

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

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES, STAFFORD STREET, BREWOOD
ON THURSDAY, 29 MAY, 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, , Dr R.C.H. Taylor, Mrs L. Tomkins, Mr P. Webster.

APOLOGIES:

Mr J. Pegg (personal), Mr P. Smith (work), Mr M. Webb MBE (personal), Cllr Mrs W. Sutton (unwell), Cllr B. Cox (unwell), Cllr M. Hampson (prior meeting).

IN ATTENDANCE

PCSO Mark Griffiths, PCSO Andy Poxon.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:

Dr R.C.H Taylor declared a personal interest in planning applications appertaining to 14 Dean Street and correspondence related to 2a Dean Street.

MINUTES:

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8 May 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.

35. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

Mr Peter Tomkins of Coven Heath thanked the Council and Cllr. M. Sutton for their help and effort in gaining double yellow lines in Ball Lane, Coven Heath.

The Chair invited PCSO Mark Griffiths to provide the Police Report. PCSO Griffiths gave a summary of the crime and anti-social behaviour that had occurred in the Parish during the last month and answered questions from the Council relating to these incidents.

Mr D. Evans arrived for the meeting.

MATTERS ARISING:

* items appertain to matters arising during 2013/2014, ** to matters prior to May 2013.

256.13** **Traffic Management Survey, Brewood.** Dr R. Taylor and Mr R. Dakin had completed the second traffic survey and reported on their findings. Dr Taylor undertook his survey on Wednesday 21st May 2014, surveying parking spaces at 2 hourly intervals within 150m of the village centre. Mr R. Dakin surveyed between 6th and 27th May at various different times and points in village. Both surveys demonstrated that there was parking available within 150 metres of Market Place. Mr Dakin raised the matter of a car obstructing the defibrillator in Stafford Street.

It was resolved that the Clerk write to Savills regarding the overnight parking outside the Bakery in Stafford Street blocking access to the defibrillator.

347** **Wall – Rear of Amenity Area, Sandy Lane.** Mr Twigger advised that the delay was solely due to him not having progressed the matter. He had apologised for this and agreed to make arrangements to have the wall reinstated as soon as possible.

Matter of report.

402. Coven Heath Allotments.

- The tenant of plot 28 indicated that she wished to renew for a further 12 months. She had been advised to clear the rubbish, including the carpet, and re-site the shed by 29 May. A site inspection at 4.30pm on the 29th May indicated that although a small improvement had been made the majority of rubbish was still on site.

It was resolved that the Tenancy Agreement would not be renewed.

- Overhanging trees.
Clerk's Report referred.

It was resolved that the Clerk obtain a quote from Brewood Tree Services to remove the dangerous overhanging branches and reduce the trees to a safe height.

MATTERS ONGOING:

385. **Grass Cutting.** Clerk's Report referred. Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes reported that there had been complaints about the poor standard of grass cutting from across the district. Members requested that Clerk report back to the Council prior to paying the Q1 invoice.

It was resolved the Clerk writes formally to South Staffordshire Council regarding the poor standard of work in relation to grass cutting in the Parish.

16. **Apologies for absence.** Clerk's Report referred. Dr R. Taylor requested that Members be marked absent if no apologies were received. It was agreed that there would be exceptions made in the event of illness.

It was resolved that the current practice of recording apologies for absence remained unchanged.

20. **Police Sign.** Clerk's Report referred.

It was resolved the Clerk investigate the legal implications of erecting a Police sign outside the Parish Council offices. It was further resolved that the matter be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

36. Email received from Ms G. Styles, Communications Officer, regarding the change in rules for Individual Electoral Registration. Ms Styles requested permission to place an article in the next Parish Council Newsletter. Mrs L. Tomkins reported on the incident at the Polling Station whereby it was thought that the generator had been stolen.

It was resolved that an article be placed in the next Parish Council newsletter.

It was further resolved that the Clerk write to Mr T. Howells of Coven Heath thanking him for his public spirit regarding protecting the polling station at Coven Heath.

37. Email received from Lorraine Richards, of South Staffordshire Council advising that at the Annual Meeting of the Council, the following had been elected: Chairman Cllr Mrs J. Johnson, Chairman's Consort Mrs K. Bates, Vice Chairman Cllr Mrs D.M. Holmes, Vice Chariman's Consort Mrs S. Wellsbury.

Matter of report.

38. The Mess Bistro. Two tickets addressed to the Parish Council received to the Mess Bistro relaunch event on Thursday 19 June 5.00pm to 8.00pm. Clerks Report referred.

It was resolved that the Chair of the Council attend representing the Parish Council in order to show support of local businesses.

39. Invitation from Codsall Parish Council to the Chairman's Civic Sunday and Songs of Praise at Codsall Village Hall on 1 June at 4.30pm. M. Alden-Court to attend.

Matter of report.

40. Invitation from South Staffordshire Council to the Chairman's Civic Sunday at Great Wyrley Methodist Church on 22 June at 2.00pm. M. Alden-Court to attend.

Matter of report.

41. Email from Mrs D. Bate requesting that the Chair save the afternoon of Sunday 7 September free in order to attend Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council's Civic Sunday. M. Alden-Court to attend.

Matter of report.

42. Email from Mr J. Laidlaw of Live and Local giving information about Big Picture Show Screening and Live and Local indoor and outdoor performers.

It was resolved that the Clerk forward the details to the three village hall committees.

43. Letter from the Post Office advising that approval had been given for the Post Office to move into the Allotment Shop, 4 The Parade, Coven which would open on Thursday 12 June at 1.00pm.

Matter of report.

44. Email from Sam Osbourne of South Staffordshire Council advising that the Council could no longer offer the SUSSED activities due to lack of resources. The alternative was to offer vouchers to

children for a nominal fee to be redeemed at leisure centres in South Staffordshire. Members wished to continue to provide for activities if possible.

It was resolved that the Clerk find further details of how voucher scheme worked and report back to the Council.

45. Email from Mr P. Element asked for the Chair or another Parish Councillor to attend Brewood Music Festival and appear on stage at around 3.00pm on the Sunday (13 July) in order to announce the Parish Council's sponsorship of the event, the committee would then announce that the Council had offered to match the bucket collection. Members agreed that it was necessary to audit the amount collected. Mrs J. Jeffries requested that the public conveniences be kept open later over the weekend of the festival.

It was resolved that the Chair of the Council attend on the Sunday of the music festival to announce the Parish Council's involvement with the event. It was further resolved that arrangements be made to keep Sandy Lane WCs open over the weekend of the festival.

46. Note of thanks received from Dr R. Taylor for the birthday card sent from the Chair, the Council and staff on the occasion of his 70th Birthday. The Chair thanked Dr R. Taylor for his year in office and the help he had given her as Vice Chair.

Matter of Report.

47. Email from Mrs L. Baker of Support Staffordshire inviting Members to its annual Celebration Event on Saturday 21 June between 10.00am and 2.00pm at The Church at Perton, Anders Square. Mrs Baker also asked if there were any voluntary or community groups or charities that wish to have a stand at the event. If so they should be asked to contact Support Staffordshire directly.

It was resolved that notices/posters be put on Parish notice boards advising people of this event.

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 discussed, in accordance with Standing Order 65, this item was taken at the end of the meeting.

48. Letter received from Mr D. Walker, regarding the grading of the post of Clerk. Copy circulated prior to meeting. Details of the Job Evaluation Scheme from SLCC were also received and were available from the Clerk.

It was resolved that the Council considered the matter at the meeting of the Precept due to be held in December. It was further resolved that the Council moved towards paying the Living Wage for staff on lower salaries, rather than the statutory minimum wage. This would be phased in over two years.

49. Request from AFC Milestone to alter the size of the pitch at Coven. The team would like the goal posts to be moved from 150m to 130m and make it narrower by 1m each side. This would alleviate the possibility of injury to players from running into the fence, which had happened last season. On measurement, the pitch was already less than 130m but could be centralised within the three boundary fences with the overall pitch size remaining the same.

It was resolved the Clerk investigate the cost of re-positioning goal posts and report back to the Council.

50. Email from Maggie Quinn of South Staffordshire Council regarding the new bi-annual Police Accountability Forum. Ms Quinn asked if the Chair and either Clerk or another Councillor would be able

to attend Watling Street headquarters (dates not yet specified). M. Alden-Court and Dr R. Taylor would be able to attend.

Matter of report.

51. CORRESPONDENCE CIRCULATED:

Gavin Williamson Newsletter May 2014

Superfast Broadband Newsletter May 2014

Brewood Civic Society Minutes of meeting held 14 May and 19 May together with copy letters sent to Planning

Marie Johnson SSC minutes of public meeting held 29 April re i54. Copies posted to residents in Coven Heath

i54 Update Newsletter May 14

Penkridge Advertiser

Wolverhampton West Magazine

Wolverhampton Magazine

52. DISTRICT COUNCIL'S REPORT:

The Council received the report of the District Council from Cllr D.M. Holmes and noted the following:-

- Mr B. Taylor has agreed to clean up car park in Stafford Street, Brewood.
- Enforcement officers had been called in to the cottage next to the New Inns.
- The planning application for 14, Dean Street were under discussion. Advice was being sought from English Heritage.

53. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

The Chair had attended Rogation Sunday, with Mrs J. Carr, in Coven on 25th May and reported that it was a very pleasant occasion. The vicar had led the procession and had blessed the fields and canal boats as part of the service.

54. FINANCE REPORT:

The Council received the Finance Report from the Head of Finance, Mrs J. Carr and resolved the following matters:

- The Income and Expenditure Approvals list as of 29 May, Income £266.15 Expenditure £13,422.83 **be approved**, including salary payments and back pay covering standard hours plus:
 - Clerk 34.75 additional hours plus 3 meetings and 1 drop-in event
 - Assistant Clerk 2.25 hours (1 meeting)
- The Financial Summary - Cash Book Reconciliation for April 2014, **be approved**.
- The quote of £248 received from Mills Bookbinders Ltd for binding 4 volumes of Parish Council minutes, **be approved**.
- The 2013/2014 end of year accounts: Income and Expenditure Account Sheet, Consolidated Balance Sheet and Supporting Notes for the 2013/2014 Statement of Accounts, **be approved**. The Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer signed the Consolidated Balance Sheet and Supporting Notes. The independent Internal Auditor Mr D. Walker had completed the Internal

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Audit and submitted his report which stated that there were no concerns to bring to the attention of Members. Mr Walker duly had completed 'Section 4 – Annual Internal Audit Report' of the Annual Return.

- The Annual Return and the Explanation of Significant Variances and the Breakdown of Variances, **be approved**. Members completed Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Return and the Chair and RFO signed Sections 1 and 2 at the meeting. The Annual Return and supporting papers would be returned to the External Auditor by 23 June.
- The Financial Regulations, Business Risk Assessments and Internal Control Checklist had been reviewed by the RFO and the Head of Finance and updated accordingly with minor amendments. **Matter of report.**

Mrs J. Carr congratulated Mrs M. O'Brien and thanked her for all her hard work on the year end accounts.

55. **PLANNING REPORT:**

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

A copy of a letter to Brewood Civic Society from Mr R. Latham in response to their letter regarding his planning application for a proposed dwelling at 2a Dean Street, Brewood was received.

Matter of report.

The Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire had been drafted, more details were available online at www.staffordshire.gov.uk

Matter of report.

56. **PLAYING FIELDS REPORT:**

The Council received the reports for the playing fields and noted the following:-

- Bishops Wood playing field and skateboard park, Mrs S. Hughes had submitted a written report. Mrs J. Jeffries reported she had spoken to local youths and asked for feedback regarding the use of the skateboard park and advised that she would report back in due course.
- Brewood playing field and skateboard park. Mr D. Evans reported graffiti on the picnic benches and that the plaque from the bench donated by Brewood fire service had been removed. Mr D. Evans also reported the poor quality of grass cutting throughout the playing field. Clerk's Report referred.
- Coven playing field and skateboard park. Mr R. Dakin reported the goal mouth was flooded and the gutting on the changing room was damaged. Mr R. Dakin also reported on poor quality of grass cutting within Coven. Clerk's Report referred.

57. **CLERK'S REPORT:**

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

- Parish Councillor Contact Information.

It was resolved that email addresses be included on publicised information for Parish Councillors.

- Resurfacing School Lane Coven. M. Alden-Court agreed to contact Cllr M. Sutton to arrange a site visit.

It was resolved that a meeting between Cllr M. Sutton and the Chair, M. Alden-Court be arranged to assess which areas of School Lane, if any, required more urgent attention.

- Land at Hall Farm Close. Clerk to establish ownership for certain with the Council's solicitor. Once the area was manageable the Gardener/Handyman would be able to keep it maintained.

It was resolved that once ownership by the Parish Council was confirmed, three quotes to clear the area be sought.

ANY OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT (For inclusion on the next Agenda if appropriate):

Dr R. Taylor reported Mrs V. Turner had been appointed to replace Mrs D. Drury as secretary to the Brewood Dole Charity.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

..... Chairman.

**REPORT OF THE CLERK FOR THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
TO BE HELD 29 MAY 2014**

MATTERS ARISING

245** **Brewood Bowling Club Lease.** This has been reviewed by Mrs J. Jeffries, Dr R. Taylor and the Clerk, in conjunction with Ms Skidmore. A revised draft lease will be available to Members in due course.

Matter of report.

385. **Grass Cutting.** I emailed Shaun Alexander regarding the poor service received but no reply has been received. However, the verges and playing field in Brewood have been cut during the past week but we are still receiving complaints about the standard of work.

Recommended resolution: the Clerk to write formally to South Staffordshire Council regarding the poor standard of work.

402. **Coven Heath Allotments.**

- Allotment 28. The tenant had asked if she could renew for a further 12 months and was advised that the Council would decide at its meeting of 29 May depending on whether or not the plot was cleared. Mrs L. Tomkins has inspected the site today and has reported that the shed and a small number of slabs have been moved but the bulk of the rubbish is still on the plot.

Members' views.

- Overhanging Trees. The Agreement has been received from Mr Hilton of Dallow and Dallow which states that the Parish Council is responsible for maintaining the boundary. Both Mr Hilton and HM Land Registry have stated that the title deeds are not specific enough to prove one way or another the ownership of the trees.

Recommended resolution: The Clerk to obtain a quote from Brewood Tree Services to remove the dangerous overhanging branches and reduce the trees to a safe height.

- Car Park Resurfacing. Mr Hilton advised that there would be no objections to the car park being resurfaced as its upkeep by the Parish Council was also included in the Agreement.

MATTERS ONGOING

16. **Apologies for Absence.** Mr D. Evans had queried the reasons given for absence. SLCC guidance is that it is important to record reason for absence in case they have to be approved to prevent a casual vacancy. A casual vacancy arises if a Member fails throughout six consecutive months to attend any meetings, committees etc. of the Council, unless s/he has a statutory reason or the reason is approved by the Council at the end of the six months. It would seem that to substitute 'personal' for 'holiday' would have no relevance to this. In the interest of security I would recommend that the Council continues with its current practice.

Members' views.

20. **Police Sign.** At the meeting of 8 May it was recommended that the Clerk investigate erecting a Police sign outside the Parish Council offices. There is currently a blue sign in the Council Chamber which was taken down from the Police Station in Market Place but this may not be the most appropriate sign.

Recommendation: the matter be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

38. **The Mess Bistro Relaunch.** I have taken further advice on the matter and would recommend that the invitation be declined. Whilst the Parish Council endeavours to support local business it is important that the Council is impartial.

Members' views.

OTHER MATTERS OF REPORT

Road Sign The Pavement. This was knocked over and Mr M. Webb MBE reported that it was left outside a house in Sandy Lane. I presume it has now been collected by South Staffordshire Council and will be repaired or replaced in due course.

Matter of report.

Parish Councillor Information. It has been requested that email addresses be included on the publicised information for Parish Councillors. Do Members have any objections email addresses being included?

Sandy Lane WCs. There is a leak at Sandy Lane WC resulting in it having to be closed from 29 May. A plumber has been called as a matter of urgency and has repaired the leak

Matter of report.

Resurfacing School Lane, Coven. Mr T. Prendergast enquired as to why Greenaces had been resurfaced and not School Lane. Cllr M. Sutton has advised that School Lane is scheduled to be completely resurfaced but is not included in this year's programme and has asked if Coven Members would be interested in meeting on site to assess whether or not parts of School Lane required more urgent attention.

Members' views.

Land at Hall Farm Close. The Council's solicitor has confirmed that this piece of land is owned by the Parish Council. The handyman has attempted to trim it but it is quite a large area and is overgrown and unsightly. Members' views are requested as to how the plot could be improved.