

BRINDLEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2019
AT THE WHITE HOUSE MARQUIS DRIVE, RUGELEY
7.30PM**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Two members of the public (to the end of Public Participation)
PCSO Sean Nicholls (for Police Report)
Mrs T. Williams (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies from parish councillors.

Apologies were received from County Councillor B. Jones and P. Hewitt.

The Police Reports item on the agenda (at number 2) was considered later in the meeting to coincide with PCSO Nicholls' arrival.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of the public raised questions relating to a building under construction. Information about the District Council's planning process was given by Councillor A. Pearson along with confirmation that the buildings height had been assessed.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To declare interests for this meeting:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
Councillor P. Adams	Chetwynd's Charity	Personal
Councillor A. Pearson	Member of Cannock Chase Council's Planning Control Committee	Personal

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2019 were approved as a correct record.

5. PROGRESS REPORTS/UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There were no progress reports for items not already listed on the agenda.

6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman's Initials

25/2019-20

The Chairman, Councillor P. Adams, invited the Vice Chairman, Councillor R. Turville, to accept an invitation received from the Chairman of Cannock Chase Council, Councillor Mrs Z. Stretton, to her Civic Carols Service on Tuesday 10 December 2019.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

a. Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence

All correspondence was noted from the Clerks Report.

b. Items of Interest/Requiring a Response

The following items of incoming post were considered:

Local Government Boundary Review – An email from the Town Clerk at Hednesford Town Council (dated 1 September 2019) advises that the Town Council has discussed the proposed boundary review of Cannock Chase District and concluded that further consideration needs to be given to the matter when more information is available on the implications for town and parish councils.

Brereton & Ravenhill Parish Council had agreed (at its meeting on 1 October 2019), that a Parish Review should be carried out for the entire District including the unparished areas.

Resolved: To note the views of local councils in the Cannock District on the proposed Local Government Boundary Review, and to await further information on the implications for town and parish councils.

Cannock Chase Council's Local Plan Update – An email from the Planning Policy Manager at Cannock Chase Council (dated 18 November 2019) provides an update on the Cannock Chase Local Plan. The District Council adopted an updated Local Development Scheme in November with a revised timetable to produce the Local Plan Review. The Area Action Plan for Cannock Town centre will no longer be progressed and the strategic policies for the District's town centres will be taken forward through the Local Plan Review, with detailed planning matters delegated to other documents as necessary.

The Parish Council discussed the planning process and the following points were made:

- The parish council would take a guide from Cannock Chase Council on interpretation of the Local Plan. In the meantime, the Council will carry on making observations on planning applications, as before.
- Brindley Heath is well protected in planning terms because of its Green Belt and AONB designations.
- Relaxation of Permitted Development regulations have afforded councils additional powers, as well as taking them away.
- The Planning Team at Cannock Chase Council and Planning Control Committee were complimented on the way in which they deal with planning. There are very few appeals, and in most cases, appeals are dismissed.
- Planning Officers are helpful to the parish council. They recognise local and national planning policy/law/regulation is complex and are willing provide advice where required. They also appear to appreciate the support of the parish council.
- Interpretation and application of the law to proposed developments can be difficult but if the process were straightforward Planning Control Committee would not be needed.
- The importance of the parish council submitting consistent and meaningful observations was emphasised.

- The Chairman of the parish Planning Committee welcomes and appreciates all comments made by Committee members on planning consultations under consideration.

Resolved: To note the Cannock Chase Local Plan update.

National Community Energy Campaign – The Director of ‘Power for People’ (a not for profit organisation) is asking (in an email dated 7 November 2019) for assistance with its campaign for the Local Electricity Bill (which it authored) to become law. The Bill aims to make it possible for local renewable energy generators, such as community energy groups, to sell the energy they generate by establishing a ‘Right to Local Supply’ and making the costs of selling locally generated clean energy proportionate to the scale of the operation. Currently they are unable to sell energy because of the huge set up and running costs involved.

Resolved: The request to support the National Community Energy Campaign was noted.

One Health and Care – An email from the Senior Responsible Officer and Chief Information Officer/Digital Programme Director, National Health Service (dated 28 October 2019) advises that health and social care organisations within Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent are undertaking a campaign to inform people about the new One Health and Care confidential digital shared care record system which will be going live in early 2020.

The campaign aims to make people aware of One Health and Care, what it does and how, why, where, and when their information will be shared. People can opt out if they wish.

The Council raised questions about whether the system will work efficiently.

It was reported that a Rugeley surgery is looking to improve patient participation, seeking their views on service provision.

Resolved: To note the details of ‘One Health and Care’ digital shared record system.

Cannock Chase Council AONB Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) – An email from the Cannock Chase AONB Land Management Officer (dated 21 October 2019) gives information about the SDF grant scheme for projects that bring environmental, social and economic benefits to the AONB and help to deliver the Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan. Grants will normally be in the range of £500 to £5000. The closing date was 15 November 2019, but further applications may be invited later in the financial year.

The Council considered that project ideas would be more easily identified in Etching Hill than Brindley Heath.

Resolved: To note that there might be a future opportunity to apply for Cannock Chase AONB Sustainable Development Funding.

SPCA Weekly Bulletins:

- **Councillors’ Guide to Handling Intimidation** (Bulletin on 7 November 2019) – A 32-page guide has been produced by the Local Government Association with practical steps on dealing with intimidation.
- **VE Day celebrations** (Bulletin 24 October 2019) – a letter from SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity, advises that Mayor’s, Leaders and Chairmen of town and parish councils throughout the UK will be taking the lead in local celebrations marking the 75th Anniversary of the end of the war in EUROPE on

the 8 May 2020. VJ Day will begin on 15 August 2020. The planned activities over the weekend include: The Playing of Battle's O'er & VE 75 Years, The 'Nations Toast to the Heroes of WW2', The 'Cry for Peace, around the World', Churches & Cathedrals 'Ring out for Peace', Street and other parties, Services of Commemoration and Celebration in churches, including the reading of the 'Tribute to the Millions' and the playing of the Last Post.

All those taking part are being asked to register their involvement on the VE day 75 website www.veday75.org

It was suggested that bunting be installed in the Brindley Village area and that the Council support its purchase.

Resolved: That the Parish Council would support one of the many VE Commemorative events already planned in the district but not organise an event, independently.

c. Consultations

• **Cannock Chase SAC Detailed Implementation Plans Consultation**

Emails from the Principal Planner at Cannock Chase Council (22 October 2019), Staffordshire County Council (29 October 2019) and AONB Development Officer (dated 28 October 2019) provide information on the Cannock Chase SAC Detailed Implementation Plans Consultation.

The Cannock Chase SAC Partnership is currently seeking views on proposals for protecting Cannock Chase and how to respond to increasing visitor numbers in the coming years. Two plans in the consultation set out how the infrastructure at Cannock Chase could be improved including the car parks, footpaths and visitor centres. The plans also look at how to raise awareness of the role visitors can play in protecting this special area.

The consultation runs until 29 November 2019.

The view was expressed that the Amphitheatre is a natural bowl and could be used for a variety of purposes. Car parking isn't considered the best use of this natural resource.

Resolved: That the details of the consultation are noted, and that Councillors respond individually.

• **South Staffordshire Local Plan Review – Spatial Housing Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Consultation**

An email from the Strategic Planning Team Manager at South Staffordshire District Council advises that the second stage public consultation on the review of South Staffordshire's Local Plan has begun. The closing date for submitting comments is Thursday 12 December 2019.

Resolved: That the Consultation is noted, and Councillors respond individually where desired.

8. POLICE REPORTS

PCSO Sean Nicholls confirmed that he is one of the PCSO's covering the whole of Rugeley and PCSO Dale is assigned to the Brindley Heath area. He provided a report on the incidents that had occurred in the Cannock Chase/Brindley Heath (and surrounding areas) between 1 November and 26 November 2019. These included: 1 suspicious vehicle, 8 deer related road traffic collisions (representing an increase), 1 missing person, 1 concern for safety, 1 anti-social behaviour (dog related) at Stile Cop, 1 anti-social

behaviour (youths behaving inconsiderately) in Mount Road, 1 road traffic collision on Penkridge Bank Road (vehicle driven by male under the influence of alcohol had struck the wall of a property).

A new type of aggressive/intimidating anti-social behaviour from youths working in groups/gangs is happening locally and an incident near Stone House Road was discussed.

PCSO Nicholls said he is currently working with schools on topics such as: use of the internet, on online safety and gang culture.

PCSO Nicholls was made aware of the longstanding issue of youths driving around the parish at speed and he suggested witnesses' phone 999/101 (depending on the nature of the incident) when it is in progress. He was also made aware of issues relating to people loitering at the top of Kingsley Wood Road.

PCSO Nicholls advised that officers now run on a designated location system. Rugeley doesn't have a designated location and officers respond to demand from Cannock, working on their own a lot of the time.

It was confirmed that Police Constable D. Wilkes is the Rural Officer for Etching Hill and The Heath.

Upon completion of his report, PCSO Nicholls was thanked for his time, before leaving the meeting.

9. PUBLIC ACCESS DEFIBRILLATOR

Councillor Cotton advised Members that a number of residents had expressed their appreciation to the Parish Council for the new public access defibrillator installed in the disused telephone box on Stafford Brook Road. Some have asked whether they could make a donation and it was suggested they make a donation to Rugeley & District Community First Responders or the Arts Council.

Councillor Cotton will be arranging to distribute flyers in the local area. He will repaint the telephone box (externally) in the spring. The preparatory work has been done in readiness including replacement of the broken glass panel.

Resolved: To note the update on the defibrillator project in Stafford Brook Road.

10. PARISH WARD ISSUES

a. Chase Side

Junction at Stafford Brook Road and Penkridge Bank Road

The email from the Strategic Community Infrastructure Manager (dated 9 September 2019) confirming Staffordshire County Council has no plans to improve road safety at this junction, was noted.

Parish Councillors said that more people should report incidents occurring here as they are going unrecorded and unnoticed by the County.

Cross-Country Bikes

Concern was expressed about the increasing number of cyclists and cycling events (along with road closures) on Cannock Chase. Such high-density use is causing damage to the environment and nuisance to residents and visitors.

The following points were made:

- Cannock Chase AONB and County Council make provision for dealing with visitors to the area including car parking but do not recognise the damage/ground erosion cyclists are causing to the Chase.

Chairman's Initials

29/2019-20

- Cyclists do not stay on designated cycle routes and are a continuous source of trouble to other users (including children and animals/pets) who are at risk of being mowed down.
- People hiring bikes are thought to stick to designated paths, but independent cyclists do not. It is this category of use that needs to be managed.
- The damaged ground is not managed to allow it time to recover.
- Road cyclists travel at three and four abreast. At night their bright headlights are dazzling.
- Many visitors park up on the roadside along Stafford Brook Road and Kingsley Wood Road which doesn't bring revenue to the area.
- Stakeholders are not appearing to be addressing the problems

The Council acknowledged that this was a very big topic which would not be easily resolved.

The Chairman suggested making attempts to find out the best organisation/officer to approach about the concerns. It was suggested that cycling associations or other AONB be approached, although other designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty larger – Cannock Chase AONB is the smallest in Britain.

Salt Bins

It was confirmed that the salt bins in Brindley Crescent and Kingsley Wood Road are on the County Council's schedule for refilling.

b. Brindley Village

The Clerk reported that she had been contacted by a resident who would like to see Brindley Crescent opened up.

c. Cannock Chase Forest

No additional items were raised.

11. INVITATION TO MEETINGS/EVENTS

To note forthcoming (external) meetings/nominate members to represent the Parish Council (where appropriate):

- SPCA Annual General Meeting on 2 December 2019 at the County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford.

12. REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

Councillor Pearson confirmed that he had attended the AONB Conference on Friday 4 October. He said that some good work is being undertaken relating to conservation. The use of Cattle on parts of the Chase and installation of underground electric fencing was discussed.

Members had not attended the Brindley Village 'A Legacy of the Great War' presentation on Monday 4 November 2019.

13. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

No reports

14. PARISH COUNCILS WEBSITE TEMPLATE OFFER

The Parish Council considered the details of Staffordshire County Council's new website template service available to local councils looking to modernise their websites. The template service guarantees compliance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 and is responsive to any device. Webmaster support would be from the County Council.

Chairman's Initials

The Government introduced regulations for public sector bodies' websites last year and websites published before 23 September 2018 need to be compliant by 23 September 2020.

Information on the Accessibility requirements and links to additional reading had been provided with the papers for the meeting.

The Clerk expressed concern about the ease with which the existing content would be transferable to WordPress and the time requirement necessary to deal with any issues. Additional costs will be incurred for work that is outside the service contract (Bronze (at £100), Silver (at £125) and Gold (at £500 then £125 each year)). Squarespace provides many templates, features and services which are not utilised. The web designer must build accessibility into the design.

The subscription for Squarespace has been renewed to October 2020 to keep the site live and it was suggested that the benefits of transferring to Staffordshire County Council's WordPress template be considered again in the future.

Resolved: That the parish clerk undertakes an audit of the Council's website to establish the accessibility issues that need to be addressed.

Resolved: That the Council reviews the advantages of transferring to Staffordshire County Council's WordPress template again, after work to address the website's accessibility issues has progressed.

15. FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Financial Position of the Council

A breakdown of income and expenditure for the financial year to date was provided (Clerks Report dated 26 November 2019). The budget statement shows the current financial position of the Council with reserves totalling £17,005.57.

Resolved: To note the financial position of the Council.

b) Community Deposit Account

The Council considered the benefits of opening a deposit account for the purposes of earning interest on its bank account balance. The Council currently holds a Community Account where no interest is payable.

The interest rates payable by the Council's existing bank on community savings/deposit accounts are currently: Instant Access: 0.18%, 30-day rate: 0.19%, 60-day rate: 0.20%. The maximum annual interest payable on an account balance of £15,000 would be £30. The benefits of setting up and managing transfers from a deposit account does not significantly outweigh the current arrangement of holding one easily managed account.

Resolved: That enquiries are made to Cannock Chase Council to establish whether it offers parish councils the opportunity to hold a deposit account and the rate(s) of interest available.

c) Request for Grant Aid Cannock Chase Shed

The Council considered a request for grant aid from Cannock Chase Shed which included a financial report and information relating to how the work of the Group benefits the parish of Brindley Heath.

Resolved: To award £100 to the work of Cannock Chase Shed.

d) Parish Precept for the Year 2020-21

A proposed budget for the financial year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 was distributed to Members. Consideration was given to future projects, the value the parish council wished to spend and how it would need to fund the spending (whether from precept, reserves or other sources of income such as grant aid).

Chairman's Initials

31/2019-20

It was reported that Cannock Chase Council has undertaken a calculation of Brindley Heath Parish Council's Tax Base for 2020-21 and will be recommending that it is set at 250.23.

It was noted that if the precept was to remain at £4,400, a Tax Base of 250.23 would generate an annual charge of £17.58 for Band D householders, representing a 3.5% reduction from last year.

Resolved:

- To approve the draft budgetary figures for the year 2020-21
- To set the precept at £4400 for the financial year 2020-21 (subject to the District Council's approval of the recommended figures)

e) To authorise cheques for payment

100162	The White House	£30.00	Use of room on 26 November 2019
100163	Trudy Williams	£179.14	Reimbursement for Squarespace Web Design Tool Subscription (one year)
100164	Trudy Williams	£643.50	Salary July, August, September 2019 (second quarter)
100165	Cannock Chase Shed	£100.00	Charity Donation (S.137)

Resolved: To authorise payment of the cheques listed.

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

Future meeting dates

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday 28 January 2020 at the White house, Marquis Drive, Brindley Heath at 7.30PM.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance, wished them a Merry Christmas and closed the meeting.

Signed.....

Chairman, Mr. P. Adams

Date.....

Chairman's Initials

32/2019-20