

Hilderstone Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22nd February 2017 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. Cllr. Parry joined the meeting at 8.00pm. There were no members of the press or public present.

- 1. Chairman's Welcome.** Cllr. Clark welcomed the councillors to the meeting.
- 2. Apologies.** These were received from Cllr. Davies (due to work commitments).
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting.** These were read, approved and signed.
- 4. Matters arising.** The Area Manager for the Roebuck has responded about the diseased tree on the car park, confirming that it will be inspected properly for safety soon. He did not confirm whether there would be regular grounds maintenance at the pub. The Clerk will continue to request that the brewery maintain the car park and surrounds until a new owner found. The group of residents concerned about the future of the Roebuck who came to the January Parish Council meeting do not appear to have formed a group yet, although one of them has put an article about the pub closure in the Parish Magazine. Cllr. Clark had received a reply from Bill Cash MP about the Roebuck, but the letter merely repeats the advice given in 2013 when the pub was last in danger of closing. The letter did confirm that the Plunkett Foundation is still in existence and that there is a £3.62 million Community Pub Business Support Programme for those communities who have residents that are willing to form a working group to purchase and run their local pub.

Cllr. Clark has still not received a reply to his email about the planning application at Priory Cottage from Cllr Beatty.

The issue of the vehicle and tractor parking on the pavement and verge near the bus stop at Eastholme appears to have been resolved; although the local PSCO has not been in touch with the Parish Council about this.

The pothole on the edge of the drain cover on Hilderstone Road near The Meadows junction has finally been marked up for repair.

There appears to have been another collision at Hardiwick crossroads since the last Parish Council meeting; as there was car body debris and skid marks on the road.

5. Borough Councillor's Report. A large amount of agricultural mud was dropped on Garshall Green Lane by a local farmer. Cllr. Harp had contacted the relevant officers at the Borough Council about this. Streetscene are encouraging all Parishes to join The Great British Spring Clean litter picking session on 3rd to 5th March 2017. Streetscene can provide rubbish bags, litter pickers and will collect the rubbish from a designated village location. Cllr Clark agreed to try and encourage a few local people to get together, but it was noted that the Borough Council had not given sufficient notice of this event and that it was a bit early in the year. Littering is becoming an increasing problem in rural areas across the County and Streetscene is having difficulty keeping on top of it. The recent cases of extreme fly-tipping in several places in Staffordshire is adding to the burden and depleting finances.

6. County Councillor's Report. Cllr. Parry was thanked by Cllr. Woodward for the grant funding for the Village Christmas Party and the Village Outing. Both events had been a great success and enjoyed by all those that had participated. Cllr. Parry said that he will be happy to receive more grant applications from Hilderstone for future village events and activities. The grant application process will be open from June 2017.

Cllr. Parry reported that the workshop for all parishes on Thursday 23rd February 2017 is intended to try and address the problem of how the severe Government funding cuts to

Highways can be managed. The increasing levels of social care for the elderly and other vulnerable groups is resulting in monies having to be cut from other services. The Highways Department is not going to be able to carry out as much environmental maintenance such as weed clearance, road sign cleaning, grass strimming and vegetation cutting in public areas. This is why the Neighbourhood Highways Team service is being phased out and the Minor Highways Agreement with parishes is ending on 31st March 2017. The workshop will ask parish councils to consider whether they could deliver some of these services to ensure that their neighbourhoods are maintained to the preferred levels. Cllr. Clark asked whether parishes and their residents will be expected to do more voluntary work. Cllr Parry said that the County Council was not expecting small Parish Councils to fund road repairs or enlist lots of local volunteers due to a lack of funds and other resources. Some of the larger parish councils are showing interest and some have already taken on contracts or share services with neighbouring parishes in order to save costs. Some of the larger Parish and Town Councils may be able to set up a community based service which other smaller parishes could tap into, but these would **not** be voluntary. It was noted that in small parishes like Hilderstone where the precept is often less than £10,000 per year, there would be no capacity to pay for extra services without massive hikes in the precept to tax payers. Small parishes often struggle to get volunteers and residents may not be very enthusiastic about doing highways maintenance work. There may also be an issue with insurance for such activities. Cllr. Parry said that the workshop is also about considering the barriers to parishes in carrying out these extra activities and will be a starting point in looking at whether these can be overcome. There are examples of local volunteers in other small parishes carrying out voluntary highways work such as grit spreading on pavements in winter and cleaning of street furniture and village signs.

Cllr. Parry said that he felt the Highways Department had done well repairing potholes this winter, although the lack of funding meant that not all had been filled. Cllr. Stringer asked if Staffordshire County Council had received some of the extra funding that the Government had recently released for pothole repair. Cllr. Parry said it had but that due to another grant being cut the County was no better off financially.

Despite the Local Authority cuts, the Staffordshire Children's Service has been recognised as the best in the West Midlands with the only one rated as Good by Ofsted. The Staffordshire economy is generally doing very well. Employment levels are good and local employer Alstom has recently opened a new state of the art Centre of Technology in Stafford. Cllr. Shelley commented that house building rates seem to be good but there is a lack of work on the additional infrastructure needed to support this, especially the roads around Stafford and Stone. Traffic volumes through Hilderstone are increasing and traffic sometime queues from the Hardwick crossroads back to nearly Sandon in the evenings.

Both Cllr. Parry and Cllr. Harp were asked to attend the Hilderstone Village Consultation meeting on Thursday 25th May at 7.30pm in the village hall.

7. Planning.

New Applications February 2017

17/25766/HOU Vernon Cottage, Sandon Road, Hilderstone. Two-storey rear extension, patio, retaining wall and landscaping. This extension is much smaller than the plans previously submitted and approved. **Resolved: the Parish Council has no objections to the plans.**

Status of Earlier Applications:

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. **AWAITING DECISION**

16/25047/FUL Bird in Hand, Cresswell Road, Hilderstone. Minor Variations on application 09/11677/FUL. Revised window pattern to improve the aesthetic appearance of the elevations. Dormer window numbers reduced to de-clutter eaves detailing to roof. Roof pitch reduced to accommodate specified roof tile to address limitations of the site conditions of the existing building. **Revised plans submitted to meet pavement requirements have been accepted by Highways. AWAITING DECISION**

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.**

8. Traffic and Highways. Reported under item 6.

9. Footpaths/Village Maintenance/Best Kept Village. Footpath 14 needs clearing as there is quite a lot of debris from hedge trimmings and fallen leaves on it. The iron railings at Lower Farm still have not been repaired and it would seem the company that were originally going to do the repairs has ceased trading. Cllr. Woodward said that she will speak to the relevant persons in the village to see if this issue can be progressed.

The Clerk has received the entry forms for the Best Kept Village Competition. It was agreed that the Roebuck should be excluded from judging as there was no guarantee that it would be occupied this summer or that Admiral Taverns will maintain the exterior to a high enough standard. Cllr. Crump confirmed that she has spoken with the staff at Green Lea School about the Best Kept Village Poster Competition and the posters should be ready for judging at the 26th April 2017 Parish Council meeting. The Clerk has spoken to the decorator about painting the phone box in Spring, but will contact him again to ensure that it can be done before the end of April.

After attending a training course at Saverley Green, Cllr. Clark had raised the issue as to who is responsible for maintaining the village defibrillator and providing training. Cllr. Crump began to read her response to the questions raised in Cllr. Clark's email. Cllr. Shelley said that the Parish Council was not the forum for discussing such issues. Information has been posted in the village and Cllr. Crump agreed to write an article relating to the defibrillator to be published in the Parish Magazine. Cllr. Crump provided a copy of her report for inclusion as an appendix to the minutes (Appendix One).

10. Village Events. The next firm night will be on Friday 17th March 2017 at 6.30pm for 7.00pm in the village hall. The film title will be confirmed soon. There will be another village coach trip on Saturday 30th September 2017 to Adam Henson's farm in the Cotswolds. The local Young Farmers group are holding a Race Night on Saturday 1st April at 7.30pm in the village hall. Admission is £3 on the door and everybody is welcome. There will be another Recorder Day in the village hall on Saturday 7th October. Hilderstone residents may be able to join this day by contacting the organiser. Cllr. Crump will provide the contact details to the Clerk for the Village Website. The jumble sales will take place on Saturday 8th April and Saturday 16th September both at 2.00pm in the village hall. Donations of jumble can be received at the village hall from 10.00am. The Village Christmas Party will be held on Tuesday 12th December 2017, 7.00pm for 7.30pm in the village hall. Ticket cost to be confirmed at a later date. The Annual Parish Meeting (village consultation) will be held on Thursday 25th May at 7.30pm in the village hall.

11. Correspondence.

- Electoral Register Changes
- Stone Town Council Afternoon Tea & Flower Arranging Charity Event.
- Stone Lions Club Request for Donation for PSA Testing.

Members Digest 227, 228 & 229 (Cllr. Crump)

227

p2.13 - Additional income generated by % increases in Council tax. 1% (17-18 only) £67,000. Each year: (17-18) £67,000, (18-19) £137,000, (19-20) £209,000.
1.5% (17-18 only) £101,000. Each year (17-18) £101,000 (18-19) £205,000 (19-20) £316,000
Up to 5% max increased 17-18 only £227,000.

p3.3-3.4 Adoption of Colwich and Hixon Neighbourhood plans.

Planning: Permit, Priory Cottage, Hilderstone (16/24977/HOU)

228

pp2.5-2.6. Sandon and Burston Neighbourhood Plan. On 8 November 2016 the Council received the Examiner's report (recommending that the plan should not proceed to referendum).

"Although the inspector has recommended that the plan does not meet basic conditions, and should not proceed to a referendum, the basic decision rests with the Council. In this case it is recommended that the Council accepts the inspector's recommendation. Alternatively if the Council disagrees with the inspector and proposes to make the plan, it must give reasons why it considers that the plan meets the basic conditions or how it could be modified to do so. It would need to invite representations from relevant parties and may also consider referral of the issue to further independent examination. (full documentation pp2.9-2.41)

229

p2.46. Tax base 2017/18, Hilderstone 275.94.

Planning. 16/24907/FUL Permit variation of condition 2 on application 13/19080/FUL Ivy Cottage, Sharpley Heath Road, Hilderstone

p6.30. Candidate Open Day for those thinking of standing for election to the County Council in May 2017. Tuesday 28th March 2017 in the County Buildings, Martin Street. Three sessions: 1 pm – 3 pm, 3 pm – 5 pm, 5 pm – 7 pm. To book your place contact Lynne Coates by email: lynne.coates@staffordshire.gov.uk

p6.31. More dog fouling fines – 2 women (neither had bags). To report dog fouling contact 01785 619000 or email dogs@staffordbc.gov.uk.

12. Finance.

The monthly accounts were presented and signed by the Chairman. The current account is £7280.67 in credit and the deposit account £3120.91 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. Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association, Planning Training Course Fees - £35.00.
2. Mrs H Howie, Clerk's Mileage and Parking Fee for Training Course - £11.80.
3. Mr W H Holmes, Cost of New Notice Board at Eastholme - £180.00.
4. Stone Lions Club, Donation to Prostrate Cancer Screening Programme - £30.00.

Cllr. Woodward submitted the financial statement for the Christmas Party funding and expenditure. Cllr. Woodward also made a grant refund of £159.70 by cheque which the Clerk will credit to the Christmas Party ring-fenced fund.

13. Any Other Business. Cllr. Woodward commented that the expansion of Walton Middle School generally does not affect Hilderstone as the majority of children go to Christchurch Middle School.

Cllr. Crump confirmed that the article about the Village Christmas Concert has now featured in the Stone & Eccleshall Gazette.

Cllr. Clark reported that the village website appears to be well used with 153 hits per day on average. Most users seem to be looking at the Village Hall, Church and News pages. The hits appear to be spread evenly throughout the day, although there are some periods when the website is being viewed quite a lot around midnight. This suggests that there might be some people overseas that are looking at the website (perhaps those with links to Hilderstone).

14. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 22nd March 2017 at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.30pm

..... Cllr. R. Clark, Chairman. 22.03.17

Appendix One - The Defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall

I was disturbed to receive the email of 14 February 2017 regarding the Defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall. The issue of such importance that it is essential that information with regard to it is accurate.

I had not been notified of any meeting to be held in Saverley Green, or Fulford, at which the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall was to be discussed, nor was I invited to such meeting. No enquiry has been made of me by any person based in Fulford or Saverley Green with regard to the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall.

It is disappointing that the situation regarding the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall was not investigated by contacting those with knowledge regarding it before the email of 14 February 2017 was despatched.

I hope it assists if explain the position regarding the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall.

I stress that I am not able to comment in any way as to defibrillators in Fulford, or any arrangements regarding them. Nor can I comment on what was said at any meeting regarding them or otherwise during meetings in Saverley Green or Fulford at which I was not present.

You will recollect that the Village Hall Committee funded and arranged for the installation of the defibrillator in Hilderstone at the time it did because the Parish Council delayed in doing so. The Village Hall Committee considered that the provision of a defibrillator should be a priority for the village.

With regard to the issues raised in the email of 14 February 2017 as to the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall the situation is as follows.

1 Hilderstone Village Hall Committee paid for an Automated External Defibrillator to be installed at Hilderstone Village Hall.

2 The defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall was provided and installed through arrangements made by AEDdonate. AEDdonate is a registered charity, based in Stone. The principal activity of AEDdonate is to provide Automated External Defibrillators to be accessible to the public. AEDdonate has successfully installed Automated External Defibrillators for many communities, both locally and elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

3 As it happens, there was an inspection of the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall by AEDdonate this month and all was in order with the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall.

4 The pads for the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall have not been renewed. They are not due for renewal until 15 July 2018.

5 The key code for the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall is available by telephoning 999. AEDdonate can also be contacted for the information. There is an auto attendant for dealing with any issues out of hours.

6 The key pad on the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall is unlit. All of the cabinets supplied by AEDdonate have unlit key pads. As it happens, AEDdonate advise that the security light above the device at Hilderstone Village Hall is such that there should be good access in the dark.

7 There was a training session specifically for the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall held in August 2015. In the edition of the Parish Magazine some time after the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall was installed it was said that people who wished to be trained in using it should contact me or Ian Britton to arrange training. None of those to whom the email of 14 February 2017 was copied attended the training in August 2015, nor have any of them made contact with me asking to be trained. Further training sessions for AEDs fitted by AEDdonate

will be held from time to time in the AEDdonate community room in Stone. Information as to these will appear in the Stone Gazette. Residents of Hilderstone will be able to attend free of charge. I hope that all who are interested will do so.

8 I have no knowledge of the use of defibrillators in Fulford, nor of the Mr Tony Holmes referred to in the email of 14 February. I have no information as to the involvement (if any) of Mr Holmes with the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall. No enquiry has been received by me from a Mr Holmes as to the use of the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall.

9 In case it is of interest, I can report that the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall has not been actually been used, but has been deployed on a number of occasions.

10 As I have pointed out, I have no information as to, and am not able to comment on, the relationship between the defibrillators in Fulford and Saverley Green and First Responders. So as far Hilderstone is concerned, I am assured by AEDdonate that the relevant First Responders are aware of the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall – indeed the person who oversaw its installation is himself a First Responder! It may be of interest to know that local First Responders carry their AEDs in the car. The defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall is designed for public use.

The defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall was installed at the cost of the Village Hall Committee as a service for the residents of Hilderstone and the surrounding area. It is essential that information regarding the defibrillator at Hilderstone Village Hall is accurate. The information set out above should be notified to all those to whom the email of 14 February 2017 was addressed and to all other persons who were given the information contained in that email. Also, the information set out above should be included in the minutes of this meeting of the Parish Council to ensure that further inaccuracies apparently by the Parish Council are avoided.