

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, 13 FEBRUARY 2014 AT 7.30PM

The Chairman presented a Parish Council scroll to Mrs R. Bourne in recognition of her service to the Voluntary Car Scheme for almost 30 years.

PRESENT:

M. Alden-Court, Mr A. Ball, Mrs J. Carr, Mr R. Dakin, Mr D. Evans (late), Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes, Mrs J. Jeffries, Mr G.E. Martin, Mr J. Pegg, Mr P. Smith, Dr R.C.H. Taylor, Mrs L. Tomkins, Mr M. Webb MBE.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr B. Cox.

APOLOGIES:

Mr P. Webster (personal), Cllr M. Hampson (personal) Cllr M. Sutton (prior meeting), PC P. Clarke (shift pattern).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:

There were no declarations of interest from Members and no requests for dispensation had been submitted in writing to the Clerk prior to the meeting.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held 30 January 2014 were approved as being an accurate record and duly signed, with the exception of the following: Item 465b**Mrs Tomkins had also thanked Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes. Item 326 should have read '*unless* the referendum level reduced'.

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.

330. **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. No members of the public wished to speak.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

251** **Site Allocation Consultation.** Acting Clerk's Report referred. Dr R. Taylor advised that he had received a letter from the Community Council of Staffordshire offering to work in partnership with parish councils and advising that they would be available at the site allocation consultation evening on 18 February. It was likely that drop-in sessions would be organised by the Parish Council in conjunction with the Community Council of Staffordshire prior to the scheduled consultation date in May.

Matter of report.

387** **Flooding, Ball Lane, Coven Heath.** A meeting was held on 7 October 2013 with representatives of Coven Heath Community Association, Severn Trent Water, the Environment Agency, South Staffordshire Council's Environmental Health and representatives from the Parish Council. Mrs L. Tomkins reported that although nothing had appeared to have progressed, there had been no recent incidents of flooding, despite the record levels of rainfall this winter. However, a meeting would still be necessary. Mrs Tomkins to produce an agenda.

It was resolved that a meeting be arranged for the end of March.

465b** **Coven Heath Village Sign.** Mrs L. Tomkins provided an illustration of the proposed sign for Coven Heath. Approval had been given by Highways for the sign to be erected. Mrs Tomkins to advise the Parish Council when the sign was finished and ready to be erected.

It was resolved that the proposed sign be approved.

279* **Boundary Wall - Parish Council Offices.** Work commenced on Monday 10 February. Dr Taylor had met with the contractors on site as the wall was being taken down. The bricklayer confirmed that they would be replacing the outer skin only as the inner skin was still in good condition.

Matter of Report.

483*. **Coven Heath Allotments.** Brewood Tree Services had started to trim the hedge along the A449 and would remove the conifers during week commencing 10 February. Acting Clerk's Report referred.

It was resolved that the Acting Clerk chase the matter with Mr Sissons if there was any further delay.

158a. **Parish Council Central Heating Boiler Service.** The boiler had been serviced. However, the heating engineer had discovered a number of issues with the gas meter which had since been replaced.

Matter of report.

Mr D. Evans arrived for the meeting.

248. **Staffing Committee.** The Chairman reported to the Council that seven interviews had taken place on Friday 7th February and all candidates were of a high quality. However, following in-depth interviews and using a scoring system, it was now his pleasure to ask the Council to ratify the decision of the staffing committee that Mrs Maggie O'Brien be appointed to the position of Clerk to Brewood and Coven Parish Council. The Council was unanimous in agreeing to the appointment.

.It was resolved that Mrs M. O'Brien be appointed permanently to the post of Clerk to the Council.

298. **Parish Summit 2014 Affordable Housing.** Deferred from meeting of 9 January, the event at South Staffordshire Council to be held on 28 February 2014 from 9.30am until 1.30pm at South Staffordshire Council's offices in Codsall.

It was resolved that M. Alden-Court, Mrs J. Carr, Mr R. Dakin, Mrs J. Jeffries, Mr G.E. Martin, and Mrs M. O'Brien attend.

Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes would be attending in her capacity as a District Councillor.

315. **South Staffordshire Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2014-17.** Responses were required by 21 February 2014. Deferred from previous meeting Members had accessed the document online. Mrs L. Tomkins was concerned that the strategy did not cover those people who lived in mobile homes and were at risk of experiencing fuel poverty. Cllr B. Cox advised that there was a separate strategy which would be circulated at a later date dealing with issues such as mobile home occupancy, energy efficiency and fuel poverty.

It was resolved that Members make no comment on the Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

MATTERS ONGOING:

306. **Admiral Rodney Development.** Acting Clerk's Report referred. This matter had been resolved using delegated powers. Cllr B. Cox advised that the developer was unlikely to oppose the decision. Rachael Dawson would shortly be arranging for the name to be recorded in the Gazetteer.

Matter of report.

256** **Brewood Traffic Management (Church House).** Acting Clerk's Report referred. Dr R. Taylor advised that the vicar was away on sabbatical and agreed to arrange the meeting with other representatives of the Corser Trust for mid March.

Matter of report.

327. **Neighbourhood Highways Team.** Acting Clerk's Report referred.

It was resolved that the Acting Clerk send the details of the type of work that the team would do to all Members for them to respond with appropriate tasks.

329. **Deansfield Road, Brewood, Parking on the Grass Verge.** Acting Clerk's Report referred. Dr Taylor would deliver the letters week commencing 17 February. Mr R. Dakin advised that the grass verge on Deansfield Close was also being parked on by residents. Dr Taylor recommended that the matter be taken up with South Staffordshire Housing Association as it was their land.

Matter of report.

282** **Parish Council Website.** Mr P Smith agreed to co-ordinate the updating of the website.

Matter of report.

143. **Newsletter (Spring).** Members were asked to provide any relevant articles for the forthcoming newsletter.

169. **Inspector Knight.** Dr Taylor read out an email received from Inspector Knight that had been received in November, outlining his intentions to attend one meeting per month. It was noted that he had not attended any meetings to date. A letter had been sent to Inspector Knight expressing the Council's disappointment at the lack of a visible police presence in the Parish.

Matter of report.

331. **Best Kept Village.** Confirmation required as to whether or not Bishops Wood was entering the competition this year. Mrs J. Jeffries to liaise with Mr A. Sloane and advise the Acting Clerk accordingly.

It was resolved that the following items be removed from Matters Ongoing: 390, 269*, 370* 496*, 121, 158a, 237/244.**

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

331. Correspondence from Mr D. Evans advising that the bus would no longer travel along Crestwood

Park after April and requesting that the Parish Council puts pressure on the bus company to reconsider its decision.

It was resolved that the Council write to the bus company to ascertain why the bus route would no longer include Crestwood Park and try to influence them to continue using the current route.

332. **CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED:**

SPCA Bulletin 31 January 2014
 Wolgarston High School SNU31 January 2014
 Staffordshire County Council What's On in February
 Historic Towns Forum February Newsletter
 NALC Legal Topic the Law in respect of parish meetings.
 Wolverhampton Magazine.

333. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

The Chairman had nothing to report other than that he had been busy with the appointment of staff.

334. **FINANCE REPORT:**

The Council received the Finance Report from Mrs J. Carr in the absence of the Head of Finance, Mr P. Webster and resolved the following matters:

- The Financial Summary - Cash Book Reconciliation for January 2014, copy circulated prior to the meeting, **be approved.**
- The accounts payable as at 13 February 2014 and the Direct Debit/Standing Orders arising from the January reconciliation, **be approved.** NB the cheque to SPCA for subscriptions had been returned with a note to advise that the invoice was for budgeting purposes only and the subscription was not due until April. The cheque for £684 had therefore been cancelled and would be raised again in April (the next financial year).
- The donation of £100 from last year's Roseclaim Grant to Bishops Wood Arts and Creativity Group towards its start up fund, **be approved.**
- The Council considered the request from the Samaritans (Stafford Branch) for a donation for the coming year.
It as resolved that a donation of £20 be made to the Samaritans.

289* **Bus Stop Old Coach Road.** The Council considered the quotes received for kerb stones. Simon Griffiths (Highways) had advised that Staffordshire County Council would be more expensive than a local supplier therefore quotes were sought from three alternative suppliers. Copy circulated prior to the meeting.

It was resolved that the quote from EH Smith be accepted; the Acting Clerk to order the kerb stones and request that Mr Dunbar proceed with the work.

323. **Brewood and District First Responders.** The Council considered the request for additional grant funding towards a replacement vehicle for the First Responders, which had not been budgeted for in the 2014-15 Precept Demand, copy circulated prior to the meeting. This matter was deferred from the previous meeting. It was noted that £1000 had been included in the 2014-15 budget. The matter was debated at length and Members were all in agreement that the First Responders did a sterling job which was of benefit to the whole of the Parish. It was considered essential that the

Parish Council was in full possession of all the financial accounts and information of grants and donations, together with expenditure, before making a decision on further funding. As with all applications for grant funding, the most recent properly audited accounts would be requested.

It was resolved that the original amount of £1000 allocated in the 2014-15 budget would stand and the situation be considered again, once further information was received.

Grounds Maintenance Charges. Acting Clerk's Report referred.

Telephone Allowance. Acting Clerk's Report referred.

335. **PLANNING REPORT:**

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

336. **PLAYING FIELDS REPORT:**

The Council received the reports for:

- Bishops Wood playing field and skateboard park (no report received from Mrs S. Hughes).
- Brewood playing field and skateboard park. Mr D. Evans reported that the field was draining very well.
- Coven playing field and skateboard park. Mr R. Dakin reported that there was extensive flooding at Coven.

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

The Council received the written report of the Acting Clerk and noted its content.

- Wolgarston High School Ofsted Inspection. Mrs J. Jeffries congratulated Wolgarston High School on its excellent Ofsted Inspection report. It achieved a Grade 2 'good' standard overall, with leadership, management and governance achieving a Grade 1 'outstanding'.
- Commonwealth Day 10 March 2014. M. Alden-Court to attend in the absence of the Chairman.

ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT:

Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes had been approached to become a key holder for the gate at Middle Lane, Coven Heath. Mrs L. Tomkins to report back to Cllr M. Sutton and Cllr Mrs Homes regarding the most appropriate person to be the key holder.

M. Alden-Court reported that the Surgery held in Coven was very successful with a number of emerging issues which she would place on the agenda in due course.

M. Alden-Court would like the Council to provide kitchen equipment for the staff as currently there was only a kettle. She would obtain costs of a microwave and toaster and place the matter on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr D. Evans advised that the Military Wives would be singing in St Mary and St Chad's church, Brewood on 26 April.

The Chairman moved that the public and press be asked to leave the meeting whilst the following matter was considered, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, in accordance with Standing Order 65.

Staffing. Vacancy for Assistant Clerk (23 hours per week).

It was resolved that following her expression of interest in the vacancy, Mrs T. Postles be appointed to the post of Assistant Clerk.

It was further resolved that the consequent vacancy of Car Scheme Co-ordinator be advertised on the Parish Council notice boards and website.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

..... Chairman

**REPORT OF THE ACTING CLERK FOR THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
TO BE HELD 13 FEBRUARY 2014**

MATTERS ARISING:

251** **Localism/Core Strategy.** Email received from Ceri Jones regarding the Site Allocation Document Consultation. The Coven event will take place at St Paul's Church on 6 May 2.00pm to 7.00pm and Brewood at the Jubilee Hall 15 May 2.00pm to 7.00pm. I have asked Ceri to let me have some wording for inclusion in the March newsletter.

Matter of report.

MATTERS ONGOING:

306. **Admiral Rodney Development.** Confirmation received from South Staffordshire Council Planning that the development will be called Admiral Rodney Gardens.

256** **Brewood Traffic Management (Parking Church House).** The Chairman has made contact with the Corser Trust representatives. Dr Taylor may wish to report further.

322. **Vacancy for Parish Councillor Coven.** Details have been passed to South Staffordshire Council's elections officer for comment. Once the advice has been received I will proceed with advertising the casual vacancy.

Matter of report.

327 **Neighbourhood Highways Team.** Members are reminded that the NHT will be in the Parish from 3 March. Any areas requiring attention to be forwarded to the Acting Clerk for inclusion on the list by 21 February.

329. **Deansfield Road, Brewood. Parking on the Grass Verge.** Letters have been prepared and Dr Taylor had offered to deliver them early next week.

483* **Coven Heath Hedge and Removal of Leylandii.** Mr Sissions of Brewood Tree Services has made a start on the hedge on A449. I have not been advised as to whether or not he has been able to fell the leyandii trees.

FINANCE:

Grounds Maintenance Charges. South Staffordshire Council has made an error in the invoice for Q3. They have charged £41.26 exl VAT for the BPSA ground. Andy Cousins has advised that the easiest way to rectify this rather than re issue the invoice, would be for the Parish Council to pay it and then the amount be re-credited in Q4. I have raised the cheque to include the £41.26 (plus VAT). He assures me that it will be resolved in this financial year.

Matter of report.

Telephone Allowance. Mr T. Fellows has advised that he would like his telephone allowance to be used as a donation to the Parish Council's ongoing work and as such I will pay it back into the Council's bank account.

Matter or report.

OTHER MATTERS FOR THE ACTING CLERK'S REPORT:

Wolgarston High School. Mrs J. Jeffries would like to report on Wolgarston High School's recent Ofsted inspection.

Annual Leave. I will be on leave on Wednesday 19 February. Mrs Postles will cover the Assistant Clerk duties. I have one week left to take before the end of March which I will take as individual days.

Commonwealth Day. The Chairman has received an invitation from South Staffordshire Council to attend this event on 10 March at the Council offices at 10.00am. As he will be away, would it be in order for the Vice Chairman to attend?

Members' views.