

those with learning difficulties and other agencies to grow and sell produce. Visitor statistics were given and interesting comparisons and targets explored. The positive tourism impact was contributing £185,000 to the Castle Bromwich economy, although this was managed with 4.8 FTE jobs being paid, there were £200,000 added value by volunteer hours. The Trust endeavoured to be responsible guardians of the wildlife aspect in their 10 acre site and they had undertaken pioneering hedgehog habitation work. Closer relationships were being established with the Royal Horticultural Society and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Forthcoming events were highlighted, with leaflets available to all councillors to take and pass on. She hoped that members would visit the gardens and bring paying guests who were always most 'welcome'. In response to questions from members, the following topics were discussed: balance of local/national visitors, promotion of membership charges to local community as they would have free entry, use of internet/website for advertising events, excellent signage from motorway links, incredible dedication of volunteers that the parish councillors were grateful to see, potential award applications, sharing history of Castle Bromwich Hall to link in with that of the Gardens.

On behalf of the Council, the Vice-Chairman thanked the speaker for her enlightening presentation and the leaflets that had been left for everyone to take.

6. Questions from Councillors.

Cllr Knibb asked about responsibility for emptying the overflowing clothing recycling bank at the rear of Arden Hall and the Clerk confirmed the Wardens sometimes had to make several calls to get collections agreed. Members offered alternative suggestions to Cllr Knibb for his donations.

7. Questions from the Public.

Under Standing Order 3(d), the Chairm temporarily suspended standing orders for this item to invite questions from members of the public. A resident from the Beechcroft ward spoke on behalf of those present to explain that several properties were experiencing nuisance from football matches in the park since the new season had started. Balls repeatedly came into their gardens, hitting fences, plants, greenhouses/conservatories and due to the potential for being hit by balls they felt unable to use their gardens for several hours (last Sunday from 9.30 am until 3.45 pm) which therefore restricted their family lives. There were additional problems outlined and although when the team managers had come to the door to ask for their balls back they were polite, they had offered some suggestions to reduce the problem. The council was asked to review the layout of the pitches and establish what had changed in the past 2 years, with suggestions for alternative solutions being offered. Residents were pleased to see the park being used and endorsed football as good exercise. The council was asked to clarify who would be responsible for any damage to residents property. The Vice-Chairman undertook to inspect the park the following afternoon, accompanied by Cllr Rashid and Cllr Upton. A member asked if the referees could be told about the problem and the Clerk undertook to write to all teams (home and away) for the next matches on Sunday. Before the public left the meeting, an opportunity was taken to commend one Warden who had worked incredibly hard sweeping the large car park. Contact details were then left with the Clerk so the council could respond in due course to their concerns, which would be discussed the following week at the Leisure Services Committee meeting and the members of the public then left the meeting. The following points were made by members: the agreed length of time under Standing Orders had been exceeded; the rubbish and goal posts had been noted during the June inspection, reported to staff but not actioned; this also happened with the broken bench in March being scheduled for removal; disappointment that proactive measures were not taken and only some reactive

ACTION

Clerk – post
1/10

Clerk
22/10
PA/MR/
BU 1/10

Clerk
asap

LSC
7/10

measures after long delays; whether usage of a spreadsheet prepared by a member had helped staff in monitoring the grounds maintenance contract; that pitches of different sizes may not easily be moved during the season, without incurring additional expense as work additional to the contract in place.

ACTION

8. Communications.

Members noted the information listed. The Clerk reported that a late communication had been received offering a free seminar at Birmingham Airport on European links.

9. Election of Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Upton, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that Cllr Riordan be elected as Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for the remainder of the civic year.

Clerk
22/10

10. Appointment of Representatives.

10.1 Following consideration, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr MacDonald, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that Cllr MacDonald take the vacant place to attend quarterly meetings of Solihull Area Committee.

Clerk
7/10

10.2 Following discussion, members **AGREED** that if reserve candidates were needed to attend general events, the Clerk would assess the appropriate Committee depending on the topic and then invite the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and then other members by phone/email as appropriate. Members also clarified that representatives were not able to vote on behalf of the council unless topics under consideration were covered by existing council policy. New topics would need to be brought to council via an agenda item for specific consideration.

Members
when
necessary

11. Local Council Award Scheme.

Members noted the review of website information and updates needed was underway.

12. Consultation Documents, Birmingham City Council and Warwickshire Co.

Following consideration, **IT WAS AGREED** that members would respond individually to the consultations of interest.

Members
asap

13. Review of the adoption of revised Financial Regulations.

Review undertaken and members noted the additional requirement arising from the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 that contracts in excess of £25,000 would need to be advertised on the internet accordingly. The Vice-Chairman felt petty cash should be brought back to avoid staff being out of pocket for purchases but members confirmed that bank transfers were authorised via the internet very promptly. Members noted that procedural guidance being written to support implementation was still not complete.

14. Completion of External Audit.

Members noted the receipt of the satisfactory completion of the External Audit by Grant Thornton, which was duly displayed on noticeboards. The closure of audit notice would be prepared by the Clerk and displayed for the requisite period.

Clerk
asap

15. Smarter Working Group.

In the absence of a written report of the meeting held on 6th August, members recalled that Cllr Hayes had undertaken to research the information presented to the council on apprenticeships. A date needed to be set for the next meeting.

Smarter WP
Tbc

16. Finance and Payments.

a) Members noted the latest income and expenditure report. The Clerk provided new Direct Debit forms to be signed for utility accounts and explained some variances to the half-yearly budget were due in part to disputed bills still due to be paid and BACS adjustments that were awaiting conclusion. The latest bank statements were available for scrutiny and countersigning. No volunteer member was agreed.

Cllr
asap

b) following scrutiny of invoices and resolution of queries, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr High, **SECONDED** by Cllr Riordan, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY**

Admin Asst
1/10

RESOLVED that the payments as listed by approved. It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the signed agreement with the Dance Studio hirer should be provided for the November LSC meeting, together with the 3 quotes received for the emergency plasterwork repairs; that the Hall Manager should update members on her investigation into supply of dual fuel tariffs to potentially give further budget savings; that Cllr Upton research information offered by BT for call cost reductions; that Cllr Mrs. Allen's request for staff training costs to be reduced be reviewed for the next year's budget and for wages for staff also be reviewed.

ACTION

Hall Mgr
28/10
Hall Mgr
28/10BU asap
LSC/FGP
11/15

17. Report of the Leisure Services Committee.

Cllr Upton raised a point of order on whether the council had been previously misdirected on the principle of voting to accept the minutes of decisions taken by Committees and this was discussed by members, who advised the decision should not be revisited until after 6 months, (e.g. January 2016). Cllr Upton invoked Standing Order 3u and clarified that he was requesting a recorded vote, which was as follows: **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr MacDonald, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held on Wednesday, 2nd September, 2015, having been circulated, be received and noted the decisions duly made.

In favour: Cllr Mrs P Allen, Cllr Mrs. A Haywood, Cllr G High, Cllr E Knibb, Cllr J MacDonald, Cllr J Riordan, Cllr Miss J Ward

Against: Cllr B Upton

Abstained: Cllr J Horne-MacDonald, Cllr M Rashid, Cllr K Shaw

18. Report of the Staff Panel.

Under Standing Order 3u, Cllr Upton requested a recorded vote, which was as follows: **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs. Allen, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Staff Panel held on Tuesday, 25th August 2015, having been circulated, be received and noted the decisions duly made.

In favour: Cllr Mrs P Allen, Cllr Mrs. A Haywood, Cllr G High, Cllr E Knibb, Cllr J MacDonald, Cllr M Rashid, Cllr J Riordan, Cllr Miss J Ward

Against Cllr B Upton

Abstained Cllr J Horne-MacDonald, Cllr K Shaw.

19. Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Prior to the vote members were notified by the Clerk that the name of Cllr High should be added to the list of attendees, as reflected correctly in the minute book. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Miss Ward, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesdays, 29th July and 9th September, 2015, having been circulated, be received and noted the decisions duly made. Under Standing Order 3u, Cllr Upton requested a recorded vote, which was as follows:

In favour: Cllr Mrs P Allen, Cllr Mrs. A Haywood, Cllr G High, Cllr J Horne-MacDonald, Cllr E Knibb, Cllr J MacDonald, Cllr M Rashid, Cllr J Riordan, Cllr Miss J Ward

Against: Cllr B Upton

Abstained: Cllr K Shaw

20. Representatives to Outside Bodies.

Reports from Cllr Mrs. Allen and Cllr Mrs. Haywood were tabled as read, as follows:

Cllr Mrs. Allen reported that on Friday 11th September she had attended the barbecue at Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens, celebrating the 30 Years of the Hall Gardens and thanked all the volunteers for their hard work throughout the year. It was a most

pleasant evening and she had donated the anniversary cake. On Thursday 17th September she had attended the Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens AGM when two members stepped down - David Howells, Chair of the gardens committee who had served for many years on the committee but he would remain a member of the Gardens; and also stepping down was Richard Easton from the Treasurers position after about 20 years. She was pleased to report there were replacements for both positions. The Trust still needed volunteers so if members knew of anyone wanting to volunteer, she urged them to contact Sue at the gardens as without volunteers they would not survive. Cllr Mrs. Allen tabled information on a recent event she had attended and confirmed that the plants won as a raffle prize had been donated by her for use by the parish council.

ACTION

Cllr Mrs. Haywood reported that on Monday 14th September she had attended the first full Governors meeting at Castle Bromwich Junior School, when the following appointments were made: Chair of Governors - Jackie Sennett; Vice Chair of Governors - Paul Jackson; Chair of Finance and Premises Committee - Paul Jackson. Other appointments would be confirmed at a later date. During the summer holiday work had taken place to create a separate Reception from the working of the main office and this now gave staff an area for them to be able to work without being interrupted. An office had also been created for the School Bursar/Office Manager. The School Hall had also been refurbished with the addition of air conditioning which was appreciated by all who attended the end of term production in July. The floor has been re-sealed and walls painted to make a much brighter and altogether pleasant area for the children. The addition of the large gates on both car parks has proved very successful and prevented cars parking inappropriately. She was pleased to report that she had retained her Year 5 Link and would be meeting with Dan Bird (Year 5 Lead) on 1st October; she would also remain on the Finance and Premises as her lead committee. The meetings had become much less paper based, with some Governors taking laptops; information was also now projected on screens at each meeting. The school continued to work towards the next Ofsted visit with Governors very much having a "hands-on" approach. The first visit into the school by Governors was scheduled for Tuesday 13th October at 9 am with "Learn and Targets" as the theme. The first Finance and Premises meeting would be on Monday 5th October with the next Full Governors meeting on 9th November. A further report of the Events working party was tabled in advance of the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting.

21. Report of the Officer of the Council.

The Clerk reported that the full log of her actions relating to byelaw enforcement on 11th September was available for members to view and that following this incident, the topic would need further consideration, potentially by both standing committees and full council. She reported her growing concern at the overwhelming amount of urgent work she was facing, that was caused by taking extra time in lieu and also by the council repeating some tasks. It was confirmed there were no Hall staff available to undertake catering after the Remembrance Parade and that a review of tree maintenance was needed and she requested assistance. Cllr Shaw and Cllr Mrs. Haywood offered to attend a site meeting and hear the views of the tree surgeon, prior to information being sent to the Clerk.

KS/AEH
Tbe

22. Report of the Chairman.

In the unexpected absence of the Chairman, there was no report available.

23. Staff Matters.

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Vice-Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Upton, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that Standing Order 3(aa) be suspended for 5 minutes to enable the meeting to continue. Cllr Riordan said he would vote against this. The Clerk requested

the Vice-Chairman put the motion to a vote, which was as follows:

In favour: Cllr Mrs. P Allen, Cllr Mrs. A Haywood, Cllr G High, Cllr J Horne-MacDonald, Cllr E Knibb, Cllr J MacDonald, Cllr M Rashid, Cllr K Shaw, Cllr B Upton, Cllr Miss J Ward.

Against: Cllr J Riordan.

Abstentions: None.

The Vice-Chairman said this business should be conducted under confidential terms.

The Clerk explained the unexpected changes to the recently improved staffing levels and thanked the Staff Panel for attending an informal discussion at short notice in Arden Hall with staff. Following ideas, suggestions and support of members, the Clerk now planned to utilise a local recruitment agency in the hopes that a fresh approach may endeavour to solve this shortage, especially as the Clerk and the Hall Manager were already managing the advertising and recruitment of two other part-time job vacancies. A member suggested that Solihull MBC HR department could be approached for potential candidates. Cllr Horne-MacDonald asked the Staff Panel why the instruction of the Council on 29th July had not been carried out. The Vice-Chairman, speaking as Chairman of the Staff Panel, replied that it was not done yet because both staff concerned had been on holiday. There was no consideration of the confidential annexe as agreed earlier in the meeting.

ACTION

DRAFT