

Hixon Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting Tuesday April 18th 2017

In attendance for all or part of the meeting:

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

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

Ref	Item	Action
001/16	Apologies received from: Members of the public: Cllr Len Bloomer, Cllr. Stewart Learoyd, Cllr. A Perkins	-
002/16	Declarations of interest: None	-
003/16	Minutes of meeting March 21st 2017 and April 13th 2017 were accepted as accurate.	-
041/15 and 032/16, 067&081/09 & 056/11 & part 041/15 plus 038/16	Speed and Highway Safety in Hixon Parish plus Village Gateway Features (New Road and Church Lane): Need to try and get money from the developer of the 30 houses to pay for the raised crossing outside the school. Involve Chief Executive of SCC if necessary as he wants PC's to more actions. (From Parish Meeting, Action: Draw up list of businesses on New Road and Church Lane Industrial Estates - Councillors and Clerk). Agreed to spend up to £500 on drawings, specifications etc. for Gateways on New Road and Church Lane, to include tree species etc. Chair has spoken to landscape architect about both areas and sent photos, he will draw up soft landscaping ideas. Someone at SCC has agreed to draw water colours based on the landscaping ideas, to provide an easier picture to envisage. Working party of Cllrs. B McKeown, Mrs C Murdoch, Mrs M Aberley and M Kelly to take the raised crossing forward. Chair to write remit/challenges for the working party. <i>Dec 2016</i> : WP met, agreed Church Lane as first priority (raised crossing, gateways etc.). Involve local businesses and SCC (Richard Rayson/James Bailey). <i>Jan-17</i> : Swynnerton PC are putting in white plastic gates at the entrance to Yarnfield village, they are paying for them themselves. <i>Feb-17</i> : Met with Richard Rayson on Jan 19th re Church Lane and New Road, plus other matters raised. Good meeting, awaiting plans and costings for Church Lane Raised crossing. <i>Apr-17</i> : Richard Rayson says it is with Amey, should get something from them April/May.	Chair
As above	Speedwatch Campaign: Sessions planned, would like to do 1 per week. Need a minimum of 3 people. Chair would like to train. <i>Apr-17</i> : 1 session held since last meeting.	Cllr Hopcroft
021/09, 023/09, 074/09, 091/09	Playing Fields Report: <i>Mar-17</i> : John will remove piles of cuttings once a year, will provide a cost for this. No real problems, Cllr Hopcroft will remove the old wooden bench. Clerk to order a replacement green recycled plastic bench, in 2017-2018. <i>Apr-17</i> : Grass cutting could be better.	Cllr Hopcroft/Clerk
097/07	Allotments: <i>Feb 17</i> : Quote for weed-spraying the central driveway, car park and where the building used to be is £25+VAT per occasion if done at the same time as the other areas in Hixon (April/May and end of August) - this was agreed. Chair had sourced a price for 2 different thicknesses of tannelised boards and also eco sleepers to use as edgings for the central drive. Clerk to contact Allotment Cttee. to let them know about the weed-killing and to enquire whether plot-holders would work together to put these edgings in place. <i>Mar-17</i> : Cttee. say that they will organise the laying of the edging boards with plot-holders, have asked for a systemic weed killer and a windless day. Clerk to check with TGM. Recirculate email with dimensions/prices of edgings. <i>Apr-17</i> : Edging dimensions decided on as 200mm x 22 mm. Discuss at meeting with WFAA Cttee. members re delivery, putting in place etc. Minutes from extra meeting on April 13th agreed. Chair to arrange meeting with WFAA Cttee. representatives.	Clerk
051/10	JBMI Liaison Committee: Next meeting June 5th 2017.	Clerk
050/12 and 032/12 (Plan for Stafford)	Neighbourhood Plan: The Neighbourhood Plan was considered by Cabinet on 3 November 2016 and adopted by Council on 22 November 2016. The Neighbourhood Plan is now part of the Borough's development plan for making planning decisions. <i>Jan-17</i> : It has been agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan Scrutiny Committee (comprising the original Steering Group members) meet 6-monthly starting in June 2017, to review the plan and its effectiveness. <i>Mar-17</i> : Date set as Wednesday June 14th, 7pm, Bank House.	Clerk
069/12	Bank House car park payments: <i>Nov 16</i> : Joules sticking to not considering a contribution at the moment - leave until March, when situation with Bank House's financial situation should be clearer. <i>Dec 16</i> : Sarah is the new manager of the Bank House from 21st Dec. Cllr Mrs C Murdoch to check with Sarah that the de-fib. is being checked every week and provide assistance with paperwork if required. <i>Jan-17</i> : Sarah does not have the code for the defib., Clerk to let her know it. One of the 2 Yew trees has been cut down - Consider a TPO for the remaining Yew tree as it part of the setting of the listed building. Liaise with Mary (leaseholder of pub). <i>Feb 17</i> : Sarah now has the code for the cabinet, instructions on what to check/record and suitable paperwork. Mary is in agreement with getting a TPO on the remaining Yew tree. <i>Mar-17</i> : Clerk has contacted SBC re TPOs. Cllr. Mrs C Murdoch will talk to Sarah/Mary re funding items, community involvement etc. By May meeting.	Clerk

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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 ASAP. <i>Oct 16</i> : get together and discuss how best to proceed. <i>Nov 16</i> : As previous month but the Councillor Murdochs have found a new walk to add to the others (Swansmoor Circular)! In Progress. <i>Mar/Apr-17</i> : More walks found, will write up.	Cllrs. McKeown and Murdoch
037/15	Ownership of/registering the land at end of Greenfields: <i>April 2016</i> : Cheque for £100 (maximum) cost agreed and signed, Clerk to get everything ready and send off to Land Registry. <i>April 2016</i> : 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. <i>May to Sept 2016</i> : All paperwork posted, now waiting to hear back from Land Registry. <i>Oct-16 to Mar-17</i> : LR chased - large back log, still waiting. Should be very soon. <i>Apr-17</i> : Land now registered to Hixon Parish Council, discharge item from agenda.	Clerk
054/14, 034/16	Hixon drop-in surgery and Hazeldene House Surgery incl. Patient Participation Panel: <i>Feb 17</i> : From patient liaison group meeting - there won't be a new surgery. There will not be a doctor in Hixon. The current emphasis is for larger surgeries covering big communities. The STP - a 5year forward view) will be/has been formulated. Need to look at who is leading the STP for Staffordshire, what is in the plan and how it impacts rural communities like Hixon. Engage in Public Consultation process, encourage residents as well. Includes Health & Social Care so involves SCC). <i>Mar-17</i> : Hubs of ca.34,000 people are proposed - how will people from villages get there? Need a few people (residents and/or PC) to go on the STP consultation panel. Get some more information and then get the information out residents. Need to know what we are asking people to volunteer for. <i>Apr-17</i> : Stewart Learoyd has provided a link on joining Healthwatch. Cllr. Mrs C Murdoch has said she will join. Staffordshire has a huge overspend on the STP, measure will be put in place to reduce it. There will be a challenge to the hub basis coming in. Probably many changes to come yet.	Councillors
050/15	Community Involvement to improve Hixon - ideas on how to achieve this: set up a sub-group - Cllrs. Mrs C Murdoch and Mrs M Aberley volunteered to join Cllr. Baxter on the sub-group. Cllrs. McKeown to join the working party, Chair to write remit/challenges for the working party. Rear of Hammonds Croft open space would be a good community project as it needs clearing out and cleaning up (undergrowth etc.) <i>Nov 16</i> : Met October 21st - good meeting, Hammonds Croft OS and path at rear to be first priority, followed by corner of Stowe Lane (Mount Farm). Letters to be drafted and sent via Clerk. Bus shelters - improve appearance, particularly Back Lane (general area of bus shelter). <i>Mar-17</i> : Hammonds Croft community get together was on Sunday March 19th, good turnout. Notes taken by Cllr. Mrs C Murdoch. Need to get some prices and plans drawn up. Involve Taylor-Wimpey MD if necessary, to get responses from TW. Get prices for dog poo bag dispenser. Get dog person from SBC out to look around Hixon and talk to Councillors (Mon/Fri best). Look at appropriate posters. Everyone needs to be prepared to challenge people who don't clear up their dog's poo. <i>Apr-17</i> : Meeting with Saul Hocking from SBC 10.30am at Hall, to discuss campaign.	Cllrs. Baxter, Mrs C Murdoch, McKeowns and Mrs M Aberley.
055/15	IT and 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. Group met June 27th, quite a useful meeting. <i>July</i> : Could a drop-box be used for shared storage, rather than the Cloud? Yes, similar idea. <i>Oct 16</i> : Next meeting November 29th, 7.30pm, Bank House. <i>Nov 16</i> : Put a laptop and projector in draft budget. <i>Dec 16</i> : IT group met, propose stand-alone projector so PC/laptop not essential. Need to have someone to maintain the website, Paul Dadge sorting current problem out. May need a maintenance contract, local person lives in cottages on New Road - would one-man-band be suitable? <i>Jan-17</i> : Next meeting Wednesday 22nd March Bank House 7pm. <i>Feb 17</i> : Neither James Peach nor Paul Dadge can take on the maintenance of the website. Chair to contact Neil Fletcher re maintenance and possible new website. <i>Apr-17</i> : Meeting Wednesday 22nd March did not take place due to unavailability. An ex-resident of Hixon (Matt Collins) has offered to help and can provide help with website as well. Chair to follow-up.	Chair
004/16	Consider request from resident for 40mph speed limit through Pasturefields: Residents are taking this further themselves, council to write to residents and businesses for their views/support, Chair to organise letter. <i>Dec 16</i> : Letters gone out to residents and businesses, all residents responding in favour if 40mph speed limit reduction, no replies from businesses yet. <i>Jan-17</i> : 2 business replies, both wanting reduction to 40mph. Write to Richard Rayson (copy James Bailey) asking for this to be implemented (give letter by hand at meeting on 19th January). <i>Feb 17/Mar 17</i> : Waiting to hear from Richard Rayson. <i>Apr-17</i> : Will have to get funding form the new County Councillor.	Clerk

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041/16	<p>Parking on Smithy Lane and McColls (rubbish, hole, overgrown grass/hedge, parking on grass verges on Hill Croft): . Nov 16:Complaints from Hill Croft re rubbish behind shop, leaking pipe and hedge/grass area. Visit on Sat. 19th 10am to look at. Dec 16: Civil (Parking) Enforcement officer attended Smithy Lane area on 16th Dec. Lots of comments on FB page. McColls manager (Scott) needs to be followed up re actions on leaking pipe, mess, untidy rear to shop, untidy grass/bank. - Chair. Overflowing manhole - Write to Severn Trent re the problem, ask them to get it sorted out. Jan-17: Severn Trent have confirmed that it is a build up of grease/fat that is blocking the drain and causing the manhole to overflow. Clerk has written to Fish & Chip shop end Chinese take-away to let them know and to ask them to dispose of the waste fat in the correct manner. If problem re-occurs, let Severn Trent know about the frequency of the problem, the cause (according to their staff) and the likely culprits. Chair to follow up with McColls manager (Scott) re the leaking pipe, mess at rear, grass/hedge etc. Ask parking officer why no tickets were given out as cars were seen parked on double-yellow lines when officers present. Ask for them to return. Feb 17: Cars are given the opportunity to move on within the 5 minute observation period, 10 cars were moved on. Request made for follow-up visits. Chair has spoken to the manager at McColls, he will chase up Head Office re the repairs and clearing up the grounds. Mar-17: Severn Trent have found a leak in the drain a few metres from the overflowing manhole. Chair has spoken to the engineer about the potential problem from the fast food outlets. Contact McColls Head Office about the lack of action on clearing up the McColls site. Apr-17: McColls Head Office has said that the area will be cleared up etc. - not happened as yet, if not done by next meeting then contact them again.</p>	Chair/Clerk
042/16	<p>Painting of swing bar and rubbing down/oiling of notice boards: <i>Dec 16:</i> Swings have now been painted satisfactorily, McKeowns will do the notice boards. Jan-17/Feb 17: Progressing ..<i>Mar-17:</i> Ang from the Pet Shop has stained the Bath Lane/Sycamore Drive notice board and will gold paint the letters. Clerk has written to thank her.</p>	Clerk
046/16	<p>Parking problems on The Croft: Discussed what had been said at the asset inspection re the possibility of creating more parking spaces using grasscrete or similar, along one side of the road (where grass is now) and also possibly at the top of the road. Problem of who will pay for the work? Decided to contact S&RH re the tension between one of their tenants and her neighbours over parking issues. <i>Sept 2016:</i> S&RH had visited but did not think they could help. Clerk to try and arrange meeting with Highways, Fire Service, Police, S&RH to discuss what may be done to help. Oct 16: meeting held 17th Oct, some agreement on best way forward but S&RH did not attend. S&RH appear to own the track and footpath behind The Croft, in the field. <i>Nov 16:</i>S&RH won't fence the track off. PC could plant the CPRE trees, ask permission from S&RH, need to know width of track. Let residents know what is going on. <i>Dec 16:</i> Have looked at approx. cost of putting in a sheep-proof fence along track, this may be better option. Letters to Monty Brown and The Croft residents agreed, write to Monty Brown first, leave The Croft residents for now. <i>Jan-17:</i> Monty Brown (Grange Hill farm) say they own the track, waiting for S&RH to clarify what documentation of ownership they have. <i>Feb 17:</i> S&RH now say they don't own the track. Arrange a site meeting with S&RH to discuss. Mar-17: S&RH definitely don't own the track. The majority of residents have requested additional parking spaces. Try and get a price from Highways for grasscreting down the side of the grass on RHS looking up the hill, Chair has some plans. Clerk to contact Monty Brown about the use of the track to assist with parking - purchase the track? Is there a legal agreement of any sort residents/Monty? Leak on The Croft - try and get Severn Trent/Highways to sort, contact both. <i>Apr-17:</i> Monty Brown prepared to attend PC meeting to discuss the track. Invite him to meet with Brendan and Paul prior to next meeting.</p>	Clerk
049/16	<p>Items from asset inspection: Get a quote for a Knee Rail to replace fence on Greenfields land. 450mm high, leave gap for mowing equipment access. Verbal quote of £450 considered too high, go back and see if lower quote is offered, if not get more quotes. <i>Nov 16:</i> All quotes higher than expected - agreed to plant hedge instead, 17m stretch. Cllrs. to remove old fence and gate. Clerk to contact CPRE. Jan -17: Residents on Greenfields have requested a fence rather than a hedge. Agreed that Clerk will get quotes for a picket fence, with gap at bottom to permit strimming. <i>Feb 17:</i> Agreed to accept lowest quote of £480 incl. VAT, move fence a bit further back from kerb than current fence. (Wait for Land Registry work to be completed). <i>Apr-17:</i> Fence can now go-ahead, set fence back by approx. 1 foot from current line.</p>	Clerk
052/16	<p>Changes to Parliamentary constituency boundaries: A change to the Parliamentary constituency boundary that put Hixon with Lichfield would not affect Hixon's relationship with Stafford Borough Council. Residents generally feel they have a relationship with Stafford rather than Lichfield and so this proposed change would not be welcomed. <i>Oct 16:</i> Put link to consultation in Newsletter, put in objection to change from PC. <i>Dec 16:</i> Objection put in, consultation ends in March. Bring back to agenda in March. <i>Mar-17:</i> Second chance to comment on others' proposals - need to comment by March 27th. Chair to circulate the proposals, agreed that comments from James Preston of Little Haywood were worth supporting. Apr-17: Consultation response put in. Clerk to contact the Electoral Commission to say that if the boundary changed prior to June 2022, the MP for Hixon would not be the one elected for Hixon this June.</p>	Chair/Clerk
053/16	<p>Consider sites for planting of trees by CPRE: Along the back of the playing field is one site, councillors to think of others. <i>Nov 16:</i> Hedge on Greenfields, track at back of The Croft. Walk around the village to look for any more sites. <i>Dec 16:</i> Community involvement group to decide where trees should go. Meet up on January 8th to look at sites in village. Jan-17: Bottom of village inspected, top part to be walked ASAP. <i>Feb 17:</i> additional tree sites on Vicarage Way, Meadow Glade, Church Road. Clerk to ask how trees are delivered. <i>Mar-1 and Apr-17:</i> Now looking at Autumn planting, need to finalise the number of trees required.</p>	Clerk

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061/16	In Camera items:	Clerk
062/16	Car park No Parking area: Update: Cllr. A Murdoch stated that BriStor should be able to paint a hatched area as long the paint colour was not specific. <i>Feb17</i> : Bristol do not have any suitable line paint but are prepared to undertake the painting. Clerk to check price of suitable paint from Travis Perkins. <i>Mar-17</i> : Paint much cheaper from Dulux shop, Cllr. A Murdoch to find out if Bristol will provide the stencil and labour. <i>Apr-17</i> : Chair to purchase the paint, Cllr. A Murdoch to follow-up with BriStor.	Clerk
068/16	Village competition 2017: Posters will be ready for collection on May 5th. Get prices for Perspex sheets to put up in bus shelters (make a case for posters): 6ft x 2ft, 4mm or 6mm thickness.	Clerk
069/16	Naming of road with the 6 bungalows, off New Road: Agreed to put in formal objection to the name of Lancaster Close, there does not appear to be any cost involved. Put forward the name Roland Court, waiting for Magistrates Court to decide. <i>Apr-17</i> : Court requires a fee of £205 for an appeal and a further £567 if the appeal is contested by the council. Clerk has queried the difference between an appeal and an objection and was referred back to SBC legal dept. Awaiting their response.	Clerk
070/16	Phone box on corner of Bath Lane/Sycamore Drive: A group of residents from Hammonds Croft and Sycamore Drive, calling themselves Friends of Hixon Community, have got together to carry out jobs around the village. They have cleaned the phone box and tidied up that area and made it look attractive with planters with the help of the Pet Shop. They aim to continue doing more jobs around the village and asked for suggestions. They would like to get the phone box replaced by a red one and use it as a book exchange and/or Defibrillator storage place. Would seek to get grants and possibly donations from residents. Ang from the pet shop is willing to do any painting job that is required. The group will be taking part in the Great British Spring Clean. <i>Mar-17</i> : Price for refurbished red phone box from the official supplier is £2750 + VAT + delivery. Information passed on to the Friends of Hixon Community.	-
073/16	Consider request for planting by resident in corner of OS on Sycamore Drive (next to No 1): Letter received from residents expressing disappointment. Decided to reconsider subject to conditions: need a planting scheme, contractor to have public liability insurance, forward plan to protect the asset in future etc. Chair to speak to residents.	Chair
017/17	Problems on Swansmoor Drive with Midland Heart property: Some councillors have been to look and consider that many of the social housing residencies were in poor condition. Clerk to contact Midland Heart to ask if they are satisfied with the way that these properties are being maintained.	
018/17	Replacing the lamp on the bollard light: Agreed expenditure of up to £50 for Cllr. Hopcroft to purchase a new bulb for the bollard light.	
019/17	Protocol for Marking the Death of the Sovereign or other members of the Royal Family: Agreed that Hixon would like its own pages, check with Memorial Hall re the pages being available inside the hall.	Clerk
020/17	Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities: 2017 Edition: Consider if this affects HPC Standing Orders, other regulations etc. A minor error affecting Parish Meetings has been corrected and some of the explanations in Part 5 have been made clearer: Check which pages this affects, with SPCA.	Clerk
013/16	Chairman's announcements:	
	Chair asked for ideas for what to include in Parish Meeting: Photos of assets, Parish Community Involvement, graphics, another Clean-Up weekend. £50 budget agreed for graphics, equipment etc. Decide next Clean-Up day should be Sunday 11th June. Put leaflets around village.	-

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014/16	Councillor Questions:	
	Pot holes on New Road: most filled in (still a bad one outside entrance to industrial estate) - why hasn't the whole road been re-surfaced, would be more sensible. The pavement at Lauder Grove (next to Constable Croft) is in a bad condition.	Clerk
	Put details of who to report problems such as potholes in the next Newsletter.	Chair
	Could councillors have business cards to give out, that included contact info. for Highways, EA etc. as well as the PC and their own contact info. Put contact info. for Highways etc on website.	Clerk
	The leaking water problem on The Croft seems to have stopped. A leak near the Old Vicarage on Church Lane has been sorted out by Severn Trent.	-
	Some footpaths on Monty Brown's land have been ploughed and cannot be walked. Cllr. Hopcroft will have a look and see how bad they are.	Cllr. Hopcroft
	There had been a crash in New Road. A hedge had been knocked and a post had been knocked down.	-
	The mud and debris in Church Lane has been swept.	-
	The apparent new gateway on Stowe Lane is not actually new, it has just been uncovered and opened up.	-
015/16	Date of next meeting: May 16th 2017	Clerk to book Memorial Hall
065/16	County and Borough Councillors Reports	None
016/16	Public Participation:	
	There had been an accident in New Road, post been knocked over.	-
017/16	AOB	
	Community Footpaths bid: One suggestion by SCC was that parish councils bid for money to buy equipment to clear footpaths, trim trees etc. Cllr. Hopcroft to look at prices of: 2 pairs of long-handled pruners, helmets, gloves, bar saw, strimmer. Clerk to check the PC's public liability to use these types of tools.	Clerk
018/16	Planning Applications:	
	17/26038/FUL: Land off Pasturefields Lane - retention of existing car park with landscaping	Object
019/16	Planning Reports	
	15/22518/FUL Construction of 196 berth narrowboat marina, facilities building, dry dock/workshop, pump out building; car parking; access and landscaping, Land South of Shirleywich London Road Pasturefields AMENDMENT. New report from applicant on salinity.	Permit
020 /16	Bank Reconciliation:	Done
021/16	Schedule of agreed payments	
	C Gill salary April (Gross). Local Gov act 1972 s111.	£763.94
	Reimbursement C Gill (costs: working from home) - April. Local Gov act 1972 s111	£59.50
	Reimbursement C Gill mileage (44 miles @ £0.45p/mile). Local Gov act 1972 s111	£19.80
	Acer Garden Landscapes - March mowing	£636.98
	Hire of room in Hixon Memorial Hall, January to March	£43.20
	Severn Trent Water (Water Plus) for 15/10/16 to 31/3/2017 - car park drainage	£203.84
022/16	Documents Received: None	

Meeting finished at 9:40 pm.