

Ashton under Hill Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2012 at 7.30pm in the Green Room.

Present

Cllr G Barnett	Chairman	GB
Cllr R Satchell	Vice Chairman	RS
Cllr Mrs D Cope		DC
Cllr J Fletcher		JF
Cllr A Sanger-Davies		AS-D
Cllr F Moore		FM
Cllr D Rees		DR
In attendance		
Mrs J Hopkins	Clerk to the Council	JH
1 member of the public		

Action

1.	Apologies. Apologies were received from CCllr A Darby and DCllr A Hardman.	
2.	Declaration of interest. None declared.	
3.	Minutes. The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 8 May 2012 and the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 6 June 2012 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.	
	No public questions.	
4.	<p>District Councillor's report. DCllr Darby sent the following report.</p> <p>Report by District Councillor Adrian Darby</p> <p>I have been away for a fortnight and have still not fully caught up with all the planning developments which have taken place while I have been away.</p> <p>South Worcestershire Development Plan</p> <p>There have been two meetings of the Joint Advisory Panel which I have missed, due to their being rescheduled a month later than originally planned. These have agreed the amendments to the preferred options which are now to be put to the three Councils on July 3rd. If they are approved by the councils there will have to be further consultation, but this will be limited to those policies which have been changed or added. So far as Ashton concerned there is a proposed change to include as a potential location for 12 dwellings the site identified in the SHLAA (ref 04-01) opposite the middle school to the west of Elmley Road. This is a significant change and residents of Ashton as well as the Parish Council will have a chance to make their views known. You should consider sending a representative to the meeting at Wychavon 5.30 – 7 pm on Thursday.</p> <p>Cllrs queried why the site had been included now.</p>	
5.	<p>County Councillor's report. CCllr Hardman sent the following report.</p> <p>Dear Councillors and Parishioners</p> <p>Thank you very much for letting me know that you have changed the</p>	

date. Unfortunately I am at the LGA Conference in Birmingham for today, on Wednesday I am in London and on Thursday I am back at the LGA so I am sorry not to be with you tonight but very helpfully Jane sent me a list of issues that were still outstanding and asked if I could update you on them and since then I have managed to find the time to visit with a Highways Officer to look at one or two of the issues that you have raised to see if we can find solutions to them.

I would just remind the Parish Council that of course this is against an extremely unfavourable financial backdrop, last year we reduced the spend, I believe by just under £31m and this year the County Council's expenditure will fall by another £20m which means that we are having to concentrate our efforts on what the residents of Worcestershire say is really important to them, which is principally the care of the elderly, roads maintenance and safeguarding children. Therefore it has been necessary to rein back in expenditure in some areas, but having said all that we will still be endeavouring to deliver the best services that we can.

Regarding the positioning of the speed activated signs, I will pass this question on to Roy Fullee who will get in touch with your representative so that we can finally move on with this project and I will activate the £1,000 grant that I offered the Parish Council to get this work underway.

- 1. The Verge outside Rookery Nook.** It is my understanding that an order has been placed to reinforce the verge to stop further erosion and the work is due to be carried out within the next month.
- 2. Grass Crete in Elmley Road to facilitate of road parking for residents.** I am afraid that the County Council has a pretty clear policy that it does not provide parking for private motorists and I have to say, I thought that I had told the Parish Council this on one or two occasions. The Housing Association, I suspect, would be the people to pursue this with, although I am extremely doubtful that they will see it as being their role either, but if the Parish Council wanted to undertake the work itself I am quite sure that the County Council will be prepared to grant them a license to do the work on the verge. But it must be at the Parish's cost rather than the County Council's since frankly we just don't have the budget for this sort of work these days. In fact I don't think we have ever done this sort of work.
- 3. The Surface of the Footway in Gorse Hill which is extremely slippery in icy and wet conditions.** The officer and I came out and did have a look at the Gorse Hill Footways. We were very pleased with the work that had been done and I do understand that they could well be slippery in wet conditions because they are on quite a steep incline. The solution to this is either gritting in icy weather and there is a grit box at the bottom, or if we get a very hot day I will see if I can come along and sand the top of them. But they are laid to the standard that we would have expected them to be laid to and I am afraid in our view we are trying to defeat geography.

	<p>We came out and also had a look at two other items that the Parish Council would appreciate our help on.</p> <p>4. Extension of footway in the Groaten to Station House. I am afraid the County Council has no plans to extend any rural footways for the foreseeable future unless there is considerable housing development in the area. This could well be the case since the South Worcestershire Development Plan will become live in July and I don't know what the housing numbers for Ashton look like. But it is extremely difficult for the County Council to undertake what would be, we estimate, £150,000 scheme which would receive very little usage.</p> <p>5. The improvement to the Footway to Willow Close, Elmley Castle is a long standing issue and while we have improved the footway in one or two places, I will endeavour to get some work on this carried out in the next financial year, but I could probably do with a meeting with a Member of the Parish Council just to bottom out exactly what the Parish is expecting us to do. There is some possibility that funding for this work could be found next year but I am afraid it is extremely unlikely to be found in this financial year, since the County Council is extremely stretched.</p> <p>I understand that officers have been out and had a look at the issue of the bus stop this week and hopefully we can find a way to resolve this and I have also asked the officers to come out and inspect and fill in some potholes that I noticed are now starting to spring up on Rabbit Lane, and I continue to press the highways maintenance unit to do work of a more substantive and long term nature rather than just patching this road up, since it is such a vital through way between the two communities.</p> <p>I am sorry to miss your meeting. I do hope that I will be able to attend in September and I do wish Jane every good luck in here retirement. She will be sadly missed, not only by me, but I am sure by all of you.</p> <p>JH to organise site meeting.</p> <p>JH to ask the occupier of Halfpenny Horn, Beckford Road to cut back the hedge overhanging the footway.</p>	<p>JH</p> <p>JH</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Planning</p> <p>6.1 Applications considered out of meeting</p> <p>W/12/01132/PN – Land adjacent, Bredon Holt, Elmley Road. Erect one dwelling house and garage (Re-submission of W/12/00252). No objection in principle as long as the proposed development does not interfere with Bramble Bank. Concerns over increased traffic entering Elmley Road opposite the First School. The proposed development in close proximity to neighbouring houses.</p> <p>6.2 Applications received after publication of the agenda. None.</p> <p>6.3 Decisions</p> <p>Approval</p> <p>W/12/00736/CU – Carrant Brook Farm, Cheltenham Road. Change of use (including building works) to create live/work development.</p> <p>Refusal</p> <p>W/12/00820/OU – Willow Cottage, Elmley Road. Proposed demolition</p>	

	of existing cottage and erection of 4 No. dwellings.	
7.	<p>Progress reports</p> <p>7.1 Social Centre. DC reported that the water issue had been resolved and that it was clean water. JF asked if the Social Centre intended to do any planting in the gravel behind Down Yonder. DC to investigate.</p> <p>7.2 Bredon Hill Conservation Group. Next meeting November 2012.</p> <p>7.3 Policing matters. DR reported he had attended a PACT meeting.</p> <p>7.4 Lengthsman. Lengthsman had sided out the War Memorial. JH to ask him to side out footway in the Groaten to Station House.</p> <p>7.5 Verge outside Rookery Nook. See 5 above.</p> <p>7.6 Grass Crete I Elmley Road. See 5 above.</p> <p>7.7 Alleviation outside Honeysuckle Cottage, Beckford Road. See 5 above.</p> <p>7.8 Surface of footway in Gorse Hill. See 5 above.</p> <p>7.9 Extra grit bin in Cornfield Way. Rooftop has agreed to supply and place a bin.</p> <p>7.10 Dog Warden. JF gave a brief summary of the Clean Neighbourhood Act and ask members to read the information before the next meeting. JH to find out if there are other villages which have a Dog Warden. Agenda September.</p> <p>7.11 Vehicle Activated Speed signs. See 5 above.</p> <p>7.12 Community defibrillators. Only one expression of interest had been received. JH to invite a speaker to the next meeting to discuss Community First Responders.</p>	<p>JH</p> <p>ALL JH</p> <p>JH</p>
8.	<p>Finance. Copies of the current financial report were circulated.</p> <p>8.1 Payments. One payment to the value of £355.68 was approved and the cheque signed.</p> <p>8.2 Bank balances. Accepted.</p> <p>8.3 Internal Auditor's report. The Chairman read out the report – copy attached.</p>	
9.	<p>Staffing Committee.</p> <p>It was agreed that GB, JF and DR would form the members of the Staffing Committee. JH to select a list of questions for the interview for a new clerk.</p>	JH
10.	<p>Allotments</p> <p>The Chairman read out a letter from a resident opposing the proposed allotments.</p> <p>FM gave the following report as at 18.06.12</p> <p>There are about 23 residents wishing to acquire an allotment. The proposed rent at the garden centre was to be £1600 pa. With, say, 20 committed members the apportioned rent would be £80pa, considered far too much by some, but acceptable to others. Richard Shaw has now reduced the rent to £1000 (£50 each member) but it is still essential that everyone agrees. We must also bear in mind additional sundry running costs impacted by numbers fluctuating as members leave and join.</p> <p>Lottery funding can be obtained to: i) erect a perimeter fence ii) provide a solar/wind pump to maintain a constant “free” water supply from an existing borehole iii) create an area of hard standing etc. In total we</p>	

	<p>would seek funding of approx. £10,000.</p> <p>There remains some concern as to the quality of the soil at the garden centre which is to be analysed this month.</p> <p>It was agreed to seek alternative land and to ask local land owners if they would be prepared to rent (or sell) a couple of acres near to the village. So far Richard Hughes has given a definite NO and Charles Archer has not replied.</p> <p>The chance of acquiring the ideal plot on ideal terms is proving difficult and the Parish Council may now be requested to fulfil its obligation to provide “soil” (land) under various local government allotments acts of parliament. As a council therefore we may be faced with the challenge of acquiring a suitable plot and to charge a suitable rent to the association</p> <p>A small number of members are keen to see if the possible housing development opposite the Middle school gets approval and to persuade the parties concerned to include provision of village allotments, i.e. to “gift” the land for specific use as allotments on the same development site (an incentive for support of the housing plan).</p> <p>It follows that in all likelihood the allotments association will fall under the umbrella of Ashton Parish Council.</p> <p>At present I am only acting chairman of AuHAA and hopefully from Wednesday 20th June will simply be the association’s representative on the Parish Council when the association confirms its elected Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.</p> <p>With the Parish Council’s approval I could continue to represent the association at Parish Council meetings and vice versa.</p> <p>In the mean time I hope to find out more on the Parish’s so called obligations to meet the demands of residents for allotments.</p> <p>Please give this subject some thought before the council meeting next week.</p> <p>FM gave the following update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning permission was not needed for the allotments. • Richard Shaw had offered access behind his greenhouses. • Possibility of access on a track from the Groaten with land owner’s permission an AAA member to approach the land owner. • 2 more land owners had declined to provide land for allotments. • Officers of the AAA are: Chairman – Keith Marshall, Secretary – Sarah Sunderland, Treasurer – Carl Brown. <p>Allotments agenda for September.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">JH</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Trees</p> <p>JF asked if the Council would consider replacing the fallen tree at the bottom of Gorse Hill. Agenda September. JF to get price of replacement tree.</p> <p>JF reported that a willow tree in The Groaten, by the telephone exchange, is overhanging the highway. JF to contact the land owner and get a quote for having the tree cut back. Agenda September.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">JH JF JF JH</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>It was agreed to adopt the Worcestershire Code of Conduct and agreed to delegate to the Clerk the power to finalise the document once it was possible to do so.</p>	

13.	Correspondence for information. All previously circulated.	
14.	Councillor's reports and items for future agenda. DC – Hedge overhanging footway outside the Post Office. JH to contact occupier. FM – The Fete Committee will have a stall at the fete for village information. FM asked if photos and contact details of Councillors could be put on the stall. No objection.	JH

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.

DRAFT