

# **BRINDLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2016  
AT THE WHITE HOUSE, MARQUIS DRIVE, BRINDLEY HEATH  
7.00PM**

**PRESENT:** Parish Councillors: P. Adams (Chairman)  
Mrs M. A. Turville  
R. Turville (vice Chairman)  
A. Pearson  
D. Cotton  
Ms S. Wilkes  
Miss J. Wilkins

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Trevor Warburton (for presentation at start)  
Robert Lugar (for presentation item)  
Debby Lugar (for presentation item)  
Mrs T. Williams (Clerk)

For the first 45 minutes of the meeting (prior to the start of the formal agenda), Trevor Warburton, Secretary to Friends of Cannock Chase, delivered a presentation about Rugeley Great War Camp (1914-18) and military hospital which later became Brindley Village.

Army manoeuvres have been happening on Cannock Chase since Napoleonic times and consideration had been given to building a camp at that time but the plans had been shelved. Germany had been preparing for war since before 1899 when conscription started. They had 800,000 regular soldiers and 3.6 million reservists in 1914. The UK had 236,000 soldiers and territorials and conscription had not started until 1916 when vast numbers of volunteers came forward. Military camps were built to accommodate them all around the country and Cannock Chase was one of the larger ones built after Lord Anglesey offered the land. A company in Wolverhampton was subcontracted to build the camp. The accommodation consisted of wooden huts (which came in construction kits built by 1000 labourers). They were different sizes for different functions and the materials were brought in by traction colliery engine. The infrastructure developed around the camp included a light railway, water tanks, sewage works (one in Kingsley Wood Road and one on top of Brindley Valley) and a road network. The roads accommodated the movement of the troops and were constructed with Slag from the foundries in Stoke on Trent and the Black Country. Electricity came from the Cannock and Rugeley Railway Colliery business. The camp incorporated a Sergeants hut (accommodating 12), Officers quarters, Social hut (every battalion line had a band), regimental institute (which was the largest structure), troop huts (28 men in), parade ground, Army Service Core with cook houses and field ovens that made bread. Church of England Men's Society provided relaxation areas for soldiers with libraries, concerts and Wesleyan huts (YMCA number 1 and 2). Men were taught how to fight. They became physically fit and were taught how to use a gun, dig trenches, how to storm them and how to destroy them. There was musketry, gas warfare, grenade practice, signalling, reconnaissance, machine gun fire practice, and gauging range. The Sniper school here was the first and considered the finest one in the country.

Trevor projected a number of old pictures on the wall and talked through each one. He also displayed maps and identified the whereabouts of various archaeological remains of the camps including the rifle ranges and trenches. Fantastic walks can be taken to see the remains of the rifle ranges of which there are eight: A (lots of bullets are evident), B (badly damaged), C, D (best one - pristine), E (modified since the great war), F (narrow valley), G, (short range), H (now only half the distance it originally was).

The earthwork remains of a trench, a quarter scale 'Trench Model System' survives (which may be given monument status in the future) is located near Rifle Range Corner, by the Tackeroo Camp Site. This is raised rather than dug down. There is also a concrete pad there which was once an Ordnance Depot for Rugeley Camp. There are a number of trench systems which survive across Cannock Chase and there are the remains (concrete foundations) of bathhouses (20 shower cubicles) on the 20 battalion lines. The best preserved one is at number one battalion line.

The Hospital was in operation from 1916. Until then the cottage hospital in Rugeley and Sister Dora's in Brocton were used. Major injuries went to the local general infirmary. The entrance was sited near Brindley Village Car Park. Wards were the length of three huts tied together and incorporated covered walkways. They were supposed to accommodate 1000 beds. Only ward number one has foundations remaining today. The site incorporated a Petrol store, Royal Army Medical Core barracks, church, dining room, power station, mortuary, isolation ward, operating theatres, nurses quarters. There was a mixture of staff which were military and volunteers (from St John, Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachments).

The hospital closed in 1924 and West Cannock Colliery Company Ltd quickly took over the site and converted the buildings into homes. The first six wards were demolished as well as the mortuary. People loved the village which incorporated a school up to 11 years, an active social club, youth club, Church, shop, store for caretakers. It had its own sewage works. There was a pecking order for who lived where as some buildings/huts were bigger than others.

Trevor spoke about the people who lived in the village and the life they enjoyed. A lot of Information was found in an old book that had been propping a table leg up in Hednesford. Ken Cavalot created a drawing of Brindley Village showing how the buildings were adapted into dwelling including who lived where and when people came and went, or upgraded into a better property.

Friends of Cannock Chase is in its third year of a project funded through Heritage Lottery Grant. During year one it employed a consultant who recruited volunteers. Every weekend the volunteers are available at Cannock Chase Visitor Centre (war hut) to share information and help people to understand and enjoy the rich heritage of the area. Walk Leaders have also been recruited to take people around Cannock Chase – they mainly have a Great War theme. This year there have been three bus tours and three Memory Days where members of the public were invited to come together at a venue to share their memories of the Chase or their relatives that lived through the Great War or served on the camps. One of these events became a virtual reunion of residents that were born in Brindley Village.

Trevor brought with him a number of books to browse, and a DVD that could be purchased about the camps and history of the area. He offered to supply some photographs for uploading on the website and information on the walks.

At the end of the presentation Trevor was thanked warmly for his time in sharing his extensive knowledge the parish, and after packing up his belongings left the meeting.

**1. APOLOGIES**  
No apologies

Chairman's Initials .....

**2. POLICE REPORTS**

No police officers were in attendance

**3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public were present.

**4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

To declare interests for this meeting:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
Cllor A. Pearson	Member of the District Council's Planning Control Committee	Personal

**5. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

**Resolved:** The minutes of the Meeting held on 15 November 2016 were approved as a true record.

**6. PROGRESS REPORTS/UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Raised under named items on agenda

**7. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Raised under other Items on agenda

**8. CORRESPONDENCE**

a) Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence

All correspondence was noted from the Clerks Report.

b) Items of Interest/Requiring a Response

The following items of incoming post were considered:

**Debt, Benefit and Consumer Advice** – Letter via email from County Councillor Alan White (dated Friday 25 November 2016). Spending controls have been introduced by Staffordshire County Council across all operations because £15 Million from the Better Care Fund has stopped. One of the services where savings could be made is Debt, Benefit and consumer advice (currently commissioned from Citizens Advice at a cost of £439K). Cllor White and colleagues are wishing to establish whether parish councils (and other agencies) would be prepared to contribute to the costs of funding these services from April 2017.

**Resolved:** To inform Cllor White that Brindley Heath Parish Council will not be in a position to contribute to the cost of providing debt, benefit and consumer advice services in Staffordshire. Its income (£4400 for the previous and next financial year) is small and residents are already facing a sharp increase in parish tax from 1 April 2017 due to the loss of Council Tax Support Grant.

**Response from HS2 Project Manager to HS2 enquiry** – email (dated 15 November 2016) from Sarah Mallen, HS2 Project Manager. The email was in response to an enquiry about the possibility of using local materials to construct the railway line (such as aggregate from Rugeley Quarry) when work commences in Staffordshire.

The HS2 procurement process (like that of all public bodies) is governed by EU Directives transposed into UK law (Utilities Contract Regulations 2016). These establish the procedures which public bodies must

follow during a tender exercise. HS2 Ltd's processes must not have the effect of distorting competition and must not result in a violation of the principles of non-discrimination and transparency. Bias is therefore not demonstrated on the basis of geography. In order to identify supply chain opportunities and prepare to compete for and win work on HS2, it is recommended that businesses follow three steps:

- view HS2 supply chain resources;
- register to access HS2 contract opportunities;
- send in questions and stay in touch.

Lots of links to information were provided in the email and the writer asked that it be noted that part of the evaluation of material import also relates to traffic assessment and consideration of the impact on neighbouring roads and communities.

**Resolved:** To note the information.

**Cannock Chase Council's Financial Recovery Plan** – Letter from Managing Director of Cannock Chase Council (dated 6 December 2016) with outcomes of the public consultation on Financial Recovery Plan.

The outcomes are contained in a 91-page document (cabinet Report). Page 35 has recorded Brindley Heath Parish Council as having objected to the proposed cessation of Council Tax Support Grant which is inaccurate as the response submitted (letter dated 31 August 2016) contained only comments. It was disappointing that the comments had not been enclosed with the Report to Cabinet Members. It appeared that the content of the letter had not been read.

**Resolved:** To contact the Policy Section (Robert Lamond) at Cannock Chase Council to point out that Brindley Heath Parish Council had not objected to removal/withdrawal of Council Tax Support Grant. The comments made were observations on its likely impact on the parish.

**SPCA Bulletins –**

- CAB has launched an online petition following notice by Staffordshire County Council to reduce financial support. CAB is asking for signatures urging that the decision is taken at a full meeting of the County Council.
- An update on the filming of meetings was provided. Members felt that as there was no obligation to record the whole of a meeting, recording sections of it could distort proceedings and outcomes which may be later taken out of context.
- Public Health England has published a Cold Weather Plan and details of this would be put on the parish council's website.

Cllor Cotton reported that he had received some good feedback about the quality of the parish council's website. He offered to assist with developing/enhancing it further, and it was agreed that pictures/information from tonight's presentation should be added to enhance the history pages.

**Resolved:** to note the information.

**Chetwynd's Charity** – letter (received after the agenda had been issued) asking for a charity donation.

**Resolved:** To put on item on the next agenda for consideration.

**Christmas Card** – a Christmas card from Amanda Milling MP was shown to members.

c) Consultations

No public consultations to report

**9. PUBLIC ACCESS DEFIBRILLATOR**

It was noted that a position for the defibrillator had been identified and agreed after a meeting between Robert and Debby Lugar and Jamie Richards of AEDdonate. The unit will be installed on the side wall of the White House building, facing Marquis Drive. There would be no backing board. A cheque for £1999 has been posted so that arrangements can be set in motion for the ordering and installation of the equipment.

The installation of defibrillators in other locations in the parish could be looked at as a future project; i.e. the telephone box on Stafford Brook road. It might be possible to achieve this through British Heart Foundation funding, but advice would first be sought from the local Community First Responders. The organisation only supplies and funds unlocked cabinets.

It was agreed that consideration would need to be given to the arrangements for publicity and recognition of sponsors and others who have been involved. AEDdonate had advised that as a guide the installation would should take around six weeks from the date the order is placed. It was pointed out by Cllor Pearson that purdah would need to be borne in mind in respect of an opening event and associated publicity given that there are elections in May 2017.

**Resolved:** To note that an order had been placed with AEDdonate for the defibrillator installation and that it would be necessary to decide the arrangements for publicity/launch event.

The Clerk was asked to investigate the costs of obtaining lapel badges for members. It was suggested that this incorporates a shield shape with a green and gold colour scheme.

**10. PLANNING**

a) Planning Comments Referred to the District Council

To confirm the observations made by the Parish Council's Planning Committee:

No observations have been submitted to the District Council and County Council since the last meeting.

b) New Planning Applications Received

**CH.16/08/709 M Rugeley Quarry, Wolseley Road** – retrospective application not to comply with (to vary) condition 6 (restriction on imported aggregates) of planning permission CH.00/0588 in order to allow the limited importation of aggregate for bagging in the aggregates bagging facility, Rugeley Quarry, Wolseley Road.

This application was received on 5 December 2016 and details have been uploaded to the parish council's website to inform members of the public so they may submit their comments during the consultation period.

Both the Chairman and Chairman of the Planning Committee (Cllor Adams and Cllor Cotton), had agreed this after their meeting with staff from Cemex and representatives of H.D. Ricketts, who are seeking planning permission for the development. Cllor Adams and Cllor Cotton informed members of the content of discussion in respect of the application. H.D. Ricketts advise they are transporting two loads of aggregate a day in a vehicle that would previously have arrived empty.

After a discussion, it was decided that the parish council's consultation response should include the following points:

That no objections are raised to the limited importation of aggregates for bagging subject to the following points:

- That the loads imported to the quarry are restricted to no more than two HGV loads/movements a day.
- That the Quarry Manager is responsible for and complies strictly with Staffordshire County Councils instruction on maximum numbers of imports for different elements of the business/businesses operating from Rugeley Quarry. This should include the aggregates bagging facility (outlined in this planning application) as well as the sand blending facility and soil manufacturing plant recently approved.
- Cemex, as site manager, should be held responsible for recording, monitoring and regularly reporting the volume of all imports, to Staffordshire County Council. The combined number of deliveries for each area of the operation should be published so that comparisons can be made and wider monitoring undertaken against limits specified in the planning conditions.
- That any request for a future extension to the maximum number of imports designated (relating to all areas of business operating at the quarry – managed by Cemex and others) are brought back to Members of the County Planning Committee, and that such decisions are not made through delegated powers by Planning Officers.

The HGV traffic on these roads is a major cause for concern to residents along Bower Lane and Stafford Brook Road. The Parish Council want to support a balance that promotes the interests of local businesses whilst maintaining acceptable standards of residential amenity for local people – who should not be subjected to unreasonable nuisance, annoyance and damage caused by the too frequent passing of very large HGV vehicles by their homes.

It is recognised that some of the HGV lorries are passing through and have no association with Rugeley Quarry. In this regard, Staffordshire County Council should give attention to finding ways of limiting or redirecting other HGV traffic from this route.

**Resolved:** To make no objections to the planning application CH.16/08/709 M subject to importation of material being limited to no more than two HGV movements a day and that Staffordshire County Council's instructions are strictly complied with on all elements of the business/businesses operating from Rugeley Quarry. The quarry manager should keep comprehensive records on deliveries received to site and any request for an extension to the approved import/delivery limits should be determined through Planning Committee (not delegated powers).

c) Planning Decisions made by Cannock Chase Council and Staffordshire County Council

No planning decisions have been received.

d) Other Planning Related Matters

**Accumulation of debris at Oak Tree Farm**

It was pointed out that the fire is still burning.

A letter of response from the Managing Director of Cannock Chase Council (dated 16 October 2016) to Mrs and Mrs Dale's has been copied to all Members of the parish council. The letter included a 42-page collated response to the questions that had been raised by Mr and Mrs Dale. This document was forwarded electronically to all members able to receive it.

A copy of an email from a Member of Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council, sent to the Managing Directors PA (dated 18 November 2016), was also copied to Members.

No new information or updates had been received since the last meeting from the Planning Regulation Manager at Staffordshire County Council.

**Resolved:** To note the latest update on the Oak Tree farm case in respect of the accumulated debris and fire.

### **Kingsley Wood Road**

The Clerk was asked to ask the Planning Department again for the plan that corresponds to the reference quoted in a recently issued decision notice for the purposes of obtaining absolute clarity on domestic curtilage and boundaries of surrounding sensitive land.

## **11. CANNOCK CHASE FOREST**

**Staffordshire County Council's Management Review 'Shaping the Future of Land on Cannock Chase'** – The reports from the first phase of the Cannock Chase management options review and stakeholder engagement are available to view on the website for Cannock Chase management review ([www.managingcannockchase.co.uk](http://www.managingcannockchase.co.uk)). It should be noted that the review is being undertaken by Staffordshire County Council and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) for land under their management. This is Cannock Chase Country Park and Bevin's Birches and the adjoining land area owned by Cemex UK. It does not include other landholdings within the AONB or Cannock Forest (owned by the Forestry Commission).

The second phase of the management options review and stakeholder engagement will follow with engagement activities running from mid-January 2017 to the end of April 2017. The outcomes of these will also be updated on the dedicated website (above).

Cllor Adams advised that a meeting had taken place on 28 November 2016 but he had been unable to attend.

He has spoken to a representative from Natural England and asked that management of the land is taken in hand. He advised that its future use should involve fencing and putting cattle on it (or uses of that kind).

It was commented that fencing can be vulnerable given that damage had been caused by dog walkers who have ripped up a section installed by Cemex.

Cemex have offered to set up a meeting with RSPB representatives and the parish council to discuss plans for the land RSPB are taking over. This would be arranged in the future.

**Cannock Chase AONB Task and Finish Group** – as part of the reorganisation of Cannock Chase AONB, a Task and Finish Group has been set up to focus on the historic environment. The group's first meeting is on Monday 19 December 2016 at 1pm (venue not known). Cllor Pearson was interested in attending this event and would contact the AONB team directly.

**Monument** – it was reported that a proposal had been put forward for a rounded dome/monument to be put somewhere on the Chase that will have a car on the top. It has been designed by an artist to symbolise how we appreciate the car industry in Birmingham and surrounding areas. It was featured in the Express

and Star and will cost £30,000. Cannock Chase is considered inappropriate for such a project and more information is awaited, with interest.

**Resolved:** To note the information.

**12. PARISH ISSUES**

a) Chase Side

**Speed Reduction Consultation** – no new information received on the 40-mph speed reduction proposal for Stafford Brook Road (whole length, from Penkridge Bank Road to the 30mph limit in Bower Lane).

**Stafford Brook Road Bridge Repair** – work not yet started.

**Lease of adjoining land to RSPB** – no new information has been received on RSPB’s takeover of the land.

b) Brindley Village

**Parking in Brindley Crescent** – inconsiderate parking is still taking place here by more than one household. There is also an issue with the speed cars travel at. In addition to a case mentioned at the previous meeting, there is another issue with vehicles being parked too far onto the footpath which is preventing pedestrians from enjoying a clear and safe access (including children walking to school). The two items would be submitted to the Partnerships Manager via a Citizen Contact Record (handed in at Cannock Police Station). The problem is at its worst at tea time.

Cllor Pearson has been reporting these kinds of issues for twelve months and hasn’t succeeded in securing any improvements by the agencies that are responsible.

**13. INVITATION TO MEETINGS/EVENTS**

The following invitations to meetings were noted:

Cannock Chase AONB Task and Finish Group meeting on Monday 19 December 2016.

**Resolved:** Invitations to meetings are noted.

**14. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED**

**Clerks meeting with Managing Director at Cannock Chase Council on 23 November 2016**

The Clerk gave a short summary of the items covered at the meeting which included: the financial recovery Plan, Peer Challenge, Council Tax Base/Council Tax Support Grant information, update on District Council activity, the future of Christmas illuminations in the District, and suggestions for giving the island at the ‘tip’ entrance in Cannock a name to stop it being called Tip Island.

**Healthwatch Meeting on 30 November 2016** – This involved an open discussion about health care services and the way they are delivered in Staffordshire. Both Cllor Pearson and the Clerk had attended the event. There are lots of challenges to the health and social care system and a Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) is being developed to attempt to address them.

Cllor Pearson reported that at another meeting he had attended, one third of pharmacies were being recommended for closure. A discussion took place about the consequences of this action.

**SPCA Annual General meeting on Monday 5 December 2016** – no information (no representatives)

**15. COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

No reports

**16. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

a) Financial Position of the Council

A breakdown of income and expenditure for the financial year to date was provided (Clerks Report dated 13 December 2016). The budget statement shows the current financial position of the council with reserves of £6886.80 (after payments - which include £19999 for the defibrillator).

**Resolved:** To note the financial position of the Council.

b) Budget for Financial Year 2017-18 and Provisional Budget

A letter (dated 21 November 2016) from the Deputy Managing Director at Cannock Chase Council advises that a proposal had been put forward to withhold Council Tax Support Grant (CTSG) which had previously been awarded to parish and town councils (to offset the effects of localisation of Council Tax Benefit). This would take effect from the new financial year 2017-18. The grant has been issued by Government to billing authorities over the previous two financial years with the intention that it would be forwarded on to town and parish councils.

The effects of Cannock Chase Council’s proposal to retain the grant (which is £651 in Brindley Heath) is that Brindley Heath Parish residents will be subject to a 14.2% increase in householder charge (for the parish element of the Council Tax invoice) just to raise the same income as last year. This is illustrated as follows:

Financial Year:	2016-17	2017-18
Tax Base:	221.01	227.10 (recommended figure)
Precept:	£4400 less £651 (CTSG) = £3749	£4400 (no CTSG awarded)
Householder Charge to Band D homes (Annual parish element of the Council Tax invoice)	£16.96	£19.37

A draft provisional budget was considered by members of the parish council, who also looked at the value of spending required and how the spending should be funded. Most of the suggested figures were unchanged but it was decided that the budget for the Clerks salary be raised from £2134.08 to £2449.28 (to accommodate an hourly pay rate of £10.467 per hour (SCP 21)).

It was considered that the Council’s total spend for the year could be covered by a precept of £4400 (should there be no budget underspends then £82.20 if necessary would need to come out of reserves).

**Resolved:** That Brindley Heath Parish Council requests a precept of £4400 for the financial year 2017-18.

The letter dated 31 August 2016 to Tony McGovern, Managing Director (containing comments on the consultation relating to the difficult financial position of Cannock Chase Council) had asked that a sentence be added to the Council Tax invoice advising residents of Cannock Chase Council’s decision to withdraw Council Tax Support Grant. This would provide an explanation for the big increase in the charge levied.

c) To authorise cheques for payment

100104	The White House	£30.00	Use of room for parish meeting on 13 December 2016
--------	-----------------	--------	--

Chairman’s Initials .....

58/2016

