

Hilderstone Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25th January 2017 at 7.30p.m.

Present: Cllr. Clark (Chairman), Cllr. J. Crump, Cllr. P. Davies, Mrs. H. Howie (Clerk), Cllr. M. Shelley (Vice Chairman), Cllr. A. Stringer and Cllr. H. Woodward. There were 10 members of the public present. No members of the press were present.

1. Chairman's Welcome. Cllr. Clark welcomed the councillors and members of the public to the meeting.

2. Apologies. These were received from Cllr. Jones (due to a family illness), Cllr. Harp (at the Development Control Committee and Cllr. Parry (who was away).

3. Minutes of the last meeting. These were read, approved and signed.

4. Matters arising. Ten members of the public were present at the beginning of the meeting to discuss the future of the Roebuck public house. The Parish Council re-iterated that it was not in a position to purchase and run the pub. The Parish Council had been asked by Phil Dale to provide an opportunity to get people together who may be interested in forming a group to try and save the Roebuck, but the Parish Council will not be involved in any such group. The Parish Council was asked if the pub would stand a better chance if it were freehold. Whilst the Parish Council has little experience in this field, the information it had received from previous Roebuck tenants led it to believe that the pub probably would stand a better chance of survival if it were freehold. The Parish Council was asked if an assessment had been made on what the impact would be on the village if the pub is lost for good. The Parish Council responded by saying that an in-depth analysis has not been carried out as it does not have the resources to do this, but it accepts that losing the pub would be negative for the village. The Parish Council reminded the members of the public that much work had been carried out by the Parish Council in 2013 when the pub was last under threat of closure and after the series of well attended public consultation events. The Parish Council was instrumental in getting the pub listed on the Register of Community Assets which still allows a community group the opportunity to buy it. The Parish Council had also urged members of the community in 2013 to form a group to consider whether funds could be realistically raised to purchase the pub. Despite the efforts of a few individuals within the village, little support was shown for forming a group. Since 2013 whilst the pub has gained some increased patronage, the Parish Council feel that the level of support within Hilderstone has not been sufficient to sustain it in the long term. It was concluded that if the pub has a future, there needs to be a very passionate group of local residents who have the expertise and willingness to carry out a proper business analysis of the Roebuck, raise the necessary funds from various sources to purchase it, oversee the running of the pub and be highly pro-active in encouraging the local community to use it on a regular basis. The community purchase of The Hollybush at Seighford has been problematic and the pub has closed three times. Cllr. Clark recommended that one or two of the residents present at the meeting should speak to the Seighford group and research other community run pubs. There is information and funds available to community groups seeking to purchase a pub and if an action group is formed the Parish Clerk can provide the initial details of some of these sources of information, but it will be up to members of the group to fully read and exploit them. Cllr. Clark then closed the discussion and the members of the public left the meeting.

The Clerk has been advised by Royal Mail that the post box at the Bird in Hand will not be replaced due to low usage and also because the location is considered to be dangerous for collection staff and the public due to the road layout.

5. Borough Councillor's Report. Cllr. Harp has informed Cllr. Clark that Milwich with Fradswell Parish Council are currently intending to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

6. County Councillor's Report. No report.

7. Planning.

New Planning Applications January 2017

16/25484/HOU Jura, Bankcroft, Dingle Lane. Construction of new garage in the front garden with conversion of the existing garage into a kitchen/dining room. Additional windows and door openings and changes to existing windows and door openings to main house. New sun pipe into landing and associated landscaping. **Resolved: the Parish Council has no objections to the application.**

16/25047/FUL Bird in Hand, Cresswell Road, Hilderstone. Minor Variations on application 09/11677/FUL. Revised plans submitted to meet the necessary pavement requirements. **Resolved: The Parish Council feels that the shrubbery on the corner of the car park at the Moss Lane junction will cause a visibility problem for drivers and should be removed from the plan. Also the crossing point may not be in the safest place and should be reviewed by Highways. The Parish Council would also like to query if there will be sufficient lighting and signage to warn drivers that there will be pedestrians crossing on the bend. The Parish Clerk was also asked to query who will own and be responsible for maintaining the piece of land opposite the development on the Stone Heath Road (behind where the postbox used to be). This piece of land used to belong to the owner of the Bird in Hand.**

Status of Earlier Applications:

16/24977/HOU Priory Cottage, Church Down, Hilderstone. Single storey rear extension with accommodation in roof space, first floor extension over the garage, single storey orangery extension and associated internal alterations. **ALLOWED**

16/24907/FUL Ivy Cottage, Sharpley Heath Road, Hilderstone. Variation of condition 2 on application 13/19080/FUL. **ALLOWED**

16/24533/OUT Land at Uttoxeter Road, Uttoxeter Road, STONE. Outline application for development of residential housing site for 51 market houses and 34 social rented houses. This development is not in approved The Plan for Stafford Borough. **AWAITING DECISION. Application has been called-in and is still waiting to be allocated a Committee date.**

Cllr. Clark has been in contact with Cllr. Beattie and also Bill Cash MP about the planning application for Priory Cottage but has yet to receive a reply. It was agreed that the liaison between the Ward Councillors and Planning Officers on behalf of the Parish Council, had not been as the Parish Council would have hoped in recent months.

It was agreed that the Parish Clerk and Cllr. Stringer should attend a forthcoming training course on 'How to Respond Effectively to Planning Applications', being organised by the Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association.

8. Traffic and Highways. There has been a problem with a 4x4 vehicle and also a large tractor and trailer parking overnight on the pavement and verge in front of the bus shelter at Eastholme. The vehicles have been completely blocking the pavement and have caused damage to the grass verge. They are also causing a potential road traffic hazard at night. Cllr. Clark has reported the issue to the local PCSO and also Cllr. Parry. The PCSO has yet to respond to Cllr. Clark.

There was a two-car collision at the B5066 Hilderstone Road junction. It would appear that a car pulled out of Hilderstone Road in front of a car coming through the village from the Sandon direction. It was noted that no agency came out to clear up the broken glass and debris caused by the accident. The Clerk was asked to check with Streetscene which agency is responsible for doing this.

Cllr. Woodward commented that the traffic through the village at rush hour is very bad. There were around 40 vehicles backed up from Hardiwick crossroads towards Hilderstone in the

morning recently. It was agreed that in addition to making the junction safer a roundabout would also help to ease traffic congestion at the crossroads.

The Speed Indicator Device has been in the village but appears to be working intermittently. The build-out on Roebuck bank has yet to be repaired, the Clerk will chase this with Highways but it is still likely to be deemed very low priority. There is a bad pothole on the B5027 Uttoxeter Road near to the farm on Hollywood corner. The Clerk will report it to Highways.

9. Footpaths/Village Maintenance/Best Kept Village. Cllr. Davies is to meet soon with the contractor with regards to the yew hedge around the edge of the Churchyard. Footpath 14 had to be closed recently because an electricity cable fell from a pylon due to heavy snow fall. The hedge bordering Priory Cottage needs cutting as it is starting to overhang the pavement and looks untidy. There is a problem with dog fouling again particularly on the grass verges at the bottom of The Meadows on Hilderstone Road. It would also seem that a dog is being allowed to roam on its own in the early mornings and is fouling on front gardens. The Clerk will place a reminder to dog owners of their responsibilities in the next edition of the Parish Magazine.

10. Village Events. The Village Christmas Party organised by Cllr. Woodward and Cllr. Jones was well attended again with 88 people. Cllr. Clark commented that the food was excellent and everybody enjoyed the evening. The Village Christmas Choir Concert organised by Andy Reiss was also a success, with few empty seats in the hall. The evening was helped along by the bar from the Red Lion that had been organised by Phil Dale. The recent screening of the Dad's Army film in the Village Hall had attracted 30 people. More films will be shown in the coming months; dates to be confirmed by Cllr. Crump.

Cllr. Woodward thanked Cllr. Crump for the excellent article on the village trip to Acton Scott which had been placed in the Stone & Eccleshall Gazette. Cllr. Crump said that she has submitted another article to the Gazette about the Christmas Concert but this might not be published until the March edition.

There will be another jumble sale in March or April; Cllr. Jones will confirm the dates soon.

11. Correspondence.

- Letter re: Best Kept Village Competition 2017
- Electoral Register Changes
- Stone Area Parish Liaison Group Minutes
- Members' Digests 227 & 228

Members' Digest 226 (Cllr. Crump).

Adoption of neighbourhood plans for Colwich and Hixon, pp2.87-2.95

Planning - 16/24837/HOU Two storey rear extension to Vernon Cottage. **Permit**

p6.42. Three dog owners have been issued with fixed penalty fines for letting their pets off their leads in a cemetery in Stafford. Since 2010 it has been an offence not to keep your dog on a lead at cemeteries in Stafford Borough.

12. Finance.

The monthly accounts were presented and signed by the Chairman. The current account is £8340.16 in credit and the deposit account £3120.88 in credit. Although most of these funds are allocated as indicated by the monthly accounts which are circulated to all Councillors prior to each meeting. The following payments were approved:

1. Mr S Down, Tree Surgery Work on Village Green & Severn Trent Corner - £660.00
2. Mrs H Howie, Clerk's Expenses & Mileage - £23.03.

3. Hilderstone Village Hall Committee, Office Space & Storage - £80.00.
4. Mr W H Holmes, Highways Maintenance December & January – £87.75.

Cllr. Woodward will provide details of the Village Christmas Party expenditure at the February meeting.

13. Any Other Business. Cllr. Woodward reported that the stables and 4 acre field on Cresswell Road are up for sale, with an asking price of £160,000. It was agreed that the Parish Council still needs to monitor this site in the future to ensure that no attempt is made to turn it into a residential property.

Councillors were again reminded that Cllr. Clark will be standing down as Chairman in May 2017 and anybody wishing to be nominated as either Chairman or Vice-Chairman should let the Clerk know as soon as possible. Cllr. Shelley said that he is happy to be Chairman but would not stand in the way of any other councillor who would like to take on the role.

Resolved: The Hilderstone Parish Council Chairman and can only serve for a maximum period of three years and this will be written into the Hilderstone Parish Council Constitution.

Cllr Clark reported that the time-table for the village consultation questionnaire has been put back. It is now planned to circulate the questionnaire in March/April and then base the Annual Village Meeting in May on the results of this (once the new Chairman is in post). Residents will be asked to return the questionnaire in the black postbox outside the village hall.

Cllr. Clark also reported that the profile for the new Vicar is now on the Hilderstone Village Website. It is being circulated widely and applications are now being invited. With regards to the Churchyard, all new graves will have to meet the new rules. Existing graves will be reviewed but a sympathetic approach will be taken. The new guidelines have been published in the Parish Magazine which is also online.

Cllr. Shelley said that he had heard a recent radio programme which stated that many countryside footpaths and rights of way are in danger of being closed through lack of use. It is again a case of use it or lose it.

A member of the public had contacted the Parish Council about rumours that gravel extraction may take place at Moddershall to support the HS2 project. The Parish Council has not received any formal notification of this, but will ask Cllr. Parry if he has any information.

14. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 22nd January 2017 at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

..... Cllr. R. Clark, Chairman. 22.02.17