

Hilderstone Parish Council

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

Present: Cllr. Shelley (Chairman), Cllr. P. Davies, Mrs. H. Howie (Clerk), Cllr. J. Jones, Cllr. A. Stringer (Vice Chairman) and Cllr. H. Woodward. There were no members of the press or public present.

- 1. Chairman's Welcome.** Cllr. Shelley welcomed the councillors meeting.
- 2. Apologies.** These were received from Cllr. Clark, Cllr. Crump and Cllr. Harp.
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting.** These were read, approved and signed.
- 4. Matters Arising.** The hedge bordering the field opposite Roebuck bank has been cut. The owner has notified the Clerk that the hedge cuttings behind the traffic island will be cleared away soon. The Clerk had notified Streetscene about the litter which Cllr. Woodward had found on Cresswell Road. Streetscene said that they would follow this up, but the Clerk has not received any further communication about this. Stafford Borough Council have launched a new litter campaign across the Borough and are asking all parishes to sign a pledge to help with the campaign at the recent Parish Forum. The Borough Council is also working with local retailers to encourage them to provide waste bins and keep the areas around their premises free from litter. It is recognised that rubbish thrown from cars on rural roads is a particular problem.

Stafford Borough Council only notify Borough Councillors when the licensee at a public house changes, but not parish councils.

- 5. Borough Councillor's Report.** No report.
- 6. County Councillor's Report.** No report.
- 7. Planning.**

New Planning Applications:

17/27280/ful Stone Heath, Sharpley Heath Road, Hilderstone. Proposed agricultural vehicle shed. **Resolved: The Parish Council has no objections to this application.**

Status of Earlier Applications:

17/26465/FUL Jesmonde, Sandon Road, Hilderstone. Detached dormer bungalow to rear of Jesmonde. This application has been 'called in' by Cllr. Beatty for a Committee decision. Amended plans submitted. Skylights to rear of property removed and inserted in front of property in order to reduce loss of privacy to neighbouring property. **REFUSED BY COMMITTEE.** (Excessive height and inappropriate design for a rural location).

17/27068/HOU Stone Heath, Sharpley Heath Road, Hilderstone. **Amended plans submitted.** Variation of condition 2 on previous application. Alterations to internal first floor plan. **AWAITING DECISION**

17/26822/HOU Drumble Mill, Cotwalton Road, Cotwalton. Extension to the rear of the existing garage. **ALLOWED.**

17/26691/COU Newfields Farm, Cotwalton Lane, Cotwalton. **Retrospective** planning application for the change of use of two existing agricultural buildings for use as liverys and the storage of sheep and cattle (mixed use). **ALLOWED**

Appeal Lodged for 17/25784/HOU Malthouse Croft, Sandon Road, Hilderstone. This application was refused by the planning department on the grounds that the replacement windows were not in character with the surrounding area.

17/26826/FUL Drumble Mill, Cotwalton Road, Cotwalton. Proposed stables and horticultural polytunnel. **ALLOWED.**

The Clerk had received an email from the Borough Conservation Advisor about the new parking space at the front of Copes Croft on Sandon Road. Unless properties are listed, front gardens can be turned into parking spaces without planning permission in conservation areas, providing permeable surfaces are used. Walls under one metre in height are not subject conservation area regulations and can be altered or removed without planning permission under permitted development rights. A local planning authority can serve an Article 4 Direction withdrawing householder permitted development rights in an area; but these are rarely invoked due to the high resource implications in preparing the notice, undertaking the necessary public consultation and enforcing the Direction.

Cllr. Woodward reported that the new properties at the former Bird in Hand now appear to be completed, as For Sale signs are now displayed.

At the Parish Forum on 28th September 2017 Stafford Borough Council informed parishes that although the current adopted Local Development Plan is in force until 2031, the Government requires local authorities to carry out regular reviews to ensure that future development needs are met. Stafford Borough Council started a review process in July 2017 and have launched a series of public consultations. The current public consultations are:

- **Call for new Sites** – the Borough Council is asking land owners and stakeholders to suggest sites that they consider to have development potential for new housing, employment and other uses beyond 2031. The Call for Sites exercise ends on Monday 8th January 2018 at 5.00pm.
- **Call for Local Green Space Sites** – the Borough Council is also inviting applications for Local Green Space designations beyond 2031. The deadline for this is also Monday 8th January 2018 at 5.00pm.
- **Draft Supplementary Planning Documents** – As part of the current adopted Plan, the Borough Council needs to provide further guidance on housing design, the re-use of rural buildings and shop fronts and advertisements. Comments are invited on the documents providing this further guidance. The deadline for comments is Monday 13th November 2017.

All the documents relating to these public consultations can be found on the Stafford Borough Council website at: www.staffordbc.gov.uk/forwardplanning

As part of the Local Plan review process the Borough Council Forward Planning Team have also sent out a questionnaire to parish councils which is intended to assess the current availability of local facilities and services in the parishes. This will be completed and returned by the Clerk.

8. Traffic and Highways. The new website to assist Parish Councils in carrying out the local highways environmental maintenance jobs which the County Council are no longer going to deliver is up and running. The website contains “information and advice to help local councils explore their options in getting more involved in local environmental tasks.” The options include enlisting local residents to carry out the work on a voluntary basis, sharing contractors with other parish councils to obtain economies of scale and raising the precept to cover the additional costs.

9. Footpaths/Village Maintenance/Best Kept Village. Rights of way maintenance is also under review and a public consultation is currently underway. The County Council budget for rights of way is also being reduced and it is likely that only the most used footpaths will be maintained on a regular basis. Parish Councils are being urged to encourage landowners to repair styles and gates on private land. Limited grant funding may still be available to Parish Councils if they want to undertake repairs themselves.

Cllr. Davies reported that some of the private hedges on Footpath 14 through The Meadows estate are being cut, he will carry out a check to see which others need doing. The yew hedge around the Church is still to be cut, but the contractor is booked for this.

10. Village Events The last film night in the village hall was reasonably well attended. The village outing to Adam Henson's Farm was a great success and fortunately the weather was good. It is thought that most people on the trip would be prepared to pay the full cost in the future.

Forthcoming Events:

- Fulford and District Conservative Party Quiz on Friday 10th November 2017. Fulford Village Hall. More details to follow.
- Remembrance Service at Christ Church on Sunday 12th November 2017. All welcome.
- Coffee Morning on Saturday 18th November at 10.00am until 2.00pm in the Village Hall. Proceeds to a children's charity and Christ Church, Hilderstone.
- Murder Mystery (instead of the Barn Dance) on Friday 17th November 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Tickets £7.00 from Ian Brittain or Jenny Crump.
- Women's Institute Christmas Party on Tuesday 5th December at 7.00pm for 7.30pm in the Village Hall.
- Village Christmas Party on Tuesday 12th December at 7.00pm in the Village Hall. Tickets £9.00 from Hazel Woodward, Jean Jones and Phil Davies.
- Village Christmas Concert on Friday 22nd December at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Now confirmed. Ticket details nearer the time.
- An Evening with Gail Morecambe on Tuesday 30th January 2018, 6.30pm for 7.00pm at Fulford Village Hall. Tickets £20.00 which includes a hot two course dinner. Proceeds to Fulford and Hilderstone Church Funds.

11. Correspondence.

- Members' Digest 236

Members' Digest 235 (Cllr. Crump) pp2.105-108 Approval to construct a new leisure centre at Westbridge Park, Stone. This includes a 25 metre, 6 lane swimming pool, fitness studio and two dance studios plus changing rooms.

12. Finance.

The monthly accounts were presented and signed by the Chairman. The current account is £11028.57 in credit and the deposit account £3121.12 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. Mrs H. Howie, Clerk's Expenses and Mileage - £18.80
2. Mr W. H. Holmes, Village and Highways Maintenance - £155.25
3. Cllr. P Davies, Petrol Strimmer for Village Maintenance Use - £120.00.

The second precept payment and the Village Christmas Event funding have been received.

The **draft** Parish Council budget and precept request for 2018-2019 was considered by the Parish Council. At the September 2017 meeting, the Parish Council had agreed that the budget and precept would need to be increased significantly over the next few years. This was due to the full withdrawal of Staffordshire County Council Highways Environmental

Maintenance services and also the possible retirement of the current village maintenance contractor.

The Clerk had prepared the budget to show the level of precept required to cover the full cost of funding the withdrawn County Council highways services and also a replacement for the village maintenance contractor, who may be significantly more expensive than the current one. As funding the full cost of these services would require a 63% increase in the current precept, the Clerk had also prepared the budget to show a 20% increase and 10% increase in the precept for 2018-19. The Parish Council agreed that it would not like to raise the precept by more than 10% in 2018-19. The alternative to not raising the precept significantly would be to not carry out the highways maintenance services and significantly reduce the level of village maintenance if a replacement contractor is far more expensive. It was agreed that whilst some of the highways maintenance jobs could be reduced without significant impact, the maintenance of village assets, the village green, footpath 14 and other areas would soon make the village look untidy. As the Hilderstone Parish Council precept is currently very small (£7,807), even a 10% increase would only raise the precept by £781 per year and the average Band D Property Parish Charge by £2.72 per year. The final budget decision will be made at the November 2017 meeting as the precept request needs to be submitted by the end of January 2018.

13. Any Other Business. None raised.

14. Date of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 22nd November 2017 at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.34pm

..... Cllr. M. Shelley, Chairman. 22.11.17.