

BRERETON AND RAVENHILL PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Parish Hall at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 5th April 2022

Present: Cllrs P A Fisher (Chairman), Alderman R Easton (Vice Chair), Mrs M Easton, J Harvey, Mrs G Harvey, Mrs C Hodgkiss, T A Jones plus District Councillor G Molineux, County Councillor P Kruskonjic and Cllr D Williams – Cabinet Member for Transport. A gentleman from the Rotary club, Mr R Rollaston was also present.

Mr Rollaston gave a presentation about Brereton Library:

- This library was threatened with closure in 2015 and so the Rotary Club took it over as a contracted project. They have increased the number of facilities including having a jig-saw library, creating a drop-in centre and offering tuition in computer skills. They have 25 volunteers.
- Their footfall has never gone back to pre-Covid levels and now there is a question mark over their future again, especially since the original contract will come to an end in 2023.
- They would like help from the parish council to bring home to the people of Brereton that there needs to be a local library.

Cllr David Williams spoke about the situation with the buses:

- District Councillor Gerald Molineux had had a meeting with D&G Buses. They will not be covering places like Snetterfield Way because there are not enough people who use the buses apart from people who have bus passes. The bus company only receives £1 for every journey carried out by a disabled person. The point was made by Councillors that the concessionary bus pass users are now suffering hardship because of the removal of buses from certain routes.
- Another problem is that some routes have been changed or axed because the D&G bus drivers are having difficulty in making the sharp turn required to keep the route going.
- Grants received by local authorities for bus transport during Covid have been extended until October. After that there will be no more grants
- Bus companies have to look at “profit and loss” and hard facts dictate routes and frequency of buses.
- Services will be further reduced in June.
- Bus usage is now 60% of what it was pre-Covid

Councillors made the following points:

- Who decides concessionary rates?
- There were highly-publicised statements from government that buses would be increased. What has happened to those assurances? The amount of money put aside for public transport was £3 – 6 billion. Metropolitan areas are having an increase in buses
- Bus companies have to apply to Staffordshire County Council (SCC) in order to get a franchise. At that point SCC could encourage bus companies to serve these smaller areas.
- Buses do not always turn up

1. **Declarations of interest:** None

2. **To consider requests for Dispensations following the Localism Act 2011:** None
3. **Apologies:** apologies were received from Cllrs D Johnson, Mrs L Johnson, Alerwoman Mrs P Ansell, K Ansell, Chad Carrington (police) and Louis Arduino from Cannock Chase Council
4. **Minutes – To approve as a correct record the attached minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2022:** It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes. PROPOSED by Cllr Jones. SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Easton.
5. **A request from Mavesyn Ridware Parish Council to share the cost of the Clerk’s membership of the SLCC and the cost of training – this could be done by building it into next year’s budget or earmarking a reserve:** It was decided to defer this item to the Financial Management meeting in May
6. **To consider spending up to £800 on pumps to create a bar area in the kitchen – to come from the Kitchen Fund:** This was first raised in the last Financial Management meeting. Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Hall has not had a bar for three or four years. A licence is not needed. There was a unanimous vote to support this idea.
7. **To consider the planned Brereton Millions Lunch:** This will coincide with the Jubilee weekend. It will not be at the Parish Hall.
8. **To consider funding for decorations for the Jubilee Celebrations:** It was decided to defer this to the May meetings of the Parish Hall Management Committee and the Financial Management Committee.
9. **To consider taking the following resolution: “This council takes note of the NJC National Salary Award and authorises its implementation”:** It was decided to defer this item to the May meeting of the Financial Management Meeting
10. **To consider the fact that Brereton Millions have secured the Jubilee Torch but need somewhere to store it for four days:** It was decided that Brereton Millions could use the tennis courts which will be locked during the storage period, if inflammable liquids are involved.
11. **To consider feedback from Cannock Chase District Council concerning the request to create a lockable compound for mobility scooter users:** The Clerk reported that she had received a list of questions about the proposed compound from the Indoor Markets Manager, Rugeley. This information would be required if a formal proposal was to be made. It was decided to contact Rugeley Town Council on this matter.
12. **To consider the Acting Clerk’s request for Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council to pay for the extras hours that he worked during his time at the council:** it was decided to defer this item to the May meeting of the Financial Management Committee
13. **To consider parking issues on Redbrook Lane and Talbot Road, Rugeley:** it was mentioned that there are also parking issues on Birch Lane. There are three issues here:
 - Vehicles park on double yellow lines
 - There is problematic parking during the school run outside Redbrook Hays School
 - Children’s safety is of paramount importance.

Concerning the last two points it was decided to write to Cannock Chase Police to say that Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council is concerned that the police are not enforcing traffic restrictions, particularly concerning parking on double yellow lines and wholly on pavements where there are double yellow lines. There was a RESOLUTION to sort this problem out. PROPOSED by Cllr Jones. SECONDED by Cllr Easton. The Clerk made the point that the

council has received notification that a traffic warden will be visiting Redbrook Lane and there was a decision that the Clerk should write to the Enforcement Department to say that we are looking forward to seeing the said traffic warden and we would like to see one at Redbrook Hays School as well.

14 To consider if Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council needs to take out any extra insurance to cover Jubilee Celebrations: No extra insurance is required. There will be no risk to the public

15 The Clerk to provide an update on the price and availability of Books of Condolence: These items are available at the moment and prices range from £7.99 to £29.95.

16 The Clerk to report back on a Zoom meeting with Rugeley Town Council concerning community transport: The conclusion of this meeting was that community transport was worth investigating even though it should be done "one step at a time". It was recognised that there would not be any funding from the government. The idea of forming a liaison committee or a working group was mentioned.

The parish council decided to ask Amazon and Tesco's to make a contribution to transport costs

17 Bus Services. N.B. The council has received responses from J.B. Henderson and from the M.P. Amanda Milling: One Councillor suggested that the council writes to the M.P. to say that we have had a visit from Councillor D Williams and that we know that a particular grant ends in October. We should ask her to use her influence to reverse this decision. The amount received for concessionary bus pass users is only £1. This system particularly disadvantages the elderly, the disabled and children and adversely affects particular bus routes e.g. the route along Snetterfield Way.

18 Police Matters: The Clerk had not received a report at the time of the meeting

19 Committees (minutes enclosed)

It was RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Finance and Management committee. PROPOSED by Cllr Easton. Seconded by Cllr Mrs C Hodgkiss

It was RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Parish Hall and Property Management Committee. PROPOSED by Cllr Easton. SECONDED by Cllr Mrs C Hodgkiss

There were no minutes from the planning meeting on 1 March 2022 as the meeting was inquorate

20 Members' items (to be discussed but no decisions can be made):

Cllr Jones mentioned the pub in Lodge Road and that it has been wrongly-advertised. It has gone through. He asked whether there should also be a planning application for a change of use.

21 Exclusion of Public: the public were excluded

22 Date of next meeting: This will be the 3rd May 2022

The meeting finished at 9.05 p.m