**Hammerwich Parish Council Minutes**

**20 September 2017**

**In attendance:**

Councillors Wasdell, Mrs Greenway, Campbell, Mrs Smith, Ho, Place, Mrs Kirkham and King.

**Also in attendance:**

3 Members of the public attended the meeting.

Ellen Bird (Clerk)

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| **1.** | **Apologies for Absence** |
|  | Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Pullen. |
| **2.** | **Declarations of Interest** |
|  | There were none. |
| **3.** | **Co-option of Councillors**  The Chairman introduced Carolyn Gittings who was standing for Hammerich Ward and Janet Taylor standing for Triangle Ward. It was noted that Linda Houlcroft had withdrawn her application.  Standing Orders were suspended and each of the candidates introduced themselves and spoke about their interest in the vacancies and the qualities and skills they felt they brought to the role.  **Resolved to**   1. **Appoint Carolyn Gittings to the Vacancy in the Hammerwich Ward** 2. **Appoint Janet Taylor to the vacancy in the Triangle Ward.**   Councillors discussed the procedure that had been used to appoint the Councillors. They felt it would’ve been helpful to have known more about the candidates prior to the meeting.  **Resolved to:**   1. **ask the Clerk to write a procedure to follow for the appointment of new Councillors who are Co-opted onto the Council to be discussed at the November meeting.** 2. **Ask the Clerk to enquire whether SPCA was running any training courses in the near future for the new Councillors.**   Standing orders were reinstated. |
| **4.** | **Approval of the minutes held on 19 July 2017**  **Resolved to approve the minutes of 19 July 2017 and that these be signed by the Chairman.** |
| **5.** | **Matters Arising**  There were none. |
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| **6.** | **Chairman's Announcements**  There were none. |
| **7.** | **Parish Funding and Responsibilities**  The Clerk reported there were two changes which may negatively impact upon Parish income in the future.  Council Tax Support Grant  The Clerk reported that a letter from Lichfield District Council stated that the Council Cabinet would be considering proposals at its Cabinet Meeting in October to remove the Council Tax Support Grant to Parish Councils.  It was noted that other local Parish Councils had written to object to the changes.  **Resolved to ask the Clerk to write to object to the proposed changes. The draft should be circulated to all Councillors for comment.**    Community Based Approach to Partnership – Environmental Maintenance Work Programme  The Clerk reported that following the Parish Council Forum Meeting attended by the Chairman she had undertaken research into the Environmental Maintenance Work Programme discussed at the meeting.  Staffordshire County Council would continue to meet their statutory duties in Highways maintenance but would remove funding for environmental support through the Lengthsman programme and also end the Highways Neighbourhood Visits.  **Resolved to note the update.** |
| **8.** | **Neighbourhood Plan**  Councillors Wasdell, Campbell and King reported back to the Parish about an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting they had attended at Lichfield District Council (LDC).  **Resolved to ask Councillor Campbell to inform Councillor Pullen about the discussion and ask him for clarity regarding Highfields Road.** |
| **9.** | **Speedwatch**  It was noted that a Speedwatch session had taken place on Highfields Road.  Other sessions were planned in the near future.  Councillors discussed the need to be careful that the sessions only took place within Hammerwich and that only the Hammerwich equipment be used.  Councillor Place agreed to pass the equipment and relevant paperwork to Councillor Campbell as soon as possible.  **Resolved to note the update** |
| **10.** | **Parks and Open Spaces** |
|  | Oakfield Park  Councillors discussed the quotes received from LDC to address the issues with the bank that required replacement support in Oakfield Park.  Councillors were concerned that the materials in the lower quote would not last very long and would need replacing again in the near future.  **Resolved to ask the Clerk to contact Gary Brownridge at LDC to discuss alternatives and to establish if a guarantee would be provided for the work.**  Crane Drive  Councillors discussed an email from a Local Resident regarding the Hedge and the Tree on the land near Crane Drive.  LDC officers had advised that the hedge should be cut down to 2m. Local residents were concerned this would lead to them being overlooked. They wanted the hedge to be cut down to 3m but the cost to do this would be significantly more.  **Resolved to ask the Chairman to go back to talk to the original complainant to discuss this further.**  Amenity Areas  Councillors discussed the need for clarity regarding the amenity areas belonging to the Council.  **Resolved to ask the Clerk to contact the Land Registry regarding land belonging to the Parish.**  Hospital Road Playing Fields  Councillor Greenway raised concerns about the amount of dog waste and Rubbish in the hedge around Hospital Road  **Resolved to ask the Clerk to arrange a meeting between the Chair/Vice Chair and Burntwood Dragons to discuss this and insurance issues.**  Cricket Ground Hedge  It was noted that the Hedge around the Cricket Ground had not been cut back. Councillor Campbell agreed to contact the Chairman to see if this could be done.  **Resolved to ask Councillor Campbell to contact the Chairman of the Cricket Ground to discuss cutting back the hedge.** |
| **11.** | **Highways and Footpaths**  Post Office Sign  It was noted that the sign remained for the Post Office on the corner between Lichfield Road and Stockhay Lane.  **Resolved to ask the Clerk to request that this be removed.**  Charrington Road Traffic Lights  Councillors noted the response from Highways England regarding introducing a filter lane at these traffic lights.  They said there were already plans a scheme proposed to improve traffic flow at the lights. They felt a filter lane was not possible. The clerk had written to request details of the proposals.  Dangerous Hedge – Hammerwich Road/ Stockhay Lane  Councillor Ho reported a resident had contacted him regarding the hedge around the exchange box on the corner of Hammerwich Road and Stockhay Lane.  **Resolved to ask the Clerk to write to Staffordshire County Council to ask if this can be cut back to improve visibility.**  Sign Post  Councillor King reported that the signpost adjacent to 151 Highfields and opposite the Farm House was still turned away from the road.  **Resolved to ask the Clerk to report this again.** |
| **12.** | **Planning Applications**  17/01270/FUL Warren House  Councillors had no comments  17/01139/FUL 117 Norton Lane  Councillors requested the Clerk make an objection on their behalf stating that they object in the strongest possible terms to the proposal as it is inappropriate development of green belt land.  17/01036/FUL Springhill Farm, Walsall Road  Councillors discussed the proposal and asked the Clerk to submit a response stating:   * The application was an inappropriate development on greenbelt land.  The Council objected in the strongest terms to this. * The Parish Council did not believe the conversion of a barn was appropriate for this proposal. * A 'Stop Notice' was already in force on this site (13/0074/ENFBC) and this should be upheld * The application went against a previous ruling by the planning inspector which had clear requirements for a traffic island to be built. The application showed a different entry which was not safe and went against the planning inspector’s conditions.   **Resolved to ask the Clerk to submit the responses detailed above.** |
| **13.** | **Public Participation** |
|  | Standing orders were suspended.  Planning Application  A local resident echoed concerns regarding the proposed development at Spring Farm.  AMEY work in Village  A local resident reported that she was pleased with the work SCC Contractors AMEY had done recently in the village.  Councillor Mrs Taylor proposed setting up a group of residents who would be willing to volunteer to tidy up the Parish in light of the funding cuts the Council faced in future.  **Resolved to ask Councillor Mrs Taylor to bring a proposal to the November meeting detailing how this would work.**  Footpath Work  Councillor Mrs Gittings discussed work on the footpaths with a local resident and informed the Parish that the local ramblers association (for which her husband was Chairman) would be able to assist with any work required on local footpaths across the Parish.  Ring and Ride Bus Service  A local resident queried whether the ring and ride bus service was to be lost.  **Resolved to ask the Clerk to write to SCC regarding the ring and Ride Bus Service and ask for information regarding consultation for its closure.**  Standing Orders were reinstated. |
| **14.** | **Correspondence received and sent**  Councillors noted the correspondence received and sent by the Clerk.  **Resolved to note the update** |
| **15.** | **Accounts for Payment** |
|  | The balance of the Community Account as at 8 September 2017 was £54,602.96  The balance on the Business Account as at 8 September 2017 was £8,247.68 .  The Parish Council were asked to approve the following payments:   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Cost | Invoice No | Cheque Number | | Grant Thornton | £240 | 8732990 | 101010 | | Clerk’s wages September 2017 | £384.43 | EB10/17/18 | 101011 | | Clerk’s Expenses | £14.28 | EB11/17/18 | 101012 |   The Parish Council noted there was no income to report.  **Resolved to approve the accounts for payment.** |
| **16.** | **Annual Accounts Auditors Response**  Councillors noted the positive response from the External Auditors. They thanked the Clerk for her work on securing a successful audit.  **Noted** |
| **17.** | **Items For Discussion at Future Meetings** |

* Hammerwich ‘Tidy Up’ – November Meeting
* Vehicle activated speed signs – November meeting

Meeting ended 9.45pm