

Hilderstone Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27th August 2014 at 7.30p.m.

Present: Cllr. J. Crump, Cllr. P. Davies, Mrs. H. Howie (Clerk), Cllr. J. Jones, Cllr. M. Shelley (Vice Chairman), Cllr. A. Stringer and Cllr. H. Woodward. Richard Pilcher, the Speedwatch Co-ordinator was present to talk about speed awareness signage under item 8.

1. **Chairman's Welcome.** Cllr. Shelley welcomed all present to the meeting.
2. **Apologies.** These were received from Cllr. R Clark and Cllr. A. Harp.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting.** The last sentence of paragraph two, page three was amended to read: PCC instead of church committee. The last sentence of paragraph eight, page four was amended to read: that the village hall committee will try to seek legal advice on this issue. The minutes were then approved and signed.
4. **Matters arising.** Dealt with under the agenda headings.
5. **Borough Councillor's Report.** There had been a query about building works at a property on Sharpley Heath Lane. Cllr. Harp had reported to the clerk by telephone that a Borough Enforcement Officer has investigated and the works being carried out meet the approved plans.
6. **County Councillor's Report.** No report.
7. **Planning.**

New Planning Applications August 2014

14/20494/COU Land off Dingle Lane Hilderstone. Proposed Garden Extension at Bank Cottage. The deadline for responses to this application was 20th August 2014, so the details had been circulated to all councillors by email prior to the meeting. The majority of councillors had replied to say that they had no objections. The clerk had replied to Planning stating that there were no objections but asking for the conditions which were agreed at the 24th July 2013 Parish Council meeting, to be attached to any approval. These conditions were as follows:

- No more than four metres of land should be converted to garden use.
- The original village boundary fence must be retained and maintained.
- No trees or shrubs beyond the four metre extension are to be removed or pruned.

APP/Y3425/A/14/222107 Appeal lodged against refusal of wind turbine at Drumble Woods, Cotwalton. The Parish Council recognises that there is a need for more power generating capacity in the U.K. and that alternative methods of power generation should be considered. There was a large number of objections to the original application and many local residents still intended to object to the appeal. The proposed turbine will be visible for some distance but not everyone finds them an eyesore. The noise from the turbine was considered to be more of an issue as this might affect residents in Hilderstone and there is some evidence to suggest that the continuous noise can impact negatively on wildlife. The cost-efficiency of wind turbines was also considered. Wind turbines of this size are expensive to install, but there is some doubt about the amount of power generated by them relative to this cost and also the negative impact that they have on the local surroundings. It was accepted that the farming community can benefit financially from having a wind turbine on their land, but it is unlikely that any of the power generated would be used by local residents. **Resolved: The Parish Council objects to the appeal, mainly on the grounds of the likely noise disturbance to the local community and also to doubts over the cost-effectiveness of wind turbines in generating power.**

Status of Earlier Applications:

13/19733/HOU Beech Tree Byre, Moss Lane, Hilderstone. Retention of timber framed parking/store building. Retrospective Application. **PENDING CONSIDERATION.**

Blythe Business Park – no application as at 26.08.14

8. Traffic and Highways. The Hilderstone Speedwatch Co-ordinator Richard Pilcher had attended the meeting to seek the Parish Council's view on how it would like the recently purchased A boards to be best used in the local traffic calming campaign. Richard explained that the original intention was to place the current set of children's speed awareness posters on the A boards so that they could be moved around the village. On inspection it was found that the posters had deteriorated to the extent that they could not be re-used on the A boards. A set of written messages drafted by Speedwatch for the boards, was deemed not suitable and not likely to be as effective as the children's posters. **Resolved: the Parish Council will organise a poster competition for under 16's to raise awareness amongst local children of the need for safe driving and also to provide some new posters for the A boards. The posters will be re-produced on plastic sheets and enlarged to the required size to fit the A boards, providing the printing costs are acceptable.**

Richard Pilcher also reported that the Speedwatch monitoring statistics show an increase in the volume of traffic travelling through the village in recent months. At peak times there are 700 –750 vehicles travelling through the village. Cllr. Shelley commented that it will be difficult to control the volume of traffic as it is a main B road route from the Cheadle/Draycott area to Stafford. The main issue was the speed of traffic and this is something which hopefully can be controlled to an extent, although there are always likely to be some drivers who will travel at excessive speed.

There has been no feedback from Cllr. Parry on progress with the list of issues raised with him by Cllr. Clark last month. Some of the issues will depend on whether funding is available within the County Council. Richard Pilcher reported that the speed camera van presence is still irregular. The clerk advised that that it is hoped that this issue can be raised at a meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner which is currently being organised.

The mirror at the Bird in Hand crossroads has been replaced and thanks are extended to County Cllr. Ian Parry for organising this. The mirror is a little smaller than the previous one, but is more convex and clearer.

9. Footpaths/Village Maintenance/Best Kept Village. Cllr. Davis attended the Best Kept Village Competition results evening but disappointingly Hilderstone had only received a Highly Commended certificate this year. Salt had won the small village category, with Hopton second and Stowe-by-Chartley third. It was agreed that the standards achieved by all villages must be extremely high as Hilderstone had looked very attractive and tidy during the judging period and it was difficult to see why it had slipped back from the previous two awards of second and third places. It was hoped that the Best Kept Village volunteers would not be disheartened by this year's result and would see it as a challenge to 'raise the game' even higher for next year. The judges' report is normally received in October.

Cllr. Davies has walked some of the footpaths and there were no major problems to report. The private hedges on footpath 14 from the play area to The Meadows are in need of cutting. The contractor who has cut the yew hedge at the side of the church will be asked to come back and cut it back further as there has been a complaint that it is still obstructing the footpath. Many of the local hedges which were obscuring the highways signs have now been cut back as it is the time of the year when hedge cutting can take place on agricultural land.

Cllr. Woodward raised the point that now that there is no bus service through the village the Parish Council may need to review whether major repairs are carried out to the bus shelters in the long term. At the moment the bus shelters are being used as community notice boards, but it was agreed that the cost-benefit of carrying out major repairs to them would need to be considered.

10. Village Events. The World War One Commemoration event held in the village hall on Saturday 2nd August had been attended by around 33 people and had been very enjoyable. The event had raised £125; £100 will go to church funds and £25 to the village hall. The church service on Sunday 3rd August had been attended by 40 people.

An academic from Keele University had recently given a historical talk and tour of the church for a group of 38 visitors from outside the village.

The last village market was not as well attended as the first, but this might be because many people are away on holiday during August. It is hoped that this will grow over time and that more villagers will support it.

The next scheduled events are:

Jumble Sale on Saturday 27th September at 2.00pm in the village hall. This will raise funds for the village Christmas party and the church.

Harvest Supper and Produce Auction on Monday 6th October at 7.00pm in the village hall. This will raise funds for the Church. Tickets £6.00 for adults and £2.50 for under 16s.

Village Christmas Party on Tuesday 9th December at 7.00pm in the village hall.

The clerk has been informed that the Christmas Concert should be going ahead again but a date has yet to be set.

11. Correspondence Received August 2014 :

- Notification from SPCA that the Open and Accountable Local Government Order permitting the press and members of the public to record, film and report on parish council meetings came into force on 6th August 2014.
- Supporting People Review Letter from Staffordshire County Council.
- Notification of date of Parish Forum – 25th September 2014, 7.00pm.
- SPCA Gazette
- Members' Digest 198

Members' Digest 197

Pp2.1-2.7 Appraisals for Corporation Street Flats and St. George's Conservation areas.

Pp2.8-2.59 Swynnerton Parish Neighbourhood Area Designation. Lots of information including letters from disgruntled villagers. "I ask you then what is the point of applying for a Neighbourhood Plan when we have no neighbourhood we recognise?"

Planning. p6.1 Permit for replacement windows and doors, a change of first floor window to Juliet balcony – The Old Stables, Cotwalton

P.2 Permit Variation of conditions 2 and 3 on permission 07/09323/FUL – Manor Farm, Cotwalton

P.10 Permit Variation of condition 2 of 12/174404/FUL Hilderstone Garage, Hall Lane.

Pp6.14-6.19 Information on Individual Electoral Registration. Introduced in England and Wales 10 June 2014. Have to provide National Insurance Number and date of birth to apply.

Residents can apply on line. The system should be safer and more convenient. Information available from www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

P.20 Free Coaching Sessions for Food Businesses. Aim is to get food businesses with a food hygiene rating of 3 "generally satisfactory". Information from Robert Simpson, Regulatory Services Group Manager. Telephone 01785 619411

12. Finance.

The monthly accounts were presented and signed by the Chairman. The current account is £4861.03 in credit and the deposit account £3117.17 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. Mr W H Holmes, Village Maintenance August 2014 - £60.00

The clerk had received information about the regulations relating to employers providing pensions for employees. It was noted that Hilderstone Parish Council is not required to contribute to a pension for the clerk as she earns under the threshold of £10,000. The clerk can request that the Parish Council arranges for her to be enrolled in a pension scheme but it would not have to contribute to it. The clerk stated that she does not currently want the Parish Council to enrol her in a pension scheme.

13. Any Other Business.

Cllr. Crump reported that she had found the base of a traffic sign post in the grass verge outside her house. The clerk will try to establish which sign was on the post and whether it need to be replaced.

14. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 24th September at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.25pm

..... Cllr. R. Clark, Chairman. 24.09.14