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| **The Minutes of Great Witley and Hillhampton Parish Council** |
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| **Held at the Great Witley Village Hall on Wednesday 13th September 2017** |
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| **Present: Chairman Cllr F Chapman (FC), Cllr C Shaw (CS), Cllr G Goodman (GG), Cllr R Perkins (RP), Cllr N Drew (ND), Cllr C Dermietzel (CD), Cllr A Symonds (AS), Cllr B Dallow (BD), Cllr C Jones (CJ), CCllr K Pollock (KP) and DCllr P Cumming (PC)** |
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| **In Attendance:** Jo Evans Clerk, |

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| **1.** | **Apologies:** none. | | | | | |
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| **2.** | **Declarations of Interest:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests. | |
|  |  | | | b. | Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: none. | |
|  |  | | | c. | Other Disclosable Interests: none. | |
| ***A Presentation by David Manning (DM) on the South Worcestershire Rural Communities Programme was given.***  ***DM from Wychavon District Council (WDC) has been working with MHDC on this Programme which has been running for two years for our ageing population. It aims to work with parish councils to offer support with issues such as energy advice, rural crime, social isolation, fire safety, etc. The Programme uses what is already in place and available and is currently running across 30/35 parishes and over 1,500 doors have been ‘knocked’ on!***  ***DM asked if our Parish would find this Programme useful and could we work with them. The process would be as follows:***   1. ***A door knock to survey services from providers such as fire services, police, AGE UK, housing providers, St Richards Hospice. Between 14/15 officers who pair up would visit door steps in person. Residents would be written to in the first instance, warning that a door knock survey would be taking place and a cross-section of between 100-120 homes visited.*** 2. ***The information collected via a feedback form would be anonymous and no personal details would be made public.*** 3. ***Any recommendations would come back to the Parish Council.***   ***CS approved the Programme at this point.***  ***GG asked how they would tackle the survey. DM said that a ‘Mosaic Tool’ would be used so that streets containing the correct demographic would be visited.***  ***FC commented that it would work in the Great Witley ‘triangle’ but some of the residents outside this and those with very long tracks to their properties may prove more challenging. DM agreed that not everyone would be visited but they would try and include some of the more remote homes in their survey as they may benefit from the services offered by the Programme. There would have to be a balance between time allowed and officers provided.***  ***GG asked whether DM would follow up any leads. DM answered that not specifically on the day but a follow up letter would be sent.***  ***AS queried whether the Programme would tie in with the Neighbourhood Plan. FC agreed that there could be a possible link with it. DM commented that some issues regarding infrastructure would be covered. For example, housing being offered to those already in the community.***  ***CS questioned about what would take place regarding AGE UK. DM said that the Programme would make direct referrals.***  ***FC thanked DM for taking the time to make his presentation to the Parish Council and that the GWHHPC would respond with their comments. DM then left the meeting. A discussion then took place and everyone agreed, by a show of hands, that the GWHHPC was in favour of supporting the Programme. A letter in support of the Programme will be sent out accordingly and we look forward to working together from March 2018.*** | | | | | | |
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| The meeting was adjourned for **Public Question Time**, notes of which are appended to these minutes. | | | | | | |
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| **3.** | **Application for a dispensation:** none. | | | | | |
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| **4.** | **Minutes:** the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12th July 2017 were approved. | | | | | |
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| **5.** | **Progress reports:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | **Clerk:** PC informed that Bloor Homes still own Glendower Way as it is still not adopted. ***ACTION:*** It was therefore suggested that the Clerk write to the residents suggesting that they form a Residential Committee to manage traffic calming measures as this is out of the Parish Council’s remit.  ***ACTION:*** The Clerk will chase WCC regarding removal of the Ringway highways signs and reinstatement of missing village signs. | |
|  |  | | | b. | **Village Hall and Quartergreen: *ACTION:*** CS will supply the Clerk with a full list of the outdoor exercise equipment purchase with the s106 monies for the Asset Register update as required by Grant Thornton in the External Audit. | |
|  |  | | | c. | **Lengsthman and Footpaths:** CS unfortunately reported that the free dog waste bags and dispensers which the parish provides have been stolen. They are being replaced and a sign has been erected asking people to please use the bags provided for their necessary purpose but not to take the dispensers. CS also took this opportunity to thank the Quarterman family for allowing access on their land for maintenance works and for hosting the fireworks display on 5th November 2017. | |
|  |  | | | d. | **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party:** It was reported that Clifton and Kempsey’s draft Neighbourhood Plans had been approved and were moving to referendum. FC would like to inspect these Plans and compare them with ours. Abberley’s Plan is behind ours and FC believes both our plans, including the Abberley Hill Preservation Society, should be the same regarding the hill. | |
|  |  | | | e. | **Speeding concerns in Glendower Way:** It was reiterated that the Parish Council has no remit here whilst Bloor Homes still own the road. The Clerk will write to the residents suggesting that a Residential Committee be set up to look after traffic issues, and footpath vegetation etc. | |
|  |  | | | f. | **VeloBirmingham update:** FC will draft a letter for the Parish Magazine. | |
| **6.** | **CALC:** none. | | | | | |
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| **7.** | **District and County Councillors’ Reports:** | | | | | |
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|  |  | | | a. | PC, after a technical issue was corrected on the planning comments form, it now reads that PC is a Councillor Consultee and not a Neighbour! Validation times are acceptable but applications are still slow. Waste collections will be fortnightly as from next April 2018. A trial across some parishes will happen first and it will be useful to trial in rural villages as well as towns. There is still some money available in the ward fund for parish organisations to apply for and PC asked that any committees with a worthy cause do so.  FC commented that the current waste bags and too weak for fortnightly collections. PC said that wheelie bins will be provided. FC replied that for homes with drives such as his where wheelie bins are not able to be used what measure will be taken? PC said that he will ‘push’ for stronger bags.  CS asked how much was in the ward fund which was on offer to committees? PC replied that there was £500 and that £150 could be available to Great Witley. BD then applied for £143 to pay for the wooden rail to the footpath extension. This is the amount outstanding to find on this project. PC approved this application for funds. | |
|  |  | | | b. | KP report is attached. To summarise:  WCC finances are not in a good state. Ofsted judged their Children’s Services inadequate and £10 million more is required to activate the complicated and detailed remedial system suggested. More children, around 750, have been taken into care. Roadshows over the summer and a viewpoint survey of 30,000 people to see how monies are required to be spent have shown that people and highways maintenance are the Council’s priorities. An increase of £6,000 required.  Regarding refuse, Harlebury take all the black bags but the ash which is produced is selling for less than it costs to produce, therefore making the them inefficient.  Tenbury’s highways works are coming to an end. The raised tables will be replaced with red tarmac and a 20-mph speed limit put in place.  Velo: at a meeting on 23rd June 2017 with CSM, KP wanted to cancel the event but CSM had rearranged the route. Another meeting took place on 29th June 2017 and it was agreed that CSM had until July to mitigate any problems arising. CSM agreed to install traffic cones through Great Witley to allow traffic to Witley Court and farm traffic to harvest potatoes. However, it was agreed that the farm and shop at Broomfield’s will suffer the most. The event has been allowed to go ahead. CSM has a contract with Birmingham City Council to run this event for 5 years. WCC does not have a contract so if there are too many problems with this year’s event there will be no contract agreed for 2018. 15,000 tickets sold within 3 days for this year’s event and any extras applied for have been saved for the proposed 2018 Velo cycle even though WCC have not committed to it. WCC will hold a ‘post-mortem’ after the 24th September 2017. All signs and marshals, who are residents of Worcestershire, are being paid for by CSM. WCC are not paying for anything, they are just allowing the road closures. All blue light services have access everywhere. GG asked about the location of diversion signs and KP said there would be adequate diversion signs in usage. CJ reported that he had copied KP into a letter he had sent to MP Harriet Baldwin outlining that 99% of local people spoken to were against this cycle event and the road closures it caused. Referring to the Government website CJ said that road closures should not affect people’s access excessively. Questions were being asked whether WCC were taking a ‘back-hander’? KP strongly refused to believe that anyone at WCC would agree to take a ‘back-hander’. CJ pointed out that businesses are losing money. WCC are seen not to be listening to the people who elected them into office. Some people are still not aware that this event is still happening and some have still not received any replies from Velo or CSM. CJ pointed out that WCC were mistaken to go ahead with this event and that they should expect disruptions. CD agreed that people will cause trouble and they have been angered by the length of time that the roads are closed despite agreeing that the sponsorship was a good idea. RP raised the question that if there is no contract between CSM and WCC then why can’t they turn the request for road closures down like Hereford County Council (HCC) have who also have no contract with CSM? KP replied that CSM have threatened legal action over the presence of a virtual contract with WCC as they have worked with them since May 2015. Benefits which were promised to Worcester haven’t happened and this will be taken up with BCC after the event. KP said in this instance the lack of contract between WCC and CSM is not relevant in WCC’s decision to go ahead this time. KP had spoken to local businessman Tim Field who was not against the event and was going to offer a feeding station through Dunley. However, CJ said that this was contrary to a discussion he had had with Mr Field two weeks earlier. ND thought that this event had “crept in through the back door” and should not be allowed to go ahead but to certainly be refused for subsequent years. AS said that CSM were “sweet talking” WCC. It was only when WCC were copied into correspondence that CSM responded. They had morally got WCC “over a barrel”. KP responded by saying that WCC had co-operated with CSM since May 2015. Velo had not come through any WCC meetings therefore all meetings had been closed meetings. He again said he was not of the opinion that any official would have accepted any money to allow this event but WCC were too committed. On balance, after mitigation it was decided to go ahead. CS commented that he thought that WCC had “caved in” this year and although he doesn’t want any disruption or harm to come to anyone he does think it will take something like that to prevent this from happening again. KP was reminded of an event in Scotland where two elderly people attacked some cyclists and although the cyclists clashed no injuries occurred but this was obviously a very silly incident and not one he wishes to see repeated. FC said that although Velo will go ahead this year he has drafted a letter for the Parish Magazine. ND asked if the proposed route planned for next year would be the same as this years but KP had no knowledge of any planned route for 2018. FC reported that he had received some communications from residents from Staffordshire who have still not been contacted by CSM about this weekend’s forthcoming cycle event and subsequent road closures. He also raised the question regarding what toilet facilities would be provided along the route to which there was no answer. CJ suggested that the event could move to a circuit such as Silverstone but KP said this would be deemed too boring for those taking part. | |
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|  |  | | |  | ***Cllr GG left the meeting*** | |
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| **8.** | **Planning:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | 17/01041/HP - relating to Old Nursery Cottage, 27 Worcester Road and proposed rear first floor extension and new roof over existing single store extension was supported. | |
|  |  | | | b. | 15/01173/OUT – 12 affordable dwellings, land off Stourport Road. Update from Cllr F Chapman after attending planning meeting with inspectors. FC said the meeting was dispiriting and alarming. The Inspector was inclusive but the parties were talking between themselves and passing papers which he did not see. He was disappointed that it was conceded there was a need for affordable housing in the area by a small percentage of applications received regardless of where they were applying from or how many applications they had made. 19 social houses are allocated in Abberley if they are ever built. The large trees which will protect The Hundred House are not actually on their land and have no preservation order on them so could be cut down at any time. As the style of the new housing will not be bungalows their elevation will be higher so there is an argument that they would be prominent. | |
|  |  | | | c. | 17/01399/LB for Hill House and installation of a new passenger list, reinstatement of windows and doors to ground and first floors and internal alterations – Not on the Agenda, was approved for the Parish Council’s support. | |
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| **9.** | **Finance:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | The Bank Reconciliation and Budget Comparison was circulated for approval and information. | |
|  |  | | | b. | ***ACTION:*** The Clerk is to contact HSBC to organise changing the bank mandate for a new set of signatories. | |
|  |  | | | c. | Invoices paid and a remittance received with approved and circulated. | |
|  |  | | | d. | BD queried if The Hundred House Pub could be considered to be an asset to the village with regard to the Plunkett Foundation. It was agreed that if the pub is not viable then the village would have 6 months to get a plan in place to raise the funds to approach the owners to offer to buy the pub as a community business. There are 16 such businesses running successfully across the country at present and it was pointed out that it linked in nicely with DM’s presentation and that a committee overlooking the possibility may be suggested. | |
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| **10.** | **Correspondence for Information:** All correspondence was read out and noted. | | | | | |
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| **11.** | **Urgent Decisions since the last meeting:** none. | | | | | |
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| **12.** | **Councillors’ reports and items for future agenda:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | BD kindly agreed that during the absence of any candidates for the Parish Warden vacancy he will take on the role until it is filled. | |
|  |  | | | b. | ***ACTION:*** CD asked the Clerk if Witley Court could be contacted for some new resident passes to be issued. | |
|  |  | | | c. | CJ has asked that the residents of Great Witley and Hillhampton be more vigilant regarding crime matters. | |
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| **13.** | **Date of next meeting:** It was agreed by a show of hands that the next meeting will be at Great Witley Village Hall at 7.30pm on Wednesday 8th November 2017. | | | | | |
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| The meeting closed at 10pm | | | | | | |
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| Signed …………………………………….. Date …………………………………….. | | | | | | |
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| **Notes of Public Question Time** | | | |
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| 2 Members of the public were in attendance and raised the following concerns during Public Question Time: | | | |
|  |  | 1. | It was pointed out that the trees planted by Bloor Homes had blown over as they had not been planted properly. An inspected party had been spotted inspecting said trees. FC said that if these trees were in the original Bloor Homes contract then they will not be released from this until these trees have been satisfactorily planted. This should be actioned by Bloor. |
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