**Hammerwich Parish Council Minutes**

**21 December 2022**

**Date: 21st December 2022**

**Time: 7:00pm**

**Venue: WI Hall, Hammerwich**

**In attendance:**

Councillors Greenway, King, Smith, Grundy, and Mears

**Also in attendance:**

No Councillors from Staffordshire County Council (SCC)

Councillor Silvester-Hall from Lichfield District Council (LDC)

No Members of the Public

**Clerk:**

Vivien Wang

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| **1.** | **Apologies for Absence** |
|  | Apologies were received and accepted from Chairman, Councillors Taylor, Place, Ennis, Thurlow and Ho.  **Noted and accepted.** |
| **2.** | **Declarations of Interest** |
|  | Councillor Grundy declared an interest relating to LDC, Husband’s business asked to do work on behalf of the Council.  **Noted** |
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| **3.** | **Approval of the minutes of 16 November 2022**  **The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16 November 2022 was approved.** |
| **4.** | **Matters Arising** |
|  | There were no matters arising.  **Noted** |
| **5.** | **Chairman’s Announcements** |
|  | The Council sent condolences to Cllr Taylor for her bereavement. **The Clerk to send a card to Cllr Taylor on behalf of the Council.**  Cllr Greenway expressed concern over the low turn-up rate of Councillors in the December meeting. Councillors are reminded that council meetings should be prioritized.  Councillors has granted £500 to Hammerwich Bowling Club at the November meeting, without enough awareness on the fact that £500 was the grant budget for the whole year instead of one-off. Cllr Greenway requested a clear remark to be made in future grant review on whether the budget is for full year or one-off.  **Noted** |
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| **6.** | **County/District/Police Reports** |
|  | Councillor J Silvester-Hall (LDC)  Cllr Silvester-Hall reported that there will be a change of refuse collection schedule during festive time.  Cllr Silvester-Hall updated that the survey on spending priorities by District Council was available on LDC website for public to give their views.  Cllr Silvester-Hall reported that a well-crafted bike track was discovered during a Volunteer Day, near to the conservation area close to Wall/A5. Cllr Silvester-Hall would appreciate the news to be spread among HPC community so that more people can enjoy the facility. **The Council agreed to publish on website if more details and pictures are available.**  On behalf of Cllr Smith from SCC, Cllr Silvester-Hall updated that the additional budget on gutter cleaning also covers Hammerwich.  Cllr Silvester-Hall reported that there was an accident on the footpath of Coppy Nook Lane earlier. A builder-owned fence was knocked down to allow bringing an injured lady to Norton Lane. Cllr Silvester-Hall suggested this may be an opportunity to work with the builder to upgrade the fence for improved local accessibility. **Cllr King will get in touch with SCC to raise the request of putting a kissing gate or an L-shape entrance.**  Cllr Silvester-Hall updated that the concerns over the parking issue from the development on Coppy Nook Lane remained, and the enforcement team is working on it.  The Council is concerned about the progress of planning application 22/01179/FUL (121 Highfields Road) and requested Cllr Silvester-Hall to check if the case is on the January planning agenda of LDC. Cllr King updated that he received request from resident for HPC to file in objection again, **Clerk will follow-up to re-state the objection**. As no notification was received for the new amendments received, Clerk will check with planning office if the case was not open for comment at this stage.  It was reported that the grit bin at Highfields Road was missing for long, and residents are requesting a new grit bin to be installed due to the steep slope of the road. **The Council agreed the request should be raised to SCC. Cllr Mears will send the request email to Cllr Silvester-Hall for passing on to SCC.**  Cllr Silvester-Hall updated that the roundabout near A5 Watling Street will be closed for a week in January 2023 as part of the main highway project of the year.  Cllr Silvester-Hall wished everyone a happy new year before she left the meeting.  **Noted.**  (Councillor J Silvester-Hall left the meeting) |
| **7.** | **Planning Applications** |
|  | 22/01682/FUL – 37 Stockhay Lane: This application was received by HPC only a day before the Council meeting, which was too short notice for Councillors to investigate and understand the views from residents, thus no comment can be made at the meeting. **Resolved by having Cllr King to monitor on any objections to be received, while the Clerk will respond by 12th January (the last day of 23 days response window) to request for extra comment time due to holiday and festive.** |
| **8.** | **St George’s Day Celebration** |
|  | No update this month as no meeting has been held by Cricket Club. Expecting an update in January.  **Noted.** |
| **9.** | **Speedwatch**  New SIDs at Hospital Road  New SID was ordered and delivered to Cllr King and will be installed after the post is ready. Cllr King is working with SCC team to order the post, expecting it to be ready in mid of January.  Cllr King reported that the replaced SID at Highfields Road is working well.  It was suggested to put speed limit 30mph signs on the posts on Hospital Road since most drivers are believed to have mistaken the speed limit as 40mph. **Cllr King to enquire if can put up 30mph signs there.**  **Noted.** |
| **10.** | **Highways and Footpaths**  Pothole  Cllr Greenway reported there is a dangerous pothole on Meerash Lane. **Cllr Greenway will take picture for Clerk to report.**  Footpath  Cllr King reported that final fingerposts were installed, and the fingerpost project had been completed within budget.  With all footpaths cleared by SCC recently, Cllr King raised a discussion on future maintenance by Council. **Cllr Greenway requested to discuss in the next meeting when there is a full council.**  SCC has cleared Wharf Lane but not cut the hedge. Hedge cutting was said to be the farmer’s (the landowner) responsibility. **Cllr Mears to check who is the farmer and to remind them to maintain the hedge and keep public path clear.**  A fallen tree was reported on Church Lane earlier and has cut the hedge off. **Cllr King will contact the owner (Mr John Bailey) to sort out the fallen tree and the hedge.**  **Noted** |
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| **11.** | **Parks and Open Spaces** |
|  | Oakfield Park Gym Equipment  The Council agreed to consult the neighbouring parties on their views even though deferral of the project had been confirmed at the November meeting due to budget constraint.  **Collis**: Cllr King updated that he had shared the survey report to Collis by hand and was told this was a good idea. Besides, Collis has concerned over who will be insuring the equipment.  **Ridgeway Primary Academy**: Head of the Board of Governors was against the proposal as he/she lives close to the park. However, the school supported this idea but wanted to reconfirm whether this will be a project for gym equipment or play equipment.  Scannable QR code  Discussion on-going for QR codes with Hammerwich signage. **Cllr Greenway suggested to postpone the discussion to next meeting when there is a full council presence.** Discussions shall cover: i) sites to put up the QR code and costs; ii) corresponding update of HPC website (and other social media platforms if any) and the responsible councillors; iii) potential risk of QR code being covered up by scam.  Trees at Gorseway  A local resident had contacted the Council regarding trees at the Gorseway near to her property that were on Council land. After receiving proposals from LDC officers, Cllr Greenway had discussed with the resident and confirmed to take down the entire tree and plant a new one further away from the property. Now awaiting LDC to feedback on the cost of planting a new tree.  Areas for Wildlife Conservation  Cllr Grundy updated that LDC had requested more nature conservation sites within Hammerwich. Besides the Triangle which site visit had been done, Coppy Nook Lane and Mansion Drive were nominated at the meeting. **Cllr Grundy will meet with LDC officers (plus Burntwood Dragon re Coppy Nook Lane) at the two new nominated sites to identify appropriate areas.** Public consultation will be held prior to decision making. **Cllr Grundy to share details of the three sites for Clerk to publish on website for consultation.**  **Noted** |
| **12.** | **Correspondence Report** |
|  | The Clerk reported on correspondence received and sent since the last meeting.  External auditor  A notification has been received confirming that the Mazars LLP will continued to be the external auditor of HPC for 2022-23 to 2026-27.  Code of Conduct  The Clerk has confirmed that all Councillors had signed/e-signed the LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020, and the latest Code of Conduct document has been uploaded to HPC website for public access.  Backpay of salary  NALC has updated a new pay scale in November which retrospectively effective from 1 April 2022. HPC has to backpay current and former clerks’ salary since the effective date. The Council is waiting for details from the former clerk and will then work with payroll to proceed the backpay calculation.  Precept  The signed Precept 2023/24 has been submitted to LDC and HPC has received acknowledgement of receipt.  Apology from Cllr Smith (SCC)  Apology of absence from Cllr Smith (SCC) has been received and accepted by The Chairman. The Chairman had sent best wishes on behalf of HPC to Cllr Smith and his family for the Christmas and 2023.  Asset Registry  The Clerk had sent out the approved asset registry to Zurich. However, the asset registry now needs to be revised to reflect the cost of final phase of fingerpost project (completed in December). **The Clerk will update asset registry for Council’s approval and resend to Zurich.**  Asset values remained constant throughout years. Cllr Greenway questioned whether the asset value shall change with time, for example the value of the Chain of Office should have gone up and she will arrange re-quote of that. **As the asset registry has been approved, the Council agreed to keep as is and to launch the discussion during the next update.**  Thank you from Chairman  On behalf of Chairman, Cllr Greenway thanked all who have helped throughout the year, including the Councillors, members of other councils, staff members and those members of the public that have contributed to the progress of the council, and wish them happy Christmas and 2023.  **Noted** |
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| **13.** | **Accounts for payment**  The statements for December have not been received in time. The statements for the Business Current Account and Savings Account as at 09/11/2022 were £37,421.72 and £8,292.81 respectively.  Councillors are asked to approve the following accounts for payment:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Cost | VAT | Invoice No | Cheque Number | | Clerks Wages December | £345.68 | - | - | 312 | | WCAVA (payroll) November-December | £186 | £2.2 | 287 (Nov)  321 (Dec) | 313 | | Staffordshire Parish Council Association (Clerk’s training) | £36 | £6 | SI-911 | 314 | | Stocksigns Limited (5th SID for Hospital Road) | £3,208.50 | £534.75 | 224018 | 315 | | Mike Halliday (signpost fingers engrave) | £300 | - | - | 316 | | Hammerwich Bowling Club (grant for mower) | £500 | - | - | 317 | | Lichfield District Council (Litter collection, Grass cutting and other maintenances) | £10,960.62 | £1,826.77 | M0075924298 | 318 | | D Hiley (Erect finger posts & clear footpath) | £500 | - | 39 | 319 | |
|  | **The accounts for payment were approved.** |

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| **14.** | **Public Participation** |
|  | There were no members of the public participated in the meeting, however, The Council would like to express grateful thanks to Burntwood Rotary for inviting the Council to meet Santa amid the meeting. And also to thank Sara & Phil Castell for their Christmas enthusiasm at the village post box.  **Noted** |
| **15.** | **Items for consideration at future meetings** |

* Future footpath clearance
* Scannable QR code and website update responsibilities
* Gorseway Trees
* Areas in the Triangle for biodiversity and wildlife conservation

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Meeting closed at 8.38pm