
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
HELD IN ARDEN HALL, CASTLE BROMWICH
ON WEDNESDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2007
AT 19.30 HRS**

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr J Gibbins

Councillors:

Cllr D Feasey
Cllr E Knibb
Cllr J Riordan
Cllr A Terry
Cllr Mrs. B Wilkins

Officers: Mrs. C Tibbles

Public: 1 member of the public

1.

Apologies.

The apologies from Cllr S Ward were accepted for the reason given. Cllr A Bull was absent.

2. Declarations of Personal or other interests.

None declared at this stage.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesdays 27th June and 11th July, 2007 be signed as a true and correct record.

4. Planning Applications.

Planning Applications and any Decision Notices received since the last Meeting were considered by the Committee, and the recommendations thereon are appended. Members noted the application by Castle Bromwich Cricket & Sports Club for a gable end addition, incorporating a scoreboard, to be built at the Sports Pavilion 2007/1799. One application listed had not been received so a decision was deferred.

5. License Application.

Members noted application DPS890 for a Premises Supervisor variation at Morrisons Supermarket had been granted by the Borough Council.

6. Resident's Concerns.

Noted with interest.

7. Communications.

Routine communications received since last meeting were noted as follows: WALC Solihull Area Committee minutes / Birmingham News / Opportunities bulletins / SCVS News / Survey into People Sleeping Rough in Solihull / letter of thanks for action following complaint / request for link on our website to renewable energy centre / new environmental waste legislation / North Solihull Business Forum newsletter / Castle

Bromwich Echo / fibreglass wall linings & shower rooms flyer / free business check / Standards Board complaints procedure / request for information about precept increase / WALC Model Protocol for Member-Employee relations / disqualification of councillor for disrepute / Warwickshire Crimestoppers appeal for funds / Castle Vale community radio refusal / BT telephone system upgrade offer / Safety catalogue / DIS bulletin / Solihull MBC support service changes to Voluntary & Community Sector / River Tame Flood Risk Management / Lloyds TSB online banking services / MP Surgery dates / Remote Monitoring CCTV flyer / WM Travel bus information / WALC Newsletter / HM Revenue & Customs update / Adult Fitness equipment / ROSPA playground inspection / NS&I confirmation of account closure / Heartbeat newsletter / Making Better Transport Connections / Community Choice Adult Learning / Solihull MBC confirmation that election not required for vacancies / refusal of Arden Hall grant application by Big Lottery Fund / request for information about precept increase / resignation from Cllr Franklin / long service achievement of Village Halls Adviser / volunteer for Friends of Arden Hall / brochure for planters and street furniture / Sage payroll newsletter / Solihull Community Housing new office / Local Policy leaflet from University of Gloucestershire / Regenerating North Solihull newsletter / Solihull Tree Wardens minutes / Costco newsletter / WRCC AGM on Saturday, 13th October at Hampton Lucy / LCR Journal / Solihull Partnership newsletter / Clerk journal / Faith Action community organisation / Community Radio for North Solihull / Heartbeat NHS newsletter / Blag a Tagger (Solihull MBC/police graffiti report scheme) / Castle Bromwich Gazette and funeral details for the late Rosalie Bott, Editor. The Chairman commended the valuable support and contribution to the work of the Parish Council by Rosalie Bott and suggested a letter of thanks be sent.

8. Draft Economic Development Strategy for Solihull (2007-2010?)

Members noted this document with interest.

9. Grant Aid Application.

Members considered the tabled information and **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to grant £200 for weekly soccer coaching at Park Hall School. Dates would be requested. The Chairman commended the approach from Fusion/Waterloo for another holiday activity scheme and members supported the Clerk's request to use delegated powers for approval to enable arrangements to be made.

10. Hire Regulations.

Members discussed the draft document and agreed further minor amendments, which Cllr Mrs. Wilkins would incorporate. At the request of Cllr Riordan, further consideration would be given to wording of the damage/behaviour bond at the next full Council meeting. The Clerk had requested views from the Arden Hall management team.

11. Minutes of meetings.

The Chairman explained that he felt briefer minutes would reduce the Clerk's workload and Cllr Knibb helpfully provided sample minutes from another parish council. Cllr Riordan preferred the existing format in that he would always want parishioners to know what he had said. Cllr Terry had seen minutes of other councils and Cllr Feasey thought that it could be sensible to have some brevity but with decisions fully recorded. Cllr Knibb said that agendas were printed so that parishioners could attend meetings of interest but the Clerk pointed out that agendas were not available on the website. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Wilkins, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that a three month trial of shortened minutes for Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings be undertaken.

12. Installation of Bus Shelter at Bradford Gardens.

Members discussed the tabled letter from Cllr Mrs. Smith and after discussion there was no support for the request from Centro due to existing vandalism, graffiti, danger from broken glass and anti-social behaviour in this area which caused distress to parishioners.

13. Terms of Reference.

Information was tabled by Cllr Knibb and was deferred to the next meeting.

14. Payments.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Terry, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the payments as set out in the enclosure be approved.

15. Clerk's Report.

Since the last meeting the Clerk had met with the Chairman to discuss a variety of topics but holiday absences had prevented a routine being established. She had been covering holiday absences and supporting a manager in resolving some problems. The Youth Council had finalised their questionnaire for distribution and councillors would receive several copies to help get a wider response, especially those who were representatives in contact with young people. A Youth Councillor had given most useful voluntary support in the office. However, she would find it difficult to tackle new projects/ideas and even with additional help it was her current aim to prevent falling further behind rather than clearing the outstanding backlog. She had continued to send apologies for some meetings but had attended the annual LCAS Seminar about risk assessment and corporate manslaughter and the NALC conference "Cracking The Code". An induction evening had been held on 23rd July for 4 new councillors that she hoped had given some insight into the workings of this Parish Council. Due to changes in police procedures, major alterations had been necessary to the Remembrance Parade, which had been most time consuming and worrying. An emergency meeting had been held at the British Legion in August and alterations made but at the normal planning meeting in September Cllr Gibbins had suggested focusing the whole event at the Village Green instead. All the changes were then revised further and a safety meeting attended with the police/Borough Council. The Parish Council would now be responsible for official road closures, providing barriers, safety marshals, road signs and she estimated expenditure of £500 would be required for this event. However, this would be an investment for future years. Communication with parishioners would be important and a leaflet drop needed to residents affected by the closures nearer the time. She tabled an extended list of tasks and appealed for volunteers. One urgent matter was roof repairs and members were asked to consider a quotation from Water Orton Roofing, which she was confident to recommend. Cllr Mrs. Wilkins asked if scaffolding was required. One area of damage had occurred due to the Christmas Tree being placed on the roof. Under emergency powers she requested the work should be sanctioned to begin remedial action and prevent further damage and no objections were made. A further quotation would be submitted to Leisure Services Committee for additional roof maintenance. An emergency repair was also required to the CCTV pavilion system and costs were awaited. Following a recent Solihull Area Committee meeting, Parish and Town Councils were being asked to consider Environmental Maintenance so that a list of common problem areas could be addressed collectively with the Borough Council. Could all members please let the Clerk have their top 5 environmental problem areas (examples only: overgrown verges, lack of recycling facilities, alleyway maintenance, graffiti removal delays).

16. Staffing Matters.

The Clerk had been asked to report on the following points: Resignations/dismissals – none; recruitment/vacancies – advertisement for Assistant Clerk had been placed and shortlisting was being arranged for interviews to be held; advertising – nothing planned for staffing; training (in place/planned) – the Clerk continued to try and support staff to the best of her ability. She had attended the Borough Council training on the Code of Conduct on 17th July would be attending a work/life balance session the following week, although this overlapped with another meeting that she needed to attend.