

HARTLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Hartlebury Parish Council was held at the Parish Hall, Hartlebury on the 9th January 2018

Present: Councillors Sandra Hickman (Chair), David Simons (Vice Chair), Caroline Boughton-Thomas, Jan Hipkins, Cath Holden, Ian Hutchinson, Ray Kirby, Tanya Kirk and Mike Tooley.

In Attendance: C/Cllr Peter Tomlinson, D/Cllr Nigel Dowty, Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk) and 11 members of the public.

The meeting was recorded by a member of the public.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Tim Cupper and Simon Fletcher (holiday).

2. Declarations of Interest

Ian Hutchinson declared a personal interest in Agenda item 11.

3. Dispensations

None.

4. Adjournment of Meeting to hear from:-

a) Members of the Public

During public question time, members of the public raised questions or points on the following topics:-

- SmartWater
- Provision of the new bench on the Old Worcester Road
- Traffic congestion along Quarry Bank caused by vehicles waiting to get into the Elizabethan School
- Lack of availability of agendas at the meeting
- Minutes of the last meeting not available on the website
- Details of the amount spent by the Clerk on postage since January 2017.

b) County Councillor Peter Tomlinson

Cty Cllr Peter Tomlinson briefly commented on the financial issues facing the County Council in next year's budget and the appointment of a new Chief Executive. He also commented a number of highway issues in the surrounding area and the discussions ongoing regarding the Velo Event taking place again in 2018.

c) District Councillor Nigel Dowty

D/Cllr Nigel Dowty briefly reported on issues relating to the wall at the former Talbot House PH which were being addressed and the provision of stickers for waste bins to make dog owners aware that they can use them for dog waste.

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on the 5th December 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on the 5th December 2017 were approved unanimously and signed by the Chair.

6. Co-Option of a Parish Councillor

The Chair reported that Mike Tooley had come forward for co-option onto the Parish Council and read out a brief resume of his background.

The Chair, seconded by Jan Hipkins, then moved and it was unanimously agreed that Mike Tooley be co-opted to the Parish Council.

7. Planning Issues

1) New Applications for Comment

i) 17/02492/HP – 3 Waresley Court Road, Hartlebury – Implementation of planning approval 17/01759/HP without compliance with condition 2 (drawing numbers) to allow amended roof design.

The Parish Council raised no objection to this application.

ii) 17/02526/FUL – Garage block off The Avenue, Waresley, Hartlebury – Demolition of existing garage block with development of previously approved dwelling (W/16/00392/PN) along with new basement garage provision.

The Parish Council had serious concerns about this application given the previous planning history relating to this property. They noted that the work had already started but then stopped by Enforcement. They were concerned about the lack of consultation and the access issues. It was also noted that soil excavated from the site was being dumped around the surrounding area.

iii) 17/02566/CU – Associated Ref: 17/02548/LB – Talbot Hotel, Old Worcester Road, Hartlebury – Implementation of planning approval W/15/00186/CU for the re-development of the site. Conversion of existing public house to form 3 dwellings & the construction of 4 dwellings on part of remainder of site without compliance with condition 20 to allow amended design.

iv) 17/02404/HP – Hargroves, Waresley Road, Hartlebury – Proposed single storey rear extension.

The Parish Council raised no objections to these applications.

2) New Applications Already Commented On Due to Planning Deadlines

i) 17/02469/CLE – 6 Torton Villas, Worcester Road, Low Hill, Kidderminster – Certificate of lawful use existing for use of the land for one static & one touring caravan. The Parish Council had strongly objected to this application.

3) Update on Previous Planning Applications

The update was noted.

It was then agreed to deal with Agenda item 12.

12. Smartwater Update

The Chair presented the report and highlighted that Smartwater had agreed to honour their original commitment to provide the kits at £8.95 each. In addition, West Mercia Police had agreed to fund the provision of the street signs as part of their 'We Don't Buy Crime' initiative. Smartwater had also relaxed their requirement of 100% take-up to recognise a 'Smartwater' parish to 80%. She added that the Parish Council had already received £2,500 from Cty/Cllr Peter Tomlinson towards the project and other sources of funding were also being pursued. In the interim she felt that the Parish Council should look to provide funding to cover the whole project but to only purchase 80% initially to see the level of take-up.

After further discussion, the Chair, seconded by Caro Boughton-Thomas, moved that the Parish Council proceed with the Smartwater project and that they commit £12,055 in the 2018/19 budget but only purchase 80% in the first instance.

On being put to a vote, the motion was carried by 8 votes to 1.

8. Parish Council Budget and Precept 2018/19

The Clerk presented the budget report explaining that the Parish Council was in a reasonably healthy position and that they had two options to consider regarding the level of precept for 2018/19. He went on to respond to a number of Councillor's questions particularly with regard to the low level of precept compared with other parish councils. It was noted that, based on current figures, there was likely to be unallocated funds of between £11,000 and £12,000. The Parish Council then looked at the draft budget in detail and agreed the following amendments:-

- The Gardening Club allocation should be combined with Other Grants in a budget of £1,000.
- An item for the reprinting of 100 copies of the Parish Plan should be included at a cost of £500.
- An increase in the budget for Smartwater to £12,055 in line with the Parish Council's decision under Agenda item 12 above.

The Clerk pointed out that the amendments agreed would not impact on either of the options for the 2018/19 precept.

Caro Boughton-Thomas, seconded by Cath Holden, then moved and it was unanimously agreed to approve a budget requirement of £23,422 for 2018/19 which would be made up of a precept of £21,930 plus the parish grant of £1,492.

9. Police Report

The Clerk confirmed that no report had been received.

10. Hartlebury Community Project

The Chair reported that the planning application would be considered by the District Council's Planning Committee on Thursday at which it was hoped it would receive approval. She added that both Sport England and Worcestershire FA had withdrawn their objections to the project and the only issue remained the future of the oak tree (T57). Nigel Dowty confirmed that he would speak in support of the planning application.

David Simons then went on to explain that the Project Management Team was now asking approval from the Parish Council to proceed with the following actions:-

- 1) Finalise the tender documents and letter of invitation to tender, in consultation with Greenway Landscape Architects and the Parish Clerk; and
- 2) Draw up a select list of at least six tenderers, with reserves. The list will include suitable local firms who have expressed an interest and other suitable firms who have expressed an interest in the project via the advertisement on the Government website. The recommendations of Greenway Landscape Architects will also be considered; and
- 3) Issue letters of invitation and tender documentation to the final list of firms willing to submit tenders for offers to be submitted by an agreed closing date; and

- 4) Assist the Parish Clerk in dealing with queries from tenderers; and
- 5) Open, review and report on the tenders received, so that a recommendation can be made to the Parish Council regarding the acceptance of an offer and the awarding of the main contract.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to delegate responsibility to the Project Management Team to carry out the tasks highlighted above and that regular progress reports be submitted to the Parish Council.

11. Finance

(1) Current Financial Position

The Council noted the bank balances as at the 31st December 2017 as follows:-

HSBC Treasurer's Account:-	
1)Parish Council General Funds	£31,824.48 (includes £699 towards footpath booklet)
2)Community Project Funds	£53,601.67
Treasurer's Account Total	£85,426.15
HSBC Deposit Account	£6,360.67
Scottish Widows Account	£10,000.00

The funds for the Community Project were currently as follows:-

Total Income to Date	£67,800.42	Total Expenditure to Date	£14,198.75
Remaining Funds	£53,601.67		

(2) Payments for December 2017

The payments totalling £1,059.48 were then proposed by Jan Hipkins, seconded by the Chair and agreed unanimously:-

Clerk's salary	chq 101696	£525.44
HMRC	chq 101697	£131.20
Clerk's expenses	chq 101698	£377.64
Ian Hutchinson – Travel expenses	chq 101699	£25.20

12. Smartwater Update

This item had been dealt with earlier.

13. Councillors' Membership of Groups

The membership list was agreed with the addition of Simon Fletcher to the Allotments Advisory Group and Mike Tooley to the Playing Fields Advisory Group.

14. Parish Council's Policies and Procedures

After comments by the Clerk, it was unanimously agreed to approve the Complaints Procedure subject to the Clerk confirming that there was no requirement for an appeal procedure. The Clerk added that further policies would be presented to the Parish Council's next meeting.

15. Date of Annual Parish Meeting 2018

It was unanimously agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 7 March 2018 at 7.00pm and this meeting would be followed by a shortened Parish Council meeting.

16. Correspondence

The Clerk reported that he had been informed that the Parish Council's new external auditors would be PKF Littlejohn LLP but he did not expect there to be any major changes to the auditing process.

He had also received a letter from Diane Malley, the Parish Council's existing internal auditor asking if the Parish Council wished her to continue in this role. The Parish Council agreed to continue with Diane Malley.

The Clerk added that the law was changing with the introduction of the new General Data Protection Regulations and all organisations were required to be compliant by the 25 May 2018 and to appoint a Data Protection Officer. Given the complex nature of the new regulations, Diane Malley had offered to carry out the DPO function on behalf of the Parish Council and was happy to quote for this work. Peter Tomlinson commented that the new regulations were creating a lot of difficulties for all levels of local government and suggested that the advice of CALC should be sought before taking any action. This was agreed.

17. Action Summary

In considering the Action Summary, the following points were noted:-

- The Chair reported that a defibrillator was being provided at the Parish Hall via the Womens Institute. She added that it was likely that the Parish Council would be approached to take over responsibility for the equipment including any future maintenance costs.
- It was agreed that the items relating to the former Talbot PH development, the notice boards, parking issues, review of Parish Council policies and meetings with the Trading Estate representatives could be deleted as they had now been actioned.
- The Chair stated that work was ongoing with the redevelopment of the Parish Council website.

18. Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Agendas

- Caroline Boughton-Thomas reported the large pothole in Chadwick Lane had still not been dealt with. Peter Tomlinson agreed to follow this up with highways.
- Jan Hipkins gave a brief feedback on the last meeting of the Weinberger CLC meeting.
- Ray Kirby commented on the ongoing problems with parking in Station Road which were not helped by the poor quality double yellow lines which were being ignored by motorists. He added that there were still problems with people being allowed to walk dogs across the trading estate and he was also concerned that the landing of a helicopter on the site met with health and safety regulations. The Chair agreed to raise these issues at the forthcoming meeting with Trading Estate representatives.

19. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Members of the press and public were excluded from the meeting to allow confidential discussions to take place under Agenda items 20 to 22.

[At this juncture, the members of the public left the meeting.]

20. Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on the 5th December 2017

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on the 5th December 2017 were approved unanimously and signed by the Chair.

21. Tenders for Tree Surgery and Removal Works

The Parish Council agreed the appointment of Shires Ground Maintenance to carry out the necessary tree works as part of the Hartlebury Community Project.

22. Parish Clerk

The Parish Clerk agreed a revised salary for the Parish Clerk in line with the terms of his employment contract.

DATE OF NEXT PC MEETING:

Tuesday 6th February 2018 - 7.00 pm at the PARISH HALL.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Signed(Chairman) Dated

Draft