

# Hilderstone Parish Council

## Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2015 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. I. Parry, Cllr. M. Shelley (Vice Chairman). There were two members of the public present at the beginning of the meeting and a journalist from the Staffordshire Newsletter was present for most of the meeting.

**1. Chairman's Welcome.** Cllr. Clark welcomed the councillors and members of the public to the meeting.

**2. Apologies.** These were received from Cllr. Stringer.

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

**4. Matters arising.** The issue relating to the roof-lights at The Bower has been resolved but the owners will need to submit a new planning application. There has still been no progress with the road name sign for Farm View, this is partly due to staff holidays at the Borough Council. A parent has expressed a wish for the Children's Club to keep running. The clerk will email this parent to establish whether there will be sufficient interest from other families in the village to make this possible. Other matters arising were dealt with under the agenda headings.

At this point in the meeting local resident Mr Holmes was invited to speak about the result of the Best Kept Village Competition in which Hilderstone has been awarded a Highly Commended certificate again. Mr Holmes said that he hoped that the Parish Council agreed that the result was not good enough and that Hilderstone ought to do better than this. Mr Holmes and his wife has recently visited the villages that had been placed in the top three positions in the competition. It was clear that there was a great deal of effort being made by local residents in these villages and the community spirit was obvious. Mr Holmes said that there were no untidy front gardens and the local pubs and other village facilities all had impressive floral displays. In Hilderstone there are at least three front gardens on the main road that are always untidy and full of weeds, The Roebuck is the only pub in the area that does not have a significant floral display, the village hall surrounds and flower boxes were poor compared to other villages and there are often weeds along the frontages of houses on The Meadows which homeowners could remove themselves. Mr Holmes said that more villagers need to get involved in keeping the village tidy for the competition. He suggested that the Parish Council could run a Best Front Garden competition as an incentive to residents to raise the standard and run an 'adopt a flower box' scheme. Cllr. Clark said that he agreed with all that Mr Holmes had said but that the main problem was the lack of residents willing to join the Best Kept Village Team. Cllr. Clark said that some people moving into the village from urban areas are not used to getting involved in community activities such as the Best Kept Village; they think that their property frontages are always the Council's responsibility. The Parish Clerk said that she was not sure what more Hilderstone Parish Council could do to encourage local residents to get more involved. The Parish Council had held a series of village consultation meetings in 2013 where many local residents had indicated that they wanted a more vibrant community. Around twenty people had volunteered to help with the Best Kept Village efforts at the consultation meetings and although there is still a group helping with the Churchyard maintenance, the numbers working in the village areas has dwindled to around half a dozen. The existing volunteers are doing a good job and some already water the flower boxes, but if the village is to win the competition there needs to be a much larger team. Over the last six years the Parish Council has regularly placed articles in the Parish Magazine and notices on the village boards asking for more volunteers for all the community groups (particularly the Best Kept Village Team) but very little interest has been shown. Cllr. Harp commented that Fulford has had many residents that have come from urban areas but that the village has managed to get a strong Best Kept Village Team together; perhaps Hilderstone can make contact with Fulford to see how they managed to get people involved.

**5. Borough Councillor's Report.** Reported under Item 4, Matters Arising. No new matters to report from the Borough Council at this time due to it being the main holiday period for staff.

**6. County Councillor's Report.** No report.

**7. Planning.**

**New Planning Applications August 2015:**

15/22807/HOU Ash Grange, Sandon Road. Proposed extension to form wet room and garage extension. **Resolved: the Parish Council has no objections to this application.**

**Status of Earlier Applications:**

15/22411/HOU Whitesytc House, Whitesytc Lane. Proposed garage extension to the side with bedroom above and utility/kitchen extension to the rear. **APPROVED.**

APP/Y3425/A/14/2222107 (13/19630/FUL) Appeal lodged against refusal of wind turbine at Drumble Woods, Cotwalton. **STILL PENDING DECISION. APPEALS INSPECTOR VISITED SITE ON 17.03.2015.** It was noted that the incentives for the installation of wind turbines are being reduced.

**8. Traffic and Highways.** After being approved at the Staffordshire Moorlands Planning Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015, another public meeting about the industrial and housing development at Cresswell was held at Draycott Sports Centre on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2015. Richard Pilcher had attended this meeting on behalf of Hilderstone Parish Council. His report from the meeting is attached to the minutes at Appendix One. Richard Pilcher said that it was interesting that many parish councils in the area are willing to get involved in this issue. Cllr. Shelley asked if the aim of any legal process was to stop the development from going ahead. Richard Pilcher said that there doesn't appear to be a high level of objection to some development in principle, but it is the size of the expansion and the lack of additional infrastructure and highways controls which is of concern to parish councils and local residents. The legal process may however force the planning decision to be reviewed. The main impact on Hilderstone is still the increased level of traffic that would be generated by the development. If Hilderstone Parish Council still wishes to reduce the impact of this development, it needs to ask the Staffordshire Highways Authority and local M.P. to enforce highway controls and safety measures under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980. Richard Pilcher also asked if Hilderstone Parish Council would be willing to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the legal process which is being proposed. It was agreed that Hilderstone Parish Council would attend the next meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2015 before it makes a decision on any financial contribution or writes to the local Highways Authority and M.P. Cllr. Harp commented that the current government directive is for more housing to be built and if local authorities go against this, they can be penalised financially.

Despite the recent patching and top dressing work that has been carried out around Hilderstone, Hall Lane still remains in a poor state. The clerk will contact Highways again with regards to this and Cllr. Clark will raise the issue with Cllr. Parry. Cllr Jones reported that there is still an area on Cotwalton Lane where the side of the road has broken away and poses a hazard.

The speed indicator device still has not been moved to the centre of the village; this may be due to the recent departure of Chris Mitchell the Community Highways Manager at the County Council. The clerk will try to establish who has responsibility for this now. It was noted that the Staffordshire Newsletter article on the Hilderstone Speedwatch Group was a fair report on the current situation. It is a shame that despite the article and recent village notices no new volunteers have come forward to help re-instate the Group.

**9. Footpaths/Village Maintenance/Best Kept Village.** Cllr Davies has strimmed footpath fifteen near to Church Farm to clear the access. There are still some over-hanging trees in this area but the responsibility for trimming these needs to be clarified with the Rights of Way

Officer. There has been no response from the Rights of Way Officer about footpath two being moved in the field where the stable block has been built off Cresswell Road. Cllr. Shelley reported that new fingerposts have been installed in this field. Cllr Davies is to arrange for the yew hedge on footpath four along side the Church to be cut back hard in the next few weeks.

It was agreed that the matter of the trees on Roebuck bank will be considered at the October meeting.

**10. Village Events** The Village Hall Committee are hoping to hold film nights in near future. The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Village Hall event is still planned to go ahead on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September.

The local farming community is holding a Bingo Evening in the village hall on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September from 7.30 pm in aid of the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI). There will be a £3 entry fee and £1 charge per game, payable on the night. There will be a pay bar and a raffle.

**11. Correspondence August 2015.**

- Letter from Staffordshire County Council re: Revised Bus Services.
- Letter from Staffordshire County Council re: Stafford Library.
- Letter re: Date of next Borough Council Parish Forum on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015
- Members' Digests 210

**Members' Digest 209 (Cllr Crump)**

1.1 – 2.33. Information on the Conservation Area Appraisal and Boundary Revisions for Ingestre, Offley Brook and Walk Mill. A major concern in Ingestre was about the golf course's inclusion in the boundary changes. For example "The Golf course is integral to the landscape and historic Ingestre Hall Estate with its important associations with the Earl of Shrewsbury".

6.12. Annexe over garage Hillcrest, Sandon Road, Hilderstone Permit of conversion of space over detached garage to form dependent relative accommodation.

**12. Finance.**

The monthly accounts were presented and signed by the Chairman. The current account is £5507.65 in credit and the deposit account £3118.86 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. Creative Bee Limited, additional speed awareness campaign posters - £60.24.
2. Mrs H Howie, Clerk's expenses and cost of new bench for Roebuck Hill - £268.14.

The second precept payment is due in September.

**13. Any Other Business.** The conservation area public consultation meeting will take place in the village hall on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015 between 6.00pm and 8.00pm. A Parish Council Open Forum session will be held at the same time giving residents the opportunity to raise any other village issue with the Parish Council. All parish councillors are requested to be present. All householders living within the proposed boundary have received a letter notifying them of both meetings. Cllr. Clark has received a couple phone calls with regards to the new boundary, but the Conservation Officer will be able to answer more complex queries at the meeting.

**14. Date of next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

..... Cllr. R. Clark, Chairman. 23.09.15

## **APPENDIX ONE**

### **Industrial and Housing Development Cresswell**

The above meeting was attended at Draycott Sports Centre 18.08.15. at the request of and on behalf of Hilderstone Parish Council.

Attending - E.M. Bane, S.J. Pilcher, R. Pilcher.

#### **Preamble**

A meeting of the Planning Committee of Staffs Moorlands District Council was held 13<sup>th</sup> August to discuss the application.

The development proposes approximately 160 Houses and 8.5 Ha of industrial units – 85% of the entire planned Staffs Moorlands industrial expansion in their 10 year Plan.

Due to the scale of this development and the inevitable significant increase in traffic on the B5066, arrangements were made at short notice (2 days) for Hilderstone and Sandon & Burston Parish Councils to lodge written objection to the development. (see also Appendix A, e-mails from Sandon & Burston PC)

Theses written objections were read out by Mrs Kate Bradshaw, one of only 3 persons allowed to speak against the development at the Planning Meeting.

The planning application was approved without adoption of any special road safety measures under section S106 relating to the B5066.

#### **Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2015**

Approximately 50 people attended the meeting at Draycott Sports Club and it was noted that word of the Planning Committee's decision had not reached many residents due to summer holidays.

It was stated that the large number of issues against development (flooding, ground contamination, unstable surrounding roads - with a vast array of supporting technical information and reports) had been ignored by Staffordshire Moorlands Council and their