**Hammerwich Parish Council Minutes**

**15 February 2017**

In attendance: Councillors Wasdell, Mrs Greenway, Campbell, Mrs A. Turnbull, J. Turnbull, Mrs Smith, Pullen, Place.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1.** | **Apologies for Absence** |
|  | An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs Kirkham |
| **2.** | **Declarations of Interest** |
|  | Councillor Pullen declared he was a Member of the Lichfield District Council Cabinet which would be considering the Greenbelt issues in the future. |
| **3.** | **Approval of the Minutes of the 18 January 2017 Parish Council Meeting** |
|  | It was proposed by Councillor Place and seconded by Councillor Mrs Turnbull that the minutes from 18 January 2017 be approved as a correct record. They were signed by the Chairman. |
| **4.** | **Matters Arising** |
|  | Councillor Campbell distributed copies of revised Standing Orders for Members to read and consider. These would be a substantive item on the March Agenda. Councillors were asked to bring these copies with them for discussion at the March meeting. |
| **5.** | **Chairman’s Announcements** |
|  | The Chairman reported that there would be a meeting of Staffordshire Action Group hosted by Councillor David Smith in Shenstone in the forthcoming weeks.  **Resolved that the Chairman would circulate the full details to Councillors.** |
| **6.** | **Hammerwich Post Office**  It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Greenway and seconded by Councillor Place that Standing orders were suspended for this item.  Richard Hall Public Affairs Manager and Matthew Wilkes, Network Operations Manager attended the meeting as representatives of the Post Office (PO). Mr Vyce from the Ashmole Club and Mrs Dhillon also took part in the discussion.  The PO representatives reassured the Council that the closure of Hammerwich PO was regarded as a temporary closure.  They explained that there were 2 main options for re-opening the Post Office in the village  - The ideal scenario would be where the PO operates alongside a retail unit in the village. The retailer would conduct the PO work in this instance.  - The second option would be for an outreach PO. In this example a Member of staff from another branch would come to a designated place eg a village hall and would bring portable kit to operate the PO. The modelling has demonstrated that for Hammerwich the PO would be willing to provide 4 hours a week for this model.  Mrs Dhillon reported she didn't feel it would be worthwhile operating for 2 sessions at 2 hours as by the time she had set up and closed down it wouldn't be worth her operating.  The PO representatives said there were other people who could operate the outreach service.  Mr Vyce outlined the Ashmole Club's position with regard to the development of a retail unit in the village and informed the Council that Staffordshire Highways had responded to the consultation on their application with numerous objections. He reminded the Councillors that until there had been the upcoming court hearing regarding the noise abatement order, the Club was not in a position to progress any further with regards to developing the PO facility.  The PO representatives queried whether consideration had been given to running a Community Post Office. The Chairman reported this had not been discussed. It was agreed that details of other schemes of this nature would be sent to the Clerk.  Councillors noted that the PO contract meant any new contract was based upon transactions rather than the post master receiving a fixed amount for operating. They said other PO ran successfully with fewer transactions than would be expected in Hammerwich.  The PO offered to attend a meeting with all interested parties in private to discuss in greater detail the financial and contracting issues.  **Resolved to**  **a) ask Mr Hall to send details of community post offices to the Clerk, and;**  **b) ask the PO representatives to set up a meeting with the Ashmole Club and all other interested parties to share further details about contracts and financial arrangements with regard to setting up a new Post Office in the Village.**  It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Greenway and seconded by Councillor Place that Standing Orders be reinstated. |
| **7.**  **And 8.** | **Greenbelt**  **Neighbourhood Plan Update** |
|  |  |
|  | The Chairman decided to take these items together as the Neighbourhood Plan was the Policy that would underpin any response regarding proposals to build on the greenbelt.  Councillor Pullen explained that a draft land allocation document had been published which detailed proposals for areas of greenbelt which should be considered for development. This document would go to Lichfield District council on 7 March 2017 where Cabinet would decide whether to open formal consultation on the proposals. The consultation would follow and would last 6-8 weeks. Once the consultation had ended and responses had been analysed the document and the findings would be put to the full District Council for approval. The whole process may take up to 12 months.  Councillors noted that the secretary of state had overruled Lichfield District Council regarding 670 houses in the district recently and arguments needed to be made to say the greenbelt land in Hammerwich was therefore no longer required.  It was agreed that Members of the Public and the Parish Council Members needed to contact their local representatives on the District Council in order to have the maximum impact.  It was noted that approximately 90% of responses during the Neighbourhood Plan consultation were opposed to development on the greenbelt.  It was noted that the next Neighbourhood Plan meeting was to be held on Friday 17 February.  It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Greenway and seconded by Councillor Mrs Turnbull that Standing Orders be suspended.  The Following concerns were raised as concerning by local residents:  - the document referred to the land proposed for development in Hammerwich as 'agricultural land' and not 'greenbelt land' and that this was concerning.  - the proposed density for housing on the site was an issue  -traffic resulting from the site would create problems  - flooding maybe an issue as a result of the development  - The conservative manifesto in 2012 stated they were against the development of the greenbelt and the local resident felt it was important to hold the local MP to account on this.  - Noise levels in the proposed areas for development may exceed statutory levels - particularly if the M6 toll becomes a toll free road in future.  - It was felt by local residents that they had fought very hard 10n years ago in order to prevent Hammerwich being drawn into the Walsall/Brownhills conurbation and that in order to preserve the Character of the area this fight against development of greenbelt land must continue.  - It was felt that local infrastructure like schools and Dr Surgeries were already struggling to cope with levels of demand and that these proposals would make the situation worse.  It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Greenway and seconded by Councillor Campbell that Standing Orders be reinstated.  **Resolved to ask Councillor Turnbull to explore getting 2000 flyers printed to inform local people about the proposals and who they can contact to make their feelings known.** |
| **8.** | **Planning** |
| **a)** | **Planning Applications**  There were no items for consideration |
|  |  |
| **b)** | **Planning Issues** |
|  | There were no further Planning Issues for discussion. |
| **9.** | **Speedwatch** |
|  | A new session would be organised when the weather improved.  **Resolved to ask Councillor Place to organise the next Speedwatch session as appropriate.** |
| **10.** | **Parks and Open Spaces**  It was noted that ACME had been asked to cut the trees back at Oakfield Park. |
| **11.** | **Highways and Footpaths**  The Chairman reported that Mr Coulson had submitted a report detailing the work on public footpaths that had been completed.  Councillor Mrs Greenway reported that the road condition on Ogley Hay Road between Charrington Lights and the Island was terrible and that the signage was not clear.  **Resolved to ask the Clerk to report this issue to Staffordshire Highways. The Parish Council thanked Mr Coulson, Mr Bennett and Mr Walker for their hard work on the footpaths across the Parish.** |
| **12.** | **Public Participation** |
|  | It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Greenway and Seconded by Councillor Campbell that Standing Orders be suspended.  It was reported by a local resident that Staffordshire Highways had been in the village at the flooded area by the cricket ground.  Concerns were raised again regarding the BUPA Carew home hedge as no action had been taken to address this issue.  Councillor Campbell reported that the work had been scheduled for January but due to inclement weather this had not been possible. The care home had confirmed it would be completed by the end of February.  **Resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.** |
| **13.** | **Correspondence** |
|  | The Councillors noted the correspondence received and sent since the last meeting which was reported by the Clerk.  The Chairman reported he had attended to look at pavements on Oakfield Park and that he had not found the paths to be any more slippy than anywhere else in the Parish.  It was agreed to ask the Greens and Open spaces Strategic Manager at Lichfield District Council to establish whether clearing these paths was covered in the maintenance contract.  It was agreed that the complaint regarding dog waste on Lawnswood Park should be referred to Lichfield District Council and ask them to quote to clear the area.  Councillors were disappointed that the land transfer at Hospital Road remained ongoing. Councillor Pullen volunteered to raise this with the Cabinet Member on behalf of the Council.  **Resolved to**  **a) note the correspondence received and sent since the last meeting, and;**  **b) ask the clerk to follow up on the actions detailed above.**  **c) ask Councillor Pullen to raise the delays concerning the handover of Hospital Road with the relevant Cabinet Member.** |
| **14.** | **Finance** |
| **a)** | **Accounts for Payment**  The balance of the Community Account ( Statement for 10 Jan to 11 Feb 2017) was £35,219.56  The Parish Council were asked to approve the following payments at their meeting on 15 February 2017:   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Cost | Invoice No | Cheque Number | | Clerk's Wages February 2017 | £376.41 | EB018/16/17 | 100977 | | Clerk additional 14 hours to complete work on tax rebate/website and other urgent duties (@£13.94 per hour) | £195.17 | EB019/16/17 | 100978 | | Greenaway Timber Products (for fingerposts etc )  (successful grant application for £210 of this - monies not yet received) | £364.80 | 1321 | 100979 | | Lichfield District Council for (Gareth Hare Aboriculturalist's site visit) | £55.20 | M0007447147 | 10080 | | Hammerwich youth and Community Centre Grant | £500 | - | 10081 |   **Resolved to approve the Accounts for Payment** |
|  |  |
| **15.** | **Items for future meetings** |
|  | * Standing Orders need refreshing and approving before the end of the financial year. These would be brought to the next meeting for consideration. Councillors were asked to bring the copies that were circulated at this meeting with them to the next meeting. * Website - update   **Resolved**  **a)to add the above items to future agendas.** |

Meeting ended 9.20pm