

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
 CASTLE BROMWICH PARISH COUNCIL  
 HELD IN ARDEN HALL, CASTLE BROMWICH  
 ON WEDNESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2015  
 AT 7.30 PM**

**Those present:**

**Chairman:** Cllr M Hayes

**Councillors:** Cllr Mrs. P Allen                      Cllr E Knibb                      Cllr K Shaw  
 Cllr Mrs. A Haywood                      Cllr J MacDonald                      Cllr A Terry  
 Cllr I Hiley                      Cllr M Rashid                      Cllr B Upton  
 Cllr J Horne-MacDonald                      Cllr J Riordan                      Cllr Miss J Ward

**Guest Speaker:** Sgt. A Heathcote, Smiths Wood and Castle Bromwich Dedicated Neighbourhood Team, West Midlands Police [Items 1-4 only]

**Officer:** Mrs. C Tibbles, Clerk to the Council and RFO

**Public:** 2 members of the public [Items 1-23 only]

**1. Apologies.**

The apologies from Cllr G Highwere noted for the reason given. Cllr E Hicks was absent.

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

None declared.

**3. Dispensations.**

None requested.

**4. Guest Speaker – Sgt. A Heathcote, Smiths Wood and Castle Bromwich Dedicated Neighbourhood Team, West Midlands Police.**

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked Sgt. Heathcote for attending two consecutive meetings and invited him to update members on latest police developments. Sgt. Heathcote said he would not repeat his explanation given last month on general policing policy. 34 criminal offences occurred in Castle Bromwich for the past month, which was a reduction of 7.8% on the same period last year. The Deputy Chief Constable had recently announced that the number of Neighbourhood Policing Units would be reduced from 10 to 8 but this would affect areas of Birmingham and not Solihull. Each neighbourhood would be responsible for deciding what team resources were needed, with some areas being classed as self-sufficient. He believed that the Castle Bromwich and Smiths Wood area was classed as needing a team, being rated as second in need after Chelmsley Wood. A new Active Citizen programme was being launched, encouraging input from members of the public, with an increased role possibly being given to Neighbourhood Watch too. There would be two ‘super blocks’ for custody cells and Solihull would be one of the remaining six in the West Midlands. He outlined the support teams based centrally at Solihull that officers would potentially receive help from, subject to bids being successful, although some clustering was likely with areas of Coventry, so responses would be sent to where the need was. There was no confirmation yet on number of officers making up the Castle Bromwich team and the focus would be on long term problem solving within the parish, including a ‘contact and build’ focus for the new Active Citizen programme. Although a five year planned reduction to PCSO’s had been announced, there had been a government announcement that day but until clarification on funding revisions and timescales was received, this

**ACTION**

**ACTION**

programme was set to continue.

In response to questions from members, the topics of Active Citizens, PCSO redundancies, firm support by Sgt. Heathcote for Alcohol Free Zones for all parish council owned open spaces in Castle Bromwich were discussed. Sgt Heathcote commended the strength of parish byelaws for enforcement of breaches by travellers, although the police only attended in their capacity to prevent a breach of the peace. On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked Sgt. Heathcote and his officers for attending the Remembrance Parade and expressed the council's support and appreciation for the additional difficulties being faced with reducing resources.

#### 5. Questions from the Public.

Under Standing Order 3(d), the Chairman temporarily suspended standing orders for this item to invite questions from members of the public. A resident from the Bradford ward left information about an event organized by a local organisation and then highlighted a planning application for a housing development which was outside the parish but affected green space that some local residents used. He hoped the effect on wildlife would be considered carefully by the Borough Council. The resident then asked if the piles of leaves in the village would be removed, in two locations that were either parish or borough land.

#### 6. Questions from Councillors.

Cllr Shaw asked if photographs had been taken during the Arden Hall path repairs and whether the job was complete yet.

Hall Mgr  
6/1

#### 7. Consideration of police Force Cuts and Insight Newsletter and Policing Plans for 2020

Members noted the information bulletin that had been circulated and had discussed under Item 4 the implications for Castle Bromwich, hoping that the excellent team already in place would be retained.

#### 8. Communications.

Members noted the information listed.

#### 9. Minutes of the previous Meeting.

In response to a query, the Clerk confirmed that two members had confirmed they were willing to become 'authorisers' for internet banking and that a message had been sent for the Wardens to arrange a meeting with a contractor. A query regarding the location of potential criminal activity was noted. A member reported an item for the Parish Plan review and this update was asked for at the next Finance and General Purposes committee meeting. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF Cllr Upton, SECONDED** by Cllr Rashid, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2015 be accepted as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

#### 10. Storm Damage.

Members noted the damage sustained to the pavilion roof on 18<sup>th</sup> November and the emergency temporary protection installed that day, unfortunately after some rain so water ingress was an additional concern. The Clerk had been liaising with the insurers and advised on the essential repair that would have to take place. Members noted the option to also replace the remaining roofing felt, that the Clerk anticipated had a short remaining lifespan, the cost of which would be borne by the council. An alternative option was also highlighted for felt tiles to give a different style of finish, with some additional benefits in the event of future repairs. In the absence of all quotations being received, only outline figures were explored and the necessity of funding this via either contingency budget or earmarked reserves. Following consideration of the dangerous weather on temporary sheeting, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF Cllr Mrs. Haywood, SECONDED** by Cllr Horne-MacDonald, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that a decision be

MH/IRH/  
JR/Clerk  
asap  
**ACTION**

delegated to the Clerk , in consultation with the Chairmen, to identify the best option.

**11. Members' Allowances.**

Following considerable discussion, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Hiley, **SECONDED** by Cllr Miss Ward,**IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that allowances should remain at the levels set many years ago. Forms had been provided for elected members to complete and return to the Clerk.

Members  
02/16

**12. Storage for Hirers.**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Hiley presented the recommendation of the Leisure Services Committee that the council should, in principle, purchase 2 single garages for £2919 (provisionally) with the cost of this capital project, including demolition of the existing garages, etc., estimated at between £6,000 - £10,000 (depending on whether the existing garage location/concrete base could be used) subject to a site being agreed and necessary permissions/licences being in place. Members were reminded of their fiduciary responsibility for management of council resources, additionally noting the unexpected costs of the pavilion roof repair. Following discussion that council expenditure of this nature would require the hire group(s) to commit to a 5 year agreement at a commercial rent, with the consent of the council, Bor Cllr Richards, as President of the hirer, said the group was founded in 1953 and intended to continue, although there could be no guarantee they would still be here in 5, 10 or 15 years time. It was also discussed that if the Borough Council should be responsible for building new garages, it would in all likelihood charge £32-£34 per month per garage. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the council support the recommendation and delegate the Leisure Services Committee to establish a clear and constructive process to conclude the matter.

LSC  
2/12

**13. Actions required by Committee/council following Staff Panel Meeting.**

Members noted the report of the Staff Panel, although noting that there was some disparity regarding the number of recommendations put forward. A further meeting was planned with staff on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November, if a reserve councillor was available to attend.

Volunteer  
30/11

**14. Amendment to Financial Regulations.**

Members discussed the recommendation and considered the cost of operating debit cards, noting the concerns of the Bookkeeper on potentially complex management of tracking receipts, the confusion between whether staff were happy with existing and prompt reimbursement arrangements or not. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Riordan,**IT WAS RESOLVED** that the matter was referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to clarify with the Staff Panel what was being requested and why it was being requested.

FGP  
9/12

**15. Review of Appointment of Staff Panel.**

15.1 The Chairman explained he was becoming aware that the apparent workings of the Panel were slow and therefore proposed that it would operate better if more members were on the Panel. Following discussion and seeking volunteers, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Shaw,**IT WAS RESOLVED** that Cllr Upton and Cllr Miss Ward be elected to join the existing members.

15.2 **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Haywood,**IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Chair of the Panel be elected by council at the next annual meeting, in line with other standing committees.

Council  
05/16

**16. Smarter Working Group.**

The Chairman reminded members that the group were waiting for action by the Staff Panel before being able to explore further topics.

Staff Panel  
Asap

**ACTION**

**17. Finance and Payments.**

a)The income and expenditure report was noted and the Chairman undertook to verify and sign the bank statements at a time to be arranged.

b)Cllr Upton confirmed he had pre-loaded internet payments ready for member authorization, with a scheduled payment date for 48 hours. The Clerk confirmed that the credit from Costco was using the commission earned on past purchases. **ON THE PROPOSITION** ofCllr Hiley,**SECONDED** by Cllr Horne-MacDonald, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** thatthe payments as listed be approved. Cllr Upton suggested the blue payment sheets need not be emailed as well as the payment summary sheet he had received but the Clerk clarified that this had been sent to all members, in accordance with the agenda. Followingdiscussion, the volunteers who would authorize payments were chosen to be Cllr Hiley and Cllr Riordan, with a summary BACS payment sheet being useful to help members check for any omissions.

Clerk  
01/16

Member  
or Clerk  
12/15

IRH/JR  
26/11

**18. Report of the Leisure Services Committee.**

A member confirmed the adult goal posts were still erected, although it had been mistakenly reported that they had been taken down. The Chairman reminded members the importance of clarity and accuracy of information when making statements.**ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Hiley, **SECONDED** by the Chairman,**IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesdays, 7<sup>th</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2015, having been circulated, be received and noted the decisions duly made.

Chairmen  
tbc

Clerk  
urgent

**19. Report of the Staff Panel.**

Members had received draft minutes but Cllr Mrs. Allen wished to discuss these with the Clerk so the matter was deferred.

PA  
urgent

**20. Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.**

Following queries regarding the Parish Plan review, members noted the Plan was the adopted policy of the council and work was now taking place to instigate the action points. The work of the Wardens was commended on litter picking at the top end of the park, especially with the added difficulties of the storm winds. A member asked how many fines had been levied by the Borough Council for dropping litter in Castle Bromwich. A member asked if a telephone quote had been actioned following the information provided by BT but the Clerk explained there had been higher priority issues since receiving the details. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** byCllr Mrs. Haywood,**IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesdays, 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October and 11<sup>th</sup>November, 2015, having been circulated, be received and noted the decisions duly made.

Member  
tba

**21. Representatives to Outside Bodies.**

Cllr Mrs. Haywood reported the planned meeting of the Dame Mary Bridgman Trust had been postponed to December.

Members noted the report tabled Cllr Knibb on the St Thomas Dole Charity Trust meeting held 17th November 2015 at the Diocesan Office, with copies being available from the Clerk.

Cllr Mrs. Allen reported that she had attended a meeting of a local organisation when confidential matters were discussed.

**22. Report of the Officer of the Council.**

The Clerk reported that an extremely serious incident had occurred during a hirer’s event on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November, which resulted in life-threatening injuries to a man. Staff had assisted with first aid until an ambulance arrived and the police were investigating the cause. Staff had co-operated in full with the police and substantial time spent providing information and reviewing CCTV footage from all cameras with CID officers.

ACTION

As a consequence future bookings for the hirer had been temporarily suspended until facts were established and safety factors re-assessed for the council. The Leisure Services Committee would be updated in due course.

Hall Mgr/  
Clerk asap

### 23. Report of the Chairman.

The Chairman reported that in addition to having meetings with the Clerk and Chair of Staff Panel, he had attended the following events as Chairman:

He again had the honour of leading the Castle Bromwich Remembrance Parade where the community came together to pay their respects and to remember all those men and women that had made the ultimate sacrifice to defend our freedoms and think of those who returned from conflict but still carried the scars -

We will remember them.

On 19th November the Chairman attended Castle Bromwich Hall as a guest of 237 Castle Bromwich Scout group, where they were presented with their well-deserved Queens Award for Voluntary Service and he was most proud that **our** scout group had won this prestigious award, which continued to raise awareness of Castle Bromwich and brought opportunities to our youngsters.

On 24th November, he had attended the council's annual Christmas Carol Concert in support of the Chairman's Charity Fund, St Mary and St Margaret's school and Castle Bromwich junior school and everyone was treated to the singing by both choirs. It was a marvellous opportunity for them to perform using facilities of the Spencer Hall and parents were thrilled to see their children on stage. He thanked everyone who had helped organize the event.

The Chairman was pleased to show members the new shield being provided to a local organisation that would be awarded in February to the Best Junior Cadet.

### 24. Staff Matters.

Following consideration, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Hiley, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the newly extended Staff Panel meet with 2 members of staff, as previously arranged, on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November. It was confirmed that councillors had made independent visits to review the confidential paperwork, which would be available at the meeting. Attendance was confirmed as Cllrs Mrs. Allen, Knibb, MacDonald, Rashid and Upton.

Staff Panel  
30/11