

Hixon Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting Tuesday February 24th 2015

In attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Cllr J Carmichael (as Chair), Cllr D Sephton, Cllr Mrs C Hassall, Cllr P Hopcroft

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

Ref	Item
001/14	Apologies received from: Cllr. B McKeown (Chair), Cllr Mrs S McKeown, Cllr R Tonge, and from members of the public: Cllr. Mrs J Tabernor, Cllr A Perkins, Cllr L Bloomer, Cllr A Stafford-Northcote.
002/14	No declarations of interest were made
003/14	Minutes of meeting January 13th and January 27th were accepted as accurate.
026/10	Rural Exception Housing from Housing Plus and Stafford & Rural Homes: Landowner is willing, local authority and Highways are in discussions, feasibility to be assessed. Application pout in Dec 2013, validated Feb 2014. Once site has the go ahead, go public on the site and engage the community - likely to be late April/early May 2014 to consult with the public. 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). Names of people interested in the houses can be passed on to Charlie Riley at Housing Plus. Exhibition on June 24th, 3-7pm Memorial Hall. S&RH/Housing Plus requested permission from Hixon PC to apply for planning permission: vote taken, unanimous Yes. Planning application put in during December 2013. Any changes to layout will come back to PC before putting in planning application. Revised layout has been provided, PC has no problems with the small change, that pushes the houses slightly further up the hill. PC needs to determine the local connection criteria: Cllr B McKeown and Clerk met with Charlie Riley to decide criteria. Awaiting decision from Planning following finalisation of section 106 agreement. Planning permission now granted (January 2015).
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. Write officially to Chris Mitchell to ask for prices for other road safety plans, as not had any prices in response to e-mails. Reply stated that he did not have the time or resource to provide prices for our projects as requested. Church Lane raised zebra crossing should be funded by CC and/or developer of 30 houses off Church Lane. What house design would we want? Current design not fitting for location.
As above	Speedwatch Campaign: Cllr Hopcroft is now running Speedwatch and needs need police training, waiting for Steve Bird to ring him back. Cllr. Hopcroft has contacted the volunteers to check they want to continue. Aim to start Speedwatch up again in the Spring. The speed gun does not need calibrating, use of the tuning fork is fine. More volunteers required, put advert in Compass, website etc..
021/09, 023/09, 074/09, 091/09	Playing Fields Report: Hedge at side of playing field is unruly, quoted £500 to sort it out, price agreed by PC. - hedge owned by PC (deeds). Clerk to contact Old Vicarage to check they don't mind the section of the hedge that borders their house cutting back to ca. 6 feet high. Contractor will do hedge any time. Cllr Hopcroft visited householder but no-one in. Will re-arrange visit. Monty Brown doesn't mind hedge being cut. See if householder will contribute towards cost.
097/07	Allotments: Meeting yet to be arranged with Allotment Committee - decided that it may be preferable to take the financial running of the Allotments under PC control. Ask opinion of allotment holders, invite them to meeting with PC to get views/opinions from as many allotment stakeholders as possible. Letter received from Allotment Committee - response sent asking again for meeting, if no response then PC will consider its options as laid down in the agreement. Reply received saying PC should attend Allotment meeting and provide certain documents in advance, not as requested by PC. This is not a suitable arrangement. Chair has met with Dave Jones to discuss the contents of draft letter on proposed changes, Dave seemed broadly in agreement. Letter now sent to Dave on the changes, primarily concerned with PC taking over the financial control, which allows VAT to be re-claimed. (Allotment tenants held a meeting, decided to hold a vote on whether they want to meet with PC for further discussions on changes.)
094/09	Land Registry: Checking which bits of land are registered as owned by Hixon Parish Council. Hammonds Croft and Sycamore Drive land title registers purchased - OK. Ridgeway OS is registered, Lauder Grove is unregistered, Church Road is unregistered, Meadow Glade is unregistered. Car Park is registered, Greenfields and Featherbed Lane are unregistered. Need to change some title registers from Stowe PC to Hixon PC. Clerk and Cllr Sephton have looked through old files stored at back of Memorial Hall. The original Playing Fields gifting document has been found, together with other paperwork on land. Most files from the cabinets have now have been discarded. Clerk to look through files and liaise with Land Registry - will be worked on as and when time permits. All Hixon PC registered pieces of land are now registered to correct name and address. Collating information on non-registered land. Need documents back from Hand, Morgan & Owen to copy for Land Registry, Clerk to request (charge of up to £50 accepted by Council). Deeds now received from HMO for Meadow Glade - Cllrs have confirmed that Church Road and Featherbed Lane are covered in these deeds. Can move forward with playing field and Meadow Glade etc.registration.

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051/10	JBMI Liaison Committee - County Council led liaison group is now set up: Cllr Mrs C Hassall is the PC representative. Publicise Cllr Hassall's e-mail address on website and Hixon Parish Facebook page to allow people to put forward questions. 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 last June. Next meeting June 1st.
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015/12	<p>Revised Code of Conduct: Code of Conduct from the Borough Council has been published - can use this draft version for Parish Council. Main difference from previous code is that the pecuniary interests of spouses/partners now have to be disclosed. Draft model 2012 and current Hixon Code of Conduct (2007) circulated to all councillors. List of changes as such not available from SBC, appendix 1 to report that states the main changes has been circulated. Sub-committee agreed to look at the paperwork and report back as to what needs to be done - Cllrs: Mrs S McKeown, Mrs C Hassall, D Sephton. New disclosable interest forms need to be completed by those Cllrs. that haven't already done so. Summary etc. of Localism Act has been circulated to Councillors for review. SBC website has information from the old disclosable interest forms on it (no Spouse details etc.), need to find out if this is changing. Point 8.2 - need to change the Standing Orders to say Councillors will leave the room when discussing an item they have an interest in. Clerk to revise the Standing Orders and finalise and circulate revised Code of Conduct. Code of Conduct has been circulated. Standing Orders will need to be typed up again (no electronic copy available) so this will take longer to finalise. Hixon PC current version has many changes from Model, Cllrs. need to decide what they want in revised version. Sub-group of Cllr. Mrs S McKeown and Cllr Sephton to consider. Nearly resolved, one task each to complete. Will be finalised for March.</p>
050/12 and 032/12 (Plan for Stafford)	<p>Neighbourhood Plan: The Community Council can provide help with Community Engagement and sourcing funds. A lot of community engagement will be required. Up to £7K per community should be available from Locality. There is a local Locality person in Stoke - Andy Parsons. Planning Aid will give free time on planning issues. Community Council charge if they come out to give help, phone calls and e-mails are free. Neighbourhood Plan needs to go along with Local Plan, therefore need to work with SBC planning. Clerk attended meeting of local parish councils to discuss Neighbourhood Plans on Thursday March 28th 2013. Need to include members of public (Hixon Parish residents) in group to draw up the Plan, ask for help on website, FB Community page and in Newsletter. Four residents and two Councillors have come forward at present. Chair and Clerk meeting with the Neighbourhood Plan person at SBC on June 24th 2013, ask her to speak at next PC meeting. Need to get working group sorted and plan started. July 25th 2013 - Raj Bains from SBC gave a talk on the best way to get going with the Neighbourhood Plan and who can help. Need to produce a survey and include businesses and school children in it. Things to cover include: housing, shops, employment, schools, doctor/pharmacy, transport. Keep records of what is being done. Once survey results are known, hold a public event. Having a local NP website is a good idea. Meeting held for people interested in being part of the NP working group. CPRE NP meeting attended on 17th Sept and a SBC NP meeting attended on 1st October. NP group started September 26th 2013. Questionnaires moving forward - residential delivered April/May 2014 and business delivered November 2014. The airfield is an un-designated heritage asset, English Heritage are interested in it, may be able to get some protection for it. Have a volunteer to help with website. Bank account set-up. Issues & Aspirations newsletter were out for delivery 22nd/23rd November, Public Exhibition on 6th/7th December. PC Cllrs. agreed to get involved with Exhibition. Clerk has drafted list of requirements for planning applications and circulated this. New Settlement Boundary needs to be set urgently based on Neighbourhood Plan findings. The legal challenge to the Plan for Stafford Borough by Gladmans should be heard in December. Met January 9th with Melissa and Raj at SBC, quite a useful meeting. Get a draft plan sent to SBC with settlement boundary attached ASAP.</p>
053/12	<p>Play surface repairs/renewal and roundabout/alternative equipment: Prices and details obtained, looking at grants. Proposal is to purchase a Solar Spinner, double zig-zag Twister and a Buddy Board. Clerk has let school know. Clerk took schematic of play equipment to school for children to comment on. Need to include the new surfaces under existing equipment on the application, price for the whole lot obtained from Wicksteed. Chair has put in the grant application to Awards for All. £10K conditional offer received, paperwork etc. returned, final offer received and confirmed. Wicksteed price has remained the same, firm order placed. Installation completed. Check with Wicksteed how much movement the Bubby Board should have, as it hardly moves. Cllr Hopcroft will complete the customer satisfaction survey and comment on the lack of movement in the buddy board as it is not what was expected. Should be end-to-end movement, as with a see-saw, works as per specification.</p>

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052/12& 058/12	<p>Discuss separation of Hixon from the Haywoods/Colwich in local election. Residents at the meeting agreed that this should be taken forward - to be progressed in New Year. Clerk to write to Alistair Welch asking for the ward boundary to be re-drawn making Hixon a single member ward. Ask about shortest timeframe possible and what the PC can do to help. Public feedback and support is required, campaign locally. Boundaries are due for review every 10 years, last review was 2003. Reply received from Jane Peat - in hand. Full SBC meeting on Thursday 23rd May 2013 to finalise revised number of Councillors - vote was for 40 councillors. Clerk to write again to Alistair Welch asking for Hixon to be separated from Colwich/Haywoods to form a 1-member ward. Reply received referred to the consultation process on number of councillors by the Boundary Commission (BC). PC to reply asking for number to remain at 50 to avoid reduction in representation. If reduced such that 1-member wards are unlikely, ask to be with Stowe/Weston rather than with Colwich/Haywoods. Update from Boundary Commission on October 23rd, decision made to reduce numbers to 40. Hixon very unlikely to get single ward status, need to join with another parish(es) to boost numbers. Proposal made to join with Stowe by Chartley again as there is a historical association, clear geographical boundary etc. Agree approach and write to Boundary Commission. Chair drafted letter to BC with proposed ward change, ward to include Hixon parish, Stowe by Chartley parish and Gayton parish (and not Great Haywood, Little Haywood or Colwich): proposal agreed unanimously by Councillors. Letter written to BC, awaiting results of consultation. SBC proposals on BC website, propose leaving Hixon with Haywoods/Colwich as at present. BC also propose to leave Hixon with Haywoods/Colwich - postcards delivered to each house for return to BC by PC. 393 postcards sent to BC, 390 supported the Parish Council's proposals. BC to report back on latest consultation by 23rd September 2014. Contact BC to ask where the postcards can be viewed and to mention the "Brilliant Council" publication recommending 1-member wards. BC recommends leaving Hixon as is, took the flawed population figures without querying them. PC to challenge recommendation. E-mail sent to LGBC asking how to object to the final recommendations. Jane Peat has been contacted (copy Alex Yendole), re the Hixon Population figures provided to BC (sent them copy of letter sent to BC Jan 2014). Reply stated that SBC were bound by the decision of the LGBCE and would not make any further comment. The population projections were made by the Stafford Observatory. Clerk to contact Jeremy Lefroy (send him copy of the letter to BC) and Stafford Observatory. Jeremy Lefroy said he would contact Boundary Commission to ask them to change the boundary, no reply from Stafford Observatory. Remove from agenda.</p>
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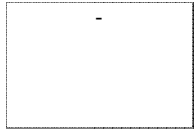
068/12	<p>Memorial Hall Committee re car park etc.: it was agreed that while the situation with the Bank House paying for the car park is undecided, the PC will be charged at a reduced rate for its hall bookings. Memorial Hall has offered a 10% reduction from January 1st, - accept 10% and ask that reduction is from the date of the meeting when the reduction was proposed i.e. November 26th. This has been agreed and will cover all meetings booked by PC (e.g. NP group meetings). Mark Farrington has sgreed to extend the 10% reduction period until the end of 2015 (or until BH start paying again), as long as the Memorial Hall financial situation allows this. Remove from agenda.</p>
069/12	<p>Bank House car park payments: Neither the new (since Dec12) tenants or the owners of the Bank House (Joules Brewery) want to pay the charge for use of the car park. Other suggestions such as a donation from the brewery as a marketing exercise have been suggested by the brewery, this was not considered a particularly good idea by the Council. Cllr Sephton to meet with a representative from the brewery to discuss the best way forward, regular payments have been made for use of the car park by their customers by the Bank House owner or tenants since 1997. Copy of letter to Bank House from 1997 given to Cllr.Sephton and Chair. Cllr Sephton has met with Neale Chandler from Joules Brewery - copy of letter passed on and the situation with the planning application for an extension discussed - the consultation by the Planning Department re the continued use of the car park by ther Bank House for the planning application for an extension was considered of note by Neale Chandler. A copy of the original contract between Bass Brewery and the Bank House owners (March 1986) has been found, together with a letter from the PC's solicitor (March 2001) saying that the PC were entitled to increase the rent - if the Bank House owners didn't want to pay an increased rent, the PC should give them notice to quit the car park. Copy of contract passed on the Neale Chandler. Prepare a statement showing what is owed for Cllr Sephton to pass to Neale Chandler - if left unpaid, PC could take legal action in small claims court. Cllr Sephton has written to the Chairman of Joules Brewery stating the situation, as no reply from Neale Chandler. Reply from Neale Chandler saying that he does not think there is a contract to pay between Bank House owners and Hixon PC but if there is, they would pay. Clerk to write to Joules saying PC is considering all the options. Contact solicitor with details to find out if contract with pub/brewery is still in force. Agreed to pay up to £500 for solicitor fees to sort out the situation re contract and precedent set. (Proposed by Cllr Hopcroft, seconded by Cllrs Mrs S McKeown and Cllr Tummey). Contact has been made with solicitor and agreement OK'd and signed at meeting. Chair to meet with solicitor to provide more paperwork. Solicitor advises that there is sufficient evidence of a trail of payments made for car park use for the contract to be enforceable. He will write to Joules Brewery. Clerk has sent evidence of car park registration and details of split of PCs. Solicitor has everything he requires and will pursue payments with Joules Brewery. Clerk to chase up solicitor - Joules still saying no agreement so don't need to pay. Replied to solicitor along Precedent Set lines. Joules still saying there is no contract, so no payments will be made by them, individual tenants may have decided to pay in the past. Chair to speak to solicitor. Need to try and find reference to car parking spaces as part of approval for restaurant extension, Chair to arrange to go to SBC in New Year, Clerk to find out planning application numbers and find out how easy it will be to get access to records, plan for March. Clerk has found further information online and passed this to solicitor, who will decide if this is sufficient evidence to proceed again.</p>
039/13	<p>Consider best way of producing walk leaflets, £175 provided by Community Footpath Initiative: Decided Chair would get price for 100 and 200 copies of each walk, Clerk has sent walks to Chair. Prices: £240 for 100 leaflets, £420 for 200. Decided on 100 of each, Chair needs to redesign WORD document to get in "folding" format, could take 2-3 months. Chair to work on these over the winter. Send copies to Cllr. Carmichael again, he will walk them. Currently waiting for better weather.</p>
004/14	<p>St Peter's Children's poster competition and garden competition 2014: Decided not to have Unusual Garden Feature this year but to have a separate Judge's Prize for anything outstanding. Cllr. Mrs C Hassall has judged the gardens etc , winners list with Chair. Prizes as per previous years plus £5 second prize for hanging baskets agreed. As photos of the winning gardens etc. were not taken, it was decided that it isn't worth having a presentation evening this year, Cllr. Mrs C Hassall will deliver certificates and prizes to winners. Cllr Carmichael to provide the certificates. Now just delivering prizes, not certificates. Theme for 2015 competition was decided as "Springtime in Hixon".</p>
032/14	<p>Hall Farm Close Open Space: Right to Bid application etc.: the situation with regards the Right to Bid applications for the open space on Hall Farm Close was outlined. Chair to look in to what is involved with a view to having an informed discussion at the July meeting. HFC residents group would like PC to write in to SBC to support them in their efforts to stop the open space being sold to the developer. Right to Buy bid(s) will only be put in if SBC decide they will sell. Clerk to write to SBC. Meeting of SBC cabinet on August 7th to discuss the principle of selling the open space. Cabinet decided not to sell the OS and to maintain the recreational use covenant - cannot be used as access to development unless SBC overturn this decision in the future. equest received from esidents of Hall Farm Close for PC to take on the lease of the HFC OS and possibly Vicarage Way. SBC would prefer PC to lease (rather than residents) and will offer a longer lease to PC. No legal costs from SBC and peppercorn rent. SBC would like PC take on Vicarage Way OS as well, to avoid them coming out to mow just one OS. Agreed to take on HFC OS if costs not too onerous. Clerk has got mowing and legal costs, PC considered costs acceptable - if PC takes on Vicarage Way OS as well then ask SBC to cover both parties legal costs and LR fees. Contact with SBC will be via Alistair Welch. Waiting to hear from Alistair Welch. Adam Hill has also been contacted. Write formally to Alistair Welch requesting for the lease to proceed. Ask Alan Perkins to assist.</p>

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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. 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. Chair to go and see Mr. & Mrs. Collyer, Clerk to prepare paperwork for Chair.
039/15	The benefits of Publicly Accessible Defibrillators: following talk by Paul Dadge on October 21st: Question on defibrillator added to NP Business questionnaire that went out late November. From responses, one at ALE and JBMI getting one. Discuss further in March. Forward e-mail from Paul Dadge to Clerk, re supply of free defibrillators and vehicle conversion (possible Bristol involvement?), to councillors.
054/14	Situation regarding Hixon drop-in surgery and Hazeldene House Surgery Patient Participation Panel: a job offer has been made, new doctor hopefully starting in September 2015. In this case, the drop-in clinic in Hixon could start again in December 2015. A nurse, accompanied by a practitioner, should start again in March on Tuesdays in Hixon. The room used as the doctor's room in the hall is of concern, it must be kept at an acceptable standard.
055/14	Consider a Community Clean Up Walk: It was decided that 1) as Hixon does not have a big problem with litter and 2) the timing of the Community Clean Up walks clashes with the VE day celebration events, the PC would not be involved in organising a clean-up walk.
009/14	Chairman's announcements:
010/14	Councillor Questions: Is the PC involved with the 70th Anniversary of VE day on May 2nd to May 10th? No financial support has been agreed.
011/14	Date of next meeting: March 17th 2015
012/14	Public Participation: The planning application refusal of the Gladman's proposed development for 101 houses off Stowe Lane is being appealed against, to the Planning Inspectorate. A new planning application for 90 houses has been put in by Gladmans for the same site and access. Jeff Phillips to find out what has happened with the Gladman's challenge to the Stafford Local Plan. Clerk to contact case officer to get more information on the appeal. Is the PC intending to take over the running of the allotments? Response - Discussions are ongoing re the PC having input, particularly with finances but it does not intend to completely take over the running of the allotments.
053/14	AOB Can a banner advertising "boot camp" sessions on the playing field be placed on the playing field gate? Decision: Agreed, the sessions should be run on a not for profit basis.
013/14	Planning Applications: 15/21668/FUL Retention of existing parking area and proposed extension to existing parking area to form hardstanding for vehicles, Land Off Pasturefields Lane Pasturefields 14/21267/REM AMENDED PLANS, reserved matters, erection of 76 dwellings served via access from New Road 15/21776/ADV 2 x 'Land Acquired' free-standing signs, Land At New Road Hixon
014/14	Planning Reports 13/19784/FUL Housing development of 5 no. houses and 2 no. bungalows, Land Off Church Lane Adjacent To 24 The Croft Hixon Stafford (Rural Exception Houses) 14/21190/FUL Warehouse unit with parking, balancing pond and closure of existing access, Land Adjacent To Units 3 To 4 Neptune Business Park London Road Pasturefields 14/21504/OUT Demolition of existing outbuilding and construction of new detached dwelling within curtilage of Ancient House, Ancient House, Martins Way, Hixon 14/21314/OUT Bungalow on land at Sunnyside Cottage, High Street, Hixon
015/14	Bank Reconciliation:
016/14	Schedule of agreed payments C Gill salary - February (gross). Local Gov act 1972 s111. C Gill allowance (costs: working from home) - February. Local Gov act 1972 s111 Reimbursement C Gill stamps (12x1st class), Local Gov act 1972 s111 Reimbursement C Gill mileage (22 miles @ £0.45p/mile). Local Gov act 1972 s111
017/14	Correspondence received: Walk leaflets, allotment survey, Invitation to "Evening of Choirs" at Gatehouse Theatre, 7pm 19th March..

Meeting finished at 9.40 pm.

Action
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Clerk/Chair
Cllr Hopcroft/Clerk
Cllr. Hopcroft
-
Clerk



Hixon Parish Council

Cllrs. Mrs S McKeown & D Sephton
Clerk/Chair/Cllr. Mrs S McKeown
Cllr Hopcroft

Clerk

Hixon Parish Council

Clerk
Chair/Clerk
Chair/Clerk/Cllr. Carmichael
Chair/Cllr Carmichael/Cllr Mrs C Hassall
Clerk

Hixon Parish Council

Clerk/Chair
Chair
Cllr. Hopcroft
-
None
-
Clerk to book Memorial Hall
Clerk
-
None
-
Object
No objection
No objection
Permitted
Permitted
Refused
Refused
Done
£703.80
£53.50
£7.44
£9.90

