

MINUTES of Special Meeting of Brocton Parish Council held at Village Hall, Old Acre Lane, Brocton on Wednesday 9 August 2017. Meeting commenced at 7.05pm.

Present: Cllr R Bates (Chairman), Cllrs Miss J Perry and L Goff.

1. **APOLOGIES** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr R Middleton and Cllr Mrs L Smith.

Item for discussion: Cannock Chase – Shaping the Future. This is a special meeting of Brocton Parish Council, where this is the only item on the Agenda. The public have been invited to attend the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to identify what representations the residents of Brocton wish the Parish Council to make on their behalf, as the sole representative for the village at the stakeholder meeting in September. Cllr L Goff has agreed to be the Parish Council representative.

2. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

The Chairman opened the meeting. Thirty seven members of the public were recorded as having attended, via the signing in record.

Cllr Bates advised of an email that had been sent by a resident of the village and proceeded to read the content of this email. The email had been sent to Sarah Bentley, SCC. The content of this email was accepted by all present as a very good representation.

Comments made by those present were as follows:

- a. Chase is becoming overgrown, it is difficult to walk in some areas and therefore we need to work with SCC to agree the way forward.
- b. Wildlife should be the priority, SCC appear not to be bothered about the ground nesting birds
- c. No maintenance costs/costings put forward by SCC
- d. Borough Cllr Learoyd from Hixon/Haywoods commented about the consultation process – suggested that we may wish to propose we don't agree to progressing with Phase 2, suggested a judicial review. Whole procedure/decision is flawed. Burning should be considered, why was this dismissed in Phase 1?
- e. Burning, cutting & spraying will continue, in addition to grazing – resident advised this has been confirmed by S Bentley, SCC
- f. Cannock Chase was given to the people of Staffordshire by the Earl of Lichfield, for their enjoyment
- g. Pigs are an alternative – very successful for bracken.
- h. Concerned over damage to World War 1 archaeology and heritage – need to maintain these sites for future. Resident shared booklet with Cllr Goff, which contained information/location of historical sites.
- i. All logistics for introduction of cattle have not been established. Massive RSPCA issue.
- j. Significant part of the Chase is registered as 'common land', planning permission needed, consultation process req', Sect 38 appl. Resident pursuing status of common land and will share findings with Cllr Goff.
- k. Matter is being driven by Natural England, not SCC
- l. Balance between recreational use and the environment is not right. View is that SCC is being pushed by Natural England to restrict recreational use & as SCC have no money will do whatever Natural England want, in order to secure funding from them. Seems to be desire to restrict access.
- m. Fencing should be opposed and this should be taken to the stakeholder meeting.
- n. Concern that land could be given to another body who would support what Natural England want – if we fight this, might this be an outcome?
- o. A study is needed, in targeted areas, to show if introduction of cattle will work
- p. Rangers willing to support volunteers, in order to address some of the issues

- q. Defra do not support invisible fencing, this will not be funded by Natural England. Funding for Natural England comes from Defra
- r. What are the views of the other Parish Councils? Clerk advised that there is limited interest from these.

3. NEXT STEPS

- a. What feedback will residents receive from the Parish Council? Cllr Goff advised website will be kept up to date with progress, as well as Paperchase, will be on the Agenda for discussion at Parish Council meetings (residents welcome to attend public session), further leaflet drop if required.
- b. 3 options currently being considered by SCC are not favourable to residents, compromise preferred, as follows: remove fencing from all villages, Severn Springs and have fencing on Cannock Road, subject to satisfactory trials and continuation of other methods that are presently in operation
- c. Achieve a compromise position, with assurances that spraying, cutting and burning will continue.
- d. Parish Council will draft representations for submission to SCC as the formal response from the Parish Council and residents.
- e. Cllr Goff will attend the stakeholder meeting in September, as the representative from the Parish Council and the residents of Brocton.
- f. Residents will complete the survey, where they wish to do so.
- g. Residents will put forward any other comments to SCC, via S Bentley.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm.

These Minutes have not been recorded as a verbatim record of the discussions that took place, they are a summary of the salient and agreed points.