

Hilderstone Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22nd May 2013 at 7.30p.m.

Present: Cllr. Clark (Chairman), Cllr. J. Crump, Cllr. P. Davies, Cllr. A. Harp, Mrs. H. Howie (Clerk), Cllr. J. Jones, Cllr. M. Shelley (Vice Chairman). There was one member of the public present who wished to observe the meeting.

1. Chairman's Welcome. Cllr. Clark welcomed the councillors and Mr Michael Bailey from Stafford Borough Streetscene to the meeting.

2. Apologies. These were received from Cllr. Stringer and Cllr. Woodward.

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

4. Matters arising. Dealt with under the agenda headings.

5. Streetscene Re-organisation. Mr Bailey explained that Streetscene now has three area co-ordinators and he is responsible for the rural parishes. Streetscene is a Borough Council department and delivers street cleansing services including road sweeping, emptying public litter bins, litter picking, and removal of fly tipping on public highways and public land. It also carries out grounds maintenance in public parks (including Dingle Lane). Pavements can be mechanically swept but the current machinery is quite wide and so cannot operate on narrow pavements. It may be possible for the mud and gravel on Dingle Lane and Cotwalton Road to be cleared using a road sweeper, but the operative will need to assess if it will be possible. Gully emptying is the responsibility of the County Council Highways Department. The Streetscene Team will be in Hilderstone every Friday to carry out the routine work, so if there is anything specific that needs dealing with the Parish Council can email Mr Bailey direct and he will arrange for the team to deal with it. Mr Bailey said that he would like to maintain a good relationship with parishes and is happy to attend the parish council meetings at least twice per year. Streetscene also grow a wide range of bedding plants at the Borough nursery in Stafford; if the Parish Councillors would like to visit the nursery this can be arranged.

6. Borough Councillor's Report. The development of Neighbourhood Plans is proving to be very difficult for some of those parishes that have decided to have one. Advice and some funding is available, but there could be a large cost implication for the parish councils. It was re-iterated that Hilderstone will not be developing a Neighbourhood Plan as no major development has been earmarked for the parish in the New Local Plan for Stafford Borough. A village/parish plan is in the process of being written however and this will help to inform local decision making. Alistair Welsh in the Borough legal department has been asked to contact the Parish Clerk about the Community Asset Register, but to date the clerk still has not had a response from him. Work on the new shopping complex in Stafford town centre has started and the multi-storey car park has been demolished. The area should look very different in a few years time.

7. County Councillor's Report. No report.

8. Planning.

No new applications.

Status of Earlier Applications:

13/18494/FUL Hilderstone Garage, Hall Lane – proposed extension to commercial garage (MOT bay). **Pending consideration.**

It has been drawn to Hilderstone Parish Council's attention that the owners of Bank Cottage, Dingle Lane have enquired about purchasing a piece of the Dingle Lane park land to extend their garden. This was discussed by the Parish Council and the following decision was made:

Resolved: The Parish Council is against any such sale of land on the following grounds:

1. The wooden fence boundary to the rear of the area forms part of the Hilderstone Conservation Area Village Enclosure. Something which is of historical importance to the village.
2. Potential removal of the mature trees/shrubs and insertion of a fence would be detrimental to the character of the play area and surrounds.
3. Potential removal of the trees and shrubs would impact negatively on the privacy afforded to the residents living in the Dingle Lane sheltered bungalows.
4. The trees and shrubs provide an area for wildlife.
5. The sale of this piece of land to a home-owner may set a precedent for other nearby residents to request the same. The play area is small and the Parish Council feels it is important to preserve it at the current size, as there is no other public land for children to play in.

The clerk will notify Sally Jones in Parks and Open Spaces at the Borough Council of this view.

The Borough Conservation Officer, Penny McKnight has responded to the Clerk about the issue of the front wall at Laburnum Cottage as follows: 'Our Enforcement Team looked into the history of this matter. It seems that the wall was removed around 10 years ago, and an enforcement file was raised in 2004. The Planning Case Officer's decision at that time, was to take no action on the matter. Unfortunately we are unable to revisit the case once a decision has been made'. The Parish Council believes that the wall was only removed a few years ago and would like Cllr. Harp to check with the Conservation Officer that they have the correct property on file.

The draft conservation area appraisal drawn up by Cllr. Clark and Cllr. Crump is now complete and will be submitted to Penny McKnight shortly. Some work still needs to be done on identifying important trees and hedges. The clerk has not had a response from the Borough Tree Officer and will contact him again.

9. Traffic and Highways. The Speedwatch Group continue to do an excellent job and carry out regular speed monitoring sessions. There is still a large proportion of vehicles exceeding the speed limit through the village. The camera safety van was in the village last night on Cresswell Road. The Parish Council has not yet received notification of the start date for the construction of the chicanes. There are some deep potholes on Cotwalton Lane near Wooliscroft Farm and one between Ivy Cottage and the Bird in Hand.

10. Footpaths/Village Maintenance/Best Kept Village. The footpath near to the church will be strimmed next week. All the other footpaths appear to be satisfactory at the moment. Bill Holmes and the Best Kept Village Team volunteers continue to work around the village. It is believed that the Best Kept Village Judges were in the village in early May. The churchyard continues to have a regular monthly tidy by volunteers. It was noted that some of the front gardens in Farm View are in need of attention. New community notice pin boards have been placed in the back of the village bus shelters. At the moment, the Best Kept Village children's posters will cover most of these, but once they have been removed the boards can be used by anybody wishing to display a notice etc.

11. Village Consultation – Progress. The Parish Council has tonight received notification from Mr and Mrs Dale that it is unlikely that they will be able to continue with the lease at the Roebuck Pub after the end of June. Although business has increased since they took over the lease, this has not been enough to justify extending the lease further. The brewery will not provide any further financial assistance and appear only interested in selling the pub to realise

the capital. There will be a public meeting on Sunday 9th June to see if anything else can be done to save the pub from closure. If not, it is likely that the pub will be boarded up after the end of June. It is not clear if the pub can be placed on the Community Asset Register as it is already for sale on the open market. It was noted that the Community Asset Register will only provide a 6 month moratorium during which the public can try to raise the funds to purchase the pub.

At the meeting on the 1st May to discuss potential village social events only two of the people who had indicated that they were willing to volunteer to run these events turned up. As well as the clerk, Cllr. Crump and Cllr Davies were also present. It was agreed that as a first event, a walking treasure hunt around the village, followed by a bring your own picnic could be held as this would not require too much organisation and expense. Jennifer Green is still willing to write the treasure hunt. The picnic can be held outdoors if the weather is fine, possibly on the children's play area or in the village hall if the weather is poor. The date for the treasure hunt is Saturday 7th June from 3.00pm. A charge of £2.00 per family or group will be made to cover costs (map and village hall hire).

Cllr. Clark and the Parish clerk have met with the designer of the new village website to discuss the content. The website is nearly ready to go live but still requires more information. It will probably be launched with the message 'awaiting content' on the pages that still need information. It is felt that it is important to get the website live as soon as possible so that residents can start using it. It was noted that the original Hilderstone Village website established in 1996 by Cllr. Crump and her husband, has now been withdrawn from the web. The Hilderstone Village Miscellany site which contains valuable village and local history information is still live and there will be a link on the new website to it.

It was noted that most of the budget set aside for the village consultation process had now been used up in the clerk's overtime relating to this. The clerk stated that she is not able to keep doing the same level of overtime due to her other commitments. Now that most of the initial work and meetings have been done, it is now down to residents to deliver the activities that they have stated they would like in the village. A first draft of the village plan has been done but more work is required, especially on the action plan. Parish Councillors need to read and contribute to the draft plan before it is finalised and released for public consultation. The clerk will aim to have the first draft ready for the Councillors to consider at the June parish council meeting.

12. Correspondence Received May 2013 :

- Age Concern Stone Request for a Donation
- Electoral Role Changes
- CPRE Newsletter
- Stafford Borough Walking Festival Booklet
- Members' Digest 183

13. Finance.

The monthly accounts were presented and signed by the Chair. The current account is £7540.54 in credit and the deposit account £3115.22 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. Hilderstone Village Hall Management Committee, Office Space & Storage - £80.00.
2. Mrs H Howie, Clerk's Expenses & May Overtime Claim – £92.24.
3. Mrs K Murray, Children's Club Materials - £61.94.
4. SCVYS, Children's Club Membership Fee - £10.00
5. Mr Alan James, Internal Accounts Audit for 2012 2013 - £70.00
6. The Potters Barn, Children's Club Pottery Day - £205.00
7. Mr W Holmes, Notice Boards for Bus Shelters & Village Maintenance - £277.00.
8. Age Concern Stone, Donation - £25.00.

- 9. Zurich Municipal, Parish Council Insurance Premium - £395.50.
- 10. Mr W Holmes, Planters for Children's Club Gardening Day - £260.00.

The Parish Clerk had obtained three quotations for the Parish Council insurance. Details of these and the cover provided were discussed and it was decided that Zurich Municipal offered the best value for money.

14. Any Other Business.

Members' Digest 182

pp2.1-2.4 Information on Food Safety Plan 2012-2015.

pp.2.5-2.9 Health and Safety Service Plan 2012-2015.

pp2.25-2.27 1100 Year Celebrations. Includes Stafford 913-2013 The Making of a County Town at the Ancient High House from 18th June to 27th July.

Planning: 13/18150/LBC Addition of single conservation Velux style window to rear pitch of roof Horseshoe Farm Cottage (Permit).

p6.11 Parks Electronic Booking System. Approval granted to extend the system used for Sports Department.

p6.12 Early morning patrol fine. Action taken against a dog owner for not cleaning up after her dog.

p6.12 Honour for Sports Stars 8th March. Trophies were presented to individuals and teams in at least ten categories. Main award Sports Person of the Year awarded to Alison Williamson, Jessica Luke and Lizzie Neave (competitors in the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games).

Easter Activities for children outlined.

It was agreed that Cllr. Clark will organise a new 'Information' sign for the telephone box.

15. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 26th June 2013 at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.55pm.

..... Cllr. R. Clark, Chairman. 26.06.13