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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 9th January 2019** |
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| **Present: Chairman**, Cllr F Chapman (FC). |
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| **In Attendance:** Clerk, J Evans, Cllrs C Shaw (CS), C Dermietzel (CD), G Goodman (GG), N Drew (ND), C Jones (CJ), A Symonds (AS), and D.Cllr P Cumming (PC) (arrived at 9pm) |

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| **1.** | **Apologies:** R Perkins (RP), B Dallow (BD) and C.Cllr K Pollock (KP) |
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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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| The meeting was adjourned for **Public Question Time**, notes of which are appended to these minutes. ***There was one member of the public 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 21st November 2018 were approved but will be signed at the meeting to be held 13th March 2019 as a draft copy was supplied in error. |
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| **5.** | **Progress reports:** |
|  |  | a. | **Clerk:*** The metal speed warning signs have been requested.
* The Spring Clean of 2019 will be held on 27th April, to start from the Village Hall from 10am-12pm and WCC will do a risk assessment beforehand and offer help. ***ACTION***: The Clerk will ask the School and Scouts to get involved. Tea and Biscuits will be provided.

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|  |  | b. | **Village Hall and Quartergreen:**The question was raised whether charges could be raised for use of the courts to help go towards their maintenance. ***ACTION***: The Clerk will contact HMRC to query whether there is a timescale attached to the rule of no charges being allowed if VAT is to be claimed back. A notice will be placed in the Parish Magazine and on the Court reminding users that a donation given freely will be gratefully received and go towards the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities.  |
|  |  | c. | **Lengthsman and Footpaths:**CJ reported that the Lengthsman continues to do an excellent job. |
|  |  | d. | **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party:** |
|  |  |  | Nothing to report at present. |
| **6.** | **CALC:** none. |
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| **7.** | **District and County Councillors’ Reports:** |
|  |  | a. | * PC reported that the 100 House problems are being sorted. FC commented that estate agents Andrew Grant have said that the development will be ready for occupation this summer. The houses at the back first followed by the apartments. PC reiterated that the bar is a condition of the planning permission and needs to be fitted out so if they cannot run it as a profitable business it can be sold as a going concern as still run as a pub. GG made the point that the bar should be finished before the houses are moved in to.
* There is a 3% increase to the District Rate of council benefits. Applications to non-domestic council scheme has been granted trial status to next year. The County will get several million extra for adult services.
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|  |  | b. | District Councillor Ken Pollock’s report is attached to these Minutes:[..\REPORTS\K Pollock 190109.docx](../REPORTS/K%20Pollock%20190109.docx) |
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| **8.** | **Planning:** |
|  |  | a. | 18/01450/FUL – Barns at Witley Park Farm were approved. |
|  |  | b. | PC reported that a retrospective application had been made for the Old Bakery relating to the banking work. The work on the building itself is ok.  |
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| **9.** | **Finance:** |
|  |  | a. | Paid invoices were approved, and remittances were circulated. |
|  |  | b. | The bank reconciliation was circulated. |
|  |  | c. | The budget comparison was circulated. |
|  |  | d. | The new Precept was discussed and using the Precept Calculator provided by WCC a figure of £10,000 would be requested. |
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|  | **Correspondence for Information:** * A letter received from the Quartergreen was read out by FC with concerns over the new handrail to the footpath leading from Glendower Way to the multi-purpose sports court (letter attached):

[..\GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE\path letter to PC 181217.docx](../GENERAL%20CORRESPONDENCE/path%20letter%20to%20PC%20181217.docx) CS commented that Adam Drew’s work constructing the path was fine but there are some places which are now ‘rutting up’. However, it has not been brought to CS’s attention until now that the path was “impassable”. With apologies to BD, who was not present at the meeting, the work carried out on the wooden hand rail is not to a good standard. The posts are not secure and the rail sags. The timber is of poor quality and there are places where knots have fallen out. CS has spoken with BD regarding this saying that extra posts etc are needed but at present BD is too busy but agreed to supply the wood at an extra cost of around £100. The Quartergreen are looking at supplying the labour from their committee to carry out the work. The volunteer is out of action due to injury at present. Although the handrail is unsatisfactory it is not deemed dangerous. The square rough sawn timbers do pose a splinter danger. The strength is in the wrong place and smooth planed ½ round rails should have been used. BD said that if someone supplied the sandpaper, he would lend the equipment.The path needs more compacting and a cement-based topping with possible edging boards. The distance between the posts is too wide so the rails sag. What is required in the reasonable near future are new posts, smooth rails, more stone and gravel boards. ***ACTION*** GG will ask Adam Drew for a quote.* A letter received from Little Witley Parish Council was read out regarding possible collaboration. ***ACTION*** FC will correspond.
* The most recent VAT 126 claim has been selected for verification by the Compliance Office.
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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. | FC responded to PC report on the SWDP, copy attached.[..\REPORTS\Issues and Options for SWDP by FC 190109.pdf](../REPORTS/Issues%20and%20Options%20for%20SWDP%20by%20FC%20190109.pdf)[..\REPORTS\Issues and Options for SWDP.2 by FC 190109.pdf](../REPORTS/Issues%20and%20Options%20for%20SWDP.2%20by%20FC%20190109.pdf)ND is worried that the 2 fields which were proposed for the 175 housing development are not encouraged, due to the benefits that come with a development. He is concerned the view is always a negative one from the Parish Council but appreciates it is the view of the majority in the village. FC accepted his comments. ND said that he thinks laterally not inwardly and if a development is controlled then lots of benefits can be had. FC said that the Parish Council has to reflect the views of the parishioners. ND thinks that the flyers that RP produces should include the benefits not just the negatives of the developments. GG, AS and CD all supported FC’s response. |
|  |  | b. | 5 Stourport Road continues to pose a problem with the amount of rubbish on the premises. ***ACTION*** PC said that the Enforcement Department will be looking into whether they are running as a business dealing with waste. To do this they require planning permission and are required to pay business rates. Vanessa Snape, the local community policing officer will be contacted as this continued state of affairs is causing harassment to their neighbours. |
|  |  | c. | Flyers to advertise the forthcoming elections in May were handed out for delivery. |
|  |  | d. | GG announced that he would not be standing for Councillor in the forthcoming elections in May. |
|  |  | e. | The Quartergreen and Village Hall require a Safe Guarding Policy and will send out a draft copy for comments. |
| **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 13th March 2019. |
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| The meeting closed at 22:30 |
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| Signed …………………………………….. Date …………………………………….. |
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|  | Chairman |

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**GREAT WITLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**09.01.19**

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT**

1. **Happy New Year**

May I wish all parish councillors and the residents that you represent a very Happy New Year, and I trust it will be prosperous and enjoyable as well?

We face some turbulent times in the next few months and it would be a fool who professed to know how it would all turn out. What I would assert, however, is that this country is highly capable and well able to succeed in a huge variety of circumstances.

In all the discussion of the various forms of Brexit that may be before us, what I find most disturbing is the feeling expressed by some politicians, business people and journalists that we are in danger of economic collapse or of some moral decline, because we may not have the protection and guidance of the EU.

Leaving may be the worst move we make as a nation, but it would be foolish to believe that our prosperity is indissolubly tied to membership of the EU. I worry when I read that our environmental standards might be lowered or our workers’ rights might be damaged by leaving.

It would be a huge mistake to believe that we are dependent on Brussels for guidance in these matters. More often than not, we have shown the way, not least with the sort of environmental research that I undertook, on a Government grant in the early 70s, before we joined the EEC as it was then.

So whatever lies ahead, I am sure we can succeed, especially if we respect others’ viewpoints and seek to understand their basis. I am disturbed by the rhetoric and rudeness I have encountered in social media, where the remoteness of the writers seems to give them freedom to be rude, supercilious and scornful in a way that would not be acceptable face to face.

1. **Economic development**

You will recognise that I am responsible within the Cabinet, for the economy and infrastructure in the County. 2019 promises great things, whatever the political climate and we must seek to encourage the good developments, no matter what.

W6, the business park just by J6 of the M5 is filling up with companies keen to take advantage of its excellent position. Kimal, Kohler Mira, Siemens (in the form of Material Solutions), Spire Healthcare and others are all expanding or transferring their operations to the park.

The Redditch Eastern Gateway also has serious interest from big companies wanting to take advantage of its location next to the A435 and the M42. The fifth phase of the Malvern Hills Science Park is ready to let and there is more land acquired from QinetiQ for further hi tech operations.

We must not also forget the importance of Worcestershire Parkway which will open this year, probably in mid-summer. The May timetable will include provision for trains on both lines to stop at Parkway, giving passengers a new destination or embarkation point as an alternative to our road network.

All of these developments promise more jobs and economic prosperity, the sort of activity we need to encourage, in order to fund those in our society that need help from local government. You will recall that 70% of our income at County is spent on vulnerable children and adults, but their numbers amount to only 12,000 of the 580,000 residents in Worcestershire.

1. **Local issues**

As with other villages along the A443, you receive complaints about speeding through the village. I hope the VAS are having some beneficial effect, but clearly there are some who ignore the warnings. It is difficult to know what more can be done to improve matters.

I understand that work on the Hundred House has stalled over a planning requirement for there to be a public house on the premises. This may be false information, but I would offer support for all those who see that as an important part of the planning conditions. When I was a long time resident of the village, the lack of what might be regarded as a “local” was a major deficiency in the village facilities. I trust the matter will be resolved satisfactorily soon, to the benefit of all concerned.

I hope that you will all be keen to pass on any observations where highway matters are deficient, preferably in the first instance to your clerk, and thence to Hannah Davies, your liaison officer, before coming to me for assistance.

Likewise any other issues that require attention can be brought to me at any time and I will do my best to pass them on to the correct officer to see that they are dealt with. Bearing in mind our general shortage of cash, this may not always be swiftly handled or done to the highest standards.

**Cllr Ken Pollock,**

**Cheltenham,**

**Gloucestershire**

**GL50 2BZ**

**09.01.19**

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**To: Frank Chapman, Chair of Great Witley and Hillhampton Parish Council**

**Re: rail and pathway leading from Glendower Way to the multi-purpose sports court**

Following discussion with the Village Hall Committee, the Quartergreen Sport & Leisure Committee would like to express their views regarding the above; we have waited until now in the hope that the rail itself and the boards for the pathway, to complete the project, would have by now been finished but sadly they have not.

The reason for the construction of the pathway and railing was to assist wheelchair users and young families with pushchairs coming from Glendower Way and to negotiate the steep incline and mitigate any chance of accidents occurring. We believe that both are not actually fit for purpose, we were under the impression that the hardcore to be laid on the path alongside the rail would be the same as that on the pathway leading down from Glendower Way, this is not the case and the surface that has been laid is not conducive to either wheelchairs or pushchairs. It is not compacted enough to give a smooth surface and is therefore problematic for users. We were initially informed that edging boards were to be installed along the pathway however these have not materialised to date. The whole point of the pathway was to give safe access to the play area and the primary school thus negating the need to use the public pathway on the very busy Worcester Road.

The rail was supposedly erected as a barrier to stop young children who are running down the incline from toppling over the edge of the wall. The design is totally inadequate for this purpose and indeed gives a false sense of security and serves no purpose whatsoever. There have been reports of loose splinters and raised screw heads and in fact one section is now actually broken. It is poorly constructed and an eyesore which spoils the area of the new court and children’s playground.

We feel, as a committee that a risk assessment is necessary by an inspector from the health and safety department of MHDC to give clear guidance of what indeed should be there rather than what is there at the moment.

I would be obliged if you could raise this matter at the next Parish Council meeting.

With best wishes

Linda Wells

Chair

Quartergreen Sport & Leisure Committee

17th December 2018

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From Great Witley and Hillhampton Parish Council

Issues and Options for SWDP

1. We would like to see the District Councils make bold decisive decisions about the next stage of development so that sufficient land and sites are selected to meet projected need, so that other land and sites can be regarded as safe from development for the forseeable future. This would remove most of the lottery of applications and appeals with landowners seeking windfalls.

2. Sites should be selected so that they add least to journey times, traffic bottle necks and our carbon footprint. It follow that new houses should be built as close as possible to employment opportunities . The days when families needed to live away from smoking chimneys and pollution have passed, so time saved in travelling to and from work will benefit the employed in the saving of time and expense; their families; their employers and other commuters.

1. In so far as it may be necessary to build new houses away from immediate employment areas e.g. for those who travel as part of their employment; the sites chosen should have the benefit of good access to rail and motorway connections. This would enable such people to go about their business without adding to the traffic on the county roads.
2. All other new sites chosen should have the benefit of good public transport facilities so that people living in them do not have to drive to work thereby adding to the traffic congestion, wasting their time and adding expense.
3. Some villages have increased in size rapidly since SWDP was approved whilst others have not. Those villages which want and need development should be given priority for expansion.
4. Land already allocated for building in the present plan but not yet developed should be used before new land and sites are included.
5. If it is necessary to allocate sites in villages where there is no spare land within the present settlement boundary, then sensible targets should be set and the settlement boundary should be enlarged only sufficiently to meet that allotted target. If the settlement boundary is enlarged more than is necessary to meet the allotted target some villages will end up carrying far more new building than is fair.
6. Decisions should not in future be based on whether a village is or was a Category 1 or Category 2 etc. according to whether it had a secondary school, primary school, surgery, bank or ATM etc.

This is because many villages now have to share facilities and residents in village A will have to go to village B for some facilities whereas residents of Village B will undertake the opposite journey for other facilities. Some of those facilities are included on the list for grading purposes whilst others are not.

Use of such criteria also corrupts the results when compared to the reality on the ground. One village might have sustainable facilities only because it receives significant support from other villages which may be larger and more suitable for development.

Such criteria also produce incongruous results. e.g. A village with good facilities might have parts of its settlement boundary further away from the facilities than other settlements outside that village. The present system would mean that the sites within the settlement boundary would be more likely to be developed than other sites outside the boundary but in fact nearer to the facilities.

1. The new plan is looking very far into the future and trying to anticipate needs for the next 20 years. We think that there ought to be some mechanism for staggering the eligibility of these sites because if all become available in 2021 we are likely to find applications for nearly all of them in the first year.

There is a real risk that the 20 year target for the District will be consumed very quickly or that some villages are overwhelmed with applications to use up their 20 year allocation in the first few years. 5 year plans would be sensible so that all would know whether a particular site would be eligible in 5, 10 or 15 years time or not at all. This would be useful in planning for infrastructure, schools, roads etc. It would also enable planners to have some flexibility if future needs rose or fell.

Frank Chapman

Chairman