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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CASTLE  
BROMWICH PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD IN ARDEN HALL, CASTLE BROMWICH  
ON WEDNESDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2007  
AT 7.30 PM**

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**Those present:**

**Chairman:** Cllr Mrs. B. Wilkins

**Councillors:**

Cllr Mrs. P Allen  
Cllr D Feasey  
Cllr D Franklin  
Cllr J Gibbins  
Cllr Mrs. A Haywood  
Cllr M Rashid

[Items 1-7 only]

Cllr J Riordan  
Cllr A Terry

**Officer:** Mrs C Tibbles

**Public:** 3 members of the public

**1. Apologies.**

The apologies from Cllr E Knibb, Cllr Mrs. J Smith, Cllr Miss J Ward and Cllr S Ward were accepted for the reasons given. Cllr A Bull was absent.

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

There were no interests declared.

**3. Co-option of new members.**

At the invitation of the Chairman, candidates confirmed their willingness to be co-opted to the Parish Council and their reasons for wishing to join the Parish Council. Apologies had been received from Mrs. Brueton and Mrs. Jackson was absent. Members held a written ballot with results being scrutinised by a member of the public. **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the co-options of Mrs P Allen for the Beechcroft Ward, Mr D Franklin for the Whateley Ward and Mr M Rashid for the Park Hall Ward be accepted. The new members signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office and were welcomed by the Chairman on behalf of the Parish Council. The Chairman of the Leisure Services Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee explained the roles undertaken and new members elected to join the following Committees:

Leisure Services Committee – Cllr Mrs. Allen and Cllr M Rashid;

Finance and General Purposes Committee – Cllr D Franklin.

**4. To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Members.**

**ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Mrs Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Gibbins, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to receive the Declarations of Acceptance of Office of newly co-opted members.

**5. Minutes of the previous Meeting.**

**ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Feasey, **SECONDED** by Cllr Gibbins, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2007 be accepted as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

**6. Questions from Councillors.**

Cllr Feasey commended his recent training and asked fellow members to also attend as this was strongly recommended, although not compulsory. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that Cllrs Mrs Allen, Franklin, Rashid, Riordan, Terry and Mrs. Wilkins would attend the induction training course at

Arden Hall on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October between 10 am and 4 pm. Cllr Feasey had designed a flyer to encourage parishioners to offer positive help to the Friends of Arden Hall for the work of the Parish Council in the community. This was discussed and the Chairman summarised it was well worth considering although requiring further investigation in relation to liability, insurance, qualifications etc for a future Council agenda.

#### **7. 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 this discussion is supplied to members.

#### **8. Report of the Leisure Services Committee.**

**ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Gibbins, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held on Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> September 2007, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

#### **9. Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.**

**ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Gibbins, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesdays, 25<sup>th</sup> July and 12<sup>th</sup> September 2007, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

#### **10. Report of the Staffing Panel.**

Cllr Mrs. Haywood **PROPOSED** the Minutes of the Meetings of the Staffing Panel held on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> July and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2007, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

Cllr Gibbins objected to the wording of the draft terms of reference. He felt a panel of three councillors should not be allowed to assume power and responsibility for staff matters.

Cllr Gibbins felt the emphasis of the Panel should be on offering advice and support and he objected to the Council's previous resolution.

Cllr Riordan was against this objection as the Panel had been approved by full Council following legal advice which clearly specified that a Panel of 3/5 persons was required and that it should not comprise of 15 councillors.

Cllr Gibbins repeated that the Clerk was the Proper Officer with sole responsibility for taking decisions on staffing matters and that her powers should not be superseded by a panel of 3. Cllr Franklin stated that in his experience any Panel or Committee was subservient to the Council and should report to the Council.

Cllr Riordan agreed but said that it was dependant on the powers delegated to any Panel or Committee by the Council. He stated that if the Clerk had sole authority with no support or advice from members then any decision taken by her must not be criticised afterwards by the Council.

Cllr Riordan queried why Cllr Gibbins wished to ignore legal advice taken by the Council with regard to establishment of a Panel.

Following further comments by Cllr Gibbins, Cllr Mrs Haywood summarised the position with regard to the Clerk's delegated powers in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act and that if the Clerk acted within her delegated powers then Councillors should not be seen to criticise her. The Chairman felt that the Panel was a way of offering support to the Clerk and acknowledged her sensible manner. She suggested the Council could consider revising the wording on the draft terms of reference for the Panel to meet to discuss staffing matters when any issues were raised by the Clerk for the Panel to deal with. Cllr Franklin said that staff would have grievance rights and that procedures followed should be legal. Cllr Mrs Haywood agreed that re-wording the draft terms of reference may be helpful and the Chairman consequently called for

a reserve member and **IT WAS RESOLVED** to accept Cllr Terry's offer to assist the Panel when required.

#### **11. Report of Working Parties.**

Cllr Gibbins reported that he had attended a meeting of the Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens when two healthy donations had been received. The Gardens were considering a membership scheme to operate in addition to the Friends association. Castle Bromwich Hall had been bought by a Thai based company manufacturing good quality reproduction furniture, which they would intend to furnish the Hall with. He was sure residents would be relieved that the Hall would not become a school or church.

Cllr Gibbins was pleased to report on the success of the small August working party in reviewing the hire regulations, which the Chairman would report on later. He thought that all working parties should be brought together for more input so he would formulate a proposal for next month to include co-option of other useful partners which had proved useful during the recess.

#### **12. Appointment of a representative for the Airport Consultative Committee.**

Due to the absence of several members, this item was deferred to the next Council meeting and the new representative would hopefully attend the ACC meeting on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November at 2.30 p.m.

#### **13. Arden Hall Frontage.**

Following refusal of funding by the Big Lottery, members discussed the problems facing Arden Hall and subsequent need to delay extension plans. Cllr Mrs. Haywood thought obtaining quotes to establish a 5 year plan would give an idea of the level of funding needed. Cllr Feasey thought essentials should be prioritised and the Chairman urged that there should be no design change to existing frontage and the Clerk needed to obtain quotes. The Clerk knew the floor was seriously damaged and sought guidance on construction materials and queried the necessity of planning permission.

#### **14. Direct Debits.**

**ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **SECONDED** by Cllr Riordan, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to establish direct debit payments for utility bills for rates, water rates, telephone and gas services to the Parish Council.

#### **15. Representatives to Outside Bodies.**

Cllr Mrs. Haywood had attended a meeting of the Dame Mary Bridgman Trust on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2007, at which the following was agreed: Trust confirmed the re-appointment of the Earl of Bradford as Chairman; with the impending departure of Rev Michael Sears, it was agreed that until such time as someone had been appointed to replace him, the Rev Bill Sands would stand in his place as Vice-Chairman; the appointment of Jerry Dutton as a Trustee to replace the late Mrs Brenda Stevens and to re-affirm that he would carry out the duties of Secretary/Treasurer (Clerk) to the Trust; also confirmed that Ian Wright be appointed as a Trustee to replace Mrs Alma Spink to represent the PCC of St Clement of Alexandria; declarations were duly completed and signed by the Trustees. The accounts were tabled for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2007 and were agreed and accepted; a note of thanks was given for all the work undertaken by Jerry Dutton on both the annual accounts and clarifying the Constitution of the Trust; thanks were also extended to Alma Spink for all her work on behalf of the Trust; it was agreed that the mid-year meeting should revert back to May in any year. It was felt that not enough people knew about the Trust; therefore it was decided that in the magazine to be published at the end of the year by St Mary's & St Margaret's with distribution intended to all residents of Castle Bromwich etc an advert write-up would be included, which Jerry Dutton undertook to do on behalf of the Trust. The next meeting would be on 17<sup>th</sup> November at Arden Hall.

Cllr Mrs. Haywood reported that she had been unable to attend a recent meeting of the Castle Bromwich/Smiths Wood Children's Centre due to work commitments but, as other group members faced the same problem, consideration was being given to changing the time of meetings.

The Chairman had received the following report on meetings attended by Cllr Knibb:

Cllr Knibb and the Clerk had attended the Youth Parish Council meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> September held at Arden Hall. Members finalised the questionnaire and agreed the preferred distribution method with replied being requested before Christmas. One Youth Councillor reported continuing problems with overgrown bushes on alleyways and a new Youth Toolkit Resource CD was to be purchased to assist them in their work. The Chairman would lay a wreath at the Remembrance Parade and members agreed to join the march. Members had supported the suggestion from a soccer coach for provision of mini-soccer facilities and incorporated the option in their questionnaire in order to canvas other views.

Cllr Knibb and the Clerk had attended the Solihull Area Committee of WALC on 6<sup>th</sup> September and it was most pleasing that after 3 years of Acting Chairmanship a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman had been elected. Other posts were quickly filled, copies tabled of the submission for the WALC Annual Report, no resolutions were submitted for the AGM, disappointment expressed at the Borough Council rejection of the Local Charter which was discussed and a further meeting had been arranged between Cllr Roger Chapman and a representative from WALC to try and establish a way forward, advice on how to deal with travellers was welcomed and a meeting between two parishes had been arranged with an officer of the Borough Council, general dissatisfaction was expressed on environmental maintenance standards from the Borough Council and it was agreed to compile a list of priority problems from among the different parishes. [Councillors from Castle Bromwich were asked to let the Clerk know of their priority problems so that the top 5 could be passed on.] An open discussion took place on the topics of village appraisals, future guest speakers, Remembrance parade problems and ASB. Consultation meetings were taking place on the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Bill and in particular its relevance to the proposed Birmingham Airport runway extension was referred to. The next meeting would be held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008 commencing at 20.00 hours at be The Parish Hall, Elmdon Road, Marston Green and any Parish/Town Councillor in the Solihull area was welcome to attend.

#### **16. Report of the Officer of the Council.**

The Clerk informed members that staff matters had been more time consuming than usual but she would endeavour to prepare a summary report as soon as possible. The emergency roof repairs to the Windsor Room and sealing of some brickwork on the Spencer frontage had been very promptly undertaken by the approved company.

#### **17. Report of the Chairman.**

The Chairman reported that she had attended the meeting of the Dame Mary Bridgeman Trust as detailed earlier by Cllr Mrs. Haywood and wondered if the Parish Council website might be able to publicise the work of the Trust. She paid tribute to the working party members who had completely revised the hire regulations and commended the contribution of Dan Kettle, former councillor. After discussion of the latest tabled version of the hire regulations, minor alterations were agreed to the forfeit of the Hire Bond and **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Feasey, **SECONDED** by Cllr Gibbins, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the regulations. Following a question from Cllr Mrs Haywood, it was agreed to implement them with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> November so that the necessary changes could be made, new procedures written and staff training undertaken.

The Chairman again welcomed newly co-opted members to the Parish Council before she closed the meeting.

Clerk  
28/9

DeF  
24/10

ACTION

Clerk  
12/10

Panel to meet  
TBA

ACTION

Council  
31/10

Working Party  
Nov

RFO/Duty Manager  
26/10

RFO  
31/10

ACTION

ACTION  
All Cllrs

ACTION  
Clerk/Mgrs& Wardens  
1/11