

BREWOD AND COVEN PARISH COUNCIL
WITH BISHOP'S WOOD AND COVEN HEATH

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES, STAFFORD STREET, BREWOOD
ON THURSDAY, 14 NOVEMBER AT 7.30PM

PRESENT:

Mr A. Ball, Mrs J. Carr, Mr R. Dakin, Mr T. Fellows, Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes, Mr G.E. Martin, Mr J. Pegg, Mr P. Smith, Dr R.C.H. Taylor, Mrs L. Tomkins, Mr M. Webb MBE, Mr P. Webster.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr Mrs W. Sutton.

APOLOGIES:

M. Alden-Court (personal), Mr D. Evans (work), Mrs J. Jeffries (personal), Cllr M. Hampson (personal), Cllr M. Sutton (personal).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:

There were no declarations of interest and no requests for dispensation as required under the Code of Conduct adopted in compliance with the Localism Act 2011 were received.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 31 October 2013 were approved as being an accurate record and duly signed.

CRIME AND DISORDER ACT:

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 places a duty on local authorities to consider the crime and disorder implications when exercising its functions and to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. Unless otherwise stated it was not considered that the resolutions moved herein would have any adverse impact for the purposes of the Crime and Disorder Act.

249. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Chairman moved that the meeting be adjourned for a period of no more than fifteen minutes to allow any elector of the parish or his/her representative to raise or question any issues appertaining to proper Parish Council business.

Mr Hunt of The Orchard, Brewood wished to raise objections to the proposed development of two two-storey dwellings adjacent to the Jubilee Hall in Brewood, which would back onto his bungalow. Mr Hunt felt that houses were out of keeping with the current site. Dr R. Taylor advised that he should put his objections in writing the South Staffordshire Council and that he would be able to speak at the planning meeting when the application was discussed. Cllr Mrs D.M Holmes agreed to advise Mr Hunt of the date of the meeting.

MATTERS ARISING:

* items appertain to matters arising during 2012/2013, ** to matters prior to May 2012.

256** **Traffic Management, Brewood.** Letter previously received from Mrs P. Spencer to be put forward to a future meeting of the Traffic Management Working Party for consideration, in order to respond to Cllr Sutton's report as soon as possible. Coven Members to arrange a separate meeting to consider matters particular to Coven.

It was resolved that a meeting of the Brewood Traffic Management Working Party be arranged for Thursday 21 November at 9.00am. Cllr Sutton and Mr D. Evans to be notified accordingly.

199* **Tree Inspection, the Bront.** Coven Members had considered the two quotes received and had recommended that the quote from South Staffordshire Council be accepted. It was noted that the specification provided best value for money. Dr Taylor pointed out that South Staffordshire Council had significant expertise in this area.

It was resolved that the Council accept the quote received from South Staffordshire Council and that the Acting Clerk organise tree inspections at all the sites listed in the specification.

229. **Tree Inspection, The Bront.** Mrs J. Carr reported that a site visit had taken place to The Bront on 11 December in response to Mr Nicosia's letter regarding trees blocking light and satellite reception to his property. Members had inspected the trees behind Willow Close and spoken to Mr Nixon in whose property one of the trees stood. Mr Nixon had no objection to Mr Nicosia cutting back the tree and Mr Nicosia was advised of this by Mrs Carr. Members also noted that Mr Nicosia's hedge was at least two feet above the fence line, which may also contribute to the darkness in the garden. **Matter of report.**

389* **i54/JLR.** Email from Marie Fitzpatrick advising the Parish Council that there would be a public meeting during Dec/Jan, date and venue to be confirmed depending upon numbers attending. The meeting would be open to Parish Councillors and residents of the surrounding areas. Up to 10 Parish Councillors would attend. Mrs Tomkins advised that Coven Heath residents had already attended a meeting.

It was resolved that Mrs L. Tomkins advise the Acting Clerk as to how many residents would attend in Dec/Jan. Details of the total number of attendees to be forwarded to Mrs Fitzpatrick, once established.

426* **Summer Sussed.** Email received from South Staffordshire Council giving a breakdown of the attendance at the activities for the three village halls. Dr Taylor advised that the take up over the three sites was between 60 and 70% with one activity having 100% attendance.

Matter of report.

200. **Coven Heath Polling Station.** Deferred from previous meeting. Mrs L. Tomkins reported on the discussion she had had regarding the correspondence to date with Mr Winterflood of South Staffordshire Council. Mrs Tomkins also provided the Council with statistics of previous turnout for Parish, District and County Council elections.

It was resolved that the Parish Council write formally to Mr Winterflood giving details of the statistics, putting forward some of the points raised and asking for written assurance that Coven Heath would have a Polling Station in future.

228. **Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) consultation.** Comments invited from the Parish Council. Full details and comments could be made on

www.staffordshire.gov.uk/consultation. Dr Taylor had reviewed the documents and had been impressed by the depth of detail it contained which he considered above and beyond what required.

It was resolved that no comment was necessary.

236. **Our Place! Programme.** Report available at www.mycommunityrights.org.uk. Deferred from previous meeting. Dr Taylor had visited the website. The programme was not relevant to the Parish Council.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would take no action.

238. **Survey on the impact of the Localised Council Tax Support Funding.** Deferred from previous meeting.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would make no comment.

MATTERS ONGOING:

Members discussed Matter Ongoing.

It was resolved that the list of Matters Ongoing be placed on the agenda for a future meeting of the Council in order to consider removing those matters which were deemed no longer relevant.

289* **Bus Stop, Old Coach Road, Bishops Wood.** Mr J. Pegg expressed his disappointment that the hard standing that had been laid at the bus stop in Old Coach Road was very poor.

It was resolved that the Acting Clerk contact Mr Keeling regretting the standard of the work and asking that two kerb stones be laid along the edge and the tarmac levelled off.

225* **Composting Site, Lawn Lane.** Mrs Tomkins reported that an important meeting had been arranged with Emma Reynolds, Gavin Williamson MP, the Environment Agency, Coven Community Association and Fordhouses Action Group. It was hoped that the matter may be satisfactorily be concluded in the near future.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

250. Email received from Sgt Heap of Staffordshire Police regarding the new PCSO Claire Clifton. Claire met with the Chairman on 8 November. Dr Taylor reported that he had met with the new PCSO who now covered this parish, Codsall and Bilbrook. She appeared very enthusiastic; she had been visiting local schools and had been issued with a car. Ms Clifton had offered to provide the Council with a Police report for the meeting. However, the report had not been received. Dr Taylor had suggested that she use the Council Chamber as a 'shelter' with a view to it possibly providing a place to hold surgeries in future.

It was resolved that the offer be made for the PCSO to use the Parish Council Chamber as a base whilst in the area, with a view to providing space to hold regular surgeries in future.

251. Letter received from T.A. Snell, Solicitor, for Housing Plus (South Staffordshire Housing Association) regarding the need for a licence to erect a bus shelter at School Lane, Coven (the shelter had already been erected). Acting Clerk's Report referred.

It was resolved that the Acting Clerk write to Mr Snell, attaching a copy of the Google map and advising that the land belonged to Staffordshire County Council and advising him that permission had been given by Staffordshire County Council for the bus shelter, which had already been erected.

252. Community Safety Partnership. Crime and anti-social behaviour figures for South Staffordshire October 2013. Copy available on request.

Matter of report.

253. **CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED:**

Rural Opportunities Bulletin Nov 2013

Staffordshire County Council 'Infrastructure+ Consultation FAQs
SPCA Annual Report, and bulletins 25 Oct and 1 Nov

Department for Communities and Local Government providing social housing for local people.
Guidance on allocation.

Staffordshire Police News Release, Horsecatch secures Paralympic rider's support.

Gavin Williamson: Card of condolences; Newsletter No 9.

Clerk & Councils Direct magazine.

254. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

The Chairman thanked M. Alden-Court (in her absence) for having attended a number of recent civic functions in his absence.

It was noted that a road sweeper would be in Brewood on 25 November and Members were asked to make this known to any drivers who normally park in Brewood. Cllr Mrs D. M. Holmes was aware that Church Road and Bargate Street was to be cleaned. She had spoken to Bob Taylor of South Staffordshire Council as the Civic Society had wanted to put notices up around the village. Mr Taylor had asked that the matter be left to South Staffordshire Council to manage.

Dr R. Taylor thanked everyone for attending the funeral of the Clerk, Sue Groom, which had taken place earlier in the day, and requested that Mrs Jeanette Edwards and her group be thanked formally for having provided the food and refreshments at Bishops Wood village hall. Mr A. Ball wished to thank the Acting Clerk for covering the duties of the Clerk until January, when the vacancy would be advertised. Mr T Fellows reported that he and Al Dutton had set up a condolences area on the Parish Council's website and would pass the messages received to John Groom, together with any cards that had been received at the Parish Council.

255. **FINANCE REPORT:**

The Council received the Finance Report and resolved the following matters:

- The accounts payable as at 14 November 2013, **be approved**. Mr M. Webb MBE advised that the debt owed by Brewood Old Boys FC had been settled using money from Brewood Junior Football Club.
- The Financial Summary - Cash Book Reconciliation for October 2013, tabled at the meeting, **be approved**.

- The quote of £72 excl. VAT to supply and replace the sensor at the Council's public conveniences in Sandy Lane, Brewood, **be approved.**
- The Council considered the date for the 2013/2014 Budget and Precept meeting. Members were requested to recommend suitable projects to be included in the forthcoming precept demand by 1st December.

It was resolved that the Council meet in December or early January to consider the budget and Precept for the forthcoming year.

- The Council considered amending the signatories for the Parish Council's bank accounts, following the death of the Clerk.

It was resolved that the forms to amend the signatories to the Council's bank accounts be completed by the relevant parties and forwarded to the Co-operative and Lloyds bank. Signatories to consist of: Dr R.C.H. Taylor, Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes, Mr D. Evans, Mr P. Webster and Mrs M. O'Brien. Mrs J. Carr and Mrs S. Groom to be removed from the list of signatories.

- The Council considered the recommendations of the Staffing Committee meeting held 6 November 2013.

This matter was taken at the end of the meeting when the public and press were asked to leave, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, in accordance with Standing Order 65.

It was resolved that, with effect from 1 November 2013:

- **Mrs M. O'Brien be known as Acting Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer until a new Clerk was appointed, to be paid at SCP 28 for up to 37 hours per week.**
- **Mrs Postles be asked to work an extra 2.5 hours per week providing admin support, to be paid at SCP 11.**
- **Mrs Postles to be asked to provide cover for annual leave of the Acting Clerk, should the need arise which would be paid at SCP 15.**
- **Mrs V. Turner to be asked to provide support with preparing the budget/Precept demand and end of year accounts if required, to be paid at SCP 23.**
- **An advert for the vacancy of Clerk be placed on Thursday 2 January 2014, with a closing date of Friday 17th January 2014.**
- **Mrs O'Brien would not be involved in the recruitment and selection process.**

195. **Brewood Music Festival.** Deferred from the previous meeting. Members reconsidered the request from Brewood Music Festival committee for a grant of £2000.

It was resolved that the Parish Council grant the sum of £1000 in the first instance and in addition, the Parish Council would match any contributions received from the 'bucket collection' up to a maximum of £500. The grant was made with the proviso that the Sunday afternoon entertainment would be free to the public.

- **Year End Process.** Clerk's Report referred.

It was resolved that the Council budget for 2-3 hours of support from AdvangEdge (the finance package provider), at a cost of £60 per hour plus VAT to assist with closing the year end accounts.

256. **PLANNING REPORT:**

The Council received the Planning Report from Dr Taylor in the absence of the Head of Planning, Mrs J. Jeffries and considered the planning applications received.

257. **PLAYING FIELDS REPORT:**

The Council received the reports for:

- Bishops Wood playing field and skateboard park. Mrs S. Hughes had submitted a written report.
Mr J. Pegg reported that there was a blockage from the septic tank at Bishops Wood Village Hall. It was possible that the blockage was underneath the skate park which may result in the skate park having to be dug up. However, previously the blockage had been cleared without the need to dig up the skate park.
It was resolved that the survey report be sent to the Parish Council prior to any work being undertaken.
- Brewood playing field and skateboard park. No report was received from Mr D. Evans.
- Coven playing field and skateboard park. Mr R. Dakin reported that there was a broken downpipe on the changing rooms guttering. Mr Dakin also reported that the pitch was waterlogged and was not fit to play on.
It was resolved that the matches for the forthcoming weekend be cancelled. It was agreed that Mr Dakin be responsible for inspecting the pitch and cancelling matches, should it be deemed unfit to play future games.

258. **ACTING CLERK'S REPORT:**

The Council received the written report of the Acting Clerk and resolved the following:

- SPCA bulletin recommendations regarding the timing of the Precept.
It was resolved that the Council prepare the budget and precept demand in December and withhold submission until a later date if necessary.

ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT:

Mr J. Pegg had contacted Dawn Plant regarding the footpath over the common in Bishops Wood. The ranger had been asked to inspect and report back to the Parish Council in due course.

Trees at the Memorial Garden in Coven were over grown and had affected the flying of the flag on Remembrance Sunday. The Council's handyman/gardener had been asked to cut the trees back if possible.

Mr R. Dakin reported that there was a large amount of dog fouling in Brewood. Cllr W. Sutton advised that South Staffordshire Council's enforcement officer had agreed to investigate the problem. Details to be forwarded to Mr J. Littlejohn.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm

.....Chairman

**REPORT OF THE ACTING CLERK FOR THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
TO BE HELD 14 NOVEMBER 2013**

MATTERS ARISING

286**/247. **Bus Shelter, School Lane, Coven.** Members will be aware that the bus shelter was erected earlier in the year. A letter has been received dated 5 Nov 2013 from Mr Snell, Solicitor for South Staffordshire Housing Association with regard the need for a licence prior to the erection of the bus shelter. Attached to the letter is a plan which appears to incorrectly show the boundary which does not include the footpath/pavement. The Parish Council received assurances from Staffordshire County Council that the land is owned by them and a Google map clearly shows that there is a footpath adjacent to the grass verge (which would be the responsibility of SCC).

Recommended resolution: The Acting Clerk respond to Mr Snell, attaching a copy of the Google map and advising that the land belongs to Staffordshire County Council and that permission has already been given for the bus shelter, which has already been erected.

169. **Inspector Knight.** Email received 9 Nov from Inspector Knight advising of the Local Policing Engagement Plan. Copy tabled at the meeting. PCSO Claire Clifton has met with the Chairman and Acting Clerk and PC Clarke has visited the office to introduce himself. Due to the size of the area that he covers, it is unlikely that he will be able to regularly attend Parish Council meetings but it is his intention to attend when possible or provide written reports on a monthly basis. Inspector Knight will make a presentation at the forthcoming Parish Summit on 29 November.

Matter of report.

347** **Amenity Area, Sandy Lane (Encroachment).** Two quotes received have been forwarded to the Parish Council's solicitor for his opinion on the previous proposal. Lucy McDonald of South Staffordshire Council's planning enforcement has been made aware and has been asked to respond.

Matter of report.

FINANCE:

279* **Council Office Wall.** Form completed in order to apply for a lawful development certificate. Kevin Twigger has provided a plan of the Council offices showing the boundary wall. Application to be submitted to South Staffordshire Council.

Matter of report.

Sandy Lane WC. Brettlec have quoted for repair/replace faulty sensors/switches, see Finance. The bill for water has also been queried as it seems excessively high although it will include water used prior to Severn Trent's inspection and the subsequent repair. I have asked the plumber to have another look and report back to make sure that the water to the urinals is not constantly running. I have agreed to supply Severn Trent with meter readings for them to assess whether or not the water usage is still excessive, once the plumber has inspected.

Matter of report.

Year End. I have been liaising with Chris Edge of AdvantEdge, (the finance package). He has advised that the Parish Council should budget for 2-3 hours support to guide me through the year end process. This is chargeable at £60 per hour plus VAT.

Recommended resolution: the matter to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council.

Office Cover. I will be on annual leave on Monday 25 November. I have therefore asked Tanya to cover the phone calls etc. Clarification requested as to whether or not the Car Scheme Co-ordinator will be paid at the Assistant Clerk's rate whilst covering for any annual leave.

OTHER MATTERS FOR THE CLERK'S REPORT:

SPCA Bulletin. Included in the 8th November Bulletin (tabled) is an excerpt from the NALC Larger Council's Committee meeting held 15 October. At that meeting it was resolved that the County Associations be reminded of the final legal date by which local councils must notify their billing authority of intended precept demands for 2014-15 financial year. 'Having particular regard to the Localisation of Council Tax Support Scheme and the fact that billing authorities will not find out their own Revenue Support Grant amounts until mid or late December, with the Local Government Finance Settlement, the committee suggests that, where possible, **larger councils might wish to wait until mid February 2014 before formally setting their budgets** by which time they will or should know how much LCTS grant, if any, they will be receiving for the 2014-15 financial year from their billing authority. It is thought that **the likely latest legal date by which precepts can be set is probably around 4 March 2014.**'

Members' views.

Winter Parish Games. These were scheduled to take place on Saturday 16 November. However, due to lack of interest, they have been cancelled.

Matter of report.