

BREWOD AND COVEN PARISH COUNCIL
WITH BISHOP'S WOOD AND COVEN HEATH

MINUTES OF THE (PRECEPT) MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, STAFFORD STREET, BREWOOD
ON WEDNESDAY 9th JANUARY 2019 AT 7.00PM

IN ATTENDANCE:

Parish Cllrs M. Alden-Court, J. Bradshaw, J. Carr, R. Dakin, D. Evans, D. M. Holmes, J. Jeffries, A. Pupino, M. Sambrook, G. Sibley, R. Taylor, L. Tomkins, M. Webb MBE.

APOLOGIES:

Parish Cllrs K. Kearney (personal), W. Sutton (personal).

DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:

Parish Cllr J. Jeffries, M. Sambrook and L. Tomkins declared an interest in budget heading 5200/1 Allotments.

CRIME AND DISORDER ACT:

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 places a duty on local authorities to consider the crime and disorder implications when exercising its functions and to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. Unless otherwise stated it was not considered that the resolutions moved herein would have any adverse impact for the purposes of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Budget for the financial year 2019-20

1. Members considered and reviewed the proposed budget allocation for the financial year 2018-19 including grant applications received and a request by a resident to install seating in Parish Council owned bus shelters in Brewood, as outlined in the Budget Supporting Report circulated prior to the meeting.
It was resolved, unanimous in favour that the recommendations contained in the Budget Supporting Report, be approved.
2. Members considered the Precept Demand required from South Staffordshire Council.
It was resolved that the Precept Demand amounting to £160,054.00 be approved.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.05pm

Chairman

Brewood and Coven Parish Council
Budget Report 2019-20 for the Meeting held on 9th January 2019 at 7.00pm

Background

The Budget is set in January for the following year, commencing in April. It is an estimate of planned spending or an intention to spend rather than actual commitment. Any grant applications included in the calculations will be considered at the point that formal application are received.

For the past five years the Precept Demand had not increased or decreased substantially. There has been a conscious effort to ensure that it did not exceed £140,000. However, next year, if the Parish Council wishes to continue to provide well maintained facilities and enhanced services to residents, the Precept Demand must be increased significantly. There has also been growing pressure for Parish Councils in Staffordshire to take on services which have in the past been provided by Staffordshire County Council. For example, the Parish Council resolved to match fund additional gully clearing, and a mobile speed indicator device which will be rotated around six locations. The Parish Council has for some years, taken on responsibility for maintaining and replacing fingerposts in the Parish.

There will be elections on 2nd May 2019 and it has been highlighted by South Staffordshire Council that should any seats in the Parish be contested, election costs will be shared 50/50 between the District and Parish Council; it has been estimated that this could be in the region of £17,000. South Staffordshire Council has agreed that if this is the case then the Parish Council can spread the cost over two years. As a result, £8,500 has been included for 2019-20. Should there be no election charges the money will be vired to the General Fund and may be used for other projects, capital items and/or grants.

The budget has been proposed based upon a potential expenditure of **£301,860** and income of **£11,060** giving a Precept Demand of **£160,054**. As the Council Tax Base for Brewood and Coven for 2019-20 is 2979.68, this gives a Parish Council rate of **£53.72** on a Band D property (£47.10 in 2018-19), an increase of £6.62 per household per annum.

The report includes details where there are significant changes in the budget or new budget provision made. Enclosed with the report are details of the proposed expenditure, the anticipated income and a summary of the budget headings showing the calculation for the Precept Demand figure. Any changes made will affect the final figure submitted to South Staffordshire Council. The main cause of the increase is as due to the forecast available balances being less than in previous years, having been spent on major projects and capital items.

Copies of the grant applications received at the time were previously circulated by email.

Ear-marked Reserves Carried Forward

Projects, Grants and Capital Items

The only permissible reserves brought forward each year are those previously ear-marked for projects or committed grants not called off and may, by resolution of the Council, be carried forward into the new financial year.

Admin Costs/Overheads

200/15 Election Charges: £6,000 was set aside last year which had been increased to £12,000 as recommended. **It was resolved 11 in favour, 1 abstention that the provision for election charges be increased to £8,500.**

Projects

1100/20 Information boards at the Bront: £2,500. This had been carried forward for successive years. There had been no call for or interest in the boards.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that this budget be deleted.

1100/28 Coven Heath and Coven Allotments Facilities: Coven Heath Allotments Association had previously requested a turning circle for vehicles at the north end of the site, £500 was allocated but not spent. The Parish Council resolved to purchase a notice board jointly with the Association and there was no movement with regard to a turning circle therefore it was recommended to retain the budget which could be spent on the noticeboard.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £500 be carried forward for the provision of a notice board or turning circle.

1100/30 Landscaping at Jubilee Park, Brewood £2,500.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that the budget be reduced to £1,000.

1100/31 Repairs to Jacob's Ladder, Brewood £2,500. This was reduced to £1,500 as the existing hand rail could be repaired rather than replaced. It was likely that the fencing would be replaced by the occupant of the adjacent property.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that the budget be reduced to £1,500.

Miscellaneous Grants

1400/1 Money donated anonymously some years ago stood at £870. This would be spent on one-off projects in Brewood as and when they arose.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that this be carried forward.

1400/2 The Grant from Roseclaim, compensation for disturbance in Bishop's Wood during the V Festival, had an accrued balance of £3,695. This was ring-fenced to Bishop's Wood and would be spent on speed reduction measures; ornamental gates at two entrances to Bishop's Wood: either side of Ivetsey Bank Road and Kiddemore Green Road, from Brewood. There would be no further income from Roseclaim as the V Festival would no longer take place at Weston Park.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that this be carried forward if unspent during the final quarter.

1400/16 A grant of £1,000 to assist with the provision of a graveyard was brought forward in 2018-19, this had been carried forward for a number of years but unfortunately there were no plans for a graveyard in the Parish.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that this budget heading be deleted.

1400/19 The Community Benefit payment of £2,307 received from Lawn Lane Solar Farm and the payment received for 2018-19 were earmarked for the new barrier at Coven playing field and match funding for solar panels for the mobile speed indicator devices. There will be a surplus of £1,498 unspent which must be carried forward in line with the policy.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £1498 be carried forward.

1400/20 The balance from Brewood Best Kept Village competition prize money of £42 was retained in the Parish Council's bank account where it would stay until the BKV committee (independent of the Parish Council) decide how it was spent. Should the committee be successful in its bid for funding from Staffordshire County Council, the award would be added to the balance during the financial year.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that this be carried forward.

1400/25 There was £1,500 set aside for Bishop's Wood flood assistance. It was reported that sumps would need to be dug out by Severn Trent therefore this amount would be included.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that the amount of £1,500 be carried forward.

Capital Projects

1500/3 Re-surfacing Coven tennis/basketball court. In order to re-surface the tennis/basketball court at Coven, £10,000 was set aside which would be carried forward. There were plans by Brewood Tennis Club to resurface Brewood tennis courts, so there was a possibility of having both done at the same time and securing a discount.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £10,000 be carried forward.

1500/8 New goal posts at Bishop's Wood £600.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £600 be carried forward if unspent during the final quarter.

1500/11 New goal posts at Brewood £600.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £600 be carried forward if unspent during the final quarter.

1500/12 Access paths at Coven playing field, this would give access to the equipment and tennis courts to people in wheelchairs and people with pushchairs. £12,000 was set aside last financial year. The Working Party would meet in the New Year to consider where the paths might go.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £12,000 be carried forward if unspent during the final quarter.

1500/13 A budget of £6,000 was included for outdoor gym equipment in Bishop's Wood. The Village Hall Committee planned to develop the village hall. It was reported that there would be gym equipment included as part of the development.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £3,000 be carried forward.

1500/14 A quote was received for £6,450 to provide perimeter fencing at Brewood playing field. Later in the year it was resolved not to continue with this project.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that this budget heading be deleted.

Contingency

The following had been set aside as contingency:

1700/1 Tree inspections and associated works for trees on Parish Council land throughout the Parish £500, reduced from £1,500.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £500 be carried forward.

1700/3 Support from South Staffordshire Council for the computer network £500.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £500 be carried forward.

1700/7 Further legal fees £1,000, (reduced from £2,000 last year).

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £1,000 carried forward.

1700/8 No emergency contingency had been included. 1% contingency had been included in the salaries budget.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that this budget heading be deleted.

1700/9 The Council has retained £60,000 to cover running costs should there be any delay in receiving the Precept payment in either April or October from South Staffordshire Council.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £60,000 be carried forward.

1700/10 Refurbishment of Parish Council offices £24,000. This had not been increased due to the other expenditure commitments. It was recommended that a formal plan be developed regarding refurbishment of the office.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £24,000 be carried forward.

Expenditure

1. **Staff Costs.** The Living Wage for 2019-20 had been set at £9.00 per hour by the Government; the minimum hourly rate for Parish Council staff had been increased in line with the pay settlement negotiated in 2018-19 which is £9.02. Staff mileage and the gardener/handyman's Essential User Car Allowance will remain unchanged as rates had not increased since 2009. National Insurance Contributions had been calculated at 15% which was paid by the Parish Council on every employee earning over £7,634. All eligible staff were enrolled into the pension scheme from April 2017 in line with legislation; the rate of employer pension contribution had been set at 24.6% by Staffordshire County Pension Fund for 2019-20. The Spinal Column Point rates were agreed nationally in 2018 for implementation from 1 April 2019, these had been used to calculate salary payments for 2019-20. A 1% contingency had been included.

The 2019- 2020 costings were therefore based on the following:

- The Staffordshire County Council pension fund employer contribution increasing from 23.4% to 24.6% of pensionable pay.
- The Clerk and Assistant Clerk attending evening meetings.
- An additional 30 hours are available to cover for events such as year-end, staff absence and additional meetings.
- Cover for the Car Scheme co-ordinator's annual leave.
- The assumption that the employer's NI contribution is increased to 15%.
- The mileage payments and Essential User Car Allowance remaining unchanged.
- A 1% contingency.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that the budget for staffing costs be approved.

2. Admin Costs / Overheads

200/1 Lighting and Heating: A 10% increase had been included in line with Staffordshire County Council's medium term strategy 2018-23.

200/4 Insurance: The insurance policy cover was agreed for a three year fixed period which expired in 2019.

200/11 Audit & Legal Fees. This had been set at £2,500 based on the previous year's expenditure.

200/15 Election Charges. As outlined above £8,500 had been included.

It was resolved that the budget for the admin cost and overheads, including the above, be approved.

3. Incidental Expenses

300/3 Standing Orders/Working Practice Guides. This budget heading should be deleted as these continue to be produced in-house.

It was resolved that budget heading 300/3 be deleted.

4. Coven Playing Field

700/1 Grounds Maintenance. The contract with Entrust would expire in March 2019. Quotes had been sought from Entrust and three other companies. The calculations had been based on the one quote received to date. Should further quotes received be less, providing they are offering as good a service and meet the criteria, this figure may reduce, but would not increase.

5. Brewood Playing Field

800/1 Grounds Maintenance. The situation was the same as for Coven playing field.

6. Other Maintenance

1000/1 Grounds Maintenance Bishop's Wood. The situation was the same as for Coven and Brewood playing fields.

1000/5 The Bront Woodland Maintenance. A quote for £1,650 to replace the fence at Poplars Farm Way entrance was included.

1000/9 Coven Heath Allotments Maintenance: the budget had been set at £500 to provide for rubbish removal following the Allotments Working Party recommendations.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that that the budget, including the above, be approved.

7. Projects

1100/32 School Crossing Patrol Funding. Members had previously resolved that safeguarding children was the responsibility Staffordshire County Council.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that no budget for School Crossing Patrols be approved.

8. Grants

In line with the Grant Awarding Policy, payment of grants were dependent upon receipt of a formal application, provision of audited accounts, a copy of the organisation's Constitution and recent bank statement(s). Copies of grant applications were circulated to Members in December with the exception of Friends of Barnfield Sandbeds, Bishop's Wood Village Hall and Coven Memorial Hall which were received later. However, budgets were included pending receipt of all applications.

It was recommended that maximum amounts be approved in principle. Applicants to be requested to make formal applications to draw down the money during the financial year 2019-20. The actual amount awarded would be considered and approved at that point.

9. Village Hall Grants

1200 Grants of £2,880 had been set aside for the three village halls (and £700 for Coven Heath Community Association as there was no village hall in Coven Heath).

It was resolved unanimous in favour that the amount set aside for village halls and CHCA, be approved.

10. Christmas Lights Grants

1300/1 Insurance. The Parish Council would continue to fund the insurance cover for Bishop's Wood and Coven Heath Christmas lights events.

1300/2 A grant of up to £200 has been set aside for Bishop's Wood expenses.

1300/3 A grant of £2,250 has been set aside for Brewood.

1300/4 A grant of £2,250 has been set aside for Coven.

1300/5 A grant of up to £200 has been set aside for Coven Heath expenses.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that the amount set aside, be approved.

11. Miscellaneous Grants

Roseclaim (Held by Parish Council)

1400/2 Roseclaim. Annual donations had previously been received from the organisers of the V Festival taken from VIP ticket receipts and awarded to organisations in or associated with Bishop's Wood. There will not be any more V Festivals and in August 2018 £3,500 was distributed. There was a total of £3,695 held in reserve which was earmarked for gateways at the entrances to Bishop's Wood. It was hoped that these would be installed in the next financial year, if not sooner.

Matter of report.

Members considered the following grant applications, circulated prior to the meeting:

1400/4 BPSA. A grant of £3,200 has been set aside this year to cover maintenance costs at Brewood Parish Sports Association in Engleton Lane, Brewood.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £3,200 set aside, be approved.

1400/7 Brewood and District First Responders. A grant application had been received for £2,000 towards the renewal of the 'terrafix', the link to the ambulance station.

It was resolved 7 in favour, 3 against, 2 abstentions that no grant be awarded.

1400/10 Brewood Music Festival 2020. The committee had requested a grant of £2,500 for the 2020 music festival therefore £1,000 had been included this year with the balance being include the following year, if approved. In previous years the Parish Council pledged to match the bucket collection up to a maximum of £500.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £1,000 set aside, be approved.

1400/12 Brewood Tennis Club. A grant application had been received for £4,300 towards the repainting/sealing of the tennis court surface to Lawn Tennis Association standard.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £4,300 set aside, be approved.

1400/13 Friends of Barnfield Sandbeds: A grant application had been received for £250 towards the purchase of further stocks of native British wild flower bulbs and plug plants to restore and improve the local environment.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £250 set aside, be approved.

1400/17 Brewood Bowling Club. The bowling green had had to be re-laid and the club was raising funds for a club house. A grant application had been received for £5,000 towards the club house, which would be used as match funding by the club.

It was resolved 8 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention that £5,000 set aside, be approved.

1400/21 Brewood Chess Circle had requested a grant of £250 towards the ongoing costs of running the club.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £250 set aside, be approved.

1400/26 Coven Forget-me-not Club had requested a grant of £1,000 towards a 60th Anniversary party.

It was resolved 8 in favour, 4 abstentions that the application be declined.

1400/27 Brewood Cricket Club had requested a grant of £1,000 towards the provision of bi-fold doors between the away changing room and the main room in order to increase capacity.

It was resolved 8 in favour, 4 abstentions that the application be declined. Parish Cllrs M. Webb MBE and R. Dakin requested that their abstentions be recorded.

1400/28 Brewood Civic Society had requested a grant of £500 towards the repairs of the clock on the Lion Hotel which was originally erected using a legacy received from a prominent Civic Society member. (The Parish Council had the power to provide public clocks Parish Councils Act 1957, s.2).

It was resolved 8 in favour, 1 against 3 abstentions that a retrospective payment of £250 be granted to Brewood Civic Society to replenish its funds, provided that this was not held in reserve by the Civic Society.

1400/29 Brewood and District Voluntary Car Scheme. It was anticipated that the car scheme would be given charitable status by the Charities Commission in 2019. The Parish Council would continue to fund a large proportion of the co-ordinator's salary (£7,500 including on-costs). Staffordshire County Council had withdrawn its grant for 2019 therefore a grant of £2,312 had been requested to replace this amount. An amendment was proposed and seconded to consider a grant of £1,000 which was defeated. A further amendment was proposed and seconded to consider a grant of £1,500 which was accepted.

It was resolved 7 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention that £1,500 be approved.

12. Capital Items

1500/17 Relocation of Bench at Sandy Lane, Brewood. The Parish Council had previously resolved to relocate the bench from the amenity area at the top of Sandy Lane to the triangle at the bottom. An estimate of £400 was suggested.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £400 be approved.

1500/18 A request was received from a resident for the Parish Council to consider installing seating in the bus shelters in Brewood. The cost of had not been established therefore an arbitrary figure of £1,000 was included.

It was resolved 11 in favour, 1 abstention that the Parish Council investigate the provision of a seat for one bus shelter in Sandy Lane, Brewood. Up to £1,000 be approved.

1500/19 Roof Brewood Bus Shelter. A quote of £800 had been received to replace the roof on the bus shelter in Brewood Road, Coven.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that £800 be approved.

No provision had been included for a multi-use games area (MUGA) at Brewood playing field/Jubilee Park, due to the emerging financial burden.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that no budget be included for the provision of a MUGA in Brewood.

13. Loan Repayments

1600/2 and 1600/3 The two Public Work Loan Board loans for Coven changing rooms and fencing at Brewood and Coven playing fields would be paid off at the end of 2018-19.

Income

5000 General Administration

5000/1 Donation to Car Scheme: – it has been assumed that donations would be received from other local parish councils to the value of £1,200 (not guaranteed), this would be used to subsidise the salary costs of the car scheme co-ordinator.

5000/2 Photocopying. Income from photocopying had not been increased as the charges had not been increased this year.

5100 Rent/Lease Agreements

It was resolved at the meeting of the Council held on 13 December 2018 that rental charges be increased by 2.2% which was the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in October 2018.

5100/1 Royal British Legion Rent: The RBL Rent would increase to £1,897.

5200 Provision of Facilities

5200/1 Allotments. The allotment rent would be increased to £25.50 per full plot.

5200/2 Poor's Land Rent. The rent would increase to £283.

5200/4 Coven Pitch Hire. The following was proposed: Pitch hire increased to £51.10, juniors £25 increased to £25.50, practice sessions with white lining £20 increased to £20.44 and practice sessions without white lining £10 increased to £10.22.

It was resolved unanimous in favour that pitch hire be increased to £55, white lining be increased to 21 and practice sessions without white lining be increased to £11.

5200/5 Brewood Tennis Courts. There was no actual income received from Brewood Tennis Club as the Parish Council paid the utility bills on its behalf. See expenditure budget heading 800.

5200/7 Rugby Tots. No income was anticipated.

5300 Grants

5300/7 Lawn Lane Solar Farm. £2,230 was received in 2018-19 and it was assumed that a similar amount would be received during 2019-20. It was anticipated that the same amount would be received each year over the next 18 years.

5400 Loans

No loans had been applied for by the Parish Council.

5500 Bank Interest

The Parish Council had invested £150,000 with CCLA bank. Income received from this was an average of £26 per month.

The following charges would continue to apply for the forthcoming financial year:

Photocopying:

A4	6p	per copy (black & white)
A4	12p	per copy (colour)
A4	10p	double sided - per copy (black & white)
A4	20p	double sided - per copy (colour)
A3	15p	per copy (black & white)
A3	30p	per copy (colour)

20+ copies:

A4	4p	per copy (black & white)
A4	10p	per copy (colour)
A4	08p	double sided - per copy (black & white)
A4	15p	double sided - per copy (colour)

Suppling own paper:

5p	per copy (black & white)
10p	per copy colour

Laminating:

A4	55p	each
A3	£1.20	each

It was recommended that charges for photocopying and laminating remain unchanged.

That concluded the budget report for 2019-2020.