**Hammerwich Parish Council Minutes**

**15 February 2023**

**Date: 15th February 2023**

**Time: 7:00pm**

**Venue: WI Hall, Hammerwich**

**In attendance:**

Councillors Wasdell, Greenway, Ennis, Grundy, King, Place and Taylor

**Also in attendance:**

Councillor David Smith from Staffordshire County Council (SCC)

No Councillors from Lichfield District Council (LDC)

1 Members of the Public

**Clerk:**

Vivien Wang

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| **1.** | **Apologies for Absence** |
|  | Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Thurlow, Mears, Smith 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.** | **Election of Chairman** |
|  | Cllr Greenway was elected as the new Chairman, proposed by Cllr King and seconded by Cllr Grundy.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Vote Outcome: For: 5 | Against: 0 | Abstentions: 0 |   Cllr King was elected as the vice Chairman, proposed by Cllr Grundy and seconded by Cllr Taylor.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Vote Outcome: For: 4 | Against: 0 | Abstentions: 1 |   **Noted.** |
| **4.** | **Approval of the minutes of 18 January 2023**  **The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 18 January 2023 was approved.** |
| **5.** | **Matters Arising** |
|  | There were no matters arising.  **Noted** |
| **6.** | **Chairman’s Announcements** |
|  | The new Chair thanked Cllr Wasdell for his work and said will continue to seek advice from him. Cllr Wasdell replied that he is happy to co-operate with the Council, the Clerk and anyone, so feel free to get in touch.  Cllr Taylor also thanked Cllr Wasdell for being a great member of the Council, while Cllr Place paid tribute to Cllr Wasdell and regarded him as the shining library in the Hammerwich. Cllr Place disclosed that he will not stand again in the election in May, so he was calling Cllr Wasdell “Chairman” for the very last time.  **Noted** |
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| **7.** | **County/District/Police Reports** |
|  | Councillor D Smith (SCC)   1. Chair resignation   Cllr Smith was allowed to address before meeting start regarding the resignation and retirement of the former Chair Cllr Wasdell. Cllr Smith said he had enjoyed working with Cllr Wasdell, and thanked him for the co-operations and the works done. Cllr Smith wished the new Chair/vice Chair all the best and said he is looking forward to build the same relationship with them.  Former Chair Cllr Wasdell in return expressed that he enjoyed working with Cllr Smith, and valued the co-operation over a few particular issues: i) travellers in the greenbelt; ii) flooding; iii) Springhill Farm planning application.   1. Bricks thrown on to M6 Toll   Cllr Smith updated that issues were reported on the dropping of bricks from a disused railway bridge onto M6 Toll causing accidents and discussions with Network Rail was on-going. Cllr Wasdell shared that the experience from flood handling, he suggested calling British Railway via the number that can directly connect to an answering staff. **The Chairman had requested Cllr Smith to keep HPC informed on the progress.**   1. Re-surfacing of highways   Cllr King thanked SCC Highways for the work done to the surface of A5 towards Hanney Hay Road. **He had requested Cllr Smith to check if the other way will be worked on too.**  (Cllr D Smith left the meeting)  Councillor J Silvester-Hall (LDC)  Cllr Silvester-Hall had sent in apologies for absence due to her COVID symptoms. Written report had been submitted beforehand and was read out at the meeting by the Clerk. Key notes as below:   1. Planning: 22/01179/FUL to be heard at committee on Monday 27 February following recent deferment. 2. Enforcement had been to see the Tame Development over recent weeks. As the works there appear to be finalising now, a report is being sent regarding how the highway is now requiring attention, for which Cllr Silvester-Hall will contact Cllr Smith from SCC. 3. Proposed Council tax freeze for LDC for the forthcoming financial year. 4. Reminder for the Cost of Living support facilitated by LDC. 5. Updated leisure projects investment in Lichfield and Burntwood 6. Shared that ground investigations for redevelopment are ongoing on Lichfield’s Birmingham Road site. 7. Shared the link to free Half Term activity for young people.   **The Clerk to update details of item iv) and vii) on to Hammerwich website.**  **Noted.** |
| **8.** | **Planning Applications** |
|  | 23/00088/FUH – 22 Overton Lane: No comment.  23/00143/FUL - Land Adj Owl Glade Farm, Lions Den: A former application was refused due to the concern of greenbelt conservation. This application is of similar conditions; therefore, **the council rejected it again because it will be an overdevelopment on greenbelt and in contrary to local policy.**  23/00105/CLP - 2 Redwing Close: The Council approved this application.  20/01265/FULM - The Springhill Farm: Cllr King updated that this application was withdrawn, thus all the rejections received will be wiped from record. |
| **9.** | **St George’s Day Celebration** |
|  | **Chairman updated that Hammerwich Cricket Club will meet on 20 February, and** **she will report the update afterwards**. Cllr Wasdell reported that bus will not be available and there was no conclusion on tuck truck.  The Council was concerned whether holding St. George’s Day celebration in pre-election period is comply to PURDAH. **The Clerk to check with Electoral Commission.**  **Noted.** |
| **10.** | **Speedwatch**  New SIDs at Hospital Road  Cllr King updated that the new SID is still pending SCC Highways to fit the installation job into their work schedule. He had approached LDC and another contractor and waiting for job quotations.  30mph sign  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 Taylor reported this is on the meeting agenda with SCC Highways.**  **Noted.** |
| **11.** | **Highways and Footpaths**  Fence at the footpath near Norton Lane  The knocked down fence at Norton Lane had been removed and destroyed with the help from the Bailye Farm. And Footpath #16, 18 and 20 were cleared and ready for the season. Cllr King thanked the Bailye Farm for their assistance.  Doggy Doo bag on footpath #3, 4 and 8  It was reported that doggy doo poly bags were regularly discarded in the hedgerow along the paths #3, 4 and 8. The Council discussed about who supply and pay for doo bins, and whether there was one near Coppy Nook Lane. **Cllr King will check the bin existence and work out a proposal with costing for discussion at the next meeting.**  Footpath near Ridgeway Primary  A resident had e-mailed Cllr Grundy reporting the mushy and slippery condition of a footpath near Ridgeway Primary, which had led to falling of children on dog faeces. Sweeping had been arranged but the resident feedback that further treatment was needed. **The Clerk will verify the responsibility of that particular footpath, and will contact Andrew Chatwin from LDC to conduct a formal assessment. Cllr Grundy to thank the resident for her attention, and to update her that the topic had been discussed at the Council meeting and the Council is looking into the issue.**  **Noted** |
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| **12.** | **Parks and Open Spaces** |
|  | Scannable QR code and website  Cllr King had shared the latest design of the QR code and updated that the Clerk had identified Zapfino as the font of the HPC logo. Several pieces of latest news had been updated to the HPC website with an enhanced display. The Council discussed about ways to highlight the Latest News section and whether the Hoard should be kept in the homepage slider, conclusion yet to be reached. **The Clerk to check with SCC hoping to connect with responsible support team for website maintenance and revamp.**  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. Trimming of 4-5 surrounding trees are needed as advised by LDC.  The Council is awaiting the invoice from Andrew Chatwin from LDC, the fee quoted fee was £1750 + VAT.  Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation  Cllr King and Grundy had met with Bailye’s farm to understand the wildflower planting project. Cllr King updated that a map of scope had been shared by the farmers, and **Cllr Grundy will report to LDC that 52 acres of wildflowers and thousands of trees and hedges were planted within Hammerwich Parish.**  Councillors were concerned if any precautions had been done to avoid future potential impacts/hazards arising from the planted trees. Cllr Place suggested “High Hedges Legislation” as a reference for the Council to look into if needed. **Cllr King and Grundy will ask for plans on tree locations for future understanding.**  The Council also suggested collaboration possibility to involve youngsters in the program through forest schooling while promoting the village.  Work on land bordering the canal and allotments  A land next to the canal was sold and developed into allotments. The company had reserved some spots for Hammerwich residents since the canal is within Hammerwich boundary. **Cllr King will draft a press release for sharing with Lichfield Live and posting on HPC website.**  Wharf Lane hedge cutting  Hedge cutting on Wharf Lane had been done.  Solicitor for land register  The Council discussed about hiring a solicitor to convert the land registry of certain HPC open space into trust owned. Chairman updated that no solicitor has been identified yet and will share once there is any update.  Gym equipment  The gym equipment project for Oakfield Park had been put on hold in previous meetings due to budget constraint plus council re-election in May which might lead to change of Council policy. **Cllr Taylor to explain the situation to gym equipment suppliers who had sent in quotations earlier.**  **Noted** |
| **13.** | **Consultation of SCC boundary change** |
|  | Cllr King and the Clerk will attend the briefing on 16 February (Thursday) and will update the Council afterwards.  **Noted** |
| **14.** | **Correspondence Report** |
|  | The Clerk reported on correspondence received and sent since the last meeting.  Mandate change  The change of mandate from former to current Clerk at Barclays Bank was completed on 9th February.  Asset Registry and insurance  The updated asset registry had been re-submitted to Zurich and their receipt confirmed. An extra premium £78.72 was required and will be settled in February accounts for payment.  Barracks Lane  The Council had submitted a request for speed reduction measures to SCC Highways based on the information provided by a resident from Barracks Lane. Feedback received stating that “Barracks Lane does not meet the criteria in terms of speed related collisions for speed reducing engineering measures to be considered at this time. The County Council will therefor continue to monitor data for this location.”  Community Volunteer Day  Cllr Silvester-Hall had shared invitation to a community day at Wharf Lane on 18th February. Details had been forwarded to Councillors by email.  Best Kept Village  The Best Kept Village Community Competition to be held on 1st to 2nd of March. Details had been forwarded to Councillors by email.  Introduction to Cemetery  The privately owned Chase & District Memorial Park and Crematorium had approached the Council for a service introduction meeting to Hammerwich. Councillors agreed to start a dialogue for further understanding. **The Clerk to circulate the original email to full council and draft a courtesy reply to address the receipt.**  **Noted** |
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| **15.** | **Accounts for payment**  The statements for the Business Current Account and Savings Account as at 09/02/2023 were £19,796.79 and £8,297.43 respectively.  Councillors are asked to approve the following accounts for payment:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Cost | VAT | Invoice No | Cheque Number | | Clerks Wages – February and back pay of January | £530.02 | - | - | 323 | | WCAVA (payroll) – January and February | £305.80 | £3.30 | 374 (Jan)  397 (Feb) | 324 | | Zurich Municipal – insurance for new assets | £78.72 | - | 520426515 | 325 | | Hammerwich WI Hall (venue hire for January) | £38.50 | - | 308 | 326 | | Serena Mears – cheque re-issue  (to replace the uncashed cheque 277 dated 15/06/2022) | £151.08 | - | - | 327 | | Information Commissioner (annual fee) | £40 | - | 000165560302 | 328 | |
|  | **The accounts for payment were approved.**  The Council also discussed about switching from Barclays Bank to Unity Trust Bank which is an internet/mobile based banking service provider that specialised for parish council community groups. The Council can authorize up to 4 signatories while 2 approvers are required for each payment. Online view-only right can be granted to the Clerk for accounting purposes.  Cllr Place shared the satisfactory experience that he had at Burntwood Town Council with Unity Trust Bank. The Clerk can submit set-up forms to the bank when new councillors were elected in May.    **The Council approved switching to the Unity Trust Bank**:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Vote Outcome: For: 7** | **Against: 0** | **Abstentions: 0** | |

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| **16.** | **Public Participation**  No member of the public had participated in the discussion. |
|  | **Noted** |
| **17.** | **Items for consideration at future meetings**  The Council discussed whether a usual council meeting shall be held in April in the view of PURDAH sensitivity before election in May. **It was agreed that April meeting will be held as normal to discuss planning applications, accounts for payments and on-going businesses.** However, it was reminded that the Council should be sensitive on whether the participation from SCC / LDC councillors are align to PURDAH.  Cllr King suggested to have a projector ready to facilitate effective presentations in future council meetings. **Chairman or Cllr King to check on projector availability, while the Clerk to confirm the usage of projector screen with WI Hall.** |
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Meeting closed at 8.48pm