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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 March 2019 at 7.30pm.** |
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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), B Dallow (BD), A Symonds (AS), C.Cllr K Pollock (KP) and D.Cllr P Cumming (PC) |

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| **1.** | **Apologies:** R Perkins (RP). |
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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. |
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| **3.** | **Application for a dispensation:** none. |
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| **4.** | **Minutes:** the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9th January 2019, were approved and the signature page of the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 21st November 2018 were signed without the Draft watermark being present. |
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| **5.** | **Progress reports:** |
|  |  | a. | **Clerk:** A reminder was given of the importance to following the guidelines for the election process and making sure deadlines are met. |
|  |  | b. | **Village Hall and Quartergreen:** There is a Race Night to be held to raise funds for the multi surface sports court. ***ACTION:*** FC will investigate HMRC’s response as to whether charges can be made for the use of these facilities. At the recent Film Night, around 150 people attended. Enquires are also being made into whether a Grant may be applied for to fund a running track around Bowen’s Field. CS asked the Parish Council is it is possible for the Quartergreen to extend a storage building on the back of the changing rooms. Consent was given by a show of hands. ***ACTION:*** CS and The Quartergreen will investigate whether Planning Consent is required. |
|  |  | c. | **Lengsthman and Footpaths:** CJ confirmed the Lengthsman’s quote for maintenance works to the bus shelter and older notice boards. The drains at The Glebe were brought up and it was noted that Highways were working there at present. Mike from the Post Office has taken it upon himself to clear Structons Heath which took 30 hours of his time. ***ACTION:*** CJ will now ask the Lengthsman to keep on top of this area and extend our thanks to Mike for his hard work. It was pointed out that the hedge belonging to John Newings on the Martley Road opposite Nailes Cottage needs cutting back urgently. ***ACTION:*** CJ will speak to the landowner, Mr Newings, regarding carrying out this work ASAP. |
|  |  | d. | **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party:** FC reported that the draft Plan has gone to David Clarke recently. Settlement boundaries expectations were encouraging, and it is anticipated that over the next 20 years new developments will go towards Rushwick making use of the new Worcestershire Link.(Witley Court Drive – Alan Pain has solved the drive problem. Mr Davies has handed the side needing attending over to the Pain’s and they will fill the holes in.) Also, BD offered to speak to Paul Owen regarding the Public Footpath. The land here is too wet making the path impassable. |
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| **6.** | **CALC:** none. |
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| **7.** | **District and County Councillors’ Reports:** |
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|  |  | a. | PC said there was little to report due to the council elections. Regarding 5 Stourport Road a Notice had been served relating to possible pests and vermin and he would speak to the Enforcement Officer to see what else could be done ***(ACTION).*** It was queried whether an ASBO could be applied for?. |
|  |  | b. | KP’s report is attached to these Minutes: He highlighted that the Southern Link Road is costing £100million, the Northern Link will be an extra £200million and duelling would cost £175million.Hannah Davies was informed about the drainage problems on the Bromyard Road at the back of Abberley Hall School. The drains have been jetted but a spring is still causing problems.[..\REPORTS\K Pollock 190313.docx](../REPORTS/K%20Pollock%20190313.docx) |
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| **8.** | **Planning:** |
|  |  | a. | Home Farm Remedial Works: GG asked KP whether any traffic control would be required here. |
|  |  | b. | 2 Stanford Road: the drive has had a big impact on the neighbours. FC can see the benefit of a separate drive. They have asked for retrospective permission where they took down trees to accommodate the drive. Mr Gallett, the neighbour, attended public question time. FC made a site visit. The works do not affect the general public only the immediate neighbours. PC said that the drive may not get approval even though the trees have been removed. Mr Gallett cannot obtain a tree preservation order on the trees which screen the houses from the road. A wall could be built. When the extension application was put in Mr Gallett supported it, but it never stated a private drive going over the designated private gardens of Abberley Hall. These have now been developed on. They intend to use this protected land as a drive. What will stop others ignoring planning restrictions? Will they intend to build a 3car garage next? FC made the point that there have now been 2 properties in that location not adhering to planning permissions. Mr Gallett is very upset that the developers has chopped down the trees with no concern to the residents. AS asked why people are not penalised with penalties? PC said that they are held within the constraints of the law. Large fees should be charged for blatant ignoring of planning permissions, but they cannot. |
|  |  | c. | Orchard Farm Planning has been approved. GG reiterated that the Tree Preservation Order application was unnecessary as the tree specimens (Silver Birch) were near the end of their growing life. FC read out Mr Wonderling’s letter of thanks. |
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| **9.** | **Finance:** |
|  |  | a. | Invoices paid and remittances received were circulated. |
|  |  | b. | The bank reconciliation was circulated. |
|  |  | c. | The budget comparison was circulated. |
|  |  | d. | C Bunn’s quote for bus shelter and noticeboard maintenance was discussed and approved. |
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| **10.** | **Correspondence for Information:** * An email was received informing us that the War Memorial has been Grade II Listed by Historic England. BD said that the villagers provided the memorial in the first instance. ***ACTION:*** FC will draft a letter relating to the required remedial work.
* FC read out a letter received from the Primary School reporting the positive Ofsted Report it had received.
* Hannah Davies of Highways had emailed regarding the mud on the A443 at Hillhampton. ND said that he has spent £10,000 on road sweepers and was unable to do anymore. The road is being swept daily and he is in contact with Pencroft, the contractors. ND does not wish to comment further on this subject. CD asked if the path could also be cleared, ND replied “no comment”. AS also said that the pavement needed clearing and that due to the mud on the road the arrow signals are not clearly visible. ND suggested writing to Pencroft and to complain to the Council. GG thought that ND had been doing a good job in keeping the highway as clear as possible and that no accidents had occurred due to excess mud on the road.
* AS said, that ‘Nextdoor’ can be used to publicise through eg: proposed property marking events.
* A letter received from David Tabberer regarding repairs and upgrades to firearms: FC queried the storage facilities and security arrangements at the property and will draft a letter ***ACTION***.
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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. | Hillhampton Notice Board: ND reminded the Parish Council that the resident at Hillhampton House had offered to replace the notice board and bus shelter here, but this never happened. Although quotes were received, ND was disappointed in the quality and cost of the new noticeboard. DB said that the quote was agreed beforehand, and he was given approval for the work to go-ahead. BD had asked ND to move the post and on 12/11/18 ND did respond agreeing to do this. ND considers that with the state of the bus shelter and noticeboard, Hillhampton is losing its identity. It was hoped that Tim Hopkins, formerly of Hillhampton House, could be persuaded to replace both these and ND will approach him. In any case, the noticeboard posts can be moved back towards the bus shelter which will make mowing easier. ND agree to help BD to move the notice board. ***ACTION*** |
|  |  | b. | 100 House: one property has been occupied despite the planning conditions stating that the public bar must be fitted out first before any of the accommodation can be marketed. FC to contact PC regarding this fact. |
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| **13.** | **Date of next meeting:** It was agreed by a show of hands that the next meeting will be the **Annual Meeting of the Parish Council** at Great Witley Village Hall at 7.30pm on Wednesday 8th May 2019 followed by the **Annual Parish Meeting** on Thursday 16th May 2019 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall Great Witley. |
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| The meeting closed at 22:00 |
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| Signed …………………………………….. Date …………………………………….. |
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|  | Chairman |

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| **Notes of Public Question Time**  |
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| 3 Members of the public were in attendance and raised the following concerns during Public Question Time: |
|  |  | 1. | Please see comments under 8.b. of these Minutes. |

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**GREAT WITLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**13.03.19**

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

1. **Budget Proposals**

Four weeks ago at full council, the budget was approved. While the outline of the proposals is well known, there were some significant changes.

Various amendments from the Labour group and the 2017 group were tabled for consideration, but were unsuccessful. Given that they proposed very minor changes to the budget, they could be taken as an indication that, overall, the budget was acceptable to all parties.

There was a notice of motion criticising the rates of charging for car parking at the Worcester Royal Infirmary, but this was rejected on the grounds that the problem was more one of capacity than exorbitant charging. When the hospital was built, provision for parking was limited to 75% of the numbers expected to need access to the hospital, building in an under-provision for parking.

1. **Worcestershire Parkway and SLR4**

Since your last council meeting, we held a press briefing at the new Worcestershire Parkway railway station. We were keen to outline the progress being made towards completion of the work this summer and then, after the extensive and detailed “entry into service” process, the station should be fully functional by the end of the year.

This support for public transport is just part of our county wide policy to promote public transport, seen as complementing work on roads, to accommodate private cars and goods vehicles. In the capital programme we aim to see enhancements at several railway stations and in particular improved parking facilities.

In addition, work has recently started on preparing the embankments of the southern link road between the Ketch and Powick roundabouts, for the widening of the causeway to allow the dualling of the road. This has involved removing the vegetation on the south side of the bank, done at this time to avoid the bird nesting season.

Final approval of the government grant of £54.5 million came through recently, giving the project the green light to proceed towards an expected completion date in 2021. There will be a new separate Carrington Bridge, as well as one halfway along the 1.2 miles of causeway, to accommodate floodwater. The whole section will become four lane, and the path on the north side will be widened to allow for more walking and cycling.

During this year, three bridges will be built over the more northerly sections of the link road, one for farm traffic and the others to allow easier and safer crossing of the road by walkers and cyclists.

It is worth noting that this development will give improved travel times from the west to the M5, junction 7, and for the reverse journey. Completion of the ring road to the north, while obvious on paper, would need a further sum of around £200 million, and a large number of houses to be built to the north west of the city, to generate many millions of pounds through Section 106 agreements. This is not likely to happen in the next decade, during which time we will be able to assess the benefit to the city itself of the diversion of traffic to the Southern Link Road.

1. **Local issues**

I am aware that there have been concerns about drainage at the bottom of the Bromyard Road and I applaud the efforts to see that this is corrected before anyone is caught out by ice. All gulley assets in the County are mapped by GPS and all attention to them is logged, so there should be no excuse for defective ones not being attended to.

I noted that the keep left signs on one of the pedestrian refuges by Witley Court had been destroyed. They seem to have been unlit and dirty for a long time and I would urge all residents to report such defects as soon as noted, to avoid this sort of problem. I feel guilty for not having done so myself…

1. **School Funding**

In the last week there has been national attention on the question of school funding. As a former governor of Tenbury High School and Great Witley Primary, I am familiar with the pressures schools are under and I am sure we would all agree that they should be supported in all feasible ways.

Last Thursday, I gave an RE lesson for year 6 pupils at Oldbury Park Primary School in St John’s. It was on humanism, and the attention and interest shown by these 11 years olds was impressive. They were all very polite and well disciplined, making it a highly rewarding experience.

At the same time the Guardian published a long piece on school funding, giving instances of the sort of measures some schools have had to follow to make ends meet. They wrote:

*In North Yorkshire, one secondary school is raising funds by holding extra non-uniform days – six a year, at the end of each half term – potentially earning an additional £3,000 for the school’s funds.*

Guardian readers clearly know that it costs each pupil a pound a day to be allowed not to wear a school uniform! I did not…

*Hours are being reduced at both the start and end of the day to save money. In Birmingham many primary school pupils are being sent home at lunchtime on Fridays; pupils at one Kent grammar school are being asked to come in late one morning.*

I do not understand why money is saved if pupils attend for a shorter week. Staff are all bound to be on full time contracts, heating costs would be barely altered, and the amount of variable costs in paper and pens saved would be trivial.

We know that school pupil numbers are going up, but how much more does it cost to teach a class of 30 over one of 29?

I don’t normally make political points, but in this crucial area, I would advise clear thinking and fact based reporting. Oldbury Park Primary School seemed to me to lack nothing in resources or staff and was smart, well supplied with materials, and apparently very successful. I hope it is typical of Worcestershire schools.

**Cllr Ken Pollock**

**Cheltenham,**

**Gloucestershire,**

**GL50 2BZ**

**13.03.19**