

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
 CASTLE BROMWICH PARISH COUNCIL  
 HELD IN ARDEN HALL, CASTLE BROMWICH  
 ON WEDNESDAY 27TH JANUARY 2016  
 AT 7.30 PM**

**Those present:**

**Chairman:** Cllr M Hayes

**Councillors:** Cllr Mrs. P Allen                      Cllr J Horne-MacDonald                      Cllr J Riordan  
 Cllr Mrs. A Haywood                      Cllr E Knibb                      Cllr K Shaw  
 Cllr G High                      Cllr J MacDonald                      Cllr Miss J Ward  
[Items 1 – 13.1 only]

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

**Public:** 1 member of the public

Prior to the meeting, the Chairman paid tribute to the great enthusiasm and contributions made to the parish council by Councillor Brian Upton, who sadly died on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January. He had left a lasting legacy with many initiatives enacted during his membership. Councillors stood and observed a minutes silence in respectful memory.

**1. Chairman’s Announcement.**

Following the request of members, and after a change in work pattern/circumstances, the Chairman had reconsidered his position and wished to withdraw his intention to resign. Members both welcomed and supported this statement and there were no objections raised. The Chairman explained that work would prevent him attending some meetings but he would continue to do his best to represent and serve the council.

**2. Apologies.**

The apologies from Cllr E Hicks and Cllr M Rashid were noted for the reason given. Cllr I Hiley and Cllr A Terry were absent.

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

None declared.

**4. Dispensations.**

None requested.

**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 acknowledged the sad news about Cllr Upton. A question was asked about why barriers were on the Chester Road when no roadworks appeared to be happening? With the consent of the Chairman, information was shared on responses already received ranging from the Highways Department who had no knowledge of the barriers; that there was a difference of opinion between the Borough Council and Severn Trent; that there was also confusion between both parties and Amey contractors.

**6. Questions from Councillors.**

None.

**7. Communications.**

Members noted the information listed and the Chairman’s reminder for members to view the folder and request inclusion of pertinent items on future agendas.

**ACTION**

**8. Minutes of the previous Meeting.**

With an amendment requested to page 4, Item 17, line 5 to read 'been awarded' instead of received, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Horne-MacDonald, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 and the confidential notes, be accepted as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

**9. New National Minimum Wage and Salary Review.**

Members considered the report of the RFO and the two recommendations it contained. Members noted the need to value staff according to responsibilities they held and the changes to pay with higher levels of NMW and the 'living' wage. The Chairman reminded members of the wish to move forward with consideration of modern apprenticeships but this was reliant on the Staff Panel first concluding the longstanding staffing issues that the council had already instructed upon. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr High, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation of commissioning an independent review of staffing and council operations as the Smarter Working group had stalled and the Clerk was asked to pursue quotes. **IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED** that from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 when the NMW increased, that one category of staff be regraded from Scale 7 to Scale 9 as an interim measure, pending any further review and recommendations.

**10. Budget Plan 2016-2017.**

The Chairman thanked Cllr Riordan for the scrutiny work he had undertaken on the figures declared in the salary forecasts and draft budget plans, which was echoed by the Clerk. Members noted the analysis information provided/clarified the provisional budgets for capital projects, music licences, bar operations, waste collection, provision for theatre workshop, bollards, playground equipment, remembrance parade, indicative mitigation allowance and the confirmed tax base of Band D houses in the parish. Apart from the figure for the precept which was yet to be decided, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to adopt the revised budget plan as circulated (version 4) with increased provision made for the agreed wage adjustment.

**11. Precept 2016-2017.**

On the basis of the indicative information provided by Solihull MBC, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Knibb, **SECONDED** by Cllr Riordan, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the precept for 2016-2017 should be £222,434. This meant no increase to parishioners paying the Band D charge, which would remain the same as the current year and as 2014-15 - £57.73. Due to the small increase in the number of properties, this would give additional income of £1039 in 2016-17.

**12. Review of Procedures for Council to receive and note Committee/Panel minutes.**

Members recalled the discussions earlier in the civic year at the request of Cllr Upton and the later commitment made to review the matter again after 6 months. Whilst acknowledging the council retained responsibility for all decisions made by committees under their delegated powers, the minutes would still need to be voted upon for accuracy by the relevant Committee. WALC had previously advised it was not essential for the Council to vote to receive them. In addition, the Clerk read page 138 of the NALC guidance on Standing Orders. Following debate, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that for a trial period of 3 months, the Committee/Panel minutes should be put to council for noting but would not be voted upon. The Council would review the practice in May.

ACTION

Clerk  
03/16

Clerk  
03/16

RFO  
asap

RFO  
27/1

Council  
05/16

**13. Review of Terms of Reference.**

13.1 Members noted the revised Terms of Reference for the Staff Panel were not yet available. It was noted the Clerk had since reported that, in line with previous legal advice when the Panel was established, that the quorum should be an odd number and she would have advised against setting it as 4 members. The Chairman expressed his wish to meet with the Panel and chair a discussion on what should have happened since the Council instructions were clearly given on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015. As the action had not been carried out he thought the Panel was broken and was not working. A member asked if he proposed an internal review of the Staff Panel. Following discussion of avoiding conflict to his position on the Appeals Committee, the aim of a general discussion as opposed to any personal specific details, the absence of the revised Terms of Reference, the Panel making decisions prior to receiving pertinent WALC advice (now available), an appropriate action plan was formulated. **IT WAS AGREED** that a meeting of the Staff Panel be urgently arranged, with the Council Chairman invited to host the discussion of its working operations. It was envisaged that this would need to be done under confidential terms and that the meeting room would be a suitable venue.

13.2 Following discussion of the terms of reference for the Finance and General Purposes Committee and Leisure Services Committee, members **AGREED** that amendments were not necessary as their relevant responsibility operated in line with the budget areas for each committee. For clarity, since the Council Offices had moved to the ground floor location, a small budget had been created to fund some overheads (insurance, heating, etc), fixtures/fittings and portable equipment. There was no real provision for major items like roofing and bricks/mortar, as that remained an integral part of Arden Hall.

**14. Smarter Working Group.**

The Chairman suggested that in the absence of the Staff Panel fulfilling the council instruction, the council suspend the Working Group and consider reforming it when, and if, recommendations were forthcoming.

**15. 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. Following the death of Cllr Upton, the Clerk confirmed the responsibility for the submission of internet payments would return to the council office and change of signatory forms would need to be prepared for Unity Trust Bank adding Cllr Knibb and Cllr High to the remaining three members.

b) Members noted the additional information from the Clerk on the gas utility bill delays when DD's had not been collected, that minor issues with adjustments on previous payments and a new deposit payment that was required for the entertainment event being marketed by Arden Hall staff, which the Leisure Services Committee would undoubtedly hear more about from the Hall Manager. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Riordan, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the payments as listed be approved.

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

Cllr Knibb pointed out that on 6<sup>th</sup> January he was not present at the meeting and therefore could not have seconded the proposal under Item 14. Cllr Shaw asked if the Assistant Clerk had requested one of the hirer groups to use the main car park until the rear lighting was repaired and the Chairman asked members to raise these question at the next Committee meeting. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Mrs. Haywood, members noted the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> January, 2016, having been circulated with details of decisions duly made.

**ACTION**

Asst Clerk  
asap

Panel/MH  
Clerk  
by 12/2

Staff Panel  
Asap

MH  
27/1

Admin.  
Asst  
28/01

Council  
24/2

Clerk +2  
members  
asap

KS/EK  
3/2

**17. Report of the Staff Panel.**

**ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Mrs. Allen, members noted the Minutes of the meetings held on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2016, having been circulated, with details shown of decisions duly made. The minutes of Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2015 were deferred again as Cllr Mrs. Allen still wished to discuss these with the Clerk. Draft confidential notes from 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016 had been circulated to Panel Members and the Council Chairman only.

ACTION

PA  
urgent

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

**ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Riordan, members noted the Minutes of the Meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesdays, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 9<sup>th</sup> December, with confidential notes, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016 having been circulated, had been duly received by the Council.

**19. Representatives to Outside Bodies.**

19.1 Members noted that confirmation had been received that the council's decision to support the appointment of a resident to represent the parish of Castle Bromwich on the Airport consultative Committee remained acceptable. The council would invite the resident to the AGM meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016 when the appointment would be considered for the next civic year.

Clerk  
27/2

19.2 Members noted the following reports that had been circulated, with further copies being available from the Clerk on request:

Cllr MacDonald reported he had attended the West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner's Business Summit meeting on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January in Birmingham when serious warnings about internet crime and fraud were given; Cllr MacDonald reported on the Solihull Area Committee meeting held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January at Cheswick Green; Cllr Knibb reported on the WALC Quarterly County Committee meeting held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January at Royal Leamington Spa Town Hall; Cllr Knibb reported on the Annual Meeting of the WALC County Committee, also on 18<sup>th</sup> January when a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman were elected, ending his extended term of office as Chairman of WALC.

**20. Report of the Officer of the Council.**

The Clerk reminded members that there were documents that required scrutiny and signing at the end of the meeting.

Members  
27/1

**21. Report of the Chairman.**

The Chairman reported there had been no official functions attended since the last meeting but lots of communications to endeavour to respond to.