

BRERETON AND RAVENHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held at the Parish Hall, Ravenhill Park, Brereton, on Tuesday, 5th January 2016.

Present

Councillors Mrs G Harvey [Chairman], K Ansell, Mrs P Ansell, Miss IJ Brown, Mrs DM Easton, R Easton, PA Fisher, Miss C Harvey, TA Jones, GN Molineux and N Parton.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Farnath and Mrs HJ Southwell.

Mr PG Davies, the Parish Clerk, was also in attendance.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest given at the commencement of the meeting.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2015, be approved and signed as a correct record.

3. POLICE MATTERS

No Police were present at the meeting but the Clerk undertook to invite Inspector Cooke to attend a future meeting.

4. THE FORMER ULTRA ELECTRONICS SITE

The Parish Council welcomed Mr Richard Miller [Senior Land Manager] and Mr Paul Coles [Senior Technical Manager] from Barratt West Midlands to the meeting.

The representatives from Barratt gave a presentation on proposals to develop the above site by constructing 103 new dwellings. A copy of their presentation was circulated at the meeting.

The Parish Council highlighted two concerns, namely:-

- The site was significantly higher than adjacent properties in Thorn Close.
- The frontage onto Main Road, Brereton.

The primary concern of local residents was the problem of being overlooked from several of the new properties, thus reducing light and privacy. The most sensitive plots were identified as being 23, 24 and 29.

The representatives from Barratt West Midlands undertook to meet with local residents on site with a view to attempting to address some of their concerns. They undertook to keep the Parish Council informed.

Members noted that Barratt West Midlands had written to the District Council in support of the Parish Council's request for one of the roads on the development to be named after Maurice Buckmaster. The District Council had confirmed that they had no objection, in principle, but the proposal would be subject to a six month consultation period.

Mr Miller indicated that he would send the Clerk elevations of the site in electronic form.

The Chairman of the Planning Committee, in thanking the two representatives from Barratt West Midlands for attending the meeting, asked them to give their support to the firm conviction of the Parish Council that Section 106 monies arising from this development should be spent in Brereton and Ravenhill.

5. RUGELEY TOWN STATION

The Parish Council welcomed Mr John Morgan [Planning Policy Officer at Cannock Chase District Council]. Mr Morgan reported that the GBSLEP Strategic Economic Plan 2014, included a £8.4m Chase Line Electrification Package for line-speed improvement, Gateway station upgrades and improved services. The Chase Line was a strategic priority for the District Council. They wanted to promote upgrades to Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley Town stations through LEP, NSIP and Access for All and other funding streams. A partnership approach was needed.

Mr Morgan advised that each station had different needs but CCTV to the Wharf Road station car park, disabled access at Rugeley Town and improved waiting facilities were all priorities. Growth Deal Bids would need to be made via GBS LEP and SS LEP and supported by Centro and Staffordshire County Council. At a meeting of the Centro/CCC Member Group on 5th August, and in September with London Midland, Centro and the County Council on the station upgrades, it was established that to succeed the active support of local stakeholders would be required. To this end, Mr Morgan invited suggestions from the Parish Council as to what additional improvements were required.

The Parish Council noted that a consultation meeting about the overall strategy and the bid would be held in County Buildings, Stafford, on 18th February 2016, between 10.00 a.m. and 12 noon. Several Members indicated that they would be attending.

RESOLVED

1. That the Parish Council fully support the bid and the overall strategic direction of the initiative.
2. That the Parish Council's key priorities be itemised as follows:-
 - Improvements in line speed
 - Restoration of off-peak services
 - Improvements in fare collection
 - Improvements to the surface of the upper floor at Rugeley Town station, which was badly drained and presented a serious hazard in freezing conditions
 - Improvements to disabled facilities and access for the disabled at Rugeley Trent Valley
 - Introduction of CCTV to the Wharf Road station car park, particularly as the station was now wholly unmanned following the removal of the signal box
 - Opening up access to Horsefair from the station
 - Support for improved IT services

The Chairman thanked Mr Morgan for attending the meeting.

6. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY SECTION 106 AND PROCEEDS OF CRIME ACT 2002 CONTRIBUTIONS TO STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE FUNDING

The Clerk reported the following response from the Police and Crime Commissioner at Thames Valley:-

The Community Infrastructure Levy – NIL
Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - £532,000.00
The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 - £1,202,439.00

An acknowledgement had been received from Leicestershire but no response whatsoever had been forthcoming from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire.

A Member enquired as to whether the Police helicopter had been removed from service.

RESOLVED

1. That if after 35 days a response is not forthcoming, the Clerk send a further letter to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire, with a copy to the Freedom of Information Commissioner and he also send a polite reminder to the Police and Crime Commissioner of Leicestershire who had acknowledged the Clerk's original letter.
2. That when writing to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire, the Clerk enquire as to whether the Police helicopter had been removed from service.

7. 2 MADDEN CLOSE

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to District Councillor F Allen to ascertain what action, if any, had been taken in respect of outstanding issues at this property.

8. POWER STATION

The Parish Council noted the response from the Station Manager at the Power Station in which he advised that the October 2015 deposition was a very unusual event and was certainly not a common occurrence. Regarding animal welfare, he advised that the dispersion of the deposits had no harmful effects on cattle, other stock or the food chain.

9. DRAFT AIR QUALITY UPDATING AND SCREENING ASSESSMENT

The District Council had advised that they were liaising with the Environment Agency regarding the Parish Council's concerns relating to air quality and environmental monitoring. They undertook to keep the Parish Council informed of developments.

The Pollution Control Officer had stated that currently there was no evidence to suggest that PM10 levels were likely to be significantly affected by dispersions from the Power Station.

10. PROPOSED NO WAITING AT ANY TIME AND PROPOSED LIMITED WAITING – WHEELHOUSE ROAD AND POWER STATION ROAD

The Clerk circulated a letter from County Highways in which they advised that as the Parish Council's comments were not received within the consultation period, they could not be taken into account.

Members expressed dismay at this inaccurate response as the Parish Council's original comments were submitted in advance of the deadline.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk, in outlining the proper sequence of events, invite the further comments of the County Highways Department and they be advised that unless a satisfactory response is received, a local resident might decide to refer the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman as a case of maladministration.

11. LICENCES ISSUED BY CANNOCK CHASE DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Clerk reported that the District Council had advised that the case of R [Hemming] v Westminster had now moved to the European Court for final judgement on the correct mechanism to levy sex establishment fees on both successful and non-successful licence applicants. In the meantime, they confirmed that fees levied in Cannock Chase District did cover the full costs of administering the licensing regime. The District Council had only one sex establishment on which fees were determined locally. With regard to amusement arcades, these fees were set by statute and Cannock Chase Council was bound by statutory limits. Nonetheless, based on current fees, they were confident full costs were being covered.

12. REDBROOK LANE/BRICK KILN WAY

RESOLVED

1. That the Clerk write and invite County Highways to send a representative to attend a site visit to discuss ongoing problems in the vicinity of Redbrook Lane/Brick Kiln Way.
2. That if a positive response is received from the County Council, a representative from the Planning Department at the District Council also be invited to attend the site meeting.

13. ARMITAGE ROAD – 30 MPH SPEED LIMITED

Councillor M Winnington, Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport, had advised that the County Council had made representations to bus companies that operate in the area to ascertain whether the introduction of a commercial service was a viable proposition. He undertook to write again to the Parish Council when a definitive reply was received.

The Parish Council noted that the County Council was unfortunately not in a position to fund unbudgeted service provision.

14. DEMENTIA FRIENDLY PRESENTATION

The Parish Council noted that this presentation which was being held on 16th March 2016, would now commence at 7.30 p.m.

Members would, themselves, approach people from the local community inviting them to attend the presentation which would be held in the Main Hall.

15. CPI BID 2015/2016

Councillor TA Jones kindly agreed to liaise with Members and inform the Clerk of the siting and design for the new Interpretation Board.

16. PUBLIC TELEPHONE – BIRCH LANE

The Clerk reported that he had been advised by BT that they were not aware of any request to remove this public telephone. They were arranging for the facility to be

repaired and brought back into use.

17. BUS SERVICE – X70 BRERETON TO WOLVERHAMPTON

The Clerk had been informed by Arriva that passengers were being required to show to the driver travel cards/tickets at various stages of the journey due to the vehicle passing through different local authority areas.

The Parish Council noted that this particular service had been withdrawn. Members were concerned that privatisation was not operating effectively due to local monopolies being created by a handful of companies.

Reference was also made to the poor quality of service provided by some Arriva staff.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to the local MP acquainting her with the foregoing and inviting her to comment on the lack of open-market competitiveness in the provision of bus services.

18. HIGHWAY WINTER OPERATIONS

The County Council had confirmed that the Ice Busters Initiative was a priority for the Authority over the winter period and that they would continue to support volunteers with local winter maintenance activities.

19. DOCUMENTATION

The Clerk tabled the following documents for the information of the Parish Council:-

- Staffordshire Update – Ironman
- CCTV Statistics - November

20. CENTRAL RIVERS LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP – HERITAGE LOTTERY FUNDING

The Clerk had circulated a letter from the Central Rivers Initiative in respect of the above.

RESOLVED

1. That the Parish Council fully support this excellent project and the bid for Heritage Lottery Funding to develop a Landscape Partnership Scheme covering the Trent, Tame and Dove river valleys.
2. That in conveying the support of the Parish Council to Central Rivers, the Clerk highlight and outline the concerns of the Parish Council in relation to the decision of the County Council to permit development in the flood plain of the River Trent.

21. NUISANCE – STAFF EMPLOYED BY AMAZON

The Clerk circulated a letter sent to Amazon by Mr S Tite of 16 Bridgewater Road.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to Amazon [copy to Mr S Tite] endorsing the sentiments set out in the letter and adding reference to the following:-

- The Parish Council would confirm that Amazon staff frequently walk in the carriageway at Wharf Road for no apparent reason. The footpath was rarely used.
- The Parish Council would be most concerned with any damage caused to the canal bridge at the Mossley. This is an 18th century structure within a conservation area on one of the main canals of the Industrial Revolution.
- The Parish Council itself was aware of several complaints of noise nuisance – a matter it had previously drawn to the attention of the Company.
- The threats referred to in the letter were of a serious nature and the Parish Council was pleased to learn that these matters had been referred to the Police for further investigation.
- Members had been made aware of Amazon staff taking active steps to avoid paying rail fares on services into and out of Rugeley. Such a lack of integrity and dishonest behaviour from individuals passing through residential areas of Brereton and Ravenhill was unacceptable.
- The Parish Council would invite the Company to comment on the possibility of providing a bus service from their site in Brereton to the Rugeley Trent Valley station to overcome several of the issues highlighted above.

22. DEMENTIA FRIENDLY STRATEGY FOR CANNOCK CHASE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

Members of the Parish Council had been invited to attend a Special Conference on 5th February 2016, at the White House, Marquis Drive, Cannock, between 9.30 a.m. and 2.45 p.m. The purpose of the Conference was to establish an Action Plan to implement the Dementia Friendly Strategy for the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

23. CANNOCK ROTARY CLUB – SERVICE AWARD

The Rotary Club of Cannock had invited nominations in respect of persons who had served the community and deserved recognition for the work they had done.

The winner would receive a certificate and be invited to donate £1,000.00 from the Rotary Club to a charity of their choice.

RESOLVED

That the Parish Council nominate Councillors Mrs DM Easton and R Easton and the Clerk, in liaison with Members, arrange to complete the nomination form.

24. PRECEPT 2016 – 2017

The Parish Council considered the Report of the Clerk on the budget and level of precept for the 2016 – 2017 financial year.

RESOLVED

- That the budget, as submitted, be approved and adopted for the 2016/2017 financial year.

- That the Parish Council set a precept of £59,500.00 for the 2016/2017 financial year.

25. PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1st December 2015, be approved.

26. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

The Parish Council had previously agreed that the next meeting would be held on 2nd February 2016.

27. PUBLIC FORUM

The public had attended the meeting earlier and had expressed their views to the Parish Council.

[Chairman]