
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CASTLE
BROMWICH PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN ARDEN HALL, CASTLE BROMWICH
ON WEDNESDAY 30TH JANUARY 2008
AT 7.30 PM**

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr Mrs. B. Wilkins

Councillors:

Cllr Mrs. P Allen

Cllr R Amos

[Items 3 – end]

Cllr D Feasey

Cllr E Knibb

Cllr Mrs. T Knibb

Cllr Mrs. A Haywood

Cllr J Riordan

Cllr Mrs. J Smith

Cllr A Terry

Officer: Mrs C Tibbles

Guest Speaker: Supt. J Andronov, Operational Manager, West Midlands Police [Items 4-7 only]

Public: 20 members of the public

1. Apologies.

The apologies from Cllr Miss J Ward and Cllr S Ward were accepted for the reasons given. Cllr M Rashid was absent. The Chairman reported that resignations had been received from Cllr A Bull and Cllr D Franklin, which she had acknowledged on behalf of the Council. The Chairman apologised for the slightly late start to the meeting but welcomed everyone in attendance.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or other interests.

There were no interests declared.

3. Co-option of new member for Timberley Ward [Clerk's Correction: Beechcroft Ward].

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Amos felt that members already knew of his desire to help improve the community of Castle Bromwich. There were no questions. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Knibb, **SECONDED** by Cllr Riordan, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Mr. Amos be co-opted as a councillor for the declared vacancy. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed and the Chairman welcomed Mr. Amos to the Parish Council. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Knibb, **SECONDED** by Cllr Riordan, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that vacancies be filled on the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the new Arden Management and Promotion Committee. Cllr Amos duly took his seat.

4. Minutes of the previous Meeting.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 19th December, 2007 be accepted as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

5. Guest Speaker: Supt James Andronov, Operational Manager, Solihull Operational Command Unit, West Midlands Police

The Chairman introduced the guest speaker and welcomed him to the meeting. Supt Andronov explained he was here to listen to the thoughts and views that people held in Castle Bromwich and he would report to Insp. Reischmiller and Sgt. O'Reilly as he had a remit to make things happen. Since April 2007 the police in Solihull had neighbourhood teams based on ward structures and this was unique in the West Midlands. The police worked in partnership and by sharing common

boundaries this was more effective. He thought contact with councillors was better and hoped that relationships could be built, asking for the local perspective to take back with him. The police were meeting many targets and working towards others. Particular successes were detections and reducing crime and other evidence was gained by the 'feeling the difference' survey. Contact was made with people who reported crimes to ask what response had been received and if the police were meeting expectations. There was also a MORI poll with random calls to ascertain views on service provided. Statistics showed the police were performing well in comparison to this time last year with 2,500 less victims of crime, 600 less reports of criminal damage and 600 less vehicle crimes. Theft of satellite navigation systems was a serious problem. Reports from Castle Bromwich showed there were concerns about anti-social behaviour, gangs of youths and he had been happy to authorize the dispersal order, which had expired in December. This intervention had worked well and although youths still dispersed without conflict when approached by the police, he asked for feedback from the public when incidents occurred. The neighbourhood team was heavily involved in local schools and Castle Bromwich would feature in the forthcoming Borough wide "Operation Attack". He asked for candid views on what issues were in Castle Bromwich.

6. Questions from Councillors.

As tabled, Cllr Mrs. Haywood asked for further information on the proposed development at Lanchester Park. Cllr Feasey said that he had visited an exhibition but residents and the Parish Council had not been aware of proposals to build 62 houses. Concerns were shared about the loss of this amenity and Cllr Feasey thought that compensation should be paid to the Parish Council. He now knew that a formal planning application had not yet been submitted but as the Borough Council were in partnership with the developers, he felt they were unlikely to object. Cllr Knibb stated the land was owned by the Borough Council so questioned how the Parish Council would be entitled to compensation. Cllr Feasey said the open space facility would be lost so compensation should be paid. Cllr Mrs. Knibb thought there were plans to improve the play area and felt that could be a compensatory factor. The Chairman asked if Bor. Cllr Richards could explain further and he replied that the regeneration of the 'North' of the Borough (excluding Castle Bromwich) included proposals for affordable housing and as partners, the Borough Council's contribution would be the land required. There had been some objections raised and there would be further consultation as a result. The Chairman asked Bor. Cllr Richards to keep the Parish Council informed.

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 the questions asked is appended for members.

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked Supt. Andronov for attending the meeting. He replied that he would be happy to come again and his remit was to find solutions to problems. On behalf of the police he pledged to deliver the best possible service. He asked for straightforward views to be put in a constructive way and said the local team was working hard for Castle Bromwich.

8. Report and future meetings of Working Parties/Friends of Arden Hall.

Cllr Feasey reported that for some months he had been co-ordinating an appeal for volunteers, under supervision of the Parish Council and using tools supplied by the Parish Council, to help improve facilities in Castle Bromwich. After personally delivering 500 leaflets in the Park Hall Ward he had not received even one reply and if this was typical of the parish he was very disappointed, especially as some homes had 2/3 residents. He appealed for anyone with skills, particularly DIY, either retired or not, to get in touch with him to give practical help to make the parish a better place.

Cllr Mrs. Knibb reported that the Building Working Party had met that afternoon and looked at Arden Hall from a visitor's point of view. Much of the work needed could be done at a reasonable

cost but felt that a specialist deep-clean of the interior was advisable. This had been discussed with the Clerk and quotes would be required. No objections were raised by members.

9. Good Citizen Award.

At the suggestion of the Chairman, this item was deferred to the next meeting for more information to be researched.

10. Parish Survey.

Cllr Mrs. Smith explained that questions for a skeleton survey had been prepared, considering the information from the previous Community Appraisal, to ascertain what residents wanted. She needed ideas on methods of distributing to parishioners as postal costs would be expensive. The Chairman reminded members of the public that their comments were not allowed during the remainder of the meeting.

11. Adoption of Policy on Member-Officer Protocol.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Riordan, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the WALC model policy be formally adopted.

12. Regeneration and Improvement of Arden Hall.

Cllr Mrs. Knibb reported that adequate solutions were needed for Arden Hall's problems. Working Parties had been formed to look at Buildings and grants. She hoped that by April/May the Parish Council would be ready to undertake public consultation with the local community.

13. Budget 08/09.

The Chairman explained that the Working Party had met the previous evening and reviewed the current situation. There had been recent savings on expenditure which were reflected in the new budget printouts showing a considerably higher forecast closing balance. The Responsible Finance Officer had reported the reply from WALC that additional information needed to be supplied to meet the requirements for a PWLB loan and therefore strongly recommended any loan application be delayed until later in the year, so that further advice could be obtained. Capital expenditure plans were therefore amended in light of AMP budget changes.

14. Precept 08/09.

The Chairman said the Working Party recommended a 5% increase in the Precept for 2008/09. **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Haywood, 6 votes were made in favour. Cllr Feasey asked for the opportunity to discuss the proposal and was concerned about insufficient funding to meet known problems and preferred a 10% increase in the precept as this would still mean the total cost for the average household was less than 90p per week. He felt this was still favourable when compared with neighbouring parish and town councils, some of which charged more, as confirmed by Cllr Mrs. Allen. Cllr Mrs. Knibb said a 5% precept would reduce the reserves further by £40,000 and warned if the budget was not sufficient this year there would be higher increases in other years. Cllr Knibb reminded members that reserves had been depleted year on year and that professional advice had recommended reserves of £100,000. The liability for diseased trees was an increasing concern and thought a responsible precept increase should be 30%. Cllr Riordan stated that £23,000 had been re-allocated to facilitate some capital expenditure on Arden Hall. Cllr Mrs. Smith questioned if 5% would be sufficient. Cllr Feasey **PROPOSED AN AMENDMENT** to increase the precept by 10%, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, with 3 votes in favour and 6 against. Therefore **ON THE ORIGINAL PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Haywood, it was **RESOLVED** to increase the precept by 5% from £195,000 to £204,750. 6 votes in favour, 4 against.

15. Report of the Leisure Services Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs. Haywood, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held on Wednesday, 2nd January 2008, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

16. Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Cllr Mrs. Wilkins, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday, 9th January 2008, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

17. Review of Representative Roles and appointment to fill vacancies.

Due to the resignations received, the Chairman suggested this item be deferred as new vacancies would now exist. However, Cllr Knibb wished to volunteer to serve on the Colebridge Trust and as a meeting would take place on 8th February he asked to stand. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that Cllr Knibb's offer be accepted and that other vacancies be deferred to the next meeting.

18. Review of Panels.

This item was deferred.

19. Representatives to Outside Bodies.

a) Cllr Knibb reported to members on the Youth Council Meeting he had attended on Tuesday, 8th January 2008 at Arden Hall. The agenda included a guest speaker, Cllr Mrs Terrie Knibb who spoke on the plans to develop Arden Hall and the community and to discuss ideas for events and sponsorship that will assist in this project. Various ideas and proposals were suggested and are worthy of consideration by the Parish Council. Also on the Agenda were the results of the Youth Council's questionnaires of the youth of the parish which were incorporated into the discussion on developing the parish community. It was resolved to actively enlist Park Hall School involvement in both the Youth Council and support and organisation of events.

Cllr Knibb reported that both he and Cllr Mrs Knibb met with Dr Lesley Browne on Thursday, 17th January 2008 and Dr Browne has invited them to speak at the next School Council Meeting to hopefully progress this aim.

b) Cllr Knibb reported that on Saturday, 12th January 2008 he had attended the seminar on Chairmanship at Dunchurch, near Rugby, together with Cllrs Barbara Wilkins, Terrie Knibb and Janine Smith.

c) Cllr Knibb reported that on Monday, 14th January 2008 he had attended the F & P meeting of Castle Bromwich Junior School on behalf of the Parish Council. Many Agenda items had been discussed including Health & Safety, telephone systems, terms of reference of F & P Committee, the purchasing policy, outdoor facilities, ICT development and year 5 classrooms.

Other matters discussed included problems with drainage on the playground, the result of the recent OFSTED audit report and most importantly the finance budget summary for 2008/2009. A security update was also given.

Cllr Knibb was pleased to report that all continues to run well for Castle Bromwich Junior School.

d) Cllr Knibb reported to members on the AGM of WALC County Committee which he had attended on Tuesday 15th January 2008 at Warwick Town Council offices. The quarterly meeting of WALC county members had followed the AGM. The AGM mainly consisted of the election of a new Vice Chairman and numerous nomination and election of representatives to outside bodies for the coming year, the change of name and remit of the Policy Sub-Committee and the cycle of dates for next years county members meetings.

Cllr Knibb advised that the Agenda of the Quarterly County Committee consisted of 18 separate issues and itemised sub-issues, and he did not intend to list them as they related to matters at regional and national level. He advised members that if they were interested, they were more than welcome to see the agenda contents and he would be happy to discuss their relevance later.

e) Cllr Knibb advised members that he had attended the Solihull Area Committee meeting at Chelmsley Wood Town Council offices on Thursday, 17th January 2008. The Committee discussed the finalisation of the Local Charter Agreement between Town and Parish Councils and Solihull

Metropolitan Borough Council. The guest speaker was Michael Blamire Brown, Solicitor to the Borough Council, who spoke to the Committee on the presentation and acceptance by the Borough Council on this long awaited Charter. Mr Nick Tromans, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's Partnership Manager was also in attendance to speak on the Borough Council's Community Strategy vision for the next 10 years and specifically local priorities for the next 3 years. He required feedback from parish councils on section 5 of the LSP document which many in attendance had not previously seen. Other matters covered were environmental concerns, changes in dealing with complaints by the Standards Board, implementation of and promotion of the new Wellbeing powers act and dealing with travellers. Next meeting would be Thursday 10th April at Marston Green council rooms.

f) On Monday, 21st January Cllr Knibb had attended the meeting of the Curriculum and Community Committee of Castle Bromwich Junior School. Since June 07 the school had been working towards being an Eco school and by 2010 teachers would need to be teaching a foreign language, which was likely to be French. The LEA had urged the school to apply for recognition as a National Healthy Eating flagship school as a result of the children's efforts in changing the schools eating habits. Governors would also be available for consultation in the library on the parent evenings 6th/7th February.

g) On Monday 28th January, Cllr Knibb had attended the full Governing Body meeting of Castle Bromwich Junior School. The main topic was the chairman's report on the recent Ofsted inspection when the school was granted satisfactory status overall, classified as grade 3. However the majority of scores were grade 2 with the school being acknowledged as happy, caring and providing good personal developments and well-being throughout. It was also acknowledged that the school was markedly better than 2 years previously and continued to be in improving school. The leadership and management were classified as good with special mention of the head and deputy head's strong leadership. The governorship of the school also received individual praise as did the school middle management leaders and staff. There was still room for improvement in the SATs academic standards but the school was confident that appropriate development was being progressed. The headteacher's report for the spring term was very extensive and covered a vast array of topics. Cllr Knibb was confident that the school was in good hands and progressing well.

20. Report of the Officer of the Council.

The Clerk briefly stated that some staffing issues had arisen on her return from leave which she would be addressing appropriately and her priority was to catch up on recent events and to report appropriately at Committee meetings. She supported the need for a specialist deep clean of Arden Hall and the Pavilion.

21. Report of the Chairman.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Knibb for reporting on the training events and meetings that she had also attended. She knew that January was traditionally a quiet time for the Chairman after attending Christmas functions. She formally recorded her thanks for the contributions of Cllr Franklin and Cllr Bull and particularly wished Cllr Franklin a return to better health in the future. She thanked members of the public for attending.

ACTION

Research by Councillors?
27 Feb.

ACTION

Members
27th Feb

ACTION

ACTION

Members
ASAP

Clerk
1st Feb