing.

Resolved: That the Council take steps to recruit a Parish Clerk and Proper Officer initially on a temporary basis.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday 4 April 2023 (subsequently changed to 28 March 2023).

The Chairman thanked everyone present for their attendance.

Signed.....

Chairman, Mr P. Adams

Date.....