

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
 CASTLE BROMWICH PARISH COUNCIL  
 HELD IN ARDEN HALL, CASTLE BROMWICH  
 ON WEDNESDAY 30TH MARCH 2016  
 AT 7.30 PM**

**Those present:**

**Chairman:** Cllr Mrs. P Allen

**Councillors:** Cllr Mrs. A Haywood      Cllr E Knibb      Cllr J Riordan  
 Cllr K Shaw      Cllr J MacDonald      Cllr M Rashid  
 Cllr Miss J Ward (part of meeting)

**Officer:** Mrs. D. Weir, Assistant Clerk to the Council

**Public:** 16 members of the public  
 Ward Cllr Richards and Ward Cllr Sleigh

**1. Apologies.**

None declared.

**2. Declarations of pecuniary or conflict of interests.**

None declared.

**3. Dispensations.**

None requested.

The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting.

**4. To elect a Vice-Chairman.**

The Chairman asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Cllr Knibb proposed Cllr Mrs Haywood. Cllrs Mrs Haywood declined to stand. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that Cllr Knibb be elected Vice Chairman.

**5. Resignations**

a) Members noted that a vacancy had arisen for the Bradford Ward following the resignation of Cllr Hiley and that the vacancy would be advertised in accordance with the statutory process.

b) Resignations of members - The Chairman suggested this item be deferred to the end of the meeting due to the length of the agenda. Cllr Riordan requested the resignations be read out whilst the public were in attendance. The Chairman read resignations received from former Cllrs Hayes, Horne-MacDonald and Hiley.

**6. Election of Councillors.**

a) Election of Chairman – Leisure Services Committee

Cllr Mrs Haywood proposed Cllr Shaw. Cllr Shaw declined to stand as he was a relatively new member. Cllr Knibb proposed Cllr Mrs Haywood and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Knibb, **SECONDED** by Cllr MacDonald, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Cllr Mrs Haywood be elected Chairman of Leisure Services Committee for the remainder of the Civic Year.

Cllr Mrs Haywood advised that she would be unable to attend the Leisure Services Committee Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016 and requested another member be nominated Chairman for the next Meeting.

b) Members noted the Clerk’s advice to elect a replacement member to serve on the Interim Grievance Panel, subject to being able to serve independently and impartially when considering the outstanding issues. Cllr Mrs Haywood advised that NALC had

asked for a resolution from the Council requesting advice on this matter and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk approach NALC with the Council's consent for advice to be obtained.

#### **7. Co-option of candidates for Beechcroft and Whateley Wards.**

Members noted that vacancies had been declared for Beechcroft and Whateley Wards and if the Borough Council's Elections Officer confirms there have been no requests for an election, the Parish Council can proceed with the process to co-opt two candidates.

#### **8. Declaration of Casual Vacancies**

Members noted the Clerk's advice that the provisional cost of holding an election would be in the region of £5,000 per ward, which would vary dependent on whether polling cards are required, should an election need to be called.

#### **9. Questions from the Public.**

Under Standing Order 3(d), the Chairman temporarily suspended standing orders at 7.45 pm for this item to invite questions from members of the public.

Members of the public were in attendance, primarily to raise issues with quad bikes and motorbikes speeding on local roads. A resident from Ronald Grove asked if the Borough Council could close Tomlinson Road to traffic. Ward Cllr Richards advised that speeding traffic was a problem across the north of the borough, particularly with bikes using open space land in Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst and Fordbridge and the police were finding it difficult to control. He outlined the difficulty with making closure orders for open roads. Various issues were raised and Ward Cllr Richards referred to the Neighbourhood Watch scheme which was being resurrected. Residents advised they had written to their local MP raising issues of concern. Ward Cllr Richards suggested that residents should also write to Chief Superintendent Murray, Solihull Police.

#### **10. Questions from Councillors.**

Cllr Shaw advised that the gates at Hob Farm had not been locked on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2016. Members advised that it was difficult as the Parish Council relied on volunteers to lock and unlock the gates on a daily basis.

#### **11. Communications**

Members noted recent correspondence and routine bulletins, including: deposit of new HS2 (London-West Midlands) information documents, including amended Bill, Plans, Sections and Book of Reference (all electronically); road closure notice for West Avenue for drainage construction works from 11<sup>th</sup> April; Mayor's invitation to St. George's Day Ball on 23<sup>rd</sup> April; results announced of SMBC consultation on Solihull Connected Green Paper; forthcoming changes to Draft Rateable Value Register for new assessment from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017; notification of Non-domestic Rates Bill for Arden Hall of £12,300.75 from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2016; request from Monitoring Officer for members to review their entry in the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests; notice that Beechcroft Public Open Space has been declared a Nature Reserve by Solihull MBC; potential to be involved with ideas to celebrate the designation and raise the profile of the site; Annual Return and notification of external audit date of 24<sup>th</sup> June by Grant Thornton UK LLP, latest journal from Park Hall Academy.

Members noted the Clerk's advice that all communications received are available to view prior to the meeting and if members wished to place any of the items on a future agenda to request this at the meeting.

#### **12. Minutes of the previous Meetings.**

a) Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

Following clarification of a query raised with regard to item 7, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 be accepted as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

b) Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

**ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Knibb, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Haywood, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2016 be accepted as a true and correct record of the Meeting

### **13. Parking on Grass Verges**

The Chairman welcomed Ward Cllr Richards to the meeting and invited him to speak on the issue of the increasing damage and frequency of motorists parking on grass verges.

Ward Cllr Richards outlined to members and members of the public present, that it is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 to cause damage to the highway and anyone causing damage is liable, but it was difficult to prove. It is a criminal offence to drive onto a pavement or verge whether with intention to park or not, except to cross it to private property via a vehicle access crossing. He outlined details of the Traffic Regulation Order which had recently been introduced in Dickens Heath prohibiting parking on the verge or pavement and one which had been introduced in Shard End by the City of Birmingham, but stated that unfortunately there was no effective sanction against verge and pavement parking unless there is signage and any scheme is capable of being policed. The Borough Council as Highway Authority could deal with the problem if there were yellow lines, alternatively, if a vehicle was parked in such a way which forced pedestrians onto the road, this creates an obstruction which is enforceable by the police. The Borough Council had tried installing kicking rails/street bollards, in an attempt to prevent parking on verges or pavements. Ward Cllr Richards referred to the problem in Knowle where the local community had indicated that they wished to be involved in finding a solution to the problem, in particular, the Knowle Society had indicated that they wish to work with the Borough Council and to carry out their own monitoring and issuing of parking warning notices. He advised that if issues are raised with the Borough Council's Neighbourhood Co-ordinators, they will visit a problem area and put notices through resident's doors. Recently following such notices, two residents had promised to carry out remedial works to the verges, but then there had been problems with regard to the appropriate time to do the work.

Ward Cllr Richards suggested that it may be a good idea if the Parish Council call a meeting to which the Police are invited, the Borough Council's Neighbourhood Manager And also the Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities and Partnerships.

Cllr Mrs Haywood referred to a letter from the Parish Council in conjunction with the Borough Council and West Midlands Police, addressing the issue of parking on verges to residents/motorists. She advised that copies of these could be made available for residents if they wished to put them on offending vehicles.

The Chairman thanked Ward Cllr Richards for attending the meeting and for his presentation and also Ward Cllr Mrs Sleigh.

The Assistant Clerk asked members of the public to leave their contact details in order that they can be notified when any meeting is arranged.

### **14. Delegated Decisions taken on urgent matter**

a) Contract entered into with Realpoint Design

Members noted the decision taken by the Clerk, in consultation with members, following the proposed Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March which had been inquorate, to accept the contract with Realpoint Design Ltd to a) prepare a core design, to customize the content for the Parish Council, to transfer existing text to the new site, at a cost of £1,000 plus £75 for hosting to include telephone support on

both the hosting platform and queries on Wordpress, £50 per hour in 15 minute blocks, to update the website, and b) training to be arranged for key staff/councilors on uploading the website and managing the website at an estimated fee of £50. The estimated fee based on the training session being a joint session with two other parish councils.

b) Members noted the Clerk's Report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

#### **15. Review of outstanding action points**

The Clerk had checked through the Minutes for the past 10 years and prepared a list of matters for members to consider. The Chairman advised that the Clerk had prepared the Report of her own volition and it was agreed to defer this for discussion at a future meeting.

#### **16. Penalty Payments for non compliance**

Members noted the Clerk's report as follows:

a) The Council has been notified that the failure to complete monthly and annual returns by the requisite deadlines will now be subject to penalty fines by West Midlands Pension Fund. An indicative level would be either £305 or £470 for this Council.

b) The Office for National Statistics has been requested to give the parish council exception from completing monthly on-line returns for wages and salaries, as it is a relatively small employer. Compliance deadline is quite short and the failure to submit a completed survey could result in a fine of up to £2,500.

Members asked the Assistant Clerk to obtain a copy of the correspondence referred to.

#### **17. Appointment of Signatories for Unity Trust Bank.**

Members noted that Cllr MacDonald had been approved as an additional signatory for Unity Bank Trust. Cllr MacDonald advised that he had not heard anything from Unity Bank Trust. Cllr Mrs Haywood advised Cllr MacDonald that he should receive a letter from them and she would be happy to provide training for him with regard to the system and what was required.

#### **18. Renewal of Insurance Policy.**

Members noted information previously circulated by the Clerk regarding arrangements for renewal of the insurance contract with Allianz. The Assistant Clerk asked members if they wished quotations to be sought, however members felt the quotation previously circulated by the Clerk should be accepted.

**ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Miss Ward, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:** that information circulated by the Clerk regarding renewal of the insurance contract with Allianz be accepted.

#### **19. Review of Risk Schedule**

The Chairman suggested this item be deferred to the end of the meeting and this was agreed.

#### **20. Membership of Standing Committees**

Cllr Mrs Haywood proposed that all members of the Council be reserve members for the two standing Committees to ensure that meetings are quorate.

**ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Rashid, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:** that Cllr J MacDonald be elected to serve on the Leisure Services Committee and Cllrs Shaw, Knibb and Ward be elected to serve on the Finance & General Purposes Committee until the May Meeting.

#### **21. Report of Interim Grievance Panel**

Members noted the Clerk's recommendation to consider the report of the newly appointed Grievance Panel and agree appropriate action and potential terms of reference for the Panel and information which had been circulated to members. Cllr Mrs

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Haywood advised that NALC had requested the Council's consent before advice could be provided and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk approach NALC with the Council's consent for advice to be obtained.

## **22. Appointment of Independent Professional Adviser**

**ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk approach NALC for advice with regard to appointment of an Independent Professional Advisor, and whether that Professional Adviser could be a member of the Interim Grievance Panel.

## **23. Staff Panel Meetings**

This item was on the Agenda at the request of the Panel Chairman, to consider suspending additional Staff Panel Meetings scheduled for the blank Wednesday each month. Cllr Riordan outlined the reasoning behind the additional meetings and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Haywood, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the additional meetings be suspended, unless there was a need for a meeting to deal with any urgent business which could not be deferred until a scheduled meeting.

## **24. Review of Earmarked Reserves**

**ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:** that this item be deferred to the next full Council Meeting.

## **25. Finance and Payments**

a) Members noted the latest income and expenditure report, including variances to budget, and receipt of the latest bank statements and reconciliations for signature.

b) Members considered a list of future payments Batch 11, dated 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016, and past salaries which had been circulated for approval. Members noted a difference of £10.37 on the monthly salary analysis to be and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the payments as listed be approved, with the salary analysis to be approved subject to reconciliation of the figures.

## **26. Report of Leisure Services Committee**

Having been circulated, members noted the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2016 with details of decisions duly made

## **27. Report of Finance & General Purposes Committee**

27.1 Having been circulated, members noted the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 with details of decisions duly made.

27.2 Members noted that the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was not held on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016 as it was not quorate.

## **28. Report of the Staff Panel**

28.1 Having been circulated, members noted the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 with details of decisions duly made.

## **29. Representatives to Outside Bodies**

At this point on the Agenda, Cllr MacDonald reported on the WALC Annual Briefing Day he had attended together with Cllr Knibb. He advised that the Introduction by the Vice President was very informative and comprehensive on a number of items to do with communities, residents, hospital and health centres, housing, care by councils, GP's and age related problems. He had attended the Workshop on the 'Superfast Broadband Project', but this had been very technical. He expressed disappointment that the Workshop on 'Rural Crime – what can be done in your community' which he was to

attend, had to be cancelled at short notice.

**30. Report of the Officer of the Council**

The Assistant Clerk referred members to the Clerk’s Report which was duly noted. The Assistant Clerk updated members on the position with regard to the contract with Npower.

**31. Report of the Chairman**

The Chairman reported on Castle Bromwich Hall Garden’s Easter Parade which she had attended. Although the weather was bad, she was pleased to see there were a lot of visitors.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 9.30 pm