

Hixon Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting Tuesday April 19th 2016

In attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Cllr. B McKeown (Chair), Cllr Mrs S McKeown, Cllr N Baxter, Cllr A Murdoch, Cllr P Hopcroft, Cllr Mrs C Murdoch, Cllr. Mrs M Aberley, Cllr. M Kelly

Members of the public: See list of people signing as In Attendance.

| Ref | Item | Action |
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| 001/16 | Apologies received from members of the public: Cllr. A Perkins | - |
| 002/16 | Cllr Baxter declared an interest in item 032/14 and did not take part in any decisions made on this item. | - |
| 003/16 | Minutes of meeting March 15th 2016 were accepted as accurate. | - |
| 012/16 | Science park off New Road - planning application public discussion: | |
| | Stafford is not a High-Tec area, people would come from outside the area to work and this would make the traffic problems even worse. Who is the proposer? - Jonathan Lloyd. If the site gets planning permission, could other types of industrial buildings end up being there? Yes, a change of use to e.g. B8 would probably be given by Planning. Are the buildings that have received pp in the last few years, at this end of the industrial estate, likely to be built? - Probably not, as originally proposed, they have not been started. Cllr Q: what is happening with the Staffordshire University site? - It has been bought by a Chinese company as an educational site. | |
| 041/15 | Gospel Hall Trust site on New Road: Gospel Hall Trust application is live again, met Richard Rayson with Gospel Hall Trust representative on Friday 22nd January. Planning permission now granted, contact Gospel Hall Trust to ask for an agreement to pay for/towards road safety measures on New Road. March 2016: GH reps. at meeting, arrange meeting with Richard Rayson, to include Gospel Hall representatives, to look at New Road plans, get estimate then arrange who pays what.. Chair is revising original plan for New Road as per agreed proposals to allow Highways to cost the work. Gospel Hall have volunteers that will help in the community - agreed that GH volunteers will litter pick New Road on a regular basis. Contact ALE, JBM and Pete Thomas to ask about tree planting, to improve appearance. | Clerk |
| 026/10 | Rural Exception Housing from Housing Plus and Stafford & Rural Homes: Application out in Dec 2013, validated Feb 2014. Housing proposed is 5 rented properties (2x 2-bed bungalows, 2x 3-bed house, 1x 2-bed house) and 2 shared ownership properties (1x 2-bed and 1x 3-bed houses). Planning permission granted January 2015. Site manager is Mark Morris. Cllr Hopcroft is PC liaison person for the rural exception houses. S&RH report that all the new houses will go to people whose family have lived in Hixon for a number of years. <i>April 2016</i> : Will be completed by the end of the month. Road has been ripped by lorries - it is believed that this will be repaired before contractor moves out, Cllr. Hopcroft will check. Houses look very nice. | Cllr. Hopcroft |
| 067&081/09 & 056/11 | Speed and Highway Safety in Hixon Parish. Maps and details/proposals of highway safety measures have been sent to Chris Mitchell for comments and prices. Priorities as far as PC in concerned are: High Street, then all 3 entrances to the village (New Road, Lea Road and Church Lane - County Council should pay for safety measures on Church Lane outside school). High Street now complete. Lorries still coming through village, Andy will take photos of the signage off the A51 and within the village for discussion. Meeting held with Richard Rayson and Len on 23rd October to discuss more Highway Safety projects in Hixon, including gateway etc. feature on New Road (in conjunction with Gospel Hall Trust). Richard was very helpful, will ask engineers for some costs. Clerk to chase up costings. Feb: At meeting on 22nd January, Richard Rayson was very apologetic about the state of New Road re flooding and pot-holes. Gully emptier was delayed but couldn't solve the problem when it did arrive. Pavement covered in sludge. Culvert blocked. Clerk to keep the pressure on Highways to get the problem sorted. Now more than 3 years since first raised as a problem with Highways. March 2016: Flooding still not properly sorted, water was pumped off but problem re-appeared after more rain. Highways have been out very recently to clear blockages etc. and have asked that the drainage ditch on the JBM land (and the Stoddard/Sutton land west of Sycamore Drive) be cleared out. Miles Brough has said that he would get the ditch on their land sorted and offered to contact Stoddard/Sutton to ask them to do likewise or give permission for them (Broughs) to do the clearing work on their behalf. HPC happy for this work to be sorted out by Miles Brough, Clerk to contact Miles Brough to confirm this. Highways have also been working on the land owned by ALE on the other side of New Road, to try and clear a blockage. April 2016: Need to try and get money from the developer of the 30 houses to pay for the raised crossing outside the school. | Clerk |
| As above | Speedwatch Campaign: Cllr Hopcroft is now running Speedwatch and needs police training, waiting for Steve Bird to ring him back. Cllr. Hopcroft has contacted the volunteers to check they want to continue. The speed gun does not need calibrating, use of the tuning fork is fine. More volunteers required, put advert in Compass, website etc.. Have 6 people and training will be arranged. Still could do with more volunteers, include in Newsletter. Cllr. Hopcroft waiting to hear from Police (Steve Nelson) as to when they can arrange suitable training. Plan to start up again in Spring 2016 - raise in Spring Newsletter. <i>April 2016</i> : Newsletter has resulted in 1 more volunteer, really need another 2 or 3 more. | Cllr Hopcroft/ Chair |

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| 021/09, 023/09, 074/09, 091/09 | Playing Fields Report: Complaint received by Clerk re amount of bird poo on swings, suggested using bird repellent on bar at top of swings. April 2016: Waiting for some replacement handles for FAF equipment as promised by service team. The green paint on the MUGA has been found to be slippy when wet - can't pressure wash as may break up the surface, which is porous to avoid getting slippy. Would have to be cleaned by hand which isn't feasible. No-one else has reported a problem. | Cllr. Hopcroft. |
| 097/07 | Allotments: <i>Feb 16</i> : WFAA have agreed to use HPC invoice for rent and water and add their own charges on a separate combined invoice, examples distributed at meeting. Invoices for 2016-2017 were sent out by WFAA on the old format in error, due to time pressures. Plot-holders have been provided with examples of what the invoices will look like in future. Should 2 separate invoices plus a covering statement be used in future instead of the proposed two invoice system? <i>April 2016</i> : Is the derelict building safe? Consider knocking it down to 1m - building belongs to landowner, so his decision as to what to do with it, PC has no appetite to restore it any longer. | Clerk |
| 051/10 | JBMI Liaison Committee - County Council led liaison group is now set up (Sept 2013): Meeting with Gospel Hall Trust people threw up problems with litter and mess at entrance road to JBM (off New Road) by Gospel Hall Trust site entrance. Clerk has contacted JBM and they will talk to Gospel Hall Trust to discuss how best to sort the problem out. Site liaison meeting held 1st December 2014, mainly discussed the fire in June 2014. Cllr Mrs M Aberley is the new PC representative and gave a summary of the things discussed at the June meeting at the June 2015 PC meeting. Cllr Mrs M Aberley gave a summary of discussions from meeting of Dec.7th, all councillors and all residents invited to look around JBM site, by appointment. Next meeting June 6th 2016. <i>March 2016</i> : Cllr. Mrs M Aberley to raise the concerns expressed by Iain Ochiltree at next liaison meeting (see emails). | Cllr Mrs M Aberley |
| 050/12 and 032/12 (Plan for Stafford) | Neighbourhood Plan: <i>2015: Dec-15</i> : Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to SBC on November 23rd and is now in consultation stage, ending on January 15th. <i>Jan-16</i> : PC and NP group have agreed to use Nigel McGurk as examiner for Plan, let Alex Yendole know. <i>Feb 2016</i> : Gladman site visit was February 16th, inspector listened to what people had to say. Neighbourhood Plan has been examined and some amendments are required. Clerk has summarised the recommended changes and circulate. <i>March 2016</i> : NP Group have met and agreed changes, return NP to Alex Yendole ASAP. Meeting at SBC on March 17th to discuss the referendum, try and get it in May or June, along with other election/referendum. <i>April 2016</i> : Date for referendum is September 15th, couldn't be fitted in before early September by SBC. | Clerk/Chair |
| 069/12 | Bank House car park payments: Cllr. Mrs C Murdoch has been unable to contact to Steve Nuttall using the phone. The Bank House is now up for sale. Clerk has let Estate Agent know that an agreement has been place for a quarterly charge for Bank House customers to use the PC car park and that the PC is willing to continue with that arrangement. <i>March 2016</i> : Proposal made by Chair that the solicitor's letter be sent to Joules, so that it is on record that our solicitor believes that the agreement is still in force. Voting: 5 in favour to send letter, 1 abstention (Clare). Who will check the defibrillator if pub becomes vacant? Cllr. Mrs C Murdoch has spoken to the tenants (who plan to leave May 20th/21st) and they believe that Joules will put a manager in if the pub hasn't sold by then. It is not intended that the pub will close. <i>April 2016</i> : Some Cllrs. had felt the solicitor's letter might be taken the wrong way by Joules, agreed that Chair would draft a letter to ask Joules some questions. Draft discussed at meeting, some amendments agreed. Chair to amend letter and send to Clerk to be sent to Steve Nuttall. | Cllr. Mrs C Murdoch/ Chair/Clerk |
| 039/13 | Consider best way of producing walk leaflets: At the January 2016 meeting It was decided that the walks need to be walked again and new descriptions and photos taken as the current wording etc. seems outdated. Cllrs. McKeowns and Murdochs to walk the walks next weekend. | Cllrs. McKeown and Murdoch |
| 032/14 | Hall Farm Close Open Space: Met Phil Gammon on Nov 6th, agreed that SBC would fully repair or replace fence and send details of this and the regime for strimming the swale to the Clerk, Clerk will then get quote for strimming. <i>Dec 15</i> : Reply from Phil Gammon says that SBC will undertake some more repairs but do not intend to fully replace the fence. This seems to be a step back from the site meeting when a new fence was discussed as a possibility and did not appear to be a problem. Contact SBC and say that the PC do not want to take on Vicarage Way OS without a new secure fence and will just take on HFC OS on this basis. <i>Jan-16</i> : No response from SBC yet, Clerk to chase. <i>Feb 2016</i> : Still no response from SBC, legal people chasing up Phil Gammon. HF Residents Association have written to the leader of SBC to ask him to look in to what is going on. He replied to say he had asked the legal team to respond. <i>March 2016</i> : SBC have now agreed to remove the swale and the Vicarage Way OS fence from the lease, these will remain in the ownership of SBC and they will maintain them - agreed to go ahead with lease on this basis, subject to re-confirmation of mowing costs. <i>April 2016</i> : Cost of placing advert for 2 weeks (£316.40 + VAT) agreed, Clerk to get back to SBC and agree to pay. | Clerk |
| 037/15 | Ownership of/registering the land at end of Greenfields: The PC does not own this land, the owner could not be traced previously and the PC has maintained the land for in excess of 12 years (since 2001). Clerk to check where PC bit of land ends and ask solicitor for a quote for getting the land registered to the PC. Discussed whether it was worth spending the money for legal work to get ownership - Clerk to approach Land Registry to see if we can establish ownership without involving solicitor. Reply received, we can do it without solicitor, will need Statement of Truth and preferably confirmation from other parties. Two statements required plus another form. Two pieces of evidence found. Cllr Mrs M Aberley has visited Mrs Collyer and the paperwork has been completed. Chair has now completed paperwork on behalf of the Parish Council. Clerk to put paperwork together and contact Land Registry. <i>April 2016</i> : Cheque for £100 (maximum) cost agreed and signed, Clerk to get everything ready and send off to Land Registry. Queried as to whether it was worth keeping the fence on this bit of land - need something in place due to steep drop - look at on asset inspection. | Clerk |

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| 054/14 | Situation regarding Hixon drop-in surgery and Hazeldene House Surgery Patient Participation Panel: A salaried GP, Emma Wood, started early August. Dr Davies retired at the start of September but will return to do some locum work. There is now a minor illness clinic run by nurses, covering things such as ENT and water infections. The number of missed appointments has decreased again. <i>Nov-15 and Jan-16</i> : nurse clinic working well, looking to appoint another GP. <i>Feb.2016</i> : A male doctor may be starting working 2-3 days per week (Dr Siddiqui (?)) Looking again for site for new surgery. March 2016: Suggested that Hazeledene are asked about their "Friends and Family Results". What can the PC do to try and get a Pharmacy in Hixon? <i>April 2016</i> : Next Patient Participation meeting is May 19th. | Cllr. Hopcroft |
| 050/15 | Community Involvement to improve Hixon - ideas on how to achieve this: Cllr. Baxter had sent his initial thoughts through to Clerk. Decided that Springtime was best to get people motivated. Currently roads and pavement dirty etc. Ideas for next meeting. Don't rush it, take things slowly. Include in Spring Newsletter. <i>March 2016</i> : Chair to come up with words for Newsletter. Gospel Hall volunteers will litter pick New Road. PC needs Hi-Viz vests for highway inspections, roadside jobs etc. Clerk to order 10 vests with Hixon Parish Council on the back, plus some gloves for litter picking. The NHT team's response to requested jobs appears positive. | Councillors/Clerk |
| 055/15 | Using Cloud Storage on G-mail for PC documents: From July 2015 meeting - IT sub-committee to be set up of Cllrs. Mrs S McKeown, Baxter, A Murdoch and Clerk. Meet on Wednesday 9th March, Bank House 7.30pm. Terms of reference to be drawn up. First meeting was March 9th, concentrated on storage and filing - various actions arose. Next meeting Wednesday 20th April, 7.30pm in Bank House. | Cllr. A Murdoch, Cllr. N Baxter, Clerk |
| 056/15 | Discuss plastic benches/tables for playing field and another bollard light for car park (Solispost, doesn't need mains connection): seats are in budget for current year and next year, all to consider styles, designs, colour etc. for next meeting. <i>March 2016</i> : Clerk to look at deals available for coloured benches and picnic tables. April 2016: Decided to order 2 green 5ft benches, ask George for quote to fix them in to ground. | Clerk |
| 058/15 | Consider applying for funds under the Community Footpaths Initiative 2016/2017: Clerk to re-circulate the email and attached letter regarding this, one suggestion is that PC's use the funds to purchase equipment to keep footpaths clear. Cllrs. to look at things that need doing to the footpaths during the walks to produce the Walk Leaflets. | Cllrs. McKeown and Murdoch |
| 060/15 | Arrange judges for Children's poster competition: Other than Cllr. Hopcroft, no year groups to avoid. | Clerk |
| 004/16 | Consider request from resident for 40mph speed limit through Pasturefields: see Public Participation, Council agreed to support the residents in their bid to reduce the speed limit through Pasturefields to 40mph, Clerk to contact Cllr. Bloomer. | Clerk |
| 005/16 | Sign off Financial Risk Assessment for forthcoming year: risk assessment read out, agreed and signed off. | Clerk |
| 006/16 | Consider continued membership of CPRE for 2016-2017 for £36pa - continued membership agreed, Clerk to add to next agenda for payment. | Clerk |
| 007/16 | Consider renewal of membership of the Community Council of Staffordshire for £25 pa: Clerk to get details of what benefits membership provides. | Clerk |
| 008/16 | Consider the loft extension at 47 Ridgeway (item requested by resident): this loft extension is permissible under "Permitted Development" rights, planning permission is not required. Clerk to write to resident. | Clerk |
| 009/16 | Consider Financial Checks by Cllr Mrs S McKeown: The water meter reading(s) for the allotments should be signed/dated by the landowner - Chair to ask landowner to do this. The Acer invoices are reduced by 5% as per agreement as a temporary retention in case of problems - ask Acer how they report their VAT (against invoices or against receipts) - Clerk. Should Acer be raising credit notes for the PC? | Clerk |
| 010/16 | Consider report and survey/feedback on Stafford Borough's recreational facilities: the only comment for Hixon is that more children's play areas are required (based on inaccurate data from 2103) - Clerk to reply saying that the PC looks forward to receiving the CIL contributions to fund these, in due course. | Clerk |
| 011/16 | Consider purchase of filing/storage cabinets for the portacabin: Chair believes it would be useful to have another 2 filing cabinets in the portacabin for storage, agreed to purchase 2 from Katherine House Hospice for approximately £60. However, there may be some going for free from Chase Estate Agents in Rugeley, Cllr. Kelly to enquire and feedback. Agreed to have the free ones if available. | Cllr. Kelly/ Clerk |
| 013/16 | Chairman's announcements: It is the Parish meeting on May 17th, starting at 7pm. | |
| 014/16 | Councillor Questions: | |
| | Roly Tonge should be out of hospital and home this week. | - |
| | Vehicle parking on Smithy Lane is very bad, driveways are being blocked, vehicles are parking on the double yellow lines. Fridays and lunchtimes are the worst - Clerk to raise with Parking Enforcement. Should the PC put up signs on the lampposts etc.? - No | Clerk |
| | Piles of road sweepings on airfield estate - the EA might be interested in these due to contamination from bitumen etc., Clerk to contact EA. | Clerk |
| | The scrap lorries parked at the side of the road are a safety hazard, loose parts such as doors may blow off and hit people, walkers etc. Could do people a lot of damage. Clerk to raise with SBC. | Clerk |

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| | Can we start having Crime Reports again, it is a long time since the last one. Clerk to contact local police. | Clerk |
| 015/16 | Date of next meeting: May 17th 2016 | Clerk to book Memorial Hall |
| 016/16 | Public Participation: | |
| | Re reducing speed limit on A51 through Pasturefields: A resident has been in contact with Cllr. Len Bloomer to ask for a reduction in speed to 40mph, in line with Weston, Sandon and Wolseley Bridge. Here have been some accidents recently due to vehicles turning in to gateways, lorries in to Ed Weetmans etc. Cllr. Bloomer has said that he will put this forward for review and ask Highways to look at it. HPC agreed to support this request and also to ask for a reduction in speed on Church Lane. | Clerk |
| | Is there any possibility of getting a doctor to take surgeries in Hixon again, now that there is anew doctor at Hazeldene House? - not at the moment as another doctor has gone part-time, this is raised regularly at the Patient Participation meetings. | - |
| | Has there been any updates on the Gladman appeal? - No, still waiting. | - |
| 017/16 | AOB | |
| | Copies of the HPC Bank Reconciliation and Receipt & Expenditure sheet for the whole of 2015-2016 were distributed to councillors by the Clerk. | - |
| | What action should be taken about the memorial tree on Walnut Crest that has been cut down and removed - look at on next asset inspection. | Clerk |
| 018/16 | Planning Applications: | |
| | 16/23927/HOU: Demolition of single storey extension and construction of 2-storey side extension to form lounge, study WC and additional stair with first floor master bedroom with en-suite and dressing room, Broadmore Farmhouse, Broadmore Lane, Hixon | Object |
| 019/16 | Planning Reports | |
| | 15/23451/FUL Extension to existing portal framed livestock/storage building plus the demolition and replacement of existing asbestos barn structure with new animal and vehicle storage barn, at Beech Tree Farm, London Road, Pasturefields | Permit |
| | 16/23588/HOU Single storey rear extension, 1 Highfield Road, Hixon | Permit |
| 020 /16 | Bank Reconciliation: | Done |
| 021/16 | Schedule of agreed payments | |
| | C Gill salary April (Gross). Local Gov act 1972 s111. | £748.96 |
| | C Gill allowance (costs: working from home) - April. Local Gov act 1972 s111 | £59.50 |
| | Reimbursement C Gill stamps 2nd class (12x£0.55 = Local Gov act 1972 s112 | £6.60 |
| | Reimbursement C Gill mileage (60 miles @ £0.45p/mile). Local Gov act 1972 s111 | £27.00 |
| | Reimbursement C Gill Clerk's mobile phone and £10 top up. Local Gov act 1972 s113 | £10.00 |
| | Fenns - ink and paper | £70.02 |
| | Land Registry for Greenfields registration (maximum price) | £100.00 |
| | SPCA/NALC subscription 2016-2017 | £384.00 |
| | Solicitor for work re use of car park by Bank House customers | £612.00 |
| | Avdec for website domain renewal for 2 years | £96.00 |
| | Transfer of VAT repayment to Ring-fenced Funds account (VAT from Allotment Gateway spend) | £573.00 |
| | Graham Lowndes for hedge cutting, side of playing field | £600.00 |
| | Acer for grass mowing - March (less 5%) | £570.93 |
| | Hixon Memorial Hall January to March room bookings | £57.60 |
| 022/16 | Documents Received: Briefing note on NALC's services | |

Meeting finished at 10 pm.