

Hilderstone Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 28th August 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), 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 I. Parry.
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting.** These were read, approved and signed.
- 4. Matters arising.** The problem with the sign at Stone Heath is ongoing. The matter has been raised by a Stone Heath resident with Milwich Parish Council who had requested the new signage to prevent delivery drivers from getting lost. Unfortunately the signs were put in the wrong place. County Cllr. Parry is to sort the matter out, as the County Council installed the new signs.

No formal plans have been received for the garden extension at Bank Cottage. This will probably take some time, as the sale of land has to go through a legal process. An application to cut back the Oak trees on the land at Bank Cottage has been submitted to the Borough Council for approval. Other matters arising were dealt with under the agenda headings.

5. Borough Councillor's Report. Cllr. Harp is to call-in the planning application for Bearstokes Farm for a committee decision; as the officers are unlikely to recommend it for approval. This is because part of the extension will sit slightly outside the current property boundary into the adjacent field. Cllr. Harp said that he felt that the loss of farm land was so minimal that the extension would not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding countryside. Cllr. Harp will ask the planning committee to recommend it for approval. The Parish Council supported this recommendation and will notify Development Control accordingly.

September is World Environmental Health month. The Borough Council is asking Parishes if they have any issues that need addressing during this month. Issues would include dog fouling, fly-tipping, street cleansing, noise nuisance, park maintenance, pests. The Parish Council should contact Environmental Health at the Borough Council if there are any issues.

A site has been identified at Common Lane, Stafford for the travellers currently living at Spotgate. The new site will be leased by Stafford Borough Council to the travellers. The site at Spotgate will have to be completely vacated. The Borough Council has an obligation by law to provide a certain number of sites for the travelling community.

6. County Councillor's Report. Cllr. Parry is unable to attend tonight due to other council commitments. He has however indicated that he wishes to meet with Cllr. Clark and the Clerk to feedback and discuss The Roebuck and the traffic calming chicanes. It was agreed that the Parish Council would prefer a written feedback report that could be circulated to all councillors rather than a separate meeting being held.

7. Planning.

New Planning Applications August 2013:

No new applications

Status of Earlier Applications:

13/18732/HOU Arnfield Cottage, Sandon Road – proposed two-storey rear and side extension. **PERMITTED.**

13/18833/HOU Bearstakes, Sandon Road – proposed two-storey rear and side extension to provide accommodation for disabled person and her carers. **PENDING CONSIDERATION.**

8. Traffic and Highways. Surface dressing has been carried out on Sandon Road and Cresswell Road recently. The standard of the top dressing and the related road repairs are of a much higher standard than in previous years. It was noted however, that the remedial works to correct the failed top dressing that took place last summer on the B5066 Hilderstone Road near to Cotwalton Road has still not taken place. The clerk has emailed Chris Mitchell the Highways Community Liaison Manager about this, but he is currently on holiday. The clerk will continue to chase.

Richard Pilcher the Speedwatch Co-ordinator has compiled a summary of the last 12 months traffic speed and volume data. The data shows that there is no doubt that the chicanes are needed to calm traffic speeds. It was noted that some pedal cyclist also travel through the village at quite high speeds, possibly in excess of 30mph down Roebuck Hill and Cresswell Road past the church. Large groups of cyclists also sometimes ride quite recklessly through the village.

9. Footpaths/Village Maintenance/Best Kept Village. Cllr. Davies has checked a few of the public footpaths and there doesn't appear to be any work required at the moment. There is a section of hedge on the Hilderstone Walkway to the rear of 2, Farm Lea that is in need of cutting. It is understood that the property is currently empty but is owned by Stafford and Rural Homes. The clerk will contact the Housing Officer at Stafford and Rural Homes. The Holly trees in the infant play area to the rear of 3 Roebuck Court are again getting low and are need cutting. It was agreed that Cllr. Davies would speak to the Rights of Way Officer to see if the County Council has any additional powers to ensure that residents maintain their boundary hedges on the Hilderstone Walkway, given that it is a marked public footpath. Cllr. Davies was also asked to find out if it is possible for a finger post marker to be placed in the infant play area to make footpath 14 clearer.

The village came third in the Best Kept Village Competition and although it achieved second place last year, this is still a very good result. Evidence of community spirit and involvement has a big influence on the judges, and last year when the judging took place there was lots of publicity relating to the scarecrow competition and the jubilee party. This may have resulted in the higher score last year. The judges' report is usually received later in the year and this should highlight where further improvements can be made next year.

10. Correspondence Received August 2013 :

- Notice of Parish Forum on Thursday 26th September at 7.00pm, Civic Centre
- Notice of Submission of the New Plan for Stafford Borough to the Secretary of State.
- Email re Rural Fair Share Petition
- Notice of SPCA Stafford Area Committee.
- Members' Digest 186

Members' Digest 185

Another £75.00 fine has been issued to a dog owner for allowing her dog to foul near shops in the Western Downs area of Stafford and not picking it up. This is the fourth person this year to be fined and the Borough Council is still keeping up the campaign.

There are 7,000 affordable homes in Stafford Borough which is 12.9% of the total housing stock. Affordable housing will be required on all new developments of 12 or more houses.

Children's holiday activity programmes have been ongoing over the summer at various venues.

There has been an application for a Heritage Lottery Fund grant for Victoria Park in Stafford to keep it to the Green Flag Status. The grant is intended to help improve catering facilities, provide a new toilet block, refurbish the bandstand and improve the aviary and thatched shelters.

11. Finance.

The monthly accounts were presented and signed by the Chairman. The current account is £4305.97 in credit and the deposit account £3115.61 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.

Cllr. Clark reported that the works required to make safe the damaged oak tree in the churchyard were more extensive than originally estimated. **Resolved: the Parish Council will still pay 50% of the cost as the graveyard is a community facility. This will be paid out of the Parish contingency budget.**

The following payments were approved:

1. Mrs H Howie, Clerk's Expenses - £13.55
2. Cllr, R. Clark, Chair's Allowance 2013.2014 - £320.00
3. Mr A. Turner, 50% of Costs of Works to the Churchyard Oak Tree - £450.00

12. Any Other Business.

There are several potholes near to Manor Farm on Hall Lane, Whitehouse Lane and Cotwalton Lane. The clerk will report.

13. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 25th September 2013 at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.30pm

..... Cllr. R. Clark, Chairman. 25.09.13