

ST. NICHOLAS HURST PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, SCHOOL ROAD, HURST
ON MONDAY 3rd September 2018 AT 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors W. Smith (in the Chair),
Curry, Holdstock, Lambert, Larkin,
Lyon, Pilgrim, I Smith and Stephenson.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mansfield.

PUBLIC: Two parishoners.

OFFICERS: Mrs. M. Bradshaw (Clerk).

8734 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mansfield.

8735 Prejudicial Interest

There were no prejudicial interests to declare.

8736 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 16th July 2018 were approved as a correct record.

8737 Matters Arising

The following matters were noted:

- The Church Hill petition had now gained 379 signatures – 14 petitions had been located around the Parish in total. It is thought that this number may rise to nearer 400 as one petition remains in the village stores. Councillor Stephenson is scheduled to speak on behalf of the Parish Council at Shute End on the 20th September 2018. It was noted that the petition had been successful in raising general awareness of speeding within the Village;

- The Chairman noted a disappointing turnout at the Wheelwrights Arms on Saturday 1st September 2018. The neighbourhood planning drop in session, designed for the Davis Street ward, had attracted only two parishoners despite door drops throughout the ward. Thanks were passed on to the Landlord who had been very hospitable;
- The Chairman reminded Members that there are engagement sessions across Wokingham regarding the Borough Plan. Amongst other venues, Council staff and members will be available at Twyford Waitrose from 11am to 3pm on Saturday 15 September; and
- Councillor I. Smith noted that the pedestrian crossing and speeding traffic had been eased with the installation of temporary traffic lights at the Davis Street entrance to Dinton Pastures during the recent Marvellous Festival. Members agreed that the Council should be approached with a view to a permanent pedestrian crossing being installed.

RESOLVED: the Clerk to contact Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) with a view to ascertaining the likelihood of a permanent pedestrian controlled crossing at Davis Street.

Public Forum

8738 The Chairman welcomed two parishoners to the public forum – they had no specific issues to raise and were in attendance in an observatory capacity only.

8739 Neighbourhood Planning Update

The Chairman updated Members following the last meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group held on the 14th August 2018. He reported to Members that Bell Cornwell's fee proposal had now been received. They can apply for grant funding on behalf of the Parish Council (at a fee of £500) but, at this stage, it is unclear as to how successful an application would be – early indications are that the success rate is favourable but obviously cannot be guaranteed. Members agreed that the fee proposal should be signed but with clear break clauses which would enable the Parish to pull away with immediate effect in the unlikely event grant funding was not secured.

RESOLVED: the Chairman and Clerk to continue to liaise with Bell Cornwell on behalf of the Parish Council and move forward with their fee proposal – subject to break clauses being incorporated.

8740 **Community Asset Transfers**

The Chairman confirmed that the lease in respect of Tape Lane and Martineau Green had now been signed and witnessed in front of a Solicitor – the Clerk will return these to WBC. The Clerk countersigned where the Chairman signed on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Chairman explained that the priority at the moment was to secure a grounds maintenance contractor going forward who could meet existing requirements, along with the newly inherited community asset transferred sites. To this end, the Chairman in conjunction with the Clerk and Councillor Mansfield, had drawn up a new grounds maintenance specification and five contractors had been invited to quote for the works. The deadline for quotes is the 27th September 2018 and the Clerk will report out to Members once this date has passed.

Discussion followed regarding the extensive works that Councillors W. Smith and Holdstock had recently undertaken at the Village pond. Huge amounts of clearance has been undertaken and the Chairman stressed that the pond is now in need of dredging. This was last undertaken in 2009 and sludge is estimated to be 1.5m deep in places.

RESOLVED:

- the Clerk to seek quotes for pond dredging to enable Members to take a view on the way forward.

8741 **Planning Applications**

Members discussed the applications attached to these Minutes. It was agreed that Members had no adverse comments with regards to applications 181537, 181909, 182019, 182169, 182150 and 182201. They objected to applications 181974 and 181963. Members had previously registered no adverse comments to application 181267. However, upon further review they subsequently objected to the proposed development as overdevelopment - the volume calculation submitted some 84% increase in volume. Comments on application 182055 would follow.

RESOLVED:

- The Clerk to communicate the Parish Council's planning comments to WBC.

8743 Purchase of Speed Detection Device

The Chairman reported that he is keen to progress the purchase of a speed detection device and get it actively up and running within the Parish. He explained that, after considerable effort over many years, Councillor Tony Mansfield does not wish to take the lead on this initiative. The Chairman does not have time to personally devote to Speedwatch and therefore sought a volunteer – he felt it important that, alongside the 32 existing volunteers, a member of the Parish Council could oversee the scheme and take ownership.

Councillor Stephenson indicated that he may be willing to fulfil this role but would need considerably more insight into the process, equipment and reporting out to the Police.

RESOLVED: the Chairman to speak again with one of the volunteers in the village who is actively involved in Speedwatch schemes. He will also obtain more information from TVP regarding the logistics of downloading captured data etc.

8744 **Correspondence**

Quotes for outside work at St Nicholas CE Primary School

The Clerk reported that the Head teacher of St Nicholas CE Primary School, along with the Bursar, had sent their apologies for not being able to attend this evening's meeting. They were hoping to speak to Members regarding the recently obtained quotes for outside cleaning of the school.

The Chairman expressed his concerns that he did not feel comfortable supporting work to clean the school when resources could be better deployed for the more direct benefit of the children i.e. books, IT equipment etc. He was aware that parents are currently being asked to offer "parental contributions" and, for this reason, he did not feel he could justify directing precious resources at cleaning. Other Members agreed and felt that whilst in principle, CIL monies could be used to support school projects, they felt the quotes for cleaning were excessive and non-essential. They thought that an alternative would be to contact local cleaners or even volunteers who may be willing to power wash the facade of the school with easily obtainable industrial cleaners.

The Chairman said he would be very willing to visit the school and go around the site with the Head teacher.

RESOLVED: the Clerk to speak with the Headteacher and ask her to liaise with the Chairman with a view to meeting to discuss priorities.

Railings around Pond

Councillor Curry noted that the railings around the pond could benefit from a repaint. Members agreed to reconsider this after the potential dredging of the pond.

8745 **Information Reports**

The Clerk reminded Members of an invitation to a meeting on the 27th September 2018 at Shute End to discuss the new ways in which the Council are working.

The meeting ended at 9.12 p.m.

Signed.....

Date.....