

was extremely dangerous and the new single carriageway would make it worse; that quality materials were needed; and finally that there should be filter lights to improve flow for all right-turning traffic at the junction. At the last full Council meeting, members had already **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to make a contribution to the Hurst Lane Place project in the form of a memorial plaque or bench recognizing the contribution which Alex Henshaw made to the war effort during his time as chief test pilot at the Castle Bromwich Spitfire factory. This was requested to be located outside Henshaw Court and would be subject to agreement on design and cost.

ACTION

Clerk
14/2

8. Grant Aid.

The Clerk read a letter of thanks from Castle Bromwich Lions for the grant and assistance given in October for their annual event, now taking place in Arden Hall.

8.1 Following his earlier declaration of a conflict of interest, Cllr Riordan left the meeting. After consideration of the application for £1000, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Hiley, **SECONDED** by Cllr Horne-MacDonald, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that a grant of £200 be awarded to Solo towards the new premises in Chelmsley Wood that would serve numerous parishioners from Castle Bromwich. **IT WAS AGREED** that the Clerk would supply contact details of Hart Furniture as a possible source of discounted items and the Council wished to suggest that Bellway and Whitefriars should be approached by the charity to contribute in the light of disruption caused by the regeneration scheme.

8.2 Following her earlier declaration of a conflict of interest, Cllr Mrs. Allen left the meeting. After consideration, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Hicks, **SECONDED** by Cllr Hiley, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that a grant of £196.75 be paid in full to Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens Trust towards the educational equipment to support the mill pond project, which was commended with interest.

Clerk
26/2

Cllr Mrs. Allen and Cllr Riordan were invited to rejoin the meeting.

9. SMBC Scrutiny Board.

Following consideration, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Terry, **SECONDED** by the Chairman, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the following issues be referred for consideration at the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group Event: whether proper provision had been made by Solihull MBC relating to the effect of housing development on causes of flooding in the Borough. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by the Chairman, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to also refer re-consideration of parish council's request for a pedestrian crossing at Arden Hall on Water Orton Road that had still not been accepted, even after a three vehicle crash that needed the air ambulance in 2013. Following later consideration, **IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED** that the issue of setting a precedent of allowing 'enabling development' on Green Belt land and the future consequences should be examined as there were far reaching ramifications for all communities.

Clerk
asap

10. SMBC North Solihull Draft Neighbourhood Action Plan.

Members noted the receipt of the draft document and expressed disappointment that the request for a pedestrian crossing at Arden Hall was not likely to be reconsidered. The Clerk was asked to seek additional information on the Speedwatch programme that had been referred to in the Plan. [See next item.]

Asst. Clerk
21/2

11. Speedwatch Scheme.

Following discussion of the continuing unresolved problem of speeding traffic on Water Orton Road, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Allen, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Police Co-ordinator for Community Speedwatch be invited to the April or May meeting; that Sgt Mirza from the Castle Bromwich Neighbourhood Police Team, Warwickshire police, Water Orton Parish Council and Warwickshire County Council be invited to send a report or attend the council

Asst. Clerk
21/2

meeting in April or May to discuss common concerns. It was hoped everyone would endeavour to find some joint agency response to improve safety for pedestrians and motorists.

ACTION

12. Community Showcase 2014.

Members considered the event held prior to the last Annual Parish Meeting and following consideration, **IT WAS AGREED** that changes be made this year by inviting local groups to provide leaflets/fliersto promote their organisations instead of displays. A guest speaker had been agreed for 6th May and timings may be adjusted to improve the format.

Asst Clerk
03/14

13. Working Parties and Steering Group.

No reports given. In response to a question from Cllr Mrs. Haywood, members were reminded to complete the feedback form on the Parish Plan, if possible by 19th February to allow time for responses to be assimilated.

Members
19/2

14. Residents' Concerns.

Members noted the list of concerns.

15. Training.

Following consideration and clarification, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Hiley, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Cllr Knibb's request to attend the WALC Annual Briefing Day on 1st March be approved. The Clerk reported that Unity Bank had offered to provide onsite training for members and staff to help enable the new accounts to be better utilised. Following discussion, it was suggested that the 3rd Wednesday of the month may be most convenient for signatories to attend.

Asst Clerk
asap

Clerk
03/14

16. Clerk's Report.

The Clerk reported that from budget preparation to final precept calculations, it had again been a complex time from September 2013 to January 2014. The issues surrounding the mitigation grants from the government being given to other tiers, with only the expectation they be passed on to their town and parish councils (and not the stipulation) had caused great uncertainty. She had been grateful for the support of members during the general and specific discussions and calculations but the consequence of this extra, but priority, work had meant other projects inevitably fell behind. After the council set the precept, the detailed demand had been sent by email and post to SMBC and confirmation given of its receipt.

Clerk
9/1

The new year had seen a visit of two HMRC Inspectors to check the VAT returns and records over the past 4 years. The Bookkeeper worked extremely hard with preparing information and extracting data for the visit and the Clerk commended her for the diligence shown. The date of the visit was kindly adjusted twice by the Inspectors due to family illness, her holiday and an important civic event. Information was exchanged in advance of the visit and on 31st January the Clerk reported and provided evidence of council activities and services, history, assets, hire charges and income (VAT and exempt), clarified services not provided or charged for, the financial software used and past issues with operation of the month end process, selection of archives, staff responsibility for financial processing in past 12 years, professional support system, training received and past guidance on VAT operation. She also gave details of herwork background, philosophy and role within the council. At year end, a partial exemption calculation was required and she had explained to the inspectors the system used for calculating this. Some further clarification would be required on this as classification of all council financial activities for the whole year as non-business, business, exempt or mixed was a somewhat subjective decision at times and quite complex. If the final calculation did not fall within clear parameters then some VAT was not eligible to be reclaimed. A minor point noted was some payment dates fell in the wrong period and the Clerk would seek clarification with the software company about what parameters were used for extraction of VAT returns. She had requested a ruling on whether a VATable sundry service was correct and also enquired whether their consent

might be given for an article to be written focusing on the positive aspects of inspection visits.

ACTION

On 5th February, the Clerk had attended a very informative and helpful stakeholder workshop presentation by Western Power Distribution at the Botanical Gardens. Cllr Mrs. Haywood and Cllr Riordan also attended and each participated in different discussion groups on Western Powers 2015-2023 business plan and timescales for its staged implementation and their successful ability to cope with severe weather disruption. The afternoon session of most interest for the parish was focussed on social obligations and it was a valuable opportunity for us to promote to them the positive aspects of being involved with parish councils. Papers are available if members wished to see them.

Several other topics were brought to the attention of members, including: support to be given to the submission by Sevenoaks Town Council under the Sustainable Community Act proposing a proportion of business rates be returned to Parish and Town Councils to be used for the benefit of economic growth in the locality; copies of the SAC constitution and arrangements for operation; an updated version of the council information leaflet; Walc confirmation that capping would not be applied to parish councils for 2014 and new legislation for cheque procedures being introduced by government; information request about WW1 centenary events; confirmation of bank signatory changes for members; statement of CCLA interest on investment account; planning ramifications of 'enabling development' on Green Belt land; invitation from Welford on Avon parish council appealing to members to support the e-petition to make 3 simple amendments to the NPPF and finally details of HS2 blog and petitioning process.

Clerk
asap

DRAFT