
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CASTLE
BROMWICH PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN ARDEN HALL, CASTLE BROMWICH
ON WEDNESDAY 27TH FEBRUARY 2008
AT 7.30 PM**

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr Mrs. B. Wilkins

Councillors:

Cllr Mrs. P Allen
Cllr R Amos
Cllr D Feasey
Cllr E Knibb
Cllr Mrs. T Knibb
Cllr Mrs. A Haywood
Cllr M Rashid
Cllr J Riordan
Cllr A Terry
Cllr Miss J Ward

Officer: Mrs C Tibbles

Guest Speaker: Mr. M. Jones, APH Developments Ltd.[Items 1-6 only]

Public: 5 members of the public [some for Items 1-6 only]

1. Apologies.

The apologies from Cllr Mrs. J Smith were accepted for the reason given. The Chairman reported that a resignation had been received from Cllr S Ward, due to increasing work commitments, and she publicly recorded the hard work he had contributed to the Parish Council over many years.

2. Declarations of pecuniary or other interests.

None declared.

3. Minutes of the previous Meeting.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Cllr Knibb, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Allen, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 30th January, 2008 be accepted as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

4. Guest Speaker: Mark Jones, APH Developments Ltd.

The Chairman introduced the guest speaker, welcomed him to the meeting and invited him to talk about his company's ideas as a specialist in regeneration of brownfield sites. Mr. Jones thanked the Council for the opportunity to talk about the proposed purchase of the former Sonic Communications site adjacent to the Village Green and explained that although the process was in early stages there was a special reason to involve the Parish Council. When applying for planning permission to Solihull MBC, support would be needed. His company hoped to develop the whole site, not just the Sonic building and negotiations were taking place with the other owners. The Sonic buildings were in disrepair and the plans were to revert the 2 houses back to residential, to demolish the factory block and build a small unit of 8 apartments initially, until the balance of the site was acquired. Although negotiations were going well, the access road in its entirety was owned by the Parish Council. A lease existed some years ago and as potential new owners APH Developments Ltd now wanted to discuss the possibility of an agreement regarding the access road. He distributed drawings to members showing the roadway enclosed by a new wrought iron fence. The existing road was blocked and although not a through road, he believed the road was unadopted. He outlined successful developments which his company had undertaken in Redditch, Atherstone and other areas.

The Chairman asked if outline planning permission had been sought and Mr. Jones replied that he had held preliminary discussions with the Borough Planning Department regarding the proposed development and confirmed that both sites were being considered. The Chairman stated the Parish Council would need to take advice, via the Clerk, and there was a concern to protect the Village Green. Mr. Jones replied that it was important for the design issue not to create an incursion with the Green and that wrought iron railings would help make the area self-policing. The Chairman thought the Parish Council would welcome residential use with private access and asked for the Council to be kept informed with stage-by-stage updates. Cllr Knibb questioned the lack of windows but Mr. Jones said windows would be included later in more detailed drawings. Cllr Terry asked if additional trees would be planted and Mr. Jones replied that no trees would be lost during the works and that additional landscaping would be put in car park areas, specifically with a plant barrier to screen the development from the ceramic plant sale unit. The Chairman asked for a guarantee that the company would not disturb the fabric of the Green which the Parish Council owned for local residents and pointed out the old trees were cared about. Mr. Jones reassured members that legislation required developers to survey trees, protect them and there were severe penalties set out in planning conditions that had to be complied with. Cllr Rashid asked about timescales and Mr. Jones said that planning permission took 13 weeks and he hoped that phase 1 would be completed in 9 months. The whole site would be longer with phase 2 taking 14-16 months due to the larger scale. There could be complications with the petrol station due to decommissioning but there were plans for an element

5. Questions from Councillors.

As tabled and notified to fellow members, Cllr Feasey explained that he thought local residents needed a Castle Bromwich Parish Council newsheet. Views were sometimes expressed about decisions made in secret, behind closed doors, in members' own interests and receiving payment for being a councillor, all of which he knew not to be true. Local residents did not know what the Parish Council could/could not do and he thought two newsletters would be sensible – one for the Parish Council and one for events/activities at Arden Hall. He suggested a single A4 sheet, initially once a year (although subsequent discussion favoured four per year as this could lead to Quality Council status) to tell parishioners what the Parish Council did. Cllr Mrs. Knibb added that whilst out delivering information leaflets that afternoon she had asked people what they wanted from their Parish Council and if they would get involved – replies confirmed that people did not want to talk individually to members, would not get information via the library but would read a newsletter if it was delivered door-to-door and would give feedback to the Parish Council if topics were relevant to them. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Knibb, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to proceed as outlined with an annual newsletter, increasing to quarterly at some future time. Cllr Feasey said he had gathered information since becoming a councillor 6/7 months ago, although he had been a resident in Castle Bromwich for 50 years, and that newsletters from 1992 and 1997 contained information that was still relevant in many respects. For example, he thought it best not to give specific names (which could change) but to explain that there were 15 Parish Councillors. He undertook to prepare a draft for council approval and Cllr Mrs. Knibb offered her assistance.

DF
26/3/08

6. Questions from the Public.

Standing Orders were suspended for a maximum period of 15 minutes so that members of the public could ask questions. Following an explanation of procedures by the Chairman, members of the public were invited to state their name and address prior to asking their question. A summary of the questions asked is appended for members.

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked Mark Jones for attending the meeting. He replied that he would be happy to come again if required.

7. Report and future meetings of Working Parties/Friends of Arden Hall.

Cllr Feasey reported that although there may not have been specific working party meetings, he could report that some activity was happening. Internal decoration had started at Arden Hall, slabs were being arranged for part of the children's play area as recommended by Rospa. He gratefully acknowledged the support he had received from Cllr Mrs. Allen, Cllr Mrs. Knibb, Cllr Knibb, Cllr Terry and Cllr Riordan. Members noted that the Clerk was seeking advice from WALC about the role of members in working parties.

8. Election of Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee

In the absence of other nominations, Cllr Knibb volunteered to fill this role until the end of the Civic Year. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Mrs. Allen, **SECONDED** by Cllr Amos, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Knibb as Chairman of this Committee.

9. Tree Report

After consideration, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to instruct the Clerk to contact Midland Forestry to quote for works category 1, 2 and 'advisory' and, according to current budgetary constraints, order the work to be done to the best possible timescale and cost. Members were asked to note the advice of a possible 5 years before diseased trees became more serious. Cllr Mrs. Knibb added that Cllr Terry was exploring the possibility of £750 grants from the Tree Council, which were conditional on a £250 contribution and children being involved in the planting.

Clerk
3/3/08

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April

10. Sponsorship Policy.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Mrs. Knibb explained how the policy had been developed in line with others she had seen as a way to offer incentives that would not cost the Parish Council money. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Rashid, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to adopt the Sponsorship policy.

11. Consultation of Public Views for Arden Hall.

Cllr Mrs. Knibb reminded members of the plan in December to apply for a loan to improve Arden Hall and hold a public consultation in February. However, rather than rush ahead, she thought establishing a quarterly public forum would be better so that views could be collated and the 2 most popular suggestions could be put to a public meeting in June/July. She stressed that the Parish Council were already listening to parishioners' views and would continue to do so. No dates were set or helpers agreed but Mr. Siviter and Castle Bromwich Ladies Club volunteered to deliver leaflets.

12. Report of the Leisure Services Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held on Wednesday, 6th February 2008, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

13. Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Amos, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesdays, 30th January and 13th February 2008, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

14. Report of the Arden Hall Management and Promotion Committee.

Cllr Mrs Knibb said she could not propose the minutes of the AMP Committee held on Monday, 18th February 2008, be accepted as she believed some parts did not adequately reflect the meeting but she was trying to resolve matters.

15. Representatives to Outside Bodies.

Cllr Knibb reported that on Friday 8th February 2008 he had attended the Solihull Partnership Forum Meeting, an all day seminar held at the Kingshurst Evangelical Church on Cooks Lane which was organised and run by SUSTAIN. They were the successful applicants tasked to deliver and administer the Local Area Agreement between Solihull MBC and local voluntary organisations within the borough of Solihull. The Local Area Agreement was now a fact. It was in place and operational, with 198 targets set at National Level, of which 35 would be chosen by SMBC on which to be measured and monitored on the rate and level of implementation. The deliverance of the LAA would be via the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The SCS was still at the draft stage, it had been 99% set and the purpose of the day was to establish whether it was on the right track so far and what else was required to complete the strategy. Everyone broke into working parties and each group worked on refining what was already set in the strategy and finalising the inclusion of the remaining segments of the strategy. This was finally achieved and he was sure the finished article would soon be circulated for ratification.

16. Report of the Officer of the Council.

Members were informed that the Staff Panel minutes had been circulated but unfortunately not itemised on the agenda, which would be corrected next month. Also, the Clerk had not received any material from members for the Good Citizen Award or Parish Survey deferred from last month so these items had not been included on the agenda. Agendas for the next AMP meeting (4th March) had been circulated but due to a prior booking the venue would be the York Room. Posters had been distributed to publicise the Waterloo/Fusion football coaching in the playing fields at Easter, in line with previous holiday activities. Ian Clarkson had requested the opportunity to share ideas on future projects and would speak at the Leisure Services Committee meeting on 5th March. Members were asked to note the tabled information on current membership of the Parish Council, residents' concerns (in confidence) and former plans for Capital Projects, which could be of interest for Working Parties to update as appropriate. She suggested a similar plan be established by all members to plan the next 5/10 years of Council priorities as this could be a useful aid. A useful list of updated Legal Topic Notes had been supplied by NALC and, due to the large number available, members were invited to request any of particular interest.

Due to low ticket sales, the Clerk asked members what decision they advised her to take regarding cancellation or postponement. Cllr Mrs. Knibb suggested that in the absence of both entries and interest, a tribute be paid to someone who was seen by many people as the 'mother of the community' because she cared and looked after everyone. If the contracted entertainment (Ain't Misbehavin) could be transferred to a different date, a new civic event could be arranged, possibly for a Sunday afternoon, which guests could be invited to and which would be good PR for the parish council. No objections were made to this suggestion. The Clerk had received a contract in the post addressed to Arden Hall for Tel Star Entertainment which Mr. Watts, the Hall Manager, had telephoned to query. However, when reading the small print it clearly stated that the contract was deemed accepted once issued even if unsigned unless written instruction was made to cancel it. The Clerk felt there could be a risk to the Council and asked members what action they felt was required. Advice was given to the Clerk to write to the company concerned, which she undertook to do urgently. A problem had been reported to her with flooding from the showers in the Pavilion to the clubroom when used at the weekend and as the Cricket Club would be laying the new floor, she was considering suspending the use of showers until repairs could be made. As the football season ended in a few weeks, she hoped there would be minimal disruption to teams. The problem seemed to be a combination of improper use, inadequate drainage, lack of DPC, cracked walls and missing tiles. Members supported this temporary solution. Finally, members were asked to confirm their attendance at a Village Hall training event on Saturday, 15th March and Cllrs Mrs Knibb, Terry, Knibb, Riordan and Rashid confirmed they would attend. The Clerk would make arrangements and confirm times with members.

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28/2/08

Clerk
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17. Report of the Chairman

The Chairman reported that on Friday, 15th February she had held a Quiz night to raise funds for the Chairman's Charity Fund, raising £470. The event had been well attended with 23 teams taking parts which nearly filled the hall to capacity. She thanked Cllr Pauline Allen and George, Cllr Amos and Cllr Alison Haywood for their help in organising the night and to the staff for their help. Also to Brian Allsop and his quiz crew for not making it too easy again for the teams to answer the questions. Everyone enjoyed a Fish and Chip supper and thanks went to Gregory's for the extra discount on the cost. The Chairman's Charity Fund was looking quite healthy and another quiz would be held on Friday 30th May – she encouraged everyone to book early as she thought people could be turned away on the night when the hall was full. As always, she appealed for raffle prizes (but not too grand as she had a reputation for producing raffle prizes with a difference).

On Sunday, 23rd February, the Chairman had joined the Mayor and Mayoress of Solihull at St. Clement's Church, Green Lane for the Guides and Brownies Thinking Day Service. They had obviously put a great deal of hard work and thought into their readings and poems, the Butterfly Song had been wonderful. Rev. Bill Sands didn't let anyone down with his funny but very meaningful and entertaining sermon – she thought everyone got a bit worried when he opened a tin of dog food and proceeded to eat it (he'd filled it with chocolate really – but there was a message as always – things are not always what they seem). The lovely occasion ended with refreshments and photographs.

Finally she again thanked Mr. Jones for his presentation and looked forward to receiving updates on progress made for the regeneration of this site, which could be a welcome improvement for local residents. The Chairman recorded the Council's gratitude for the contribution to the Parish Council and the community by Councillor Steve Ward over the many years that he had served as a member and knew he would be missed.

At the request of the Clerk and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Amos, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Clerk contact property surveyors and its solicitor to advise the Council.

asked if the council was technically empowered to either sell it or give a long term lease on the road or whether it was a decision for Solihull MBC. If the Council was willing to consider it then offers could be made but he would not discuss figures in an open forum. The deal with Sonic was agreed and the project could move forward if the site was unlocked. His company would be the building developer and not sell the site on to someone else. Successful sites had been developed in Redditch, Atherstone and other areas. Tests on the land and other issues were being undertaken and things hopefully concluded by end of April.