
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CASTLE
BROMWICH PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN ARDEN HALL, CASTLE BROMWICH
ON WEDNESDAY 27TH JUNE 2007
AT 7.30 PM**

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr Mrs. B. Wilkins

Councillors:

Cllr A Bull
Cllr D Franklin
Cllr J Gibbins
Cllr Mrs. A Haywood
Cllr E Knibb
Cllr J Riordan
Cllr A Terry
Cllr Miss J Ward
Cllr S Ward
[Items 1-13 only]

Officer: Mrs C Tibbles

Public: 5 members of the public (some not present for all of the meeting)

The Chairman welcomed new members to their first full meeting since their appointment to office and explained that the tradition of the Parish Council was that views remained independent at meetings, with political opinions being left outside the door. Members were representing the community of Castle Bromwich and she particularly welcomed the expertise that new members would bring to the Parish Council.

1. Apologies.

The apologies from Cllr D Feasey and Cllr Mrs. J Smith were accepted for the reasons given. The Clerk had notified the Chairman of the reluctant resignation submitted by Cllr Colin Pearce, due to his work location being changed unexpectedly. Cllr M Rashid was absent and the Clerk was instructed to seek advice on his consequent delay in signing to accept his election as a Parish Councillor.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or other interests.

There were no interests declared.

3. Minutes of the previous Meeting.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Cllr Knibb, **SECONDED** by Cllr Gibbins, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 16th May, 2007 be accepted as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

4. Questions from Councillors.

Cllr Gibbins asked how the council could reduce the Clerk's workload by support, explaining that resolutions could not be implemented promptly as she was overwhelmed with work. Cllr Knibb stated that the Clerk was doing the job of two people and suggested a time management course, if affordable, might help decide priorities. Cllr Gibbins said he was surprisingly now the longest serving councillor and had discussed his role as Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee with Phil Scriven, Ted Richards and Dan Kettle (former Parish Councillors). He recommended compiling a resume of the skills, experience and qualifications of all members so that the Clerk would know if she could seek advice from an appropriate source when necessary. Cllr Bull supported this idea. Cllr Gibbins also intended to meet weekly with the Clerk to give support. He stated that no experienced applicants had been interested in a part-time position with

responsibility as Deputy Clerk. The Chairman personally felt that another Committee for Staffing was not needed and that matters could be reported upon monthly by the Clerk at Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings. Cllr Riordan thought the legal and professional advice already received and discussed at length should be followed as agreed and that reporting to that committee would delay decision making, which had already happened when 15 members had been unable to make concise recommendations. Cllr Mrs. Haywood thought that only certain types of staff issues would need consideration by a Panel or when the Clerk needed/sought assistance and believed that a Committee of 15 would not be manageable. Cllr Gibbins thought that a Panel meeting of 3, with 2 reserve members could work. Cllr Ward agreed with Cllr Mrs. Haywood, as in his experience Panels always consisted of 3 people, not 7/8. Cllr Knibb stated that the Clerk knew what the staffing issues would be and should contact the Panel to arrange a meeting when required promptly, rather than reporting to the next scheduled Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Gibbins, **SECONDED** by the Chairman, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that staffing matters become a permanent agenda item each month at Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings and that the Clerk could call the Panel to meet when required. Cllr Knibb said that the Panel should either support the decisions of the Clerk, who was the Line Manager to staff and had delegated powers, or make recommendations to the Council if time constraints would not hinder progress. Cllr Gibbins thought a current staff situation required consideration by the Panel and that an early date should be agreed, with the Clerk issuing the appropriate agenda.

5. 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.

6. Report of the Leisure Services Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held on Wednesday, 6th June 2007, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

7. Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Cllr Gibbins, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday, 13th June 2007, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted. Cllr Riordan asked that his abstention on the vote for a grant funding application be noted.

8. Report of Working Parties.

There were no further reports.

9. Representative Appointments.

Further to the appointments the previous month, the Chairman invited volunteers and **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Cllr Ward be appointed as representative for the St. Thomas Dole Charity and Cllr Gibbins as Association Governor at Park Hall School.

10. Hob Farm Licences.

The Chairman had asked for the sale of the three former entrances to be discussed which were currently licensed to residents of adjoining properties and subject to an annual fee of £10, which she believed was troublesome for the Clerk to collect. Cllr Gibbins wondered why the entrances were originally established and Cllr Ward urged caution if they were ancient rights of way. After a brief discussion, there were no objections to investigating the valuation of the land and contacting the licence holders with an offer to sell it to the licence holders for the value of the land, plus the cost of conveyance. Cllr Gibbins offered to approach a couple of local agents.

11. Terms of Reference.

After discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that each Committee, Panel and Working Party should complete the 'Terms of Reference' forms to submit an outline of their responsibilities and powers to the Council for approval.

12. Year End Accounts 2006/07, Internal Audit and Annual Return to the External Auditor.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Year End Accounts 2006/07 be accepted and signed by the Chairman. **IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Internal Audit information be accepted and the Annual Return was duly completed and authorised by the chairman and witnessed by the Clerk.

13. Representatives to Outside Bodies.

Cllr Knibb reported that on 17th May he had attended the AGM of Castle Bromwich Scout Group at their headquarters in Brownsover Close. After the adoption of the 2006 AGM minutes and matters arising, there was a report from the Treasurer and a presentation of the Annual Accounts to March 2007. These showed a small surplus of £2,500 which added to accumulated reserves brought forward of £53,000. £22,000 had been allocated for the refurbishment of the Hall interior, new boiler and roof for the new building extension that was partly completed. The projected costs for operations would leave them financially solvent and safe, but by no means comfortable, so a renewed effort would be required for fund raising in the coming year. The Beavers, Cubs and Scouts presented unit reports and all sections were now at or near capacity, with another night planned soon for Scouts due to demand for places, which was very encouraging. Presentations were then made for leading cubs and scouts, followed by badges. The meeting was adjourned for light refreshments. The District Commissioner indicated that he would be in touch regarding the offer of the Spencer Suite for a Jamboree or Gang Show to commemorate 75 years of the 237th Scouts and 100 years of the Scouting movement nationally.

Cllr Knibb reported that on 21st May he had attended a full governing body meeting of Castle Bromwich Junior school, which had covered a vast number of items including regeneration in North Solihull, equality and diversity, embrace programme, actions of Chairman since last meeting, report on visit by Headteacher to school in Beijing, reports from committees, excellent improvements in achievement and standards in core subjects, a clean air award, ECO school status, FA compliance standard which would result in more money for equipment and the kudos of a new emblem on letter headings, new child protection policy successfully introduced, review of Health & Safety and a number of other matters with the meeting eventually being adjourned.

Cllr Knibb reported that on 23rd June he had attended a Finance and Premises Committee meeting of the governors of Castle Bromwich Junior School which had approved the expenditure for 2007 and provisional outturn and monitoring statement for the year. New tests and monitoring standards for governors to show competence in implementing internal controls and the school was well positioned to meet any foreseeable requirements that may be required. Plans for the Pauline Gray Memorial Award was progressing, with a cup being kept by each recipient and their name placed on the board for posterity. The school, the Clerk and the family would be involved in establishing the details.

Cllr Mrs. Haywood had attended a meeting of the Castle Bromwich Children's Centre on 23rd May, which was a morning meeting and sometimes difficult for her to attend. She had received a warm welcome and was pleased that the Centre at Chelmsley Wood still continued to attract good numbers. The Dad's Group had planned several trips and those already held had been well attended. The number of children attending the Play n Stay group in the Pavilion at Arden Hall Playing Field continued to grow and although the venue was not ideal, it had proved difficult to find anywhere in Castle Bromwich that was in a better location or had better facilities to offer. Concern had been expressed about not receiving an update on the planning permission for the modular building which was to be sited on a portion of the infants school playground. The general layout of the building had been slightly altered and it was hoped that because of this the room needed for the Kippers Club would not be reduced. If this was the case then the reason to have the modular building in the first place needed to be looked at again. The next meeting was

planned for 11 July in Castle Bromwich Library at 10 a.m.

Cllr Mrs. Haywood had attended a meeting of the Dame Mary Bridgeman Trust in the Foden Room on Saturday, 23rd June but the number of apologies necessitated a discussion as to whether a quorum was present (9 members need 4) only 3 trustees present. It was decided to proceed with meeting and requested that the minutes be sent to each committee member promptly asking for their agreement as to the recommendations made. Fr. Michael outlined how the Trust was set up and the money allocated. Brenda Stevens who had been secretary/treasurer to the Trust had sadly died in February and Jerry Dutton had agreed to step into this position. This was welcome but would need to be ratified. A thank you letter had been received from Paul Wright for help with his funding regarding youth work. It was noted that all requests for donations should be writing to the Trust. New cheque signatories had to be arranged with the bank and as soon as this had been done and the agreement given the recommendations for donations would be paid. She had found the meeting very interesting and looked forward to the next on 15th September.

Cllr Gibbins asked for the Arden Hall Working Party to meet as thought needed to be given to the redevelopment of the front of Arden Hall, regardless of the outcome of the lottery application. Cllr Mrs. Haywood and the Chairman agreed the frontage needed serious consideration. Cllr Gibbins asked any interested members to give ideas of what might usefully be considered if the front was extended and thought estimated costs needed to be reduced. Jerry Dutton had previously submitted a possible layout and details of where Studley Village Hall had obtained funding. Cllr Knibb had seen plans from Cllr Gibbins but these had not been shared with other members. The Chairman knew that lottery funding could not be relied upon and other sources would need approaching. Cllr Gibbins invited Mr Woodhouse to join the working party.

14. Report of the Officer of the Council.

The Clerk reminded members of the need to confirm their updated contact information, particularly relating to availability to members of the public and the website. An induction meeting would be arranged but new members had not yet offered suggested times/availability. She asked members of the Leisure Services Committee to consider the annual Tour of Inspection being brought forward and **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to meet on Wednesday 18th July in the playground at 6.30 p.m., with all Parish Councillors being encouraged to attend so that new members could tour the facilities. The Chairman requested that a private bar be available after the tour. A potentially serious matter for Arden Hall Managers was being addressed and further details supplied at the next Leisure Services Committee meeting. She had attended a meeting of the Solihull Area Committee of WALC with a warm invitation being sent to all members for the next or future meetings (6th September at Hampton-in-Arden).

15. Report of the Chairman.

The Chairman reported that on Sunday 10th June she attended the Annual Parish Civic Service at St. Mary's and St. Margaret's Parish Church. The service was conducted by the Rector, Father Michael Sears and was very well attended by the Mayor and Mayoress of Solihull, present and past Parish Councillors, Borough Councillors, representatives from many local groups and organisations and church members. A buffet supper and reception was held afterwards at Arden Hall. It had been a delight to meet the new Mayor and Mayoress of Solihull and she hoped that this would be the first of many occasions that they felt able to attend functions in Castle Bromwich.

On 15th June along with other members of the Parish Council, she had attended the sad occasion of the funeral of Cllr Michael Hughes. She took the opportunity to say how much he would be missed, not only for the contribution to the Council but also for his common sense and excellent sense of humour and sincere condolences were extended to his wife Eileen and his family.

On Wednesday, 20th June she had attended that official opening of the new playground equipment at Castle Bromwich Junior School. She had behaved like a child and tried it all out, much to the amusement of the children and said that they did not have things like that when she had been at school, so maybe it was time to go back if only to play. A short presentation had been given by members of the school council on how much the equipment meant to the school and a big thank you to all of the organisations that had contributed to the funding. She had been amused by a little boy

who commented “that’s a nice bit of bling you’re wearing missus – are you the mayor or something?” She thought he meant the chain of office so in future the Chain would be “a nice bit of bling” and as she was not the Mayor she must be an “or something” so no rude comments please!

The Chairman concluded by saying with the resignation of Colin Pearce and the sad death of Mick Hughes there were now two vacancies on the Parish Council and appealed for anyone who knew someone who may be interested in joining to please get in touch with the Clerk or any member so that the necessary information could be passed on. The Parish Council worked to keep Castle Bromwich the place that residents wanted it to be and to improve things where possible.