

MINUTES of the meeting of BOBBINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
held on Wednesday 18 March 2020 in the Jubilee Room at Bobbington Village
Hall at 7:30pm

PRESENT: Councillor: Cllr. Mrs L Jones (Chairman)
Councillors: A Burton and Mrs J Stanton
Victoria Morris – Clerk to the Council

1761. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Cllr. Mrs I Rees, Cllr S Hadgett, Cllr Snelson, Cllr Slater and County and District Cllr. Mrs Victoria Wilson.

1762. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

There were no declarations of interest.

1763. MINUTES:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Bobbington Parish Council held on 19 February 2020, a copy having previously been circulated to each member of the Council, be approved.

1764. MATTERS ARISING:

a. Tree Update (Brantley Lane / Crescent)

Various emails had been circulated since the last meeting. Cllr. Snelson had spoken to Steve Dore at the District Council with respect to his correspondence, two issues were discussed:

1. We have planted a tree on land owned by the council. They may in time notice this, and ask us to remove the tree as we do not have permission from them.
2. We haven't planted a replacement tree in the curtilage of the property as the planning permission clause stated. If this tree isn't planted in the garden soon, enforcement action will be taken. This can only be done against the property owner, which is the Housing Association.

Cllr. Burton expressed concerns given the planning permission had been obtained by the Parish Council not the Housing Association. Should further advice be sought? It was agreed that the matter would be adjourned to the next meeting given the lack of Councillors in attendance.

b. Affordable Housing

The questionnaires have all been sent to Parishioners. The Clerk had received a few telephone calls requesting further information. The response to date appears to be good (Lesley Birch has reported that 40 envelopes have been returned), however, the closing date has not yet passed.

The Chairman reported that some had commented that part B was not clear and thought it confusing.

c. Bobbington website

The Clerk and Cllr. Burton had attended a conference call with the digital team at Staffordshire County Council. Following the meeting the following information was circulated to the Councillors as an immediate decision was needed.

The Councillors had originally discussed the packages available and decided to opt for the gold package. This had an upfront cost of £500 then and annual cost of £150 per annum. Whilst this option was still available, the team would not be in a position to start work on the website until the end of March at the earliest.

They offered the silver package (£125 pa) as an alternative which would be available much sooner. The main difference appeared to be that the gold package includes the content from the old website being copied to the new one, we could then work with them to change it as required. It was noted that much of the content is outdated and would need to be changed, therefore, would it be a good use of funds to pay for it to be copied and effectively re-written?

The new site works on word press templates, so a development site is initially set up and then activated at a later date once developed. Various add-ons are available depending on requirements. We will be provided with logins to the site so that we can make our own amendments. Training is available on their site and they are happy to provide assistance over the phone/email.

The sub-committee recommendation was to opt for the silver package, even though it will involve us investing time and writing the website. Given the position with our website and the upcoming renewal, we pressed as to whether this could be set up before the end of March. Whilst they couldn't provide 100% assurance, they have promised that they will try and get a development site set up in the next week if we are able to confirm the package by Monday. Whilst we will then have to set the site up ourselves, we could initially launch it as a basic site with the minimum requirements and then develop it further over time.

The Councillors agreed to accept the silver package. Chipmonk Computing's facility will be retained for a further 12 months to permit the site to be built. It was also agreed the same web address should be kept.

Cllr. Burton updated the meeting. The development site is now active and Cllr Burton has started to transfer the information. The site is user-friendly. The Clerk agreed to look into the requirements of the transparency code.

d. Unkempt properties/gardens

Shortly after the last meeting Teresa Smith, Senior Tenancy & Estate Management Officer had emailed the Clerk stating:

"I have made contact with the tenant and made them aware of the complaints. I'm in the process of arranging for a convenient time to visit to discuss an action plan. The other property I haven't had chance to get out to have a conversation with them as yet. We currently have limited resources and as already mentioned in a previous email we have to prioritise cases, so urgent ones such as vulnerable tenants, safeguarding issues, domestic violence cases and compliance concerns

relating to gas and electric take precedence to non-urgent cases like condition of gardens.

I will do my best to contact the other tenant as soon as I can to arrange a home visit to discuss the condition of their garden and will let you know once both visits have been completed.”

The response was discussed by those present. In the current situation it is unlikely that a visit will be carried out before the Summer. It was noted that a number of parishioners had referred to the condition of the Housing Association properties when discussing the affordable housing questionnaire i.e. if the existing properties cannot be maintained why would we support development of more of these houses?

e. The National Lottery Community Fund funding opportunities

The Clerk has registered the Parish Council. An application is still to be submitted. There does not appear to be a closing date currently, however, the Clerk will look to progress the application before the next meeting.

1765. CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

a. Future meetings including annual meeting and AGM

Further guidance is awaited. A number of emails have been circulated since the last meeting, these suggest that legislation will be changed to permit meetings to be held remotely, the AGM to be held later in the year and the audit/accounts deadline to be delayed also. It is anticipated that the Coronavirus Bill will provide further detailed information. As such the date of the next meeting cannot currently be confirmed. It is likely that any meeting will be held remotely, however, clarification is needed as to the minimum requirements and practicalities.

b. Isolation / community assistance

It was agreed that Bobbington Parish Council should support a community assistance initiative. Cllr. Burton agreed to co-ordinate the scheme. The Clerk agreed to design a flyer for delivery to parishioners. It was suggested and agreed that this would be two sided - one asking for volunteers and the other aimed at those who may need help due to isolating, shielding etc.

1766. HIGHWAY MATTERS

a. Water main and cleansing Six Ashes Road

Diane Firkins of Staffordshire Highways had confirmed that unfortunately they do not have any records for their drainage systems.

Cllr. Mrs Wilson had kindly made enquiries of Ryan Taylor at the District Council. He has some info that he could print off showing the various services and where their connections are on the roads, so to speak. The Clerk had circulated a list of road names and requested any others be added. It was agreed the list was complete for the current time.

Cllr. Mrs Wilson had also checked the highways gully schedule to identify when the gullies are due to be cleansed, she advised as follows:

Gospel Ash Road - cleansed biennially, due 13/05/21 – 03/06/21

Leaton Lane – cleansed biennially, due 27/05/21-17/06/21
 Lutley Lane – cleansed biennially, due 27/05/21-17/06/21
 Bridgnorth Road – cleansed annually, due 22/10/20-12/11/20
 Six Ashes Road – cleansed biennially, due 13/05/21 – 03/06/21, some are only done triennially, due on 26/11/21 – 17/12/21
 Crab Lane – cleansed biennially, due on 27/05/21 – 17/06/21.

1767. **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

Corbett School

Cllr. Burton reported that all events had been cancelled following the Coronavirus outbreak. Whilst Cllr. Burton had a meeting scheduled with Mrs Crook, this had also been understandably cancelled as the school had closed to all non-essential visitors. The school will close on Friday in line with Government advice. Provisions are currently uncertain, however, Mrs Crook and the staff have prepared a timetable to encourage daily routines and work will be sent home/available through the website. Teachers can be accessed via email.

Village Hall

Mrs Southall had emailed the Clerk to thank the Council for agreeing to send a representative to their meetings if available. The scheduled meeting was cancelled due to Coronavirus – however Mrs Southall will let Cllr. Hadgett have details of future meetings.

Church of the Holy Cross

Mrs Humphries had informed the Clerk that no more services are taking place until further notice. The church will remain open during the day and anyone can of course can go in there if they wish. 3 moles have been caught in the churchyard!

Community Speed Watch (“CSW”)

Cllr. Burton reported that three activities had been planned for the month, however, one had to be cancelled due to rain. On the earlier occasion the road sweeper had been in the village, so speed was generally slower. However, 6 out of 92 vehicles were found to be speeding on the 12 March 2020, including a lorry which passes through the village each day.

Police Crime Report

PCSO P Wilkes had emailed the Clerk apologising for them being unable to attend due to the guidelines regarding the Coronavirus. There was only one incident to report since the last meeting, this being vehicle crime - theft of an Ifor Williams trailer/horse box from Crab Lane.

1768. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present.

1769. **FINANCE**

a. Year-end donations

- i. Corbett School – High Fives and football tournament (2019 £230) – This event has been cancelled due to Coronavirus. Should the event be rescheduled the donation will be reconsidered.
- ii. Halfpenny Green Air Scouts – (2019 £230) – In light of developments at the airport in the last 12 months, it was agreed that an update was

required before discussing a donation. The Clerk agreed to contact the Air Scouts.

b. Clerk's annual salary review

The Chairman proposed an increase of 1.79% in line with the CPI increase. This was agreed by all present. Payment of salary, expenses and HMRC will be deferred to the next meeting.

c. Cheques

The following cheque was proposed by Cllr. Mrs Stanton and seconded by Cllr. Burton

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| i. SPCA – Annual membership | £142.00 |
|-----------------------------|---------|

1770. PLANNING MATTERS

- a. Received
- b. Responded to:
 - ii. APP/C3430/W/20/3245585 - 16 Brantley Crescent Bobbington DY7 5DB 19/00659/FUL – Appeal 3 bedroom detached dwelling house with integral garage – No further comments
 - iii. 19/00910/FUL - Proposed detached garage, Primrose Cottage Gospel Ash Road Bobbington STOURBRIDGE DY7 5EE – amended plans – No objections
- c. Outcomes:
- d. Enforcement matters:

1771. AIRFIELD MATTERS

Nothing to report.

1772. CORRESPONDENCE

Circulated by email prior to the meeting:-

Voluntary sector news for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent 26/2/2020
 South Staffordshire Council - Council news 156, 157, 158, 159
 Staffordshire Parish Councils Association (SPCA) bulletin 20/2/20, 27/2/20, 5/3/20, 12/30/20
 SSC Street scene update 6/3/20, 13/3/20
 SSC Grass cutting and weed control
 SSC Spring Parish Summit 26/3/2020 & agenda
 SPCA Coronavirus 9/3/2020
 SPCA bulletin extra 12/3/20, 13/3/20
 Staffordshire Fire & Rescue service safety plan 2020-2024
 New group in Wolverhampton for people with Arthritis 20/4/2020 2-4pm

Circulated at the meeting:

Blakelands fireworks – 11 April 2020; 8 May 2020, 1 July 2020

1773. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING TBC due to the current unprecedented position with COVID-19.

Meeting Closed