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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE  
HELD IN ARDEN HALL,  
CASTLE BROMWICH ON  
WEDNESDAY, 4TH APRIL 2007  
AT 7.30 PM**

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**Those present:**

**Chairman**      Cllr J Riordan

**Councillors**

Cllr J Gibbins  
Cllr Mrs. A Haywood  
Cllr M Hughes

[Item 1-5 only]

Cllr D Kettle  
Cllr Mrs. J Smith  
Cllr Miss J Ward  
Cllr Mrs. B Wilkins

**Officers:**      Mrs. C Tibbles, Clerk to the Council  
**Public:**        1 member of the public [Item 3 onwards]

**1. Apologies.**

Apologies had been received from Cllr C Pearce and were accepted for the reason given.

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

None declared.

**3. Minutes of the previous Meeting.**

**ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Kettle, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Haywood, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2007, having been circulated, be signed as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

**4. Manager's Report.**

Members considered the report written by Mr. Witten for Hall matters and Miss Ratcliffe for Bar information in the absence of the Hall Manager. After discussion and consideration, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the following matters: support in principal for a dog show as a new hire venture for Arden Hall but more information should be sought from the hirer of their anticipated needs (e.g. area for fouling, responsibility for clearing etc); to paint the Spencer foyer doors white but with the requirement that on-going maintenance of paint chips be undertaken regularly; to authorize costs up to £225 on cleaning and sealing the wooden Spencer floor. The report highlighted the success of the Bridal Fayre with thanks to Cllr Mrs Haywood and Mr Haywood for their work in planning the event; booking made by a new hirer for a show week in 2008; work on cleaning and re-sealing the stage floor and repairs to the entrance foyer décor, painting/varnishing of the new fire doors, painting of miscellaneous small areas to improve appearances.

**5. Bar Stock Report.**

Under confidential terms, members noted the bar trading analysis and information supplied but expressed concern about incomplete information on the stock audit.

## 6. Residents' Concerns.

Noted by members. The Clerk clarified that an email had been forwarded by the constituency office after a parishioner had contacted Caroline Spelman MP. 10 parishioners had expressed dissatisfaction with the precept increase. Members considered the letter from Borough Cllr Richards in respect of flooding of residents gardens and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Kettle, **IT WAS RESOLVED** the Clerk should reply to confirm the following information – that the drains from the playing field had previously been checked thoroughly with the help of Solihull MBC experts and were still clear, that the gully had been further excavated as recommended although tree roots and concrete foundations had hampered this work, that the source of the problem was due to the ground in the gardens being clay based. Over the years some residents had received advice on how to improve drainage in their gardens.

## 7. Communications.

Routine communications received since last meeting were noted as follows: Solihull Times / Castle Bromwich Gazette / DIS Bulletin / Solihull Tree Wardens Information / Letter from Bor. Cllr Ted Richards on behalf of some residents adjoining the Playing Fields regarding flooding of their gardens requesting consideration / ACAS Newsletter / North Solihull Voluntary and Community Alliance request for community information / Change in charges for Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure checks / Confirmation of renewal of Data Protection Registration / Edge Design software information / no price increase for Green Garden Sacks for 07/08 / Local business information – care homes, activity centre / Work Experience request / Lyons Inquiry into Local Government / Core Strategy for Birmingham / North Solihull Business Forum newsletter / LSP Forum workshop results / NALC Financial Update. Also received: police newsletter / notification of withdrawal of Spitfire licence extension application.

## 8. Review of Working Parties.

Cllr Riordan reported that the Marketing Working Party had discussed more details of an event with Coleshill Town Band and members hoped to attend one of their forthcoming shows. Cllr Dutton said that Arden Hall had better facilities than Coleshill Town Hall and knew they had also performed at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre. Cllr Gibbins referred to the possibility of resurrecting the drama festival with the help of Alan Craske. Cllr Dutton knew there had been problems with lack of support in the past, mainly due to falling membership, but he suggested that neighbouring areas could be invited such as Water Orton and Coleshill and perhaps plan an event over 2/3 days rather than a whole week. Cllr Riordan also reported that the Working Party had discussed hire regulations, insurance and the proposal for a car boot sale. The Hall was not available for a quiz night on 4<sup>th</sup> May so alternative dates would be sought. Chris Beebee had declined involvement in promoting a 60's night because of prior commitments so the Marketing Group were recommending that Rewind be approached directly to perform in the Spencer Hall on Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> October. The arrangements would be for the band to arrange advertising and ticket sales (minimum 60), the proceeds of which they would retain and the Parish Council to provide the Spencer Hall and retain the bar takings.

## 9. Car Boot.

Members considered the proposal received from Nigel Fry and after considerable discussion of the potential advantages and disadvantages, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that approval of one trial event be given initially in order to assess if the management of a car boot sale was viable and what the response of public and neighbours would be. The proposal was accepted as outlined, with the following conditions also being applied: the large rear car park could be used in return for

a fee of £125 (based on 50% of the booters charges), 2 bays would be used for booters and the other bays used by visitors; temporary toilets would be required, own stewards to be responsible for safety, litter and access with the event taking place on a date when there were no hirers in Arden Hall, the Sports Pavilion, no tennis or cricket taking place, the event to take place from 8.30 a.m. until 2 pm. The Clerk asked if free public access to the park and recycling facilities would be maintained and members confirmed that stewards would need to ensure this. The Chairman undertook to consult further with Nigel Fry for his agreement and to seek a suitable date.

#### **10. Multi-Agency Policy on Ball Games.**

Councillors noted the draft policy document and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that an invitation be extended to the Solihull Crime and Disorder Partnership to visit the Parish Council and report on their work in Castle Bromwich.

#### **11. Fusion Project.**

The Chairman explained that Cllr Mrs. Haywood had been interested to learn that Insp. Lee had suggested Hob Farm as a location for football coaching to take place. He had met Ian Clarkson (Fusion Project) with Cllr Gibbins at the Pavilion and at Hob Farm and was pleased to report that Mr. Clarkson was amenable to using both locations for coaching. He was concerned that alternating venues could cause difficulties and lose participants but if funding could be obtained he would be interested in providing coaching at both locations. Cllr Dutton recalled residents in the Timberley Ward saying the Arden Hall Playing Fields were too far for children to walk to. Members agreed that the Parish Council could contribute free use of facilities for the benefit of young parishioners. Cllr Riordan added that Mr. Clarkson hoped that local shops in Green Lane could be approached for corporate donations to help encourage youth activities in the local community. Approximately £1200 would be required and it was suggested that local residents who had wanted to keep Hob Farm open might be able to help seek funding for this activity. Mr. Clarkson had been impressed with the standards at the playing fields but thought the grass at Hob Farm needed cutting. Cllr Mrs. Smith hoped that lack of parking would not present a problem at Hob Farm but members felt many participants would live within walking distance. Cllr Kettle suggested that shops and businesses on Chester Road could also be approached for sponsorship, preferably acknowledging their support on promotional flyers for the scheme. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that free use of playing fields and Hob Farm be provided for the Fusion Project and to lend support to their quest for local funding. The Clerk reminded members of the Parish Council's own grant aid scheme.

#### **12. Arden Hall Insurance and Hirer's Liability.**

The Chairman suggested that a working party could be formed to research the complex issues and Cllr Kettle felt there were lots of exclusions in the insurance information supplied but read an extract from page 15. Cllr Mrs. Wilkins said that Mr and Mrs. Beebee had questioned where they stood but did have public liability insurance of their own. She asked who were commercial hirers and Cllr Dutton said that such customers would normally be paying the A rate hire charge. Cllr Mrs. Wilkins referred to Chris Beebee, the Psychic Fair, Weight Watchers, Line Dancers and the Antiques Fair and members agreed that they would be deemed as commercial operatives. Age Concern, for example, would not be and neither would hirers making bookings for weddings, funerals and family celebrations. The Clerk confirmed that the levy referred to in Clause 2 of the hire regulations had not actually been charged to customers because the quote obtained for extending policy cover for non-

commercial hirers had actually become included in the standard policy free of charge at last year's renewal. Cllr Mrs Wilkins thought the rules should be applied equally and fairly and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Haywood, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to establish a working party at the next Council meeting to seek information from neighbouring Parish Councils on their practices, identify problem areas of potential liability (e.g. whose equipment and who could be at risk, who could cause problems to hirers). Cllr Mrs. Wilkins suggested taking out Clause 2 but the Clerk wondered who would be liable for the cost of damage to Arden Hall by hirers if this Clause was removed.

### **13. Arden Hall Licensing Hours.**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Cllr Mrs. Wilkins explained that several comments had been made by visitors to Arden Hall that functions had been booked at other venues because Arden Hall's licence for drinking ended at 11.00 p.m. She suggested extending this by 1 hour on Friday and Saturday evenings at the discretion of the Duty Manager in line with other local pubs and Shard End Community Centre. Cllr Kettle recalled previous extensions that were made regularly by the Clerk and paid for by hirers but since the Licensing Act 2003 practices had changed. Cllr Mrs. Wilkins felt that it would save time to have an extension in place but thought it should not be used for all functions, mainly special events like weddings. Cllr Kettle clarified that drinks could then be served until midnight on these nights. The Chairman was reluctant to support this idea as the Parish Council had opposed applications from pubs to support local parishioners who believed extended drinking was not appropriate in residential areas but did acknowledge that Arden Hall did need to move with the times. Cllr Mrs. Wilkins stressed that offering the facility did not mean it would always be in use and knew that the Castle Bromwich Club had an extended licence.

Cllr Gibbins, who was attending the meeting as a member of the public, asked permission to raise a question, which was granted by the Chairman. He asked if there were 2 functions on the same evening how would it be managed if they had different bar times and would there be conflict between guests. The Chairman acknowledged it could present a problem and the views of Managers would be sought.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** to recommend to the Parish Council that an application be made to Solihull MBC to extend the licensing hours on Friday and Saturday evenings for an extra hour serving drinks until midnight.

### **14. Accounts.**

The Clerk reported that under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, she had used her delegated powers to make corrections to the payment of accounts as approved at the last Council meeting, which members had received amendments for. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Kettle, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs Wilkins, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the accounts as set out in the enclosure be approved.

### **15. Clerk's Report/Open Spaces Report.**

The quotation for replacement of 9 fire extinguishers and 3 fire blankets had not yet been received from Island Fire. Photographs of Arden Hall had been taken to assist the quantity surveyor with his work on preparing the financial aspect of the lottery application. The broken lock on the police surgery door had been repaired at minimal cost. Problems had occurred with the locking of Hob Farm gates, often on the same one evening per week but Warden had put on alternative chain to ease locking problems for security company. As suggested by a local resident, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to arrange for anti-climb paint to deter climbing.

Pavilion hirers seemed content with their child minder bookings and a request may be made for permission to install new shelving, possibly sharing cost with other hirer. An additional enquiry had been received for a Saturday morning club for fathers and toddlers and was being pursued. Tennis court moss removal had been completed, with difficulty due to the weather and lack of water supply, and new nets installed after the lines were re-marked. The Land Registry documents had been checked by the Clerk and she suggested displaying them at a future Leisure Services Committee meeting, perhaps after the election when new members may find it useful to see. An extremely large hole had been dug on the Village Green and thanks to the vigilance of a local resident, prompt remedial action by the Mobile Warden had prevented an accident. Inevitably the Clerk was still behind with much of her work and staff matters still took the majority of her time. However, support would be limited now due to audit requirements and, following discussion with Cllr Scriven, it had been agreed to temporarily close the office to enquiries so that the finance work could be prioritised, with no new projects being undertaken by the Clerk due to the current workload. Under confidential terms, an update was given on staff matters. The Appeal Panel had met and upheld the decision of disciplinary action made by a Manager and the Clerk was advised it should be reported at the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The Chairman expressed his concern about the increasing workload being borne by the Clerk and reminded members of the Council's duty of care to her as an employee. He hoped that even with the work pressures being faced, she would endeavour to take time off that was owed to her. Cllr Dutton offered his congratulations on the new website.