

Hilderstone Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27th February 2013 at 7.30p.m.

Present: Cllr. Clark (Chairman), Cllr. J. Crump, Cllr. A. Harp, Mrs. H. Howie (Clerk), Cllr. J. Jones, Cllr. M. Shelley (Vice Chairman), Cllr. A. Stringer and Cllr. H. Woodward. There were no members of the public present.

- 1. Chairman's Welcome.** Cllr. Clark welcomed the councillors to the meeting.
- 2. Apologies.** These were received from Cllr. Davies and Cllr. Parry.
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting.** These were read, approved and signed.
- 4. Matters arising.** Cllr. Jones who had not been present at the last meeting, asked where in Cotwalton, was the proposed location of the wind turbines shown in the New Plan for Stafford Borough. From the map shown in The New Plan it appears that they would be located on land on the North side of Cotwalton Road. Other matters arising were dealt with under the agenda headings.
- 5. Borough Councillor's Report.** The New Plan for Stafford Borough submission document has been open to public consultation. New government planning guidelines mean that there will be a presumption to pass plans if they meet all the government sustainability guidelines and The New Plan requirements. There is a lot of new development in Stafford town centre that is soon to go ahead. This should benefit the whole town by attracting in new investment and new employers. The Parish Council expressed concern that the new development, which is out of the main central shopping area, could have an adverse effect on existing businesses.

There are currently lots of discussions about the High Speed Rail 2, Phase 2 route through Staffordshire. Bill Cash MP and Staffordshire County Council are against this project but it seems unlikely that it will not be given the go ahead. The route should not have a direct adverse impact on Hilderstone, but it will travel very close to Stafford and Stone. It was noted that the planned route around Stafford is through part of the proposed new housing development to the North of Stafford.

The development plans for Westbridge Parks have been released for public consultation and three public meetings have been advertised. The Parish Council has placed leaflets about this on the notice boards. If the public turn down the proposals the danger is that there will be no improvement in the park and the funding available will go to another part of the Borough. There is no doctors' surgery on the proposals, as none of the PCT's expressed an interest in running a new surgery on the site. There is a possibility that the new food store will be Marks and Spencer.

There has been little progress at the Bird in Hand recently. The site has been tidied up a little and looks better. It is unlikely that there will be more units finished, until the house that has been completed is sold.

- 6. County Councillor's Report.** Reported under item 8 Traffic and Highways.

7. Planning.

New Planning Applications February 2013:

13/18150/LBC Horseshoe Farm Cottage, Sandon Road, Hilderstone – addition of single conservation style Velux window to rear pitch roof to illuminate stairs and landing. **Resolved: The Parish Council has no objections to this application.**

Status of Earlier Applications:

12/17930/HOU 3 Barnes Croft, Hilderstone – proposed kitchen and playroom extension.

PERMITTED.

8. Traffic and Highways. Cllr. Parry has notified the Chair that he has received a report from the Highways engineers detailing the viable traffic calming measures that could be introduced in Hilderstone. Cllr. Parry has said that he needs to speak with the engineers to clarify a few points before releasing the information for public consultation.

The lanes around Hilderstone are still in a poor state and there is a large pothole on Cotwalton Road near to Newfields Farm. Highways have filled the worst of the potholes but nothing has been done to clear the large amount of mud and gravel that have accumulated during the heavy rains of last summer and this winter. This matter will need to be taken up with Cllr Parry at a later date.

9. Footpaths/Village Maintenance/Best Kept Village. Nothing to report about footpaths. The entry forms for the Best Kept Village Competition have been received and Hilderstone will enter again. The War Memorial in the Churchyard has been cleaned and looks much better. There is still a problem with dog fouling, especially around the play area and on Dingle Lane. The Parish Council is working closely with officers at Stafford Borough Council and will pass on information and evidence as necessary in order to stop this. The Borough Council has recently issued several fixed penalty fines in the Borough and carries out patrols in villages where there is a problem. It has a zero tolerance approach to this problem.

10. Village Consultation Meeting 23rd January 2013. 72 people attended this and the atmosphere was very positive with many enthusiastic comments from residents about how they would like to see their village develop. 50 people completed and returned the questionnaire. Around 12 people indicated that they would be willing to volunteer some time and left their contact details with the parish clerk.

Since the meeting some good progress has already been made. U3A Stone have carried out a lot of work to re-furbish the community boules pitch at the rear of the Roebuck Pub. This work has been done on a voluntary basis and the group has made a request to the Parish Council for a donation towards the cost of materials used. The pitch will be available to the whole of the community to use as well as U3A. **Resolved:** The Parish Council will make a donation of £220.00 towards the cost of materials for the community boules area. This will be paid directly to Bill Holmes (on presentation of an invoice) who will source and supply the materials. It was also agreed that if other new community groups need some start-up funding, the Parish Council will consider a request for a donation towards these costs. Groups will need to provide details of what is required and a break-down of the costs. They will also need to indicate how they intend to become self-financing in the long run.

Two parents have come forward and expressed a keen interest in running a children's activity group. A meeting has been set up with an officer from Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS) on Monday 4th March 2013 and the clerk will attend this. The SCVYS officer will advise the parents on how to set up a properly constituted group and complete all the necessary child safety procedures. It is hoped that an activity session will be held at Easter.

The Roebuck Pub held a race night recently and the proceeds will be donated to Christ Church. Food is once again being served.

There will be a village follow-up meeting on Wednesday 20th March 2013 at 7.30 to discuss the outcomes of the questionnaire and to encourage people to show real commitment to supporting village assets and running events/activities. Another pamphlet will be circulated to every household in the next couple of weeks inviting them to this meeting and summarising the results of the questionnaire.

11. Correspondence Received February 2013 :

- Community Paths Initiative Bids 2013-2014
- Community Council of Staffordshire Diary of Events Letter
- Community Council of Staffordshire Newsletter
- Members' Digest 179
- Members' Digest 180

12. Finance.

The monthly accounts were presented and signed by the Chair. The current account is £4265.00 in credit and the deposit account £3114.85.00 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. Community Council of Stafford, Best Kept Village Entry Fee - £15.65
2. Mrs Helen Howie, Clerks Expenses and Overtime Relating to Village Consultation - £206.92.

13. Any Other Business. The conservation area appraisal still needs finishing off. More properties need to be included in the conservation area and the protected trees/hedges need reviewing.

There will be a charity Bingo Night in the Village Hall on Friday 12th April 2013.

Members' Digest 177 - Empty Homes Strategy (pp2.48 –2.56) – for dealing with the problem and appointment of an Empty Homes Officer.

Approved Capital Bids (p2.102) – Creation of an additional car parking at North Walls, £260,000. St.Albans Road former tip site, provision for potential site development, £450,000. Solar Panel Farm at Riverway, intended to reduce the Borough's electricity costs and carbon footprint, £100,000.

P6.18 Dog Fouling - there will be more dawn and evening patrols to catch inconsiderate dog owners. Eight people have recently been fined and the Borough Council has a zero tolerance approach to this problem. Dog fouling can be reported confidentially by calling 01785 619402 or email info@staffordbc.gov.uk.

Members' Digest 178 - Latest pictures of illegally dumped rubbish have gone on line. Residents are being asked to provide information on 'unsolved grimes' featured at www.staffordbc.gov.uk/grimewatch. Environmental and Health Services deal with around 350 cases a year at a cost to the tax payer of £20,000. the act of fly tipping carries a possible prison term and a maximum fine of £50,000.

As part of the RHS Britain in Bloom Competition, free packets of edible plant seeds are being offered to villages. It was agreed that there isn't currently a suitable area of the village or large enough flower box to grow these in, but it might be something that can be considered if a larger Best Kept Village Group can be established.

14. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 27th March at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.45pm

..... Cllr. R. Clark, Chairman. 27.03.2013