

BRINDLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 25 MAY 2021 AT THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, MOUNT ROAD, RUGELEY

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: P. Adams (Chairman)
R. Turville (Vice Chairman)
D. Cotton
Mrs M. A. Turville
A. Pearson
Mrs S. Pearson
M. Sutherland

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs T. Williams (Clerk)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Chairman, Councillor Adams, invited nominations for Chairman.

It was proposed by Councillor R. Turville and seconded by Councillor Mrs M. A. Turville that Cllor P. Adams be appointed as Chairman for the ensuing year. There were no further nominations and all Members agreed.

Councillor Turville informed members of the Council that Councillor Adams had done a fantastic job as Chairman over very many years and always kept the Parish Council free of politics. He said that Councillor Adams had given much needed help and advice when Hednesford Town Council was being set up and all those involved had been most grateful for the support.

Resolved: To appoint Councillor P. Adams as Chairman to Brindley Heath Parish Council for the municipal year 2021-22.

2. SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Clerk invited Councillor Adams to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and received the Badge of Office.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

It was proposed by Councillor Adams and seconded by Councillor Pearson that Councillor R. Turville be appointed to the position of Vice Chairman.

Resolved: To appoint Councillor R. Turville as Vice Chairman to Brindley Heath Parish Council for the municipal year 2021-22.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillors Dr J. McMahon and P. Hewitt.

Chairman's Initials

1/2021-22

5. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No Interests were declared.

<u>Member</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
No interests declared		

6. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Clerk acknowledged receipt of Councillor Mrs Shirley Pearson’s completed Acceptance of Office form and Member Interests form which would be forwarded to Cannock Chase Council for publication on the District Council’s website.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Mrs Pearson to the meeting.

7. PLANNING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Council considered the terms of reference for the Council’s Planning Committee which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

Resolved: The terms of reference for the Council’s Planning Committee were approved.

8. TO DETERMINE THE MEMBERSHIP AND ELECT THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE FOR 2020-21

Resolved: That all Members be appointed to the Planning Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Pearson, seconded by Councillor Adams and agreed that Councillor D. Cotton be appointed as Chairman of the Planning Committee.

Councillor Pearson complimented Councillor Cotton on the fantastic job he had done as Chairman and all members agreed.

Resolved: That Councillor D. Cotton be re-appointed as Chairman of the Planning Committee for the year 2021-22.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed that Councillor A. Pearson be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee for the year 2021-22.

Resolved: That Councillor A. Pearson be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee for the year 2021-22.

9. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Parish Council considered the appointment of representatives to outside bodies:

Resolved: To make the following appointments of Council representatives on outside bodies:

Slitting Mill Village Hall	M. Sutherland
Etching Hill Village Hall	D. Cotton

Chairman’s Initials

2/2021-22

Chetwynd's Charity	P. Adams
Charity for the Recreation Ground for the Benefit of the Inhabitants of the Ancient Parish of Rugeley and Neighbourhood in the County of Stafford	P. Adams & D. Cotton
Charity for an Allotment for the Labouring Poor in the Ancient Parish of Rugeley in the County of Stafford	P. Adams & D. Cotton
Longdon Cotton Alms-houses (four-year term to 2024)	P. Adams (to 2024)
Cannock Chase Council's Standards Committee	R. Turville
Cannock Chase AONB Parish Councils' Meeting	A. Pearson & Mrs. M. A. Turville

The Council made the point that the parish council had used to get invited to Cannock Chase AONB Parish Council Liaison meetings on a regular basis and also received frequent contact from the staffing team until they left their posts (in 2018). This contact has now mostly ceased.

Information (dating back to 2016) confirmed that as part of the governance arrangements agreed by the Joint Committee in that year, the annual conference was reinstated. The parish council has been invited to the Annual Cannock Chase AONB Conference (held in the latter part of the year with the last meeting taking place in October 2019). The parish council has continued to nominate a representative to attend the conference and to take the lead on any other AONB engagement opportunities that might arise.

The Council asked that an enquiry be made to Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee as Members considered it to be unacceptable that Brindley Heath Parish Council is not represented on the Joint Committee. It was noted that other outside bodies were invited to contribute, and none will have a greater interest in the area than the Parish Council. The Council would also like to have additional information about how the organisation is run and how good decisions can be made without representation from the people who live there.

A discussion took place about the management plan and whether the best strategies for looking after the landscape were in place.

10. MINUTES OF LAST MEETINGS

Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6 April 2021 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17 May 2021 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Resolved: The draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 6 April 2021, were noted.

11. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Chairman's Initials

3/2021-22

There were no reports from the previous minutes.

12. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported that he had received contact from a resident who had expressed concern about the frequency of speeding cars and near misses with horses on Stafford Brook Road.

The Chairman asked that the Police be alerted about the issue and that enquiries are made about the installation of horse-riding signs on Stafford Brook Road and Bower Lane. Councillor Sutherland advised that he had made enquiries about horse riding signs on Shooting Butts Road.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

a) Items of Post

Bloomin’ Cannock Chase – an email dated 25 April 2021 from Hednesford in Partnership thanked attendees to a recent meeting and gave formal notice of the launch of the Bloomin’ Cannock Chase competition.

Councillor Pearson confirmed that the competition was similar to the ‘Best Kept Village’ competition. It was open to any town or parish councils that formed part of the Cannock Chase district and involved them selecting an area of their town or parish that could be judged. There were pre-determined set of criteria, and the closing date was 24 May 2021.

The Council concluded that it was difficult for Brindley Heath to get involved with this type of competition as most land in the parish was either forest or privately owned. The parish does not have a village centre or any areas of land that it manages.

b) Consultations

Public Spaces Protection Order (Dog Control) 2018

The Council considered a letter (dated 14 May 2021) from the Environmental Protection Manager at Cannock Chase Council inviting views on Cannock Chase Council’s intention to renew the existing Dog Control Order which applies throughout the district. The Order has been in place for three years and Cannock Chase Council propose to extend the Order for a further three years.

The letter and Order had been enclosed with the agenda for the meetings.

Resolved: That the Parish Council supports the District Council’s extension of its Public Spaces Protection Order (Dog Control) 2018 for a further three years.

14. CONTROL OF DOGS

Councillor Sutherland was satisfied that the District Council through the Public Spaces Protection Order above, had the powers to be able to assist with an incident that had been highlighted to him by a member of the public who experienced an unnerving incident with a dog that had been off a lead on Cannock Chase.

Councillor Sutherland concluded that he would ask the enquirer to contact the District Council rather than put them in touch with Staffordshire Police.

The Council commented on people leaving dog poo bags on trees and questioned the reason people did this rather than taking them home.

15. PARISH ISSUES

a) Chase Side

Chairman’s Initials

There were no issues raised in the parish ward.

b) Brindley Village

Councillor Pearson asked whether progress had been made on the notice board project and the Clerk advised that a decision on its position had not been confirmed.

Councillor Pearson offered to make a site visit to determine the best position which it was agreed should be in the most accessible place for members of the public to view it and the least vulnerable place for vandalism.

c) Cannock Chase Forest and AONB

Iron Man Staffordshire

The Council noted that Ironman Staffordshire would be taking place on 18 July 2021.

Message from Community Safety Officer

A Community Safety Flash leaflet has been issued by Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service raising awareness of the dangers of outdoor fires in woodland and grassland areas during the summer months.

Local community safety officers patrol hot spot outdoor spaces but cannot be everywhere at once. As there is a complete ban in the use of BBQ/naked flames on Cannock Chase AONB, they are asking the public to report and provide details of: campfires or BBQ's, the disposal of alcohol, the disposal of smoking materials, evidence of burnt or scorched material and evidence of fly tipping.

Councillor Cotton advised the Council that he would be thanking Mr Spencer for supplying his terms and conditions for users of the pop-up campsite at Four Oaks Farm.

The potential use of the field as an overspill car park continues to give cause for concern. Queries were raised about the requirement for planning permissions, and it was suggested that planning officers may have agreed the proposal in principle. It was also thought that the closure of the highway would require a road safety audit and road closure orders.

The Council expressed concerns about the impact of events such as Ironman, the Commonwealth Games and Forest Concerts on the area and on residents who are prevented from leaving and accessing their homes on the days the events are held.

The point was made that this issue comes back to communication and integration with the Cannock Chase AONB. Feedback and support on these types of events would be beneficial.

The point was also made that S.106 money should be used to improve surrounding infrastructure.

16. INVITATION TO MEETINGS/EVENTS

There were no invitations to meetings for noting.

17. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

Councillor Cotton reported that Etching Hill village Hall Committee will be having its first physical meeting on 2 June 2021. He also advised that the Committee had been successful in securing grant funding from various sources.

Chairman's Initials

5/2021-22

18. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor Pearson informed the Council that it had been mentioned at the last meeting of Cannock Chase AONB that funding (to the value of £20,000) had been secured from DEFRA to replace RAF signs where the camps used to be located.

Councillor Sutherland reported on a meeting he had attended with the head of Hart School. There have been problems with cars blocking Chase Side Drive between 8:30 and 9:30am and again in the afternoon. Through the County Council residents have been consulted and no waiting restrictions are going to be installed on both sides of the road between 8:30 and 9:30am and 2:30 and 4:30pm for a stretch of 100 yards. The project is at the final consultation stage currently.

Councillor Sutherland reported that on Slitting Mill Road residents have complained about speeding from Hednesford through to Slitting Mill. The speed limit is 60mph but when fast traffic is travelling both ways at the same time, the situation is concerning. As a result of the pandemic there are many more walkers on the road with few designated footpaths. County officers have been asked to undertake a site visit and a survey. Councillor Sutherland would like to accompany them if possible.

19. FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Financial Position of the Council

Prior to the meeting, Members of the Council had received copies of the end of year accounts for the financial year 2020-21 comprising: cash book, bank reconciliation, budget and spend statements, variance report and analysis of budget heads.

The Council noted the financial position of the Council at the 31 March 2021.

b) Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020-21

i) To receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2020-21

The Council noted the Internal Audit Report for 2020-21 which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. No issues of concern had been raised as internal control objectives had been achieved meeting the standards that were required for a smaller authority.

Resolved: That the report of the Internal Auditor for the year 2020-21 be noted.

ii) Annual Governance Statement 2020-21 (Section 1)

Resolved: That the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year 2020-21 be approved.

iii) Accounting Statements 2020-21 (Section 2)

Resolved: That the Accounting Statements 2020-21 be approved.

iv) Certificate of Exemption

The Council noted that there was no requirement to have a limited assurance review or to submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the external auditor provided it has certified itself as exempt at a meeting of the Council after 31 March 2021, and a Certificate of Exemption submitted notifying the external auditor.

The Certificate of Exemption is completed by smaller authorities (where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure does not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31 March 2021) who wish to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.

Resolved: That the Chairman signs the Certificate of Exemption to confirm that the Council wishes to be exempt from a limited assurance review.

c) Appointment of a Responsible Finance Officer for the year 2021-22

Resolved: The Parish Clerk was confirmed as the Responsible Finance Officer for the year 2021-22.

d) Appointment of Independent Internal Auditor for the year 2021-22

Resolved: Mr Ray Smythe was confirmed as Independent Internal Auditor for the year 2021-22.

e) Financial Regulations and Standing Orders for 2021-22

The Parish Council undertook to review the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

Resolved:

- To adopt the National Association of Local Councils model Financial Regulations (dated July 2019).
- To adopt the mandatory statutory requirements of the National Association of Local Councils model Standing Orders version 2018.

f) To authorise cheques for payment

100184	Church of the Holy Spirit	£35.00	Use of room on 17 May 2021 and 25 May 2021
100185	Ray Smythe	£40.00	Internal Audit of accounts for the financial year 2020-21
100186	Came & Company	£218.00	Insurance renewal from 6 July 2021 to 5 July 2022

Renewal of the Council's insurance Cover

The Clerk in consultation with the Chairman had considered the Council's insurance renewal from Came and Company for the period 6 July 2021 to 5 July 2022 with the existing levels of cover.

The policy excludes cover for: firework displays, bonfires, skate parks, BMX tracks, Zip Wires, ponds (water related activities) and playground equipment from the Public Liability section.

Chairman's Initials

7/2021-22

Resolved: To authorise payment of the cheques listed.

20. ANY OTHER ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Councillor Sutherland reported on the success of the speed monitoring device in Hednesford (Pye Green Road) as there is a speeding and education issue on Bower Lane. Analysis has demonstrated that this device has really helped to reduce speeds and Councillor Sutherland is looking to secure funding for a device in Bower Lane.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday 20 July 2021 at the Church of the Holy Spirit, Mount Road, Rugeley.

The Chairman thanked everyone present for their attendance.

Signed.....

Chairman, Mr. P. Adams

Date.....