

BRINDLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2012 AT THE WHITE HOUSE, MARQUIS DRIVE, BRINDLEY HEATH 7.00PM

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. D. Ballett (Member of the Public)
Mrs. T. Williams (Clerk)

The Chairman welcomed Duncan Rollo (Partnerships Manager for Staffordshire Police) to the meeting to talk about his role in managing crime and anti-social behaviour around Cannock Chase.

Duncan explained his responsibilities which are to provide a link between the Police service and public bodies (such as Probation Service, Fire & Rescue Service, and local authorities), community groups, organisations and members of the public. He works for Chief Inspector Carl Ratcliffe at Cannock LPT, acting as a voice and representative for Carl and his team. His area or patch straddles three policing units – South Staffs, Stafford and Cannock.

Duncan works more around vulnerability and prevention than directly with crime, on matters such as council related anti-social behaviour, promoting community safety/issues on the roads, lewd behaviour on the Chase and other community policing matters. Management through education is a key feature of his work, as is acting as a sign post and facilitator for directing issues and concerns to the right people (responsible organisation).

He is involved with 'Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership' and Cannock Chase Council's Community Partnership Team. Duncan also sources grant funding for projects from organisations such as the Coalfields Regeneration Trust.

Some of the local issues discussed were:

- There is a 'no cruising' injunction around Cannock and a speed awareness initiative
- Powers under S.59 Road Traffic Act 1988 (vehicles used in a manner which causes alarm, distress or annoyance)
- Poaching on the Chase – Police protocol requires specialised officers to attend in pairs which causes delays in getting to the scene
- Forestry Commission – Concert issues and not shutting gates properly (Duncan offered to speak to his colleague Michelle Denny about the gates matter. It may be possible to resolve this with the use of County locks)
- Kingsley Wood Road – Youths parking up for drinking sessions in cars and then driving off at speed. Also abandoned vehicles and litter problems
- Motorbikes on disused land within Cemex Quarry site – Michelle Denny is liaising with the Quarry Manager
- Reviews of some Chase car parks known to be anti-social behaviour hotspots – looking at closure

- New signage is being installed on some Chase car parks (sponsored by Police Mutual Society)
- Roads around the Chase being used as race tracks (Rugeley Road and others). Cruising injunction will impact on this

Despite the issues discussed Duncan advised that Cannock District is one of the safest places in the County to live.

At the end of the presentation the Chairman thanked Duncan for the insight into the nature of his work and community initiatives he is involved with. Duncan left the meeting at this point (before the first agenda item began).

1. APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr J. Wilkes and Mr P. Bishop (working a shift).

2. INTERESTS & DISPENSATIONS

- a) The new Code of Conduct (with minimal amendment for Parish Council use) was signed by the Chairman.
- b) The definitions of Personal, Pecuniary and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (supplied to District Council members) were noted for reference.
- c) Parish Councils are now responsible for determining requests for dispensations by Parish Councillors under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011. In certain circumstances Councillors may be granted a dispensation to enable them to take part in Council business where this would otherwise be prohibited because they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI).

Advice from SPCA states that Councillors who live within the Parish and liable to pay Council tax, are considered to have a DPI on matters relating to the setting of the Council's annual budget and precept. However, Parish Councils (or their Clerks with delegated powers) may grant dispensations to enable participation in discussion at meetings and to participate in voting where it is considered that:

- So many members of the decision making body have DPI's that it would impede the transaction of the business; or
- The authority considers that the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area; or
- It is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

Written dispensation requests were received from Cllor Adams, Cllor Cotton and Cllor Pearson.

Resolved: To grant a dispensation up until the next ordinary election to Cllor Adams, Cllor Cotton and Cllor Pearson to enable these members who live within the Parish, to participate in any discussion and vote on all matters concerning the setting of the Council's budget and annual precept.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 9 October 2012 were approved as a true record.

4. PROGRESS REPORTS/UPDATES FROM LAST MEETING

- a) Environmental/wildlife habitat and plant enquiries to Cemex

Cllor Adams will continue with attempts to make contact with the Site Manager Gareth Fenna.

b) Outstanding Repairs & Improvements

It was reported that the verge repair on Stafford Brook Road had been completed speedily and to a good standard by County Highways. However, the recent heavy rain has damaged the work and part of its construction has been washed away. It was agreed that the damage would be reported and a suggestion made that support is needed at the back.

The condition of the derelict land situated on the corner of Taylors Lane/Bow Street may have improved as reports have been received that it has been cleared. The Chairman will view the site to confirm.

c) Noise Monitoring Results from Forest Concerts

The monitoring results for the concerts held on 29 and 30 June 2012 have been received in a report compiled by Chris Richardson from Cannock Chase Council (dated 24 July 2012). He states that noise levels and timings were all compliant with the code of practice and the premises licence conditions.

d) Reduction in Speed Limit around Cannock Chase

It was confirmed that a letter (dated 30 October 2012) has been sent to the County Highways Department in support of Brereton & Ravenhill Parish Councils campaign for a reduction in the speed limit on the east side of Cannock Chase. It was also stated that Brindley Heath Parish Council would like to see a speed limit reduction to the whole of Cannock Chase where roads are not already within a 40mph restriction.

An email has been received from Peter Davies (Clerk to Brereton & Ravenhill PC) saying 'thank you'.

The matter will be confirmed in writing to Duncan Rollo in the hope that he can assist with the cause of securing a reduction in the speed limit throughout the AONB.

e) Any other matters not covered elsewhere on the agenda

None

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

No report

6. CORRESPONDENCE

a) Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence

All incoming and outgoing correspondence was noted from the Clerks Report.

b) Items of Particular Interest/Items Requiring a Response

The following items of post were considered:

- Best Kept Village Competition 2013 – The invitation from John Perry (Chairman of the BKV Working Group) dated 10 October 2012 was noted.
- Staffordshire County Council's Street Lighting Initiative – An update letter (16 October 2012) was noted.

It was confirmed that Steve Bradbury (Lighting & ITS Manager) has been informed that the Council do not wish to consider the introduction of part night street lights. There are very few lights in the Parish and for safety reasons would not want them turned off or dimmed.

- Community Focus on Ice Busters – Invitation to take part in the County Council's 'Ice Busters – Winter Footway Treatments Initiative' was noted. No potential sites were identified for de-icing treatment.

- Rugeley Town Council's Musical Extravaganza on 16 December 2012 – a courtesy email has been sent to Naazlin Somaní thanking the Town Council for its invitation (which was open to all Parish Council members).

Resolved: All items of correspondence were noted and appropriate responses (as above) confirmed.

c) Consultations

None

7. PLANNING

a) Planning Comments Referred to the District Council

CH/12/0324 Silver Trees Holiday Park, Rugeley – Retention of perimeter fencing

Comments forwarded to the District Council in a letter dated 12 October 2012

CH/12/0167 Birchwood, Kingsley Wood Road, Rugeley – Change of use of residential dwelling to residential dwelling and cattery business with outdoor boarding cattery in existing outbuilding, with associated office APPEAL

Copies of original planning objections and observations were forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate on 15 October 2012.

Resolved: To confirm the observations and actions taken by the Parish Council's Planning Committee on the proposed developments listed.

b) New Planning Applications Received

CH/12/0413 Penkridge Bank Cottage, Penkridge Bank Road, Rugeley – Erection of domestic stables & summer house in rear amenity space

The site of the dwelling is considered to be overdeveloped, and although the stables will be situated in the rear garden of the property, it will be visible from Stafford Brook Road (across the field).

Resolved: To object to this planning application as the site is already considered overdeveloped and not in keeping with the area.

c) Planning Decisions made by the District Council

No planning decisions have been received

d) Report on Cannock Chase Council's Planning Presentation on 22 November 2012

The three main areas covered by the Planning Presentation were:

- Local protocol for planning decision making – summarising planning comments in Committee reports was discussed along with a request for the District Council to make automatic submissions to Committee of all cases with Parish Council objections. District Council Officers advised that Parish Councils are treated the same as all other consultees and are expected to contact a District Councillor for 'call in' of a decision to the Planning Control Committee. A parish representative may also attend a meeting to make a verbal presentation on a case. District Officers agreed to reflect on the comments made - after the meeting.
- Neighbourhood Planning Process – this item was covered at length.
- Cannock Chase District Draft Local Plan (Part 1) 2012 – Final version of the Plan will be made public in early 2013 to be taken forward to examination in the summer of 2013.

Resolved: The information was noted, along with the written comment made to Mr. Heminsley on the point of summarising the Parish Council's planning comments (forwarded to him by email prior to the Planning Presentation Event).

- e) To determine whether to investigate the benefits of a Neighbourhood Plan in Brindley Heath

Resolved: To consider this matter further after studying the content of the final draft of the District Council's new Local Plan (to be made public at the beginning of 2013).

8. CASUAL VACANCY

The 14 day statutory notice of the vacancy has been displayed, and confirmation received from the District Council that no residents have called for an election. Authorisation has thus been given for the vacancy to be filled through co-option.

An 'Expression of Interest' notice has been advertised on the notice board for a period of five weeks and two written applications have been received.

Resolved: That the application period is now closed and arrangements made to interview two candidates - Mr Phil Bishop (written application received on 7 November 2012) and Mr David Ballett (written application received on 11 December 2012) in January 2013.

9. CANNOCK CHASE & AONB MATTERS

- a) The Wildlife Trust's 'Connecting Cannock Chase' project. The details of this project were noted in a letter dated 11 October 2012 from Bernadette Noake, Biodiversity Officer at Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (copied to all members).
- b) AONB Calendar of Volunteering & Awareness Days 2013. This schedule of events was noted (copied to all members).
- c) Councillor Adams reported that, in response to his previous letter, he had received an invitation to meet with Councillor Mrs Beatty MBE (Chairman of the AONB Joint Committee) to discuss the issues raised. He had been given specific dates which were not convenient; but indicated that he would at some stage in the future meet up with her.

Resolved: To note the information on matters relating to the AONB and Cannock Chase.

10. KINGSLEY WOOD ROAD

The Chairman reported that the people riding mini and midi motorbikes on land in a disused area of the quarry site were being investigated by PC Michelle Denny. She has made contact with the Quarry Manager and taken a tour around the site with him. The County Council and Natural England are reluctant to take preventative action on the matter (planting may have been an effective solution).

Resolved: To note the update.

11. ROAD MARKINGS AT THE JUNCTION OF STAFFORD BROOK ROAD AND PENKRIDGE BANK ROAD

Councillor Cotton reported that he had witnessed a number of near collisions at this junction caused by motorists overtaking vehicles slowing to turn into Stafford Brook Road. A third vehicle pulling out from Stafford Brook Road may not at that moment see or anticipate the overtaking car. A call was made for no overtaking lines to be painted on Penkridge Bank Road to improve safety along this section of road.

It was also noted that Lorries heading to and from Cemex Quarry loop out onto the opposite side of the road when turning into and out of Stafford Brook Road.

Resolved: To report the Council's safety concerns about this junction to the Highways Department and also to confirm the details in writing to Duncan Rollo.

12. OLD QUARRY ENTRANCE ON RUGELEY ROAD (A460)

Cllr Pearson confirmed that the skip company who has been depositing skips here is continuing to do so despite contact from the County Council's Network Management Team insisting they refrain. Gillian Rogers has confirmed that the quarry entrance is adopted highway and that dropping skips without a permit constitutes a breach of licensing responsibilities and a potential fine. She has asked that the Parish Council (or others) notify her of further instances and she will put the wheels in motion for her Inspector to investigate.

Mark Keeling, Community Infrastructure Liaison Manager at the County Council has offered to arrange for the earth mound to be moved towards the road, but suggested leaving a lay-by sized area to enable drivers to continue parking up. This would prevent the dropping of skips but leave a stopping/parking facility.

After consultation with Cllr Pearson, Mark was advised that neighbouring properties would not be in favour of the retention of a lay-by as the on-going parking of vehicles will continue to create opportunities for the dropping of litter, fly tipping and other nuisances. Mark was asked if he could consider devising a solution which does not involve retention of a lay-by. A response to this request is awaited.

The District Council has supplied the conditions for the County Planning Permission awarded for 'Extension of time for infilling and restoring a northern portion of Hednesford Quarry- Rugeley Road, Hednesford' (reference: CH.93/552 dated 5 April 1994).

It was agreed that an enquiry be made to the County Planning Department about the reason the planning condition 20 (vi) was not fulfilled. The entrance has not been 'grubbed up' and the ground restored. Remedial works have not been done.

Resolved: To continue with enquiries to the District and County Councils to secure a solution to the nuisance and unsightly appearance of the former quarry entrance site.

13. INVITATIONS TO MEETINGS

The forthcoming Community Forum Meeting dates were noted (Hednesford on 4 March 2013 and Brereton & Rugeley on 11 March 2013).

Resolved: To note the dates of the Community Forum meetings.

14. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

- a) Standards Board Meeting on 3 December 2012. Cllr Pearson gave a report. Cllr R. Turville had been unable to attend on this occasion.
- b) Hednesford and Brereton & Rugeley Community Forums – Cllr Pearson reported on the Hednesford Forum.
- c) AONB Parish Councils' Meeting on 22 November 2012. No report.
- d) Clerks Meeting with Chief Executive on 27 November 2012. Trudy Williams attended this meeting and gave a brief report on some of the items discussed.
- e) Stafford & Cannock Chase Hospitals Question Time on 4 December 2012. No specific report.
- f) Any other meetings attended – No reports.

15. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr David Ballett had been introduced to members of the Council earlier in the meeting (item 8).

16. FINANCE

a) Update on Financial Position of the Council

The HSBC account balance at 12 November 2012 is £4704.66 (includes second precept instalment).

Resolved: To note the financial position of the Council.

b) Risk Assessment

The Risk Assessment approved on 5 July 2011 has been reviewed by the Clerk, and as no changes to the Council's activity have occurred, does not require any updates or amendments at the present time.

Resolved: To verify that the Risk Assessment approved on 5 July 2011 continues to adequately address the risks and current activities of the Council.

c) Budgetary considerations and provisional setting of the precept for 2013-14

Resolved: To defer the item to the next meeting in January 2013.

d) Request for a donation from two charities: Cruse Bereavement Care and Vitalise (essential breaks for disabled people)

Resolved: To decline a request for a donation as the work of both charities is not considered to be directly local to Brindley Heath Parish.

e) Cheques for Payment

100019	The White House	£25.00	Room hire for meeting on 11 December 2012
100020	SPCA	£40.00	SPCA Training Courses x 2. Precepts & Annual Returns (24 October 2012) and Internal Audit & the Parish Council (21 November 2012)
100021	Trudy Williams	£347.14	Salary October & November 2012. Postage £1.20, Stationery £4.80 (2 reams of paper)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£412.14	

Resolved: To authorise payment of the cheques listed.

17. SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES

Resolved: The next meeting will be arranged on 15 January 2013 (7pm) and the one after that provisionally set for 19 March 2013 (7.30pm).

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

None

19. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday 15 January 2013 at The White House, Marquis Drive, Brindley Heath. The start time will be 7pm and the agenda will be limited to essential items to include the setting of the budget and precept, and appointment of a new member to the Council.

The Chairman thanked all present for their attendance, wished everyone a Merry Christmas and declared the meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed.....

Chairman, Mr. P. Adams

Date.....

Chairman's Initials

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