**Hammerwich Parish Council Minutes**

**18 January 2023**

**Date: 18th January 2023**

**Time: 7:00pm**

**Venue: WI Hall, Hammerwich**

**In attendance:**

Councillors Wasdell, Greenway, Ennis, Grundy, King, Mears, Smith and Thurlow

**Also in attendance:**

Councillor David Smith from Staffordshire County Council (SCC)

No Councillors from Lichfield District Council (LDC)

4 Members of the Public

**Clerk:**

Vivien Wang

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| **1.** | **Apologies for Absence** |
|  | Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Taylor, Place 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.Councillor Mears declared an interest in a planning application as she knew the applicant personally:* 22/01691/FUL – Land Adj High Ash Grange, Meerash Lane

**Noted** |
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| **3.** | **Approval of the minutes of 21 December 2022****The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21 December 2022 was approved.** |
| **4.** | **Matters Arising** |
|  | Cllr King updated that there was no called in meeting for planning application 22/01179/FUL (121 Highfields Road) in January. He will monitor progress in February. **Noted** |
| **5.** | **Chairman’s Announcements** |
|  | The Chairman wished everyone happy new year. And prior to meeting, the Council dedicated a minute of silence to the pass away of Cllr Branda Constable, the former councillor of HPC, in early January. **Noted** |
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| **6.** | **County/District/Police Reports** |
|  | Councillor J Silvester-Hall (LDC)Cllr Silvester-Hall had sent in apologies for absence due to her attendance at LDC meeting. Written report had been submitted beforehand and was shared at the meeting by the Chairman: 1. Cllr Silvester-Hall updated that planning application 22/01691/FUL was published on 16th January 2023 regarding the alleged breaches to works at Meerash Lane.
2. Cllr Silvester-Hall reported that LDC enforcement and Police (including Insp. Green) were contacted due to residents’ complaints regarding worsening parking at Overton/Coppy Nook development. Now contacted by PCSO Matthews to arrange to discuss further.

LDC Enforcement Paul Bignell had visited site on Monday 16th January 2023 and discussed parking arrangements with Director. Called on Tuesday 17th January 2023 to suggest for more considerate parking, including what was originally signposted as a carpark.  1. Cllr Silvester-Hall declared an interest on the case of Norton Lane footpath as she is living next to it. And she had liaised with Cllr King on the replacement of stile following a fence being knocked down whilst extracting an injured walker.
	1. A HPC footpath fingerpost was now being used as support, consequently leaning.
	2. Owners of the copse are also the developers of the `Big House’ on Norton Lane. They have demonstrated being keen to work together.
	3. Cllr Silvester-Hall expressed her willingness to facilitate the communications between HPC and developers if required.
2. Cllr Silvester-Hall reported that enquires were made for updates to on-going matters such as Highfields Road planning application and Barracks Lane.
3. Cllr Silvester-Hall shared a link with details of Pedestrianisation of Lichfield City Center. There will be consultation events for feedback.

Councillor D Smith (SCC)Cllr Smith joined the meeting when the Council was discussing Speedwatch. He apologised for being late.Cllr King thanked Cllr Smith for having the ramblers to clear the footpath in Hammerwich. Besides, Cllr Smith had also responded to Cllr King’s enquiry that Amy, who assisted the former SID posts installation in Hammerwich, is still a current contractor of SCC Highways. **Noted.** |
| **7.** | **Planning Applications** |
|  | 22/01682/FUL – 37 Stockhay Lane: The Council was concerned that Hammerwich #16 Footpath was included in the application. **Cllr King will provide details for the Clerk to feedback.** Besides, the revision plan had added an entrance to the surrounding field which wasn’t normal. **Cllr King will follow-up to understand why such request was raised.** 22/01691/FUL - Land Adj High Ash Grange, Meerash Lane: This is a retrospective application to change the land usage to cater for the new barn that being built. The council considered the complaints that received for the nearby old barn and discussed whether those should be taken into account. **Resolved that this application (new barn) should be treated as a standalone case and the Council is in support to it.**

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| Vote Outcome: For: 5 |  Against: 1 | Abstentions: 2 |

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| **8.** | **St George’s Day Celebration** |
|  | Cllr Greenway reported that there had been no reply from Cricket Club so far, and the Council may need to put this on hold if still receives no update. **Cllr Greenway to follow-up with Cricket Club.****Noted.**(Councillor D Smith joined the meeting) |
| **9.** | **Speedwatch**Cllr Taylor updated to the Clerk before meeting that Speedwatch will resume in February. New SIDs at Hospital RoadCllr King updated the new SID cannot be installed yet as still pending quotation from SCC on the post cost, while the drawing and design of the post are identical to the former SID posts. Cllr King will explore the possibility of hiring a contractor to work for HPC if no progress from SCC after two weeks. Price, safety, and risk assessment factors will all be taken into consideration. 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 has applied for a sign (ref # 4305579) and is awaiting reply.****Noted.**(Councillor D Smith left the meeting) |
| **10.** | **Highways and Footpaths**Footpath near Ridgeway PrimaryA 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. **The Clerk will raise a formal request to LDC to sweep the footpath, while Cllr Grundy will update the Council’s action to the resident.** Barracks Home FarmA resident living on Barracks Lane had reported the issue of vehicle speeding leading to the roundabout at the junction of Barracks Lane and Lichfield Road. Traffic calming work such as a speed hump was suggested by the resident as she believed a speed limit sign was not enough. **As this is out of the scope of the Council, the Council concluded to have the Clerk to report the case to SCC Highways Team and reply to the resident accordingly.** Fence at the footpath near Norton Lane A fence owned by the farmers at a footpath near Norton Lane was knocked down to rescue an injured lady. Cllr King had reached out to SCC and was advised to leave the footpath open as there is no livestock or animals involved.The knocked down fence is now tied up to lean against a HPC fingerpost. There was concern on the potential damage to the fingerpost, so the Council had decided to remove and scrap the fence. **A member of the public (Mrs. Donna Bailye) had volunteered to scrap on behalf. Cllr King will follow-up with her on this.** The Council expressed sincere thank you for the help that Mrs. Bailye had offered.Future footpath clearanceFootpath No. 20 leading to Board Lane needs clearance. It will be in next year’s plan.**Noted** |
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| **11.** | **Parks and Open Spaces** |
|  | Scannable QR codeCllr King had sent out details of the QR code (5” large) and was waiting for reply from Councillors. He will resend the information to full council, while Cllr Mears had suggested to use larger font size to cater for the need of all eye sights.Timeline to deploy the QR code signages will depend on the progress of website news update. **Cllr King will align with the Clerk separately on timeline, by putting up past posts from Lichfield Live as trial.** The Council aimed to work on the News page of the website first instead of a whole website revamp. Inclusion to websites and responsibilitiesThe Chairman reiterated that the responsibility of the website is solely by the Clerk to ensure impartiality, including upload of press release and other updates. Councillors shall provide details to facilitate the update by Clerk.Cllr Mears expressed her willingness to help as she run a business that was relevant to website platform. The Clerk appreciated her offer and said will reach out when needed. Trees at GorsewayA 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.Areas for Wildlife ConservationLDC had requested more nature conservation sites within Hammerwich. The Council had noticed recent efforts on wildflowers planting by farmers within the area, which was a huge effort on wildlife conservation that already fulfilled the request from LDC. Cllr King suggested to find out which farmer(s) is/are working on this.In coincidence, the farmers who planted the wildflowers were attending the meeting as members of the public. Mrs Donna Bailye shared that they had been working with Oxford University on planting 52 acres of wildflowers and 3,000 trees within the area. **Cllr Grundy will collect more information from Mrs Bailye for liaison with LDC.** **A map will be shared to help illustrate the scope of work. HPC will work out a press release together with farmers for sharing on the website.** Councillors appreciated and thanked the farmers for the contributions.Wharf LaneAs discussed in the last meeting, SCC had cleared Wharf Lane but not cut the hedge. Hedge cutting was said to be the farmer’s (the landowner) responsibility. **Cllr Mears has yet to find out who is/are the farmer(s), and she will follow-up by next meeting and remind them to maintain the hedge and keep public path clear.**Playing Field AssociationCllr Greenway reported that loans are available at the Staffordshire Playing Field Association (SPFA) at good rate to facilitate Council’s development of playing field equipment. The Council noted and agreed to take no action now. The Council also discussed about hiring a solicitor to convert the land registry of certain HPC open space into trust owned. Lands mentioned were located at Oakfield Park, Mansion Drive and Coppy Nook. Hire of a land solicitor from LDC was not recommended due to conflict of interest as LDC owned certain lands. Cllr **Greenway will explore the support from SPFA and check the cost of hiring a solicitor and the procedures involved.** (Two members of the public left the meeting)Oakfield Park Gym EquipmentCllr Taylor provided written update that work on fundings of Oakfield Park Gym Equipment is still on-going, while the Council had confirmed in the November meeting to suspend the project this year due to budget constraint. Resident input on Accessibility and Leisure An email was received from a resident (Mr. Stuart Taylor) sharing comments on ways to improve accessibility and leisure within Hammerwich was not yet responded to. **The Clerk will send a courtesy reply to address it.** **Noted** |
| **12.**  | **Asset Registry update and re-approval** |
|  | Asset Registry was updated to reflect the cost of final phase of work done to Fingerposts in December 2022. The Council had approved the updated registry. **The Clerk will share the final registry with insurance company and settle the additional premium that had incurred.** **Noted** |
| **13.** | **Correspondence Report** |
|  | The Clerk reported on correspondence received and sent since the last meeting. Internal auditThe internal audit of HPC will take place in the morning of 6th June 2023. The audit will be conducted by the same auditor as last year from Black Rose Solutions. Backpay of salaryCalculation on number of hours to backpay as per new NALC pay scale had been done by payroll. The former and current clerks will be back paid 214 hours and 91 hours respectively. The backpay will be completed in January.Community Volunteer DayCllr Silvester-Hall had shared invitation to a special volunteer day on 21st January. Details had been forwarded to Councillors by email. **Noted** |
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| **14.** | **Accounts for payment**The delivery of statements for December were delayed. The statements for the Business Current Account and Savings Account as at 09/12/2022 were £36,642.11 and £8,297.43 respectively. The statements for the Business Current Account and Savings Account as at 09/01/2023 were £35,678.93 and £8,297.43 respectively. Councillors are asked to approve the following accounts for payment:

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|  | Cost | VAT | Invoice No | Cheque Number |
| Clerks Wages (EB) – payback  | £171.20 | - | - | 320 |
| Clerks Wages (VW) – January and payback  | £442.82 | - | - | 321 |
| Hammerwich WI Hall (venue hire for November and December) | £77 | - | 295303 | 322 |

The Parish Council are asked to note the following income:

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| Source | Amount | Reference |
| Interest | £4.62 | - |
| Repay of Clerk Wage – EB (November) | £533.70 | - |

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|  | **The accounts for payment were approved.**  |

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| **14.** | **Public Participation**2 members of the public had volunteered to remove and scrap the knocked down fence from Norton Lane on behalf of HPC and shared their work on wildflowers and trees planting within the area. Details of each have been covered in #11 and #10 of this meeting minutes respectively. |
|  | **Noted**(2 members of the Public left the meeting) |
| **15.** | **Items for consideration at future meetings*** St. George Days celebration
* 5th SIDs installation
* 30mph sign on Hospital Road
* Scannable QR code and website update
* Gorseway Trees
* Biodiversity and wildlife conservation
* Knocked down fence at Norton Lane
* Wharf Lane hedge cutting
* Solicitor for land register
* Consultation of SCC boundary change
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| **16.** | **Confidential Item** |
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Meeting closed at 8.45pm