

MINUTES of the Meeting of Brocton Parish Council held at Village Hall, Old Acre Lane, Brocton on Wednesday 4 October 2017 commencing at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr R Bates (Chairman), Cllrs Miss J Perry, R Middleton, L Goff, Cllr Mrs L Smith, L Lee (arrived at 7.55pm), Cllr Mrs B Smith and Borough Cllr F Finlay.

59/17 APOLOGIES Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr J Francis.

60/17 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

The Chairman adjourned the meeting and declared the public session open.

9 members of the public were present. The following matters were raised:

- a. Resident requested an update on the speed signs for Brook Lane and advised that a request has been sent to approx. 9 residents, asking for a contribution of £150.00 towards the upkeep of Brook Lane. Request for contribution has come from another resident of Brook Lane. Cllr Miss J Perry advised she has not received such a request. Cllr Middleton advised advice should be sought from Staffordshire County Council, as residents do not have the authority to close off Brook Lane, without permission of the County Council. Brook Lane is a bridleway and if repaired/resurfaced without knowledge/permission of the County Council resident will be taking a very big risk, particularly if something were to go wrong, need to ensure covered by insurance. Cllr Middleton suggested resident contact Mr Richard Rayson – SCC, in the first instance, who will be able to signpost resident appropriately. Cllr Middleton also advised that he believes a precedent may have already been set in Staffordshire. Further information was provided by Cllr Middleton regarding the classification of Brook Lane, which he is continuing to pursue with the County Council and if classification can be changed from a bridleway to a BOAT (byeway open to all traffic) then funding streams will be released. It was acknowledged by all that Brook Lane is of concern and Cllr Middleton advised residents that he will continue to pursue this matter.
Chairman advised that speed signs had been ordered and were ready to be erected, however, agreement to the location of these signs is still pending. Clerk will chase this matter with Steve Archer, from the Ranger Service. Also, a resident advised that the wooden barrier at the top of Brook Lane is rotten and is lying on the ground. Clerk to follow up with Steve Archer.
- b. An update on Cannock Chase was requested. Cllr Goff informed residents that he had attended the workshop organised by Staffordshire County Council and their consultation partners, Dialogue Matters, on 14.9.17. A number of interested parties were present at the workshop. A full update will be provided in the next edition of the Paperchase, which will be available within the village from the beginning of November. In summary, all 3 options were rejected as being fundamentally unacceptable. Option 1 would not be pursued, however, options 2 & 3 would continue to be looked at. Still a lot of work to do before anything is finalised. Next steps – 10 year plan for management of heathland has to be developed, for submission to Natural England and then the Government, for funding. Brocton Parish Council will be part of the working group who will help prepare this plan. Nothing will happen overnight, Brocton has an opportunity to be fully involved in what will happen in the future. It was generally commented upon that this was a good result for the village, residents and the Parish Council. Cllr Goff commented that Old Wood and Old Acre Valley are deteriorating and need quick action – options are being explored.

Public session closed at 8.05pm.

61/17 WEBSITE

- a. Mr Nigel Ferguson gave a presentation to the Parish Council about the work he can do to build a new website for the Parish Council to ensure the website will be fully responsive and fully browser compatible. Mr Ferguson will manage the security of the website on behalf of the Parish Council. The cost to progress this will be:
£400.00 to build the new website
£100.00, maximum, to host the website

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Additional costs, of £200.00, could be incurred if the Parish Council request Mr Ferguson to upload documents on their behalf. It was unanimously agreed that this support would not be necessary.

Mr Ferguson advised that the Parish Council currently has 2 domain addresses, **co.uk** and **org.uk**. The primary address is co.uk and this is the address Mr Ferguson will use to build the new website. The Cllrs discussed the presentation given by Mr Ferguson and Cllr Middleton proposed he build a new website for the Parish Council, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs L Smith. Clerk to progress this accordingly. Cllrs Mrs L Smith and Mrs B Smith both agreed to support the uploading of documents onto the website.

Cllr Finlay left meeting at 9.05pm.

6217 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS There were no declarations of interest.

63/17 MINUTES Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 September 2017 were approved and signed as a correct record.

64/17 MATTERS ARISING

a. 51/17 – the adoption of both phone kiosks was discussed. Cllr Mrs L Smith proposed that both kiosks were adopted, Cllr Mrs B Smith seconded this proposal. Cllr Goff abstained, all other Cllrs confirmed their agreement.

b. 53/17a – Clerk provided details of response received from TGM and decision of TGM to close children's playing field when hedge is cut, should they be awarded the contract next year. All Cllrs confirmed their agreement with this response.

c. 53/17c – Picnic in the Park. Deferred to next Parish Council meeting.

d. 57/17d – Cllr Mrs L Smith provided an update following her attendance at the Cannock Chase AONB Annual Conference 2017 and advised of an invitation to visit Sutton Park to view grazing – ponies and cows in operation. Cllr Middleton advised that Sutton Park is very different from Cannock Chase. It was unanimously agreed to review visiting Sutton Park in the Spring, when the cattle will be present.

e. 58/17f – Chairman advised that he was still in discussion with the PCSO, who in turn was contacting Horsewatch for advice. A description of the horses using the footpath has been provided by a resident (unable to take photographs). Matter is ongoing. Retain as an Agenda item.

f. 58/17j – Clerk advised that, following discussions with the reprographics team, cream paper for the next edition of the Paperchase, of the agreed quality, has been secured.

g. Overgrowing hedge at The Gables – matter has been resolved and is therefore discharged.

65/17 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a. 17/27111/TWT – Felling of Blue Atlantic Cedar at Coach House, Old Coach Lane, Brocton.

Clerk advised that as no objections or comments have been received, Stafford Borough Council have been advised accordingly.

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66/17 PLAYING FIELD

a. Regular Inspection Visits – The meeting received a written report of routine visits to the playing field by Mr J Sulway. No problems were identified. The Chairman thanked Mr Sulway for his time. The re-seeding of the goal mouth was identified as an area of 2 metres. This item was deferred to the next meeting for further discussion.

It was acknowledged that the refurbishment of table/benches has been completed, by Mr Steve Ward. Clerk to thank Mr Ward accordingly.

67/17 DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY BASED APPROACH

a. No update received to date from Cllr Francis. Cllr Goff advised that Staffordshire County Council produced a website that contains all of the information relating to what the County Council will/will not do. The Clerk will look into this and provide an update at the next meeting.

68/17 PROPOSED CHANGES – CANNOCK CHASE

a. Item covered in Public session. Cllr Goff advised that the working group referred to in the Public session will need a representative from the Parish council, this will be expected by the residents.

69/17 FINANCE

a. Accounts for Payment - The meeting approved payment of the following accounts:

| Paid to: | Details: | Net Amount | VAT | Total Paid |
|------------------------------------|---|-------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Gillian Davies | Salary from 1 – 30 September 2017 | £295.75 | Nil | £295.75 |
| Gillian Davies | Home working allowance | £17.33 | Nil | £17.33 |
| Gillian Davies | Mileage expenses for September | £47.70 | Nil | £47.70 |
| Gillian Davies | Clerks expenses | £14.71 | £0.54 | £15.25 |
| Trent Grounds Maintenance | Grass cutting Nos 10 & 11, cut/collect grass on play field; cut/trim verge on A34; strimming at Brocton Crescent & trim bank in Pool Lane | £398.00 | £79.60 | £477.60 |
| Trent Grounds Maintenance | Grass cutting Nos 12 & 13; cut/collect grass on play field; strimming at Brocton Crescent | £350.50 | £70.10 | £420.60 |
| First Brocton Brownies | Picnic in the Park – donation in lieu of support | £25.00 | Nil | £25.00 |
| HMRC | PAYE due for the period 6.4.17 – 5.10.17 | £315.20 | Nil | £315.20 |
| Christine Heelis | Financial advice and assistance | £71.30 | Nil | £71.30 |
| Community Council of Staffordshire | 2017/18 subscription fees | £25.00 | Nil | £25.00 |
| SPCA | Guide to Finance & Transparency | £4.00 | Nil | £4.00 |

b. Training for new Cllr – Clerk advised Cllr Mrs B Smith of a training event on 14 November 2017. Clerk to send details to Cllr Mrs B Smith for her consideration.

Cllr Mrs B Smith left at 9.30pm

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c. Internal Audit arrangements – Clerk advised that John Blount has recommended the Parish Council formally appoint the internal auditor for the financial year 2017/18. This has been prompted by a change in the Audit arrangements for Parish Councils with a budget of under £25,000 from April 2017. This matter was discussed by the Cllrs and it was agreed that the Clerk write to Mr A Siddons to ask if he would be willing to act as the internal auditor for the Parish Council for 2017/18, advising him of the regulations he will be required to comply with. Once his response is known, the Clerk can progress this as necessary.

d. Elections expenses – Clerk advised of need to build up a cash reserve for 2019 elections and that this should be borne in mind for the budget and precept request.

70/17 DELEGATED POWERS

a. Delegated Powers for Clerk – this item was deferred to the next meeting.

71/17 CORRESPONDENCE

a. Two Minute Silence Campaign – 11 November – Clerk shared details and advised this will be included on the front of the next edition of the Paperchase (along with item b. below). All Cllrs confirmed their agreement to this.

b. Remembrance Day Service and Parade – 12 November– Clerk shared details. Cllr Lee and Cllr Middleton expressed an interest in attending the above and it was agreed the Clerk provide details of the Service and Parade to them both. Once the decision of who will represent Brocton Parish Council has been determined, the Clerk will inform the Mayor's Office accordingly. Cllr Miss Perry advised she will attend the Service at Weeping Cross and it was agreed that Mr Jim Smallwood be asked to attend the Service at Brocton Church – Chairman agreed to follow this up.

c. Hednesford Neighbourhood Plan – this was noted.

d. Future of libraries – letter from Cabinet member for Communities, Gill Heath – this was noted. Cllr Mrs L Smith suggested a comment be included in the Paperchase about the use of the Mobile service, Clerk advised this is already done, but can look to emphasise this further.

e. Mayor's Charity Quiz Night, 4.11.17– Clerk provided details. No interest received.

72/17 VILLAGE MATTERS

a. Village Hall Committee – Cllr Goff advised he had attended the latest meeting of the Village Hall Committee on 3.10.17. There were no items discussed that were of interest to the Parish Council, at this time. Cllr Lee advised that the Parish Council had previously always had a representative on the Village Hall Committee and suggested that a Cllr attends on a quarterly basis, on a rota and reports back to the Parish Council. It was agreed, therefore, that the Clerk write to the Secretary, Martin Green, advising of attendance on this basis and that the Village Hall Committee has an open invitation to attend the Public Session of the Parish Council meeting, if they have items they wish to raise. Alternatively these can be brought to the attention of the Clerk, who can add them to the Agenda, on their behalf.

b. Brook Lane – item covered in the Public session. Matter ongoing.

c. Speed limit between Brocton & Milford – deferred until the next meeting.

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Items raised by Councillors

i. Litter Pick - Chairman thanked all of the litter pickers who attended the latest event. 25 bags of rubbish were collected. The litter on the A34, on the left by the petrol station (Derwick site) is significant and it was agreed that the Clerk write to the owners and draw this to their attention – Chairman to provide contact details.

ii. Severn Stars – Chairman advised that this is being refurbished and has been purchased by the owners of The Wayfayer, which is good news for the village.

iii. Chase Crescent – Cllr Miss Perry advised that on Chase Crescent the kerbs and grids are broken, footpaths can't be walked on as hedges are overgrown. Chairman agreed to raise with Highways.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.55pm.