

Hilderstone Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 28th June 2017 at 7.30p.m.

Present: Cllr. Shelley (Chairman), Cllr. R. Clark, Cllr. J. Crump, Cllr. P. Davies, Cllr. A. Harp, Mrs. H. Howie (Clerk), Cllr. J. Jones. Cllr. A. Stringer (Vice Chairman). Kerry Ashdown a reporter from the Staffordshire Newsletter was present throughout the meeting. Mr and Mrs Westwood, were present before the main meeting to explain their interest in possibly purchasing the Roebuck public house. Phil Dale and Andy Reiss were present from approximately 7.50 to 8.00pm to listen to Mr West.

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

The Chairman invited Mr Westwood to speak to the Parish Council about his interest in the Roebuck before the main meeting. Mr Westwood explained that he and his wife currently own a successful pub called The Vine in Rugeley. They originally ran it as tenant landlords tied to a brewery, but quickly realised that it was difficult to make a decent income under this arrangement. Eventually they were able to purchase the pub, run it as a free house and have made a profit since. Mr Westwood attributes the success of The Vine to the fact that it is very much a community meeting place and he likes to be involved in village life. There are plenty of events and charity fund-raising activities which attract local people into the pub on a regular basis. They also brew their own beer which he says is very popular. If he purchases the Roebuck it would also be run on a free house basis. He doesn't intend to spend a lot on refurbishing the pub initially, but would ensure that the beer cellar and associated equipment is in excellent condition. He would also be happy to incorporate a small village shop selling items that villagers demand most frequently and also newspapers. He does not intend to have a full pub meal menu as he feels that the Roebuck cannot compete with nearby pubs who are well established in this, but would serve bar snacks and have a hot drinks machine. A cash machine may also be installed.

Mr Westwood's main question to the Parish Council was: 'is there enough local support for a pub in the village'? Cllr. Shelley and Cllr. Clark explained that at a recent meeting organised by Phil Dale and Andy Reiss to try to save the Roebuck, approximately 100 people had attended. There are not enough villagers who are willing to invest in and buy the pub; but the meeting would seem to indicate that there is still a body of people who would like to see the pub stay open. At the village consultation meetings held a few years ago some residents expressed an interest in having a small village shop. Most people now recognise that such services in small villages stand a better chance of success if they are run from one establishment such as the pub. Phil Dale explained that 84 households were now registered on his list to save the Roebuck from permanent closure. The Parish Clerk suggested that if Mr Westwood does purchase the Roebuck it might be beneficial for him to liaise with Phil Dale and Andy Reiss on publicity via this list. The Roebuck is still on the Stafford Borough Assets of Community Value register but this should not pose a problem for potential buyers as local residents have recently indicated that they are not willing to buy the pub and run it as a community venture.

2. Apologies. These were received from Cllr. Woodward.

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

4. Matters arising. These were reported under the relevant headings.

5. Borough Councillor's Report. There are not as many villages taking part in the Best Kept Village Competition as in previous years. This is partly due to some of the volunteer groups losing their main co-ordinators and the other volunteers not wanting to organise the work.

Stafford Borough Council Leisure Services is currently reviewing its sport facilities. Westbridge Park in Stone will be included in this review, as it is intended that there will be a significant upgrade of sports and leisure facilities when the food store development goes ahead. The design of the major new housing developments in the Borough is taking up a lot of the Planning Department's time. Although the key service villages currently have enough new housing allocation, the earmarked areas of development may change or be added to over time. The Local Plan has to be reviewed regularly to ensure that enough new housing is being built to meet future needs.

Cllr. Shelley asked who is responsible in Stafford Borough for fire safety in high rise buildings. Cllr. Harp replied that it is Stafford and Rural Homes, as they own all the social housing although there are not many high rise buildings in their portfolio of properties.

6. County Councillor's Report. No report.

7. Planning.

New Planning Applications June 2017

17/26465/FUL Jesmonde, Sandon Road, Hilderstone. Detached dormer bungalow to rear of Jesmonde. This application has been 'Called-in' for a Committee decision by Cllr. Beatty.

Resolved: The Parish Council objects to the plans on the following grounds: Hilderstone is not identified as a key service village in the settlement hierarchy of the current Local Plan for Stafford Borough. The development would be within the Hilderstone Conservation Area and borders Green Belt land. The Parish Council is against garden infill particularly within the Conservation Area. There would be more vehicles exiting and joining Sandon road at a point where vehicles regularly speed. Over-intensification of the site as the property is large in relation to the plot size.

17/26372/HOU Stone Heath, Sharpley Heath Road, Hilderstone. Two-storey extension and internal alterations. **Resolved: The Parish Council has no objections to the plans as it will not impact negatively on neighbours or the surrounding area.**

17/26565/HOU Raylings House, 2 The Meadows, Hilderstone. Garden room and bay window extension. **Resolved: The Parish Council has no objections to the plans.**

Status of Earlier Applications:

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. **REFUSED. The proposal is outside the development boundary for Stone and would cause additional traffic at the rail crossing.**

17/26011/HOU The Breadstores, Sandon Road. Retrospective application for children's play slide and raised timber platform to be re-sited to north west side of the garden away from the road. **ALLOWED.**

17/26067/FUL The Breadstores, Sandon Road. Variation on Condition 6 of previous application 16/23570/LBC. Variation includes cavity drained tanking system to the below ground walls and small detail changes to the timber frame sliding doors. Mainly technical detail. **AWAITING DECISION.**

17/26236/HOU Meadow View, Sharpley Heath Road. Proposed alterations and extensions to existing detached dwelling and detached replacement garage/carport. This will change the property from a bungalow to a two storey house. **AWAITING DECISION.**

8. Traffic and Highways. Staffordshire County Council Highways are currently investing an extra £5 million to repair 13,000 potholes. The extra investment is to be spent on an extra 12

patching crews, four new 18 tonne patching machines and an on-site tarmac manufacturing machine which will prepare hot tarmac.

Cllr. Shelley reported that the speed indicator device has been placed in the old location near the traffic calming build-out instead of the new location opposite the village hall. The Clerk will query this and ask for it to be moved as soon as possible. Cllr. Clark reported that there was an accident on the B5006 Hilderstone Road near to Balaams Lane recently. The road was closed and traffic had to be diverted via Fulford.

9. Footpaths/Village Maintenance/Best Kept Village. It was noted that there are a lot of weeds and grass accumulating in the road gully on Roebuck Bank. The weed-spraying schedule is possibly being reduced by the County Council as part of the cost-reduction measures.

The metal railings at Lower Farm are to be repaired soon due to Bill Holmes' involvement. It was noted that Bill Holmes has made several phone calls and car journeys in relation to this issue. **Resolved: The Parish Council should pay Mr Holmes £25.00 to cover these expenses and send a letter of thanks for acting on behalf of the Parish Council in relation to this issue.**

The Best Kept Village Competition judging team had visited the village in late May and mid June this year. There are still one or two areas of the village which could look better but hopefully Hilderstone will get through to the third round of judging in July.

10. Village Events The Barn Dance held in June was well attended with around 60 participants. Forthcoming events are as follows:

Summer Fair on Saturday 15th July 2017 from 2.00pm on the Lower Farm field or in the Village Hall in case of bad weather.

Charity Bingo Night in aid of the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution on Friday 15th September at 7.00pm in the Village Hall. Pay at the door.

Jumble Sale on Saturday 16th September at 2.00pm in the Village Hall.

Village Trip to Adam Henson's Farm in the Cotswolds on Saturday 30th September, departing at 8.30am from the Village Hall. Tickets cost will be £8.50.

Barn Dance on Friday 17th November 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Village Christmas Party on Tuesday 12th December at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

Village Christmas Concert on Saturday 16th December at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. To be confirmed.

11. Correspondence Received June 2017

- Members' Digest 232
- Notification of Forthcoming Police & Fire Service Consultation.

Members' Digest 231 (Cllr. Jones) – The Health and Scrutiny Committee has recently issued a Suicide Prevention Guide for Local Authorities. On average in England, thirteen people take their own lives every day. This affects not only their families, but their friends and work colleagues. Relationships break down, careers suffer and mental health worsens. The Committee recognises that it needs to engage with as many communities as possible and maintain the mental health funding from Staffordshire County Council.

Fly-tipping is becoming an increasing problem across the U.K. The latest statistics show that in 2014/15 local authorities in England dealt with 900,000 fly-tipping incidents at a cost of nearly £50 million. The most common places for fly-tipping to occur is on the side of highways, on

footpaths and on bridleways. The most common amount to be dumped is a car boot or small van load. Fines can be up to £50,000 or imprisonment. Business are also being reminded that they are responsible for the correct and legal disposal of their waste. Regardless of whether the land is private or public, anyone witnessing fly-tipping can report it to Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

12. Finance.

The monthly accounts were presented and signed by the Chairman. The current account is £8917.74 in credit and the deposit account £3121.01 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. Mrs H Howie, Clerk's Expenses and Mileage (June) - £25.53.
2. Mr W H Holmes, Village Maintenance and Plants for Boxes - £177.75.
3. Mr W H Holmes, Expenses Relating to Lower Farm Railings Repairs - £25.00.

The Clerk reported that the funding conditions for the County Councillors' Local Community Grant Scheme has changed in 2017. Parish Councils applying for a grant are now expected to contribute 50% of the required funding. The Clerk reminded the Parish Council that it was stated in the 2016 grant application for the village trip that the aim was for the trip to become fully self-funded if there was sufficient demand from residents. It was unlikely that the County Councillor would continue to support a grant application for this event in future years. In relation to the Village Christmas Party which costs in the region of £1600, the Parish Council is not in a position to provide 50% of the funding. It was agreed that if the party is to continue in the long term, residents will have to pay higher ticket costs. If the party is not subsidised, the full ticket cost would be approximately £18.50 per person. This still represents good value for a three course sit down meal with entertainment, but it would depend on whether residents are willing to continue to support the event at this cost.

13. Any Other Business. Cllr. Crump reported that there is currently a problem with several vehicles parking on the pavements and road at the bottom of The Meadows. Most of the vehicles are builders vans relating to works being carried out at Priory Cottage on Church Down. Hopefully the problem will be temporary. Where vehicles are blocking driveways, house owners are advised to put a polite notice on the vehicles asking them not to cause an obstruction. Cllr. Crump also reported that there has been more dog fouling on the grass verge on Hilderstone Road and there is a significant amount of litter in the unofficial 'lay-bye' at the entrance to a farm field on Sandon Road. The Clerk will report the litter to Streetscene for removal. It was agreed that a litter bin should not be installed in the 'lay-bye', as this would encourage more drivers to park there.

14. Date of next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 26th July 2017 at 7.30 p.m. The meeting closed at 9.15pm

..... Cllr. M. Shelley, Chairman. 26.07.17