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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 Tuesday, 16th January 2018 at 7.30pm.** |
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| **Present: Chairman F Chapman (FC), Cllrs, C Shaw (CS), C Dermietzel (CD), G Goodman (GG), N Drew (ND), C Jones (CJ), A Symonds (AS) and District Cllr P Cumming (PC)** |
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| **In Attendance:** Clerk, J Evans |

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| **1.** | **Apologies:** Cllrs R Perkins (RP) and B Dallow (BD) and County Cllr K Pollock (KP) – KP did attend briefly between 8pm and 8.15pm | | | | | |
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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 | |
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|  |  | | |  | **Presentation from Emma Jordan (EJ) and Dean Kinsella (DK)**  **MHDC Planning Department**  EJ and DK kindly agreed to attend the meeting to help with clarification over the Inspectorate’s decision to overturn the original refused planning application APP/J1860/W/16/3164820, Land off Stourport Road, Great Witley on 13th November 2017.The SWDP designates the land as open countryside which can only be used for development if it is established that there is an unmet local need for affordable homes. The question of whether a need is established is determined by reference to the Homes Choice Plus System (HCPS) and Parish Needs Survey (PNS).  EJ outlined the HCPS. Councils have a waiting list for affordable homes over a wide area. For the housing needs requirement, applicants in the Parish are looked at first and then applicants from neighbouring parishes.  It was reported that there are believed to be 8 applicants on the list in Great Witley and 28 in the surrounding area. This was reassessed for the Appeal and reduced to 4 in Great Witley who were registered with high needs and 21 in the surrounding areas.  DK explained the PNS. This is a test which can be used in conjunction with the parish councils as well as the HCPS. In this appeal decision a parish needs survey had been conducted without the involvement of the Parish Council and so this limited the weight the Inspector gave to the document. The Inspector used the HCPS which showed there was a need for affordable homes in the parish. MHDC had pointed out that permissions in neighbouring parishes had already been granted which meant that this development was not needed but the Inspectorate was not convinced that these permissions were going to lead to building in the next five years. DK stands by the original decision to refuse the application, but the Inspectorate decided that both the HCPS and PNS supported a need for affordable homes and they are entitled to come to a different view.  The question was raised whether this decision would have any bearing on the appeal for the proposed 175 housing development in Great Witley? The response was that this was on a Rural Exception Site and the application for 175 houses does not claim to be a rural exception site.  DK said that MHDC has land and plans to develop sufficient houses over the next 5 years, (figures show more accurately 6.6 years). In other appeals the Inspectorate have accepted that MHDC has sufficient land to meet the needs over the next 5 years Therefore, he felt that MHDC planning department are in a strong position to resist the appeal about the 175 houses. The 2 appeals are not linked.  ND asked how the MHDC determined their 5-year plan? DK said that the Government gives them a target of houses to be built. A number of sites are then earmarked, and a guess has to be made as to which sites and how many houses are needed for their target to be met. They must not have a record of undelivered housing projects.  GG wanted to know that if out of the 175 proposed homes there are 70 affordable houses included, how does it fit within the plan? DK replied that the SWDP states that 40% on a scheme of that size must have that many affordable homes.  CS asked whether a developer can renege on the affordable homes requirement if he went bust. DK said that another developer would be found as there are safeguards in place. A legal agreement for the life time of the development is made.  FC asked who would move into these affordable homes? Would they be local? EJ replied that adverts are placed locally at first and priority is given to local applicants in the first 2 weeks. After that, they look further afield at the surrounding parishes. It is important to make sure that any prospective local applicants are made aware as soon as possible when these affordable homes become available. The Parish always gets first refusal. Residents are then given a choice when they can move. Up to 3 properties can be bid for. If no bids are made, then applicants names are taken off the list.  GG then brought to the attention of the meeting past problems had with Glendower Way and inappropriate tenants from outside the area being given accommodation. EJ said the final decision is made by the housing association but that the appropriate checks should be made.  FC made the point that if the development goes ahead along with those proposed in Abberley and Martley of between 30/40 houses, then those figures go beyond the Councils needs. DK said that the SWDP’s stated need is not a maximum figure. It’s a plan led system which some argue sets a minimum requirement figure. This builds in some resilience for the Council’s 5-year plan.  AS reported that a development survey questionnaire came “out of the blue”. The question asking how many houses are required, 13 or more, on the survey, was a “stacked question”. Obviously, locals opposed to any further developments are going to have to choose the lower figure with no option for ‘no development’. DK said that the parish council’s housing needs survey can be useful. Each survey is assessed on its own merits as each situation is different. EJ explained that MHDC do carry out these surveys for a fee.  FC reinforced that the Inspectorate’s decision is not going to be appealed. He thanked EJ and DK for their time and presenting at the meeting. EJ and DK left the meeting at 20.10pm. | |
| **7.** | **County Councillors’ Report:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | |  | | |
|  |  | | | b. | CCllr KP arrived at 20.00pm and left at 20.15pm. KP arrived following attending a meeting of the Dick Brook flooding meeting at the Dog at Dunley and reported that more tests are going to be carried out to see if the alerts which are in place work. He had circulated his report prior to the meeting and which FC read out at the meeting a copy of which is attached to these Minutes | |
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| The meeting was adjourned at 20.15pm for **Public Question Time**, 1 member of the public was in attendance and no questions were asked. | | | | | | |
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| **3.** | **Application for a dispensation:** none | | | | | |
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| **4.** | **Minutes:** the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8th November 2017 were approved. | | | | | |
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| **5.** | **Progress reports:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | **Clerk:**   1. Lara Brennan’s request to advertise what appeared to be an advert for a job centre was declined as it was from a private business. 2. The abandoned car outside the scout hut has now been removed. 3. The overflowing recycling bins are regularly reported to James Noblet at MHDC who is monitoring the contractors responsible for their emptying. 4. Blocked drains from Abberley Hall School to the filling station have been reported and the site has been inspected by WCC and the matter has been passed onto their drainage contractor for clearance. 5. Blocked ditch at Home Farm Lane has been reported but it has also been suggested that the Lengthsman needs to dig out this ditch further. | |
|  |  | | | b. | **Village Hall and Quartergreen:**  The village hall is still over used and highlights the lack of an alternative facility in the village. CS was sorry to report that it is presumed that the missing defibrillator has been stolen as no reports from the emergency services have been received that they are in receipt of it following an emergency. It is planned that the replacement will be moved from its present site at Chiltern Close to go next to the notice board at The Glebe. | |
|  |  | | | c. | **Lengsthman and Footpaths:**  CJ raised the sufficiency of the Lengthsman’s Time allowance. As the Lengthsman’s contract is coming up for renewal it was agreed that an appraisal meeting would be arranged with RP, CJ and CS present. ND suggested that RP contact the Lengthsman to arrange this.  CJ highlighted some areas which need to be addressed.  FC upon hearing these points warned that it is important that the parish does not lose its Lengthsman.  CD requested clarification as to who is responsible for our Lengthsman and it was pointed out that RP is currently.  CJ is happy to recommend a new candidate should it be necessary, but GG and FC said that the procedure to follow is that an appraisal meeting needs to be arranged where these issues can be addressed.  The ditch at Home Farm Lane needs to be dug out further.  FC raised the point that there is a lot of water on the road by the sewage farm, The Hundred House and Mill Orchards Farm and that Severn Trent are aware. | |
|  |  | | | d. | **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party:**  Nothing to report. | |
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| **6.** | **CALC:** none. | | | | | |
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| **7.** | **District Councillors’ Report: District Cllr PC arrived 21.30pm**: | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | PC has asked for an automatic update on Issue of Enforcement as without which you do not hear anything further and must chase for information.  There was a proposal to reduce planning down to one committee from 2. PC objected to this, arguing that we are a large area and therefore need 2 committees who have detailed knowledge of their own area. PC was supported in this and our Northern area committee is staying. | |
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| **8.** | **Planning:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | Please see Dean Kinsella’s report earlier on in these Minutes. It was agreed his presentation could start early so that himself and Emma Jordan could leave before the main meeting started. | |
|  |  | | | b. | The Old Dairy was supported. | |
|  |  | | | c. | Villa Fiore was approved. | |
|  |  | | | d. | Woodpeckers was approved. | |
|  |  | | | e. | Barns at Witley Park Farm, a decision could not be reached so the parish council recorded they could neither support or object to this application. | |
| **9.** | **Finance:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | The Clerk’s pay review was discussed and agreed. Below follows an extract from an email from the Staffing Committee to the Chairman summarising the outcome of the appraisal and the new pay review:  *“Basically, it sets out 8 criteria that the role of the Clerk has to be judged against (Knowledge, Mental Skills, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, etc, etc) and for each of those 8, there are 4 possible options to assign from "1", which is basically least responsible through to "4", which is basically most responsible. Please note these criteria judge the level of responsibility of the given post as opposed to competency of the individual.*  *That then generates 8 numbers and those dictate which of the four pay bands ("LC1" through "LC4") they are on and whether they are substantively at that pay band, or above or below that substantive pay band. Wherever they end up in the band ("substantive", "above" or "below" for whichever "LC" band) there are a number of Spinal Pay Points which apply to the Clerk - the Clerk starts on the lowest of those Spinal Points and then progress up them on 1st April each subsequent year, until they hit the top one where they stay.*  *Currently, I understand from Jo that she thought that she was possibly on spinal point 20 or 21. However she advises that she is paid £10.63 per hour - which translates to a 2016 pay-rate spinal-point 22 - the pay rates increased from 1st April 2017, so at the very least her current pay rate is incorrectly on the old 2016 scale.*  *To cut a long story short, our review of those 8 criteria gave Jo 5x scores of "1" and 3x scores of "2". This translates to an "LC1 Above Substantive" - which has spinal pay points from 23 to 25. Therefore we recommend that Jo is put on to Spinal Pay point 23 with immediate effect. This translates to an hourly rate of £11.054 - which isn't much more than her current £10.63. Jo would move to pay point 24 (currently £11.415/hr) on 1st April 2018 and pay point 25 (currently £11.777/hr) on 1st April 2019 where she would stay (that being the highest spinal pay point for "LC1 Above Substantive").”*  A signed copy of these changes will be applied to the Clerk’s contract. | |
|  |  | | | b. | The precept was discussed and in light of the increased number of houses in the parish and the required maintenance work needed to re-paint the parking lines on the car park, it was agreed to increase this year’s precept by £1,000 to £10,000. ***ACTION:*** The Clerk will apply for this by the end of January. | |
|  |  | | | c. | Invoices paid, and remittances received were circulated. | |
|  |  | | | d. | In RP absence the Bank Mandate form for update the bank account signatories could not be completed and will be brought to the next meeting. | |
|  |  | | | e. | The bank reconciliation was circulated. | |
|  |  | | | f. | The budget comparison was circulated. | |
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| **10.** | **Correspondence for Information:**   1. It was agreed to appoint Diane Malley as the internal auditor again this financial year. ***ACTION:*** The clerk will write confirming this. 2. FC signed the street naming initiative support document and agreed that local knowledge and connections should be used in the naming process. 3. The SWRCP update was circulated for information and FC noted that we would be contacted in March to take part in the ‘door knock’ survey. | | | | | |
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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. | VeloBirmingham: FC reported from the recent meeting he attended organised by CALC that no-one from WCC or the Highways Department were present only disgruntled parishioners. He strongly urged those who wished to do so to write to WCC with their comments before 8/2/18 when a decision will be made as to whether this event will be repeated in the future.  ND said that he cannot believe that this is still being discussed 12 months’ on considering the negative effects it had on so many businesses. WCC are not supporting us in this matter. No agreements have been made in writing.  FC reported that he had asked WCC for copies of all Minutes of all meetings relevant to VeloBirmingham under the Freedom of Information Act. ***ACTION:*** He will also write a letter to the RAC and AA on behalf of the Parish Council concerning highway matters surrounding this event.  CS agreed with FC’s suggestion that this event, should it be permitted to carry on, happen on the other side of the river to alleviate bottlenecks at the crossing points and open up potential diversion routes which we were denied in 2017. | |
|  |  | | | b. | PC reported that regarding the appeal over the proposed application for 175 houses, he confirmed a valid appeal had been submitted and received by the planning department, but no inspector has yet been appointed.  He will remind the Inspectorate that an application for 12 affordable homes has been approved and therefore our village needs have been met. | |
|  |  | | | c. | The 100 House: GG reported that the works were going well. The pub was in the process of being worked upon. No timescale for completion is being given and all communication must go through the agents. | |
|  |  | | | d. | In BD absence this point will be carried forward to the next meeting.  ***CS wished to thank Steve Breakwell for his hard work and efforts in clearing the snow from the car park and Dan Griffiths in recent weeks and that the surgery and school would have been grateful for the benefit this brought.*** | |
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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 14th March 2018. | | | | | |
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| The meeting closed at 21.50 | | | | | | |
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| Signed …………………………………….. Date …………………………………….. | | | | | | |
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|  | | Chairman | | | |

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County Councillor Ken Pollock’s report:

**GREAT WITLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**18.01.18**

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

1. **Happy New Year**

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Great Witley councillors and residents in and around the parish a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. We can expect there to be great challenges facing us at the town, district and county level, without considering national negotiations re Brexit.

Worcestershire starts the year in good shape, as indicated in the annual conference of the Local Enterprise Partnership last month. Around 400 local business people, local authority officers and councillors attended the Chateau Impney Hotel to hear of some of the many good things that are happening in the county, and of the major challenges ahead.

Some of the latter dealt with the way technology offers new possibilities in transport and manufacturing, as well as the handling of big data – a positive factor, but one open to misuse. Cyber security is a constant concern, but Worcestershire is well placed to benefit from the need, with several top flight companies operating in this area.

It was also good to hear from the three recent top county apprentices, who have gone on to succeed in their chosen fields, after the benefit of their apprenticeships. They demonstrated how important it is to choose the right path for the individual, rather than believing the only route to success is via university. Indeed, one winner left her course after two years, when she realised that a better future lay with taking up an apprenticeship.

Overall, a very positive conference, with many lessons learnt and encouraging enthusiasm for the tasks ahead.

1. **County Council affairs**

At the County level, I am pleased to report that we have recruited a new Chief Executive, who will start work in the Spring. He is Paul Robinson, currently the Chief Executive of Derby City Council, where he runs a unitary authority with a large budget and staff, comparable to this county.

Sitting on the appointments panel, I was impressed in particular by his vigour and keenness, qualities we will need as a new senior team is being recruited over the coming months. While we have lost some senior people recently, they have all gone on to more significant posts, indicating that our personnel are recognised as being highly effective and worth employing.

I will forward a note from Jon Fraser with other county matters of relevance and also a link to the latest bulletin re superfast broadband, some of which may be relevant to some residents of Great Witley.

1. **Tenbury Public Realm**

The Public Realm work in Tenbury is nearing completion. There are still some items of street furniture to be installed, in particular the planters. Red tarmac will be applied to the raised tables in the warmer weather in the Spring.

It is good to note that the 20 mph zone is now in force. The average speed of traffic on Teme Street was 22mph. While this is not fast, it means that many cars were travelling much faster than that, and we have to hope that motorists will now observe 20 mph as a maximum.

This is reinforced by the raised tables, where pedestrians should feel more secure in crossing the road, because of the lower speeds. The zone extends from the Teme bridge as far as the Kyre brook and then as far as Cross Street beyond Bowketts. The roads around the church are also 20 mph, but that is an area where higher speeds are very unlikely anyway.

The new 20 minute parking restriction for three car lengths outside Tenbury News will be applied next month. We must all trust that trade will now start return, to bring more prosperity to all retailers and residents in and around Tenbury.

1. **Velo Birmingham**

Some of you will be aware that there was a CALC meeting last Wednesday to discuss Velo Birmingham in 2017 and the prospect of another such event this year. Since then the WCC Cabinet members have received a couple of reports from other parish councils detailing their attitude to the event and whether there should be another this year.

As it stands, no decision has been announced and the matter will probably come to Cabinet on February 8th. Any comments from Great Witley councillors and residents would be welcome, no matter what side they may take on the desirability of another Velo event.

1. **Speeding**

I am aware of the continuing concern about speeding in the village and I praise the efforts of those involved to seek better redress from the Safer Roads Partnership and others. I hope these measures will be seen as effective in the coming months.

**Cllr Ken Pollock**

**Cheltenham,**

**Gloucestershire,**

**GL50 2BZ**

**16.01.18**