

BROCTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of Special Ad-Hoc Meeting of Brocton Parish Council held at Village Hall, Old Acre Lane, Brocton on Wednesday 4 January 2017 commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr R Bates (Chairman), Cllrs Miss J Perry, Mrs L Smith, R Middleton, L Goff

102/16 Apologies

Apologies were received by County Cllr L Bloomer, Borough Cllr F Finlay, Cllrs Mrs E Learoyd and L Lee.

103/16 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made.

104/16 Matters Arising from the minutes

a. 98/16c Dog owners taking dogs into the play area (Park). Following the December meeting the Clerk reported that she had contacted the Stafford Borough Council's legal team to clarify whether the Borough's Dog Exclusion Order 2010 applies to Brocton's play Park even though it is not owned or maintained by the Borough. The Clerk reported that she would enquire about a new sign for the Park after this issue has been clarified.

b. 101/16d Charging for waste disposal. After concerns were raised, by councillors at the last Parish Council meeting, that the new charges for waste disposal would lead to increased fly tipping the Clerk contacted Staffordshire County Council's Waste Disposal Department. The Clerk reported that their response outlines that such items of non-household waste disposal is not paid for by Council Tax and with increased County Council budget pressures they need to cover the cost of recycling/disposing of these items. They stated they have set prices to meet costs but not to make a profit. Whilst they recognize the concerns of Brocton Parish Council over the increased risk of fly-tipping they stated that, based on research from other County Councils, they do not believe a significant amount of fly-tipping will occur as a result. The level of fly tipping will be monitored by the County Council.

c. 101/16b Brick Kiln Lane and pathway adjacent to the Park. The Clerk reported that she had written to Richard Rayson with the guidance of the Chairman and Cllr R Middleton but that she had not yet received a response.

105/16 Planning Matters

New application to be considered:

16/25459/HOU 47-49 Pool Lane, Brocton

The above application proposal was reviewed and considered. No objections or concerns were raised.

106/16 Finance

a. Budget planning. At the last meeting it was suggested that the precept be set at £10,650 giving a 1.7% increase on the previous year once accounting for the new tax

base. This proposal was subject to confirming that earmarked reserves were adequately accounted for in the proposed budget.

The Parish Council had historically earmarked reserves as follows; £250 for election costs, £1,000 for the replacement of playing field equipment and £50 for bus shelters. The Clerk spoke with retired Clerk Mrs C Hammond to clarify how to these figures had been arrived at and what the CLP reserve of £290 intended for.

The CLP reserve was the amount left over after completing the Community Led Plan. This reserve would no longer be needed and as such it would be best to transfer these funds to another earmarked reserve that needed more funding. The Chairman proposed that £250 of this £290 be transferred to election costs and the remaining £40 be transferred to the bus shelter reserve. Cllr L Goff seconded this proposal and this was agreed unanimously. The bus shelter reserve exists to cover the cost of removing the old bus shelter on Pool Lane which is in a state of disrepair and no longer in use as well as covering any maintenance costs for the bus shelter on the Cannock Road. This reserve would be insufficient to cover the cost of replacing the Cannock Road bus stop but the Parish Council has no legal obligation to provide a bus shelter either.

The election costs only need to cover the cost of the local parish council election and no other form of election. The next election would be due in 2019 and by this time sufficient funds would be earmarked especially after transferring the CLP funds also.

As previously agreed the earmarked reserve for Cannock Chase AONB of £1,000 has been transferred to playing field equipment. However, the cost of replacing the entire playing field equipment would be far greater than earmarked reserves currently budget for. When the playing field equipment was installed a European grant was obtained and it is unlikely this will occur in the future. The Parish Council felt that it would be difficult to increase the precept enough to cover the potential costs of replacing all of the playing field equipment and hope that another form of grant or funding might be available for such a time as this.

The attached budget reflects the suggested transfers of reserves and the precept being set at £10,650 as original proposed in the December 2016 meeting giving an increase of 1.7%.

107/16 Correspondence

a. Email from Alan White. Request for Parish Councils, the Police Commissioner, District and Borough Councils and/or the NHS to contribute to the cost of providing the debt, benefit and consumer advice services from April 2017.

The loss of such a service through budget cuts would indeed be concerning and difficult for our town. The email suggests that collectively from all the partners contacted they hoped to raise £300,000 to maintain some level of service. Having already considered the Parish Council budget for 2017/18 the Chairman reported that any contribution we could make would be extremely minor and insufficiently helpful. Cllr R Middleton agreed with this statement adding that it would be of great cost to our budget and would make very little positive impact upon theirs. Cllr R Middleton proposed that the Parish Council would not offer to contribute any funds in this instance and Cllr L Goff seconded this proposal. The Council agreed with this proposal and the motion was carried.

b. Trent Grounds Maintenance (TGM) letter. The Parish Council were saddened to hear of the loss of one of TGM's business partners Mr Ian Gammon. The Parish Council extends their sympathy to the family members who partnered with him.

c. Electoral register. The 2017 electoral register has been received and is now available for inspection. A notice about this will go on the noticeboard outside the post office.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.22pm.

The next meeting will be held on 1 February 2017 at 7.30pm.