

# BAGNALL PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Meeting

April 2020

Bagnall Village Hall  
School Road  
Bagnall  
Staffordshire Moorlands

### Present:

Cllr Andrew Batson (Chair)  
Cllr Sally Brown  
Cllr David Pearson  
Cllr Roger Jackson

Cllr Les Knowles  
Cllr Peter Lawley  
Cllr Sybil Relphs

### In attendance:

Denise Cooper (Clerk)

#### Apologies

No apologies received.

#### Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the works undertaken during March, having been distributed to Councillors via email and displayed on our website, will be verified at the next adjourned meeting if deemed to be a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

#### Declaration of Personal / Pecuniary Interest

Cllr Lawley declared a pecuniary / personal interest in planning application SMD/2020/0153 and took no part in discussions or decisions.

#### Adjournment of meeting for public comments and concerns

As previous meetings had been suspended due to the Coronavirus / Corvid-19 there are no Parishioners' concerns or District Councillor Reports to be reported.

#### 20.01 Coronavirus (Covid-19) – Update

All local authorities in England and Wales are governed by the Local Government Act 1972 which states that meetings have to be held in a **place** ... with Cllrs **present**. However, following the Government's guidelines of meetings of no more than two and social isolating a decision was taken to cancel the March meeting; this was swiftly reinforced by the Coronavirus Act and the 2020 Health Protection Regulations (or lockdown). The Parish Council's core business of planning and finance over the past few weeks has been undertaken via email communication.

As this situation is likely to continue for some weeks the Government has been under pressure from NALC and the SLCC to provide Councils with the option to hold 'virtual'

meetings. This was granted under the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 which came into effect on 4 April 2020. This means that meetings can now be held using a conference call; open to the public, duly advertised on our website, with an associated agenda. Currently, business outside our core responsibilities is limited and the Parish Council does not feel the need to hold such meetings and would encourage parishioners to comment on planning issues directly on SMDC's online portal –

<http://publicaccess.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/WeeklyListServlet>

Should this situation change, due notification will be given on our website together with the application we will be using and how to log on.

The Annual Parish meeting scheduled for May 2020 has been cancelled, as per the new Regulations. Therefore all Councillors will retain their current posts / responsibilities until May 2021.

All core business discussed will be detailed in draft minutes, which will be posted on our website on a monthly basis and ratified once the Parish Council meets in person again.

Any queries or concerns should be directed to the Clerk, details on the contact page of the website. Every effort will be made to resolve issues as they occur given the resources available to us at that time.

## **20.02 Chairman's Report 2019/20**

The whole nation is living through unprecedented times which are having a dramatic effect upon our lives in a variety of ways. I hope that Parishioners are keeping safe and well and adjusting to this new way of life and that you are not too badly affected.

As a result of the regulations put in place by the Government Parish Council meetings have been suspended for the foreseeable future, but to ensure that issues that have been dealt with during the 2019/20 financial year are not lost, I provide a brief summary for information.

There have been repeated incidents of motor cycles inappropriately using Footpath 28. This has been reported to both Staffordshire County Council's Rights-of-Way Officers and Staffordshire Police. Section 59 notices have been erected alongside other signs asking for people to use the Footpath responsibly. Some misunderstandings by equine users raised its head over the year and the Parish Council confirms that the status quo will continue and ask the horse fraternity to self-monitor the walking of horses along the Footpaths. Problems have also been encountered by people using Footpath 14; steps to address the situation are being put in place to resolve this situation. Residents are asked to keep the Parish Council fully up-dated on problems or concerns around Footpaths so that the appropriate steps can be undertaken to preserve them for the benefit of all.

Fly tipping has been reported on numerous occasions, particularly by Blue Bridge. Each incident has been reported to SMDC and cleared away. Parishioners are asked to either keep the Parish Council informed or report incidents directly to SMDC to prevent our beautiful countryside becoming an eye-sore.

The 'pinch' point on Bagnall Road at Salter's Wells was a concern of many residents, and

this was reported to the Highways Department in September, and the Parish Council is currently awaiting their review, although it is recognised this will be delayed due to the current Pandemic.

In October the Parish Council meeting was held at Bagnall Heights and we were treated to a presentation from NatWest plc on scams and the best ways to avoid them. Our thanks go to Georgina Woodcock for a very informative and enjoyable presentation that certainly left much food for thought.

Concerns around the future of bus through Bagnall which was due to cease in April 2020 were raised by a number of residents. The Government has made available additional funding, and this issue has been taken up on our behalf by Cllr Keith Flunder who is currently liaising with Stoke-on-Trent City Council. A revised position is awaited.

## **20.03 Finances**

### ***Matters Arising from Previous Minutes***

#### **19.71.01 – Lengthman’s Agreement**

A request for funding was submitted; we await payment in due course.

### ***New Issues***

#### **20.03.01 – Financial Report 2019/20**

The Clerk / RFO reported that in the financial year 2019/20 the Parish Council added an increase of 1.26% on the Precept, making our precept for the year £8,600. This equated to a rise of £0.29 on B and D Council Tax, based on 368 households within the Parish.

Our largest commitments for the financial year were the maintenance of the greens totalling £2,280, and staffing costs at £1,713. A re-claim of VAT on invoices paid during the year in the sum of £561.12 has been made. Two capital payments towards the purchase of the playing field were made totalling £6,000.

SMDC, in line with the loan agreement, has undertaken a 5-yearly interest rate review and with effect from 12 February 2020 the interest rate will rise 0.25% to 3.75%. Since taking out the loan in 2015, the Parish Council has repaid approximately 60% leaving a balance of £6,500.

The Parish Council received monies as part of SMDC’s Lengthman’s Agreement in the sum of £400.00, which has been used to sandblast and re-paint the railings by the Ford, purchase new fence posts to replace those in need of repair on the village green and clearing vegetation along Footpaths 28 and 32.

As at 31 March 2020 the monies held by the Parish Council amounted to £12,588.87, £4,000 of which is earmarked for capital expenditure.

#### **20.03.02 – Year End audit 2019/20**

A decision was taken for the Clerk to secure the services of Julia Podmore as our independent reviewer of the year-end accounts. The AGAR paperwork has been received from Mazars and duly completed and signed; these have now been forwarded to Julia Podmore for review. Parishioners have a right to inspect the accounts and notices to this effect will be displayed on the website once they have been audited.

#### **20.03.03 – Invoices / Receipts**

There were no receipts and the following invoices were received and payment agreed:

- Denise Cooper – Remuneration (April) - £150.00

## 20.04 Planning

### SMDC Planning Decisions

- None

### New Applications

- SMD/2020/0153 – Manor House Farm, The Village, Bagnall  
Construction of an agricultural workers dwelling

Bagnall Parish Council supported the above application.

## 20.05 Footpaths and Highways

### *Matters arising from previous minutes*

None

### *New Issues*

#### **20.04.01 – Footpath 14**

Councillors had been made aware that members of the public walking this footpath are encountering problems from the horse in the adjacent field which has access to the footpath as the fencing between the paddock and the footpath is not in good repair. The owner has been contacted and agreed to effect repairs as soon as possible. The Animal Welfare Officer has also been contacted as we are concerned that the horse is currently not being looked after, and in any event its behaviour is unacceptable.

#### **20.04.02 – Footpath 25**

The Parish Council has received concerns regarding access along this footpath. The landowner has been contact regarding an obstruction to the path caused by a fellen tree and had responded promptly and cleared the path. He has also inspected the stile accessing the path from Rock Cottage and the Rights of Way Officer has been contacted with a request that a new stile be delivered to his property for him to install. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions the landowner has been informed that there will be a delay in the receipt of the stile.

#### **20.04.03 – Coronavirus and Rights of Way**

DEFRA has released its guidance on Rights of Way for path users and landowners. The link for information is below and also provides links to two forms that can be used :

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/RightsofWay/Coronavirus-and-Rights-of-Way.aspx>

#### **20.04.04 – Footpath 28**

The Parish Council has been informed of a further incident of a motor cyclist using the Footpath. A registration number has been recorded and this has been reported to the Police.

## 20.06 General Maintenance and Other Issues

### *Matters arising from previous minutes*

#### **19.28.01 – Deteriorating Tree adjacent to playing field**

Cllr Jackson has identified three trees along the boundary with the playing field and Mr Mountford's property. Quotations from a tree surgeon to undertake the works will be requested once the 'lockdown' has been lifted.

**Action: Clerk**

**19.74.02 – Notice Board**

The Clerk advised that she is still awaiting the cork backing to the notice board on the village green. Cllr Brown will chase up.

**Action: Cllr Brown**

**19.74.04 – Website**

This issue will be reviewed further when the Parish Council next meets.

**Action: Cllr Knowles**

**19.79.02 – Phone Kiosk, Rose and Crown PH**

A response from the landowner is still awaited.

***New Issues***

**20.05.01 – Pollution**

The Parish Council has been made aware that the Ford, Springs Bank is looking polluted. This has been reported to the Environmental Dept, SMDC and the Environmental Agency.

**20.05.02 – Overflowing Litter Bin**

The litter bin at the end of the tow path opposite Greenways Golf Club requires emptying as it is overflowing; this has been reported to SMDC.

**20.05.03 – Code of Conduct**

An addendum has been added to the Code of Conduct to allow video conference meetings effective between 4 April 2020 and 31 May 2021. Cllrs were in agreement with the content.

**20.07 Correspondence**

- Best Kept Village Competition – Notification that the event for 2020 has been cancelled.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Notices of any forthcoming meetings, as and when they are convened, will be displayed on the website.

Signed  
(Chairman)  
Dated: