

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 MARCH 2014 AT 7.30PM

PRESENT:

M. Alden-Court, Mr A. Ball, Mrs J. Carr, Mr R. Dakin, Mr D. Evans, Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes, Mrs J. Jeffries, Mr G.E. Martin, Mr J. Pegg, Mr P. Smith, Mrs L. Tomkins, Mr M. Webb MBE, Mr P. Webster.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr. M. Sutton.

323. Brewood & District First Responders.

Mr P. Smith spoke with regard to the meeting held on 27 February 2014. He felt that some Members had behaved in a way that showed a lack of respect for the position of Chair and the position of Clerk; the Council had a code of conduct that should be adhered to; Mr Smith stated that he had been embarrassed to be a Parish Councillor, healthy debate was to be expected but personal criticism aimed at individuals was not. Everyone around the table had one thing in common: to do what was best for the parish as a whole. The Council had a responsibility to ensure that public money was wisely spent.

The Chair, Moira Alden-Court asked members not to disrespect the office of Chair or Clerk, as had happened at the previous meeting, which had been unprofessional and out of order. She advised should it happen again, she would have no hesitation but to ask the offending member to leave the meeting. She then quoted Standing Order 29(d) 'No speech by a mover of a resolution shall exceed four minutes and no other speech shall exceed four minutes except by consent of the Council.'

APOLOGIES:

Dr R. Taylor (personal), PC Clarke (shift pattern).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:

Mr M. Webb MBE declared an interest in planning application number 14/00126/FUL. Cllr Mrs D. M. Holmes declared a personal interest in item number 363.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 27 February 2014 and the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 7 March 2014 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.

354. **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 S. Chorley of the Allotment shop in Coven advised that he would like to take over the Post Office which would be moved into the Allotment shop. The Chair advised that the proposal was currently out to consultation.

Mr P. Mullard reported there had been someone collecting door to door from Battersea Dogs' Home asking for bank details. It had been reported to the Police who confirmed that the company concerned was legitimate. Mr Mullard felt that the area was still not getting a good service from the Police.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

342. **Thermal Recycling Project at Four Ashes.** The Council received the presentation from Mr L Wordley and Ms H. Loney regarding the innovative project to tackle the safe disposal of cement bonded asbestos (CBA). Mr Wordley advised that if approved the project would take CBA from the West Midlands area. The plant would not deal with blue asbestos. The Council would await receipt of the planning application for comment.

Matter of report.

251** **Site Allocation Consultation.** Posters had been received advertising the two consultation days, one at Brewood and one at Coven which had been placed on the Parish Council's notice boards. Dr R. Taylor had recommended that the Parish Council made contact with the Community Council of Staffordshire in order to arrange a meeting to discuss housing provision in Brewood and Coven. Clerk's Report referred.

Matter of report.

387** **Flooding, Ball Lane, Coven Heath.** A meeting had been scheduled for the morning of 26th March (re arranged to 2 April) 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 to advise the Clerk of items for the agenda.

Matter of report.

465b** **Coven Heath Village Sign.** Gavin Williamson MP would unveil the village sign on Saturday 22 March 2014 at 10.00am. Mrs L. Tomkins had prepared a press release for approval. Cllr B. Cox, Cllr M. Hampson, Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes and Cllr M. Sutton had been invited to attend. Mrs Tomkins also extended an invitation to all members of the Parish Council.

It was resolved that Members wishing to accept the invitation to advise Mrs Tomkins or the Clerk.

289* **Bus Stop, Old Coach Road, Bishops Wood.** Mr J. Pegg advised that Mr Dunbar has completed the hard standing at the bus stop. Photograph circulated at the meeting.

It was resolved that a letter be sent to Mr Dunbar thanking him for the excellent work that he had carried out.

143. **Parish Council Newsletter.** Draft copy of the Newsletter was circulated prior to the meeting. Members advised the Clerk of the necessary amendments. Budget for printing had already been approved. (See Finance regarding approval for delivery). **Matter of report.**

248. **Staffing Committee Recommendations.** To consider the recommendations of the Staffing Committee from the meeting held on 7 March 2014. This item was taken at the end of the meeting when the public and press were asked to leave due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

323. **Grant Award Policy.** The Parish Council considered the policy document and application form for the awarding of grants to local charities, voluntary and community groups from the Parish Council budget. Copy circulated prior to the meeting.

It was resolved that the Grant Award Policy be adopted by the Parish Council with immediate effect.

MATTERS ONGOING:

169. **Inspector Knight.** Members acknowledged that there had been no correspondence from Inspector Knight over the past 12 months. The Chair read out the email received from PC Clarke, copy tabled at the meeting.

It was resolved that a letter be sent asking when Inspector Knight was likely to visit.

317. **Commemoration of World War One.** Mr D. Evans had been asked by Brewood Middle School whether or not the Parish Council was planning anything to commemorate the beginning of WWI. It has been proposed that a medal be given to each pupil at the school at a cost of £1 each.

It was resolved that the matter be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council.

It was resolved that the following items be removed from Matters Ongoing:

289*, 483*, 485b, 232, 312.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

355. Letter received from Mrs A. Peters thanking the Parish Council for its involvement in providing a defibrillator for Bishops Wood and also acknowledging the donation of £1000 from Roseclaim. The letter also confirmed that the Parish Council needed take no further responsibility for the upkeep of the defibrillator and that training on its use would be ongoing.

Matter of report.

356. Letter from Mr T. Webber Chairman of Bishops Wood Village Hall Committee requesting that the Parish Council consider relocating the skate park at Bishops Wood. Copy circulated prior to the meeting. Mr J. Pegg advised that Mr Webber had resigned from the village hall committee and that Mr T. Sloane was the new chairman. Mrs J. Jeffries gave details regarding the original provision of the skate park.

It was resolved that the Parish Council conduct a survey to gain the views of the young people in order to gain the views of the young people, prior to making a decision about the future of the skate board facility in Bishops Wood.

357. Letters from the Post Office and Mr S. Winterflood of South Staffordshire Council concerning the proposed move of the Post Office in Coven to the Allotment shop, 4 The Parade, Coven. Copy circulated prior to the meeting. Members were in agreement to support the move of the Post Office to the Allotment shop. **Matter of report.**

358. Letter and questionnaire from the Community Council of Staffordshire seeking to establish whether or not there was any interest in setting up a good neighbour scheme in the area to address issues of isolation and loneliness. Copies circulated prior to the meeting.

It was resolved that copies of the questionnaire be sent distributed to local organisations and village halls to ascertain whether or not there is any interest in establishing a good neighbour scheme.

359. Coven Football Pitch and Facilities. Mr P. Webster had requested that the football facilities be made available until the end of May in order to enable the football teams fulfilling their fixtures.

It was resolved that the football facility at Coven be made available until the end of May 2014.

360. Emails received from Mr N. Aldridge and Mr J. Roobottom regarding the poor state of the path around the Bront. Copies circulated prior to the meeting. Mrs J. Carr advised that it was not feasible to replace the path. Members agreed that the weather conditions had contributed to the waterlogged state.

It was resolved that the Clerk advise Mr Aldridge and Mr Roobottom that the Parish Council was unable to improve the condition of the paths at the Bront.

361. Letter, minutes and agenda received from Helen Skidmore, Secretary of Brewood Bowling Club, inviting Members to its Annual General Meeting at the British Legion, on Wednesday 26 March at 8.30pm.

It was resolved that Members wishing to attend advise Ms Skidmore directly.

362. Email received from Mrs R. Heseltine, Chairman of South Staffordshire Council inviting Members to her Civic Dinner on Saturday 5 April commencing at 7.00pm. Tickets were £35 each.

It was resolved that interested Members advise the Clerk.

363. Telephone conversation with Mr I. Tipper requesting permission from the Council for the Jubilee Hall Committee to hold its meetings (every other month) in the Council Chamber.

It was resolved that the Jubilee Hall committee be allowed to use the Parish Council Chamber to hold its meetings every other month.

364. Email received from Brewood Parish Sports Association advising that they have applied for a grant from South Staffordshire Council to replace the cricket square at a cost of up to £8,000. One criterion was that the BPSA must have the support of the Parish Council. Mr M Webb, MBE advised that the BPSA was not asking for a grant from the Parish Council. Mr Webb also asked that the Parish Council confirm its intention to renew the lease when it next expired,

It was resolved that the Clerk write to Mr T. Wynne-Jones advising that the Parish Council was in full support of the grant application towards replacing the cricket square and also confirming that it intended to renew the lease when it expired.

365. Letter received from Mrs D. Drury on behalf of Bishops Wood Art and Creativity Group, thanking Members for the donation of £100 from Roseclaim.

Matter of report.

366. **CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED:**

Fields in Trust Impact Report 2012

Staffordshire PCC circular regarding the sale of Stafford Police old headquarters

SPCA Bulletin 28 Feb

Superfast Staffordshire Newsletter March

Gavin Williamson MP Newsletter March

Wolgarston High School SNU

Wolverhampton Magazine March

367. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

The Chair M. Alden-Court reported that she had recently broken her leg but would still endeavour to attend Parish Council meetings.

368. **FINANCE REPORT:**

The Council received the Finance Report from the Head of Finance Mr P. Webster and resolved the following matters:

- The accounts payable as at 13 March 2014, **be approved**. Clerk's Report referred.
- The purchase of the 9th edition of Local Council Administration by Charles Arnold-Baker at a cost of £60 (inc £15 discount for SLCC membership), **be approved**.
- The request of the Clerk to attend the SLCC regional conference on 17th September in Telford at a cost of £69 (inc £20 discount for SLCC membership) **be approved**.
- The request of the Clerk to attend one day's 'year end' training in Coventry on 24 March at AdvantEdge main office, plus associated mileage, **be approved**.
- The appointment of the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2013/14 at a cost of £20 per hour for approximately 12 hours, **be approved**. Mr D. Walker had confirmed his availability as in previous years.
- The payments to be made for delivering the Council's newsletter: £110 each to Brewood Civic Society and the Coven Delivery Fund; £30 each to Coven Heath Community Association and Ms B. Cumming of Bishops Wood (subject to availability), **be approved**.
- The quote for up to £300 to appoint an engineer to carry out a damp investigation and CCTV survey (if required) of underground pipes at the Parish Council office, **be approved**.
- The Council considered the quotes received to update the Chairmen's Honours Board in gold leaf.

It was resolved that the quote of £180 be approved to update the Honours Board with the additional names of past Chairmen in gold leaf with black enamel shading, as recommended by the Clerk. The previous names to remain unaltered.

323. **Brewood and District First Responders.** The Council considered the request for grant funding towards a replacement vehicle, up to a maximum of £5,000. Copies of audited accounts for 2011/12 and 2012/13 together with a copy of the Constitution and bank statements circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council must be satisfied that the First Responders' accounts were correct and complete before deciding on the amount of money to be awarded.

It was resolved that £5000 be awarded to Brewood and District First Responders. M. Alden-Court abstained from voting.

350(i) **Kitchen Equipment, Parish Council Office.** The Council considered the quotes received for a toaster, microwave and fridge for the office. Copy circulated prior to the meeting.

It was resolved that the Clerk and Assistant Clerk decide upon the most appropriate equipment to select from the list of suppliers.

369. **PLANNING REPORT:**

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

251** Site Allocation, School Lane, Coven. Clerk's Report referred.

It was resolved that Mr Maddox be invited to address the Parish Council at 7.00pm prior to the next meeting of the Council.

The Chair invited Cllr M. Sutton to report on behalf of Staffordshire County Council.

COUNTY COUNCIL'S REPORT:

Cllr M. Sutton reported the following matters:

- The County Council had struck a £100m investment deal which it was hoped would bring 20,000 jobs to the area over the next ten years.
- Congestion in Brewood had been placed on the Divisional Highways list which would commence in April although some projects from this financial year had been delayed due to the bad weather.
- A defibrillator was being pursued in Blymhill and Cllr Sutton had attended Heart Start training in Wheaton Aston. The Chair explained about the Heart Start training planned for Coven. Mr D. Evans reported that a car had been obstructing the defibrillator on Brewood. The Clerk agreed to write again to the agent (Savill's).

Cllr M. Sutton left the meeting.

370. **PLAYING FIELDS REPORT:**

The Council received the reports for:

- Bishops Wood playing field and skateboard park, nothing reported.
-
- Brewood playing field and skateboard park. Mr D. Evans reported that the park and skate board ramps were being well used. Mr M Webb advised that the grass on the football pitch needed cutting.
- Coven playing field and skateboard park. Mr R. Dakin reported that the top rail was broken on the cradle swing and needed urgent attention.

371. **CLERK'S REPORT:**

The Council received the written report of the Clerk and noted that the bus service along Crestwood Park (item number 331) would definitely be ceasing with effect from 28 April 2014.

ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT:

Mr J. Pegg advised that he was fully qualified in the use of the Speedwatch device.

The Chair 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.

248., **Staffing.**

248a. **Flexible Working Application, Assistant Clerk**

Members considered the written request of the Assistant Clerk to work 22 hours per week over four days (Tuesday to Friday) with a provision for working from home on a flexible basis during school holidays.

It was resolved that:

- **The Council accepts the proposal of the Assistant Clerk to work 22 hours per week between Tuesday and Friday during term time.**
- **The Council accepts the proposal of the Assistant Clerk to work flexible hours during school holidays; following a precedent previously set, this may include occasional home working. The smooth running of the office would continue to be managed by the Clerk.**

248b. Car Scheme Coordinator Vacancy (15 hours per week).

Members had considered the applications received and shortlisted them accordingly.

It was resolved that:

- **Six applicants be shortlisted for interview**
- **The date for interviews to take place was agreed as 26 March 2014.**
- **Interviews to commence at 9.30am.**
- **The panel to consist of M. Alden-Court, Mrs J. Carr, Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes, Mrs J. Jeffries and the Clerk.**
- **Invitation to interview letters, including a copy of the job description, and unsuccessful letters to be sent to all applicants by the Clerk as soon as possible.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15pm

..... Chairman

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

MATTERS ARISING:

351** **Localism / Core Strategy.** Documents have been received which will be used in the consultation. I have tried to contact Graham Wright of the Community Council of Staffordshire and I await his response regarding availability during April to hold pre- consultation meetings in Brewood and Coven.

331. **Brewood Bus Service 877.** Reply received from Mr B. Brown of Select Bus advising that it would not be possible to continue to run the bus service along Crestwood Park after 28 April this year. There are a number of reasons for this decision: The Select Bus will shortly be adding to its 877 service, taking over the 88 service from Brewood to Stafford and also the 482 service linking Brewood with Church Eaton, Derrington and Haughton adding pressure to timescales. In addition, the company had received a complaint from a Brewood resident that the bus was continually late, which was being investigated by VOSA, the governing body. The journey from Wolverhampton takes 25 mins and the bus runs half hourly, giving 5 minutes to go along Crestwood Park. Due to congestion in Dean Street, there is no longer any spare time and so the Crestwood Park detour will be cut. As there was a maximum of only five people using the bus from Deansfield House area and up to twenty others being kept waiting elsewhere en route it was decided that to avoid any further delays and action from VOSA the service past Deansfield House would cease. Mr Brown suggested that the five people affected use the Connect service which would take them to a point on any bus route.

Matter of report.

356. **Bishops Wood Skateboard Park.** I have tried to ascertain why the Village Hall was selected as the area most suitable for the skateboard park but have been unable to find any relevant paperwork. However, it is likely that because skate boarding is such a physical activity and skate boarders are therefore more likely than most to sustain a serious injury, the park at Bishops Wood would not be an appropriate site as it is remote and emergency vehicles would not be able to access the site easily. The village hall site was probably selected as the best alternative. The approximate cost at the time was £13,000 (including equipment, surface and fencing). The skate park was built in 2003.

Matter of report.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

PC Clarke. Email received from PC Clarke giving his apologies for not being able to attend the meeting. Copy tabled.

FINANCE:

483* **Coven Heath Hedge and Removal of Leylandii.** The contractor advised that had not included the removal of the tree roots in his original estimate of £800. In order for the area exposed to be useful as a turning point and/or community area, at the meeting of the committee in October it was recommended that this would be necessary. The invoice for a total of £1000 (an increase of £200 for the additional works) has been received for the completed works. This is within the budget allocated and well below the nearest competitive estimate.

Matter of report.

350. **Norton Anti Virus Renewal.** Original offer at £59.99 was no longer available online. As the subscription was due to expire on 12 March approval was granted from the Head of Finance for the purchase of the renewal of the antivirus software using the Clerk's personal credit card, as the Parish

Council debit card remains suspended. The invoice for £64.99 is included in expenditure for approval.
Matter of report.

PLANNING:

Site Allocation Coven. Letter received from Mr P. Maddox requesting a meeting with the Parish Council to discuss proposals to build affordable houses in Coven adjacent to the playing field in School Lane. Copy tabled. Plans available.

Members' views.