

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE  
HELD IN ARDEN HALL, CASTLE BROMWICH  
ON WEDNESDAY 11TH FEBRUARY 2009  
AT 19.30 HRS**

**Those present:**

**Chairman:** Cllr J Riordan [except Item 10]  
**Councillors:** Cllr Mrs. P Allen      Cllr N Harris                      Cllr Mrs. A Haywood  
                         Cllr R Amos                      Cllr M Hayes  
**Officers:** Mrs. C Tibbles                      **Public:** None.

**1. Apologies.**

The apologies from Cllr E Knibb, Cllr A Terry and Cllr Mrs. J Smith were accepted for the reasons given.

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

Cllr Riordan declared an interest in part of Item 10, Grant Aid, as he was a volunteer member of the Stroke Association.

**3. Election of Committee Vice-Chairman.**

Cllr Amos volunteered for this position. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Harris, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Cllr Amos be elected as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the civic year.

**4. Minutes of the previous Meeting.**

**ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Harris, **SECONDED** by Cllr Amos, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2009 having been circulated, be signed as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

**5. Licensing Application.**

Following preliminary discussion at the previous meeting, namely the initial concerns of the Parish Council to the Licensing Committee remained ["After discussion, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the information was confusing to absorb and unclear what the variation request actually was. Therefore the conclusion reluctantly reached was that approval could only be given by the Licensing Committee **subject to any concerns raised by neighbours** as the Parish Council did not have sufficient information or evidence provided with the application."] Members noted the additional background information researched by the Clerk, namely the retrospective planning application. A further discussion took place and views submitted by residents were taken into account and under delegated powers, the Clerk was able to summarise the views of the Committee, in addition to those stated above, as follows: "The prevention of public nuisance would not be achieved if the condition was removed. The Parish Council feels it should remain and also be made permanent. If it was removed there would be a seriously detrimental effect on local parishioners and the noise would go beyond the acceptable hours and reasonable times. The protection of children from harm would not be achieved if the bad language in outside areas continued as sound carries across the boundaries. If the grassed area, which is the whole of the grounds, were not cleared after 9.30 pm. and the doormen not monitoring the exits, there would be risk to underage children who were reportedly climbing the fence to access drinks purchased by older

**ACTION**

Clerk  
11/2

**N.B. All Minutes are deemed as draft until formally approved and signed.** friends for their consumption. As owners of the neighbouring Village Green, the Parish Council would be directly affected by an increase in drinking on the Green and glasses being left behind by customers, as happened regularly prior to the voluntary condition being brought in. The refusal last year by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to reinstate the dispersal order around the Village Green and to establish a new Alcohol Restriction Zone to combat the problems experienced by residents and known to the police and the Parish Council means that support is still needed to solve the ASB problems and relaxation of existing conditions would be most likely to exacerbate these problems." Cllr Harris expressed an interest in attending the Licensing Committee hearing to voice these views and support parishioners.

NH  
tba

#### **6. Residents' Concerns.**

Members noted the circulated information, particularly noting those relevant to this Committee.

#### **7. Communications.**

Routine communications were detailed by the Clerk and noted. Additional communications received: charity abseil for Stroke Association at Fort Dunlop / WALC Newsletter / Walc Briefing Seminar on 7/3/09 / Change of date for Stepping Stones (Coventry) NALC event / Costco offers / Sustain Bulletin / Borough Council Events Guide 2009.

#### **8. Working Party Reports.**

Cllr Mrs. Allen reported that £37 had been raised for the Chairman's Charity Fund by selling refreshments at an Arden Hall event and members noted that interest was going well for the forthcoming Charity Quiz and table top sale. The Chairman thanked Cllr Mrs. Allen and her team for the work done to increase income for the Charity Fund. Cllr Mrs. Haywood alerted members that bookings were disappointing for the March Bridal Fayre but that alternative contingency plans, possibly for an Arden Hall Open Day for local voluntary groups to publicise their organisations and possibly recruit new volunteers. It was hoped the Youth Council, the Air Cadet and North Arden Local History publications could be promoted, in addition to Arden Hall and the Parish Council if an event were to be held. The Chairman thanked Cllr Mrs. Haywood and her team for the efforts they had made.

#### **9. Investment Banking.**

The Chairman urged that the Council be mindful of the current economic climate and that the Parish Council research further, with care, to find a suitable bank for investment of earmarked reserves and contingency funds. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Wilkins, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Clerk seek advice from WALC and the Financial Services Association on entitlement to compensation if banks failed.

Clerk  
03/09

#### **10. Grant Aid**

In the absence of Cllr Riordan who had withdrawn, Cllr Amos took the chair as the new Vice-Chairman. After reviewing the remaining budget and the applications, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Harris, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Stroke Association be awarded £120 (+VAT). **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Cllr Mrs. Allen, **SECONDED** by Cllr Hayes, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Nineacres Drop In organisation for mental health be awarded £100 and also be sent details of the discounted Hire Charges for facilities available in Castle Bromwich.

Clerk  
ASAP

### 11. Training.

The Clerk was sorry to report that the Borough Council Code of Conduct Training Course had been oversubscribed and her prompt application for 3 places for new members had been unsuccessful. In line with the new Training Policy, tabled requests were considered. Cllr Hayes suggested that best use of funding was to cascade down training by sending one person. **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that in the new financial year that new members would take priority for training events. In line with the remaining budget available of £225.50, the following decisions were made: 21st February 09, Visionary Leadership: Cllr E Knibb, Cllr Mrs. T Knibb - applications approved at a cost of £50; 7th March 09, WALC Briefing Day: 7 requests received but budget remaining only sufficient for 5 attendees - applications approved for Cllr Mrs. S Baker, Cllr N Harris, Cllr M Hayes, Cllr J Riordan, Mrs C Tibbles at a cost of £175; 22nd April 09; Stepping Stones: Cllr E Knibb, Cllr Mrs. T Knibb - Decision deferred to April (new budget year).

### 12. Annual Risk Review.

Members conducted the review, which was also explained for the benefit of newer members. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the document be updated with the agreed revisions and circulated to all parish councillors.

Clerk  
20/2

### 13. Review of Office Hours.

Members considered the matter and concluded that there was sufficient accessibility for parishioners and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Amos, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to retain the existing opening hours. However, subject to the views of the Hall Manager and the Leisure Services Committee, consideration could be given to changing the booking office hours for Arden Hall in the future.

### 14. Councillor Surgeries.

The Events and Promotions Working Party had not been able to establish a rota as requested (26/11/08) and members discussed the potential obstacles. After due consideration, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Hayes, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Cllr E Knibb be asked to update the Council at the next meeting on his progress since the Leisure Services Committee meeting resolution on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2008. Some members believed the existing arrangements for dealing with residents concerns were sufficient and practical.

EK  
asap

### 15. Website.

At the request of Cllr Harris, members considered the existing website style and system of operation and **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Clerk and Cllr Harris should discuss possible improvements and current operating systems/charges.

NH/Clerk  
03/09

### 16. Payments.

Following scrutiny by members, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Amos, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the payments as set out in the enclosure, be approved.

### 17. Clerk's Report.

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting she had been involved with training information, licensing application research, war memorial information, computer and telephone repairs, meetings with the loss adjustor regarding financial compensation for the sewage flood and would need to arrange the upgrade of the payroll and pension systems in preparation for the year end. Supporting new staff and supervising building work had also been a new task, in addition to the Council Office undertaking an average of four duty manager shifts each week. Snow had disrupted some staff plans for work and also some hirers.

