

**Minutes of the meeting of Bobbington Parish Council**  
**held on Wednesday 15 September 2021 at 7:30pm**

**Present:** Councillor: Mrs. L Jones (Chairman)  
Councillors: A Burton, Mrs I Rees, S Hadgett and Mrs J Stanton.  
Victoria Morris – Clerk to the Council  
2 Members of the public

**1903. Apologies:**

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted by County and District Councillor:  
Mrs Victoria Wilson.

**1904. Declarations of Interest:**

Cllrs. Mrs Jones declared interests in 1906a.

**1905. Minutes:**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Bobbington Parish Council held on 16 June 2021, a copy having previously been circulated to each member of the Council, be approved.

**1906. Cllr Brian Edwards MBE**

The Parish Council wish to offer their condolences to the family and friends Cllr. Brian Edwards, Leader of South Staffordshire Council and our former County Councillor who sadly passed away in August 2021.

**1907. Matters arising:**

**a. Affordable Housing**

The Clerk had contacted Lesley Birch (Housing Plus) to determine if any offer had been made to the landowner. She had explained that an offer cannot be submitted until the proportion of land required is known. Once the architect completes a drawing then an offer can be made. The offer will include a plan outlining the extent of the site to be purchased. Lesley confirmed the housing association will not be spending any substantial money until contracts are exchanged.

In July, Lesley informed the Clerk that the initial sketch designs for the eight affordable homes didn't meet expectations, so revised plans were in progress. The agent had been updated. However, in September the architect announced that the practice has gone into liquidation. Lesley will now look to engage another architect and keep us informed of progress.

**b. Bobbington website**

An email received from Chipmonk Computing congratulated the Parish Council on the new website. They would like to maintain the old website, remove the existing Council information and insert a link on the relevant page to the new site. Their proposal was agreed by those present.

With respect to the new website Cllr. Slater is still to provide a photo and biography. The Clerk and Cllr. Burton will liaise with respect to uploading minutes and accounting records.

**c. Unkempt properties/gardens**

The Clerk had received an email from Alison Simmons, Public Health Officer at South Staffs who had spoken to South Staffordshire Housing Association (“SSHA”). It is SSHA’s opinion that the gardens are not in such a poor state that they are contravening the tenants' contract with the Housing Association. SSHA don't really prioritise gardens as an issue and see far worse elsewhere. From the environmental health perspective gardens are not usually an issue unless putrescible waste or faecal matter is accumulating and attracting vermin.

It was suggested parishioners could assist the residents to bring the gardens to the standard they would like to see. Those present felt this was a disappointing response. It was unclear why clauses were included in agreements if they could not be enforced. It was noted that SSHA cut the lawns of the bungalows just round the corner, however, after discussion it was agreed that the tenancy agreements probably differed due to the conditions placed on the bungalows.

It was agreed that a couple of Councillors would attend one of the properties as the tenant has not been seen for some time and the house doesn't appear to be occupied.

A discussion took place with respect to the appropriateness of offering assistance. A member of the public offered to assist with grass cutting if required.

It was agreed that a welfare check would be carried out and then further actions could be discussed at the next meeting. The Clerk was asked to seek the advice of SPCA to ascertain whether any further steps could be taken.

It was noted that the third property along Brantley Lane was also in need of some attention. It is understood that no one is living at this property. The Clerk will try to establish who owns it.

**d. Telephone box – Salt Box Lane**

The Clerk was in receipt of a contract from BT with respect to the “agreement for sale and purchase of telephone kiosk(s) to a local authority in England and Wales”. A couple of questions were raised as to the position and maintenance. The Clerk was asked to review the document and provide a summary, it was also suggested advice be sought from SPCA if required.

**e. Parish online & ordinance survey website:**

It was agreed that a zoom session would be set up to enable Cllr. Burton to demonstrate the package and provide training for the other Counsellors.

**1908. Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

**Isolation / community assistance**

Whilst Cllr. Burton is still assisting one parishioner, they consider this to be outside covid. No additional help has been sought by any Parishioners.

**1909. Highway Matters**

The Parish Council wish to offer their condolences to the family and friends of the man who was recently killed as a result of a collision along Tom Lane.

It was noted that there had been two incidents along this stretch of road in recent weeks. It was agreed the 30mph sign on Tom Lane is difficult to see, the possibility of moving it was discussed. A long discussion followed. The Chair stated that the last review undertaken had taken a long time to implement, however, as a result the Parish Council were successful in lowering the speed limit along various stretches of roads in the parish. One of the main factors considered at the last review was the number of accidents and severity of them, this data has changed over the last five plus years. It was agreed that we should consider asking for a further review of the speed limits.

Cllr Hadgett stated that he had been asked if the white lines could be reinstated, both in the middle of the road and side lines. A discussion followed as to the advantages and disadvantages. It was agreed the road may be too narrow in places.

**a. Flooding - Six Ashes Road**

It is understood that Cllrs Snelson and Slater carried out a site visit, however neither was present to confirm their findings.

Cllr. Mrs. Wilson had emailed Cllr. Hadgett on 2 August 2021 stating that CCTV was booked for the 10th August to investigate this area. There was no explanation as to the delay although it was assumed an emergency at another location pushed back the work. Those present were unclear as to whether this work had been carried out.

Furthermore, Diane Firkins (Staffordshire Highways) had emailed Cllr. Hadgett and reported that the gully outside number 21 had been cleansed and left running as part of an ad-hoc visit to rectify some flooding further up Six Ashes Road. She also noted there is also a gully opposite number 23, however, this gully did not receive a cleanse at this time. On the last visit in 2018 this particular gully was parked over so did not receive a cleanse. She stated they were due to return to the area for routine cleansing work in November.

The Clerk had received notification of a road closure possibly due to drainage works on 13/9/21 for no more than 5 days. It was confirmed the road had been closed this week. Cllr Hadgett reported that they cleansed some of the drain / gullies during this visit, so much earlier than anticipated.

It was, however, noted that the hedges had been cut along Six Ashes Road, so unfortunately, the cuttings were likely to be washed into the drains and have an adverse effect on the cleansing. Unfortunately, the road sweeper had attended the Parish during the previous week so was unlikely to attend in the coming weeks.

**Church Lane flooding**

Cllr. Mrs Stanton reported that there was now a kerb stone by one of the drains, therefore, excess water was unlikely to drain off.

**b. 20's plenty**

Cllr Burton had attended the recent zoom meeting. He reported that there was a lot of logic to the theory behind the campaign. They were seeking the assistance of Parish Councils to request "20's plenty" be rolled out across Staffordshire. A discussion followed, the main concern was the costs that would be incurred. It was

agreed that Cllr. Mrs Wilson's input would be useful, this will be sought at the next meeting,

**c. Diversion of vehicular traffic**

13 September 2021 – Six Ashes Road from Bridgnorth Road to Crab Lane – drainage works.

7 October 2021 - Six Ashes Road, Bobbington – between the hours of 09:30 and 15:30 – pole testing and tree cutting works

**1910. Reports from Committee Representatives**

**Corbett School**

The children have returned and are no longer required to be in bubbles, everyone appears to have settled back into school life well. School photos were taken yesterday. 34 children will be going to a trip to Cadbury World in October 2021.

One teacher is currently off with covid, therefore, the headteacher is teaching.

The school will be hosting a new event on the first Tuesday in every month between 9-10am. This will be a social network event.

**Village Hall**

Cllr. Mrs Stanton reported that the hall is now open and running. A number of grants had been received during the pandemic, as such, the committee are currently considering decoration of the hall and replacement of broken windows.

The AGM will be held in November 2021.

**Church of the Holy Cross**

Mrs J Humphries had informed the Clerk that a Harvest Festival service will be held in church on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October at the usual time of 11.15 a.m. but there will be no Harvest Supper.

There has been another small fall of plaster this time from high up in the chancel roof!

**Community Speed Watch (“CSW”)**

Cllr. Burton reported that a meeting of volunteers is to be held next week, however, more volunteers need to be recruited as soon as possible. There are currently only 4, so they have a very limited impact. Councillors were asked to spread the word in the hope of recruiting more people.

**Police Crime Report**

***Attempt theft of plant machinery***

Six Ashes Road - 24/06/2021 – Caller has disturbed unknown offenders attempting to steal a mini digger off driveway. Damage to ignition caused approx. value £1000. Sadly, only CCTV available did not catch registration number of offending vehicles which were described as a dark grey Astra and white low loader van.

***Vehicle crime:***

- **Crab Lane**, 04/08/21 at 15:00 occupants of an Izuzu Trooper 4x4 got out of the vehicle to open gate to a field, offender jumped in and drove their car away. Extensive area search by Staffs and West Mercia Police with a negative result, no lines of enquiry.

***Burglary:***

- **Tom Lane**, 21/07/21 at 09:00 2 males have gained entry to property via French doors taking jewellery, CCTV captures the males and a red Fiesta, forensics recovered DNA samples, enquiries ongoing.

***ASB hotspots:***

- No locations of note

***Road Accidents***

- Sadly, there have been two serious collisions on Tom Lane, one on 27<sup>th</sup> August where two vehicles collided head on. The occupants of a Citroen C3 were trapped inside their vehicle for over an hour before being taken to hospital with numerous fractures. The male driver sustained a head injury which has led to a bleed on the brain. Thankfully both survived the crash. The driver of the Astra and his passenger received cuts and grazes only and the driver was arrested at the scene, interviewed and released the following days whilst enquiries continue. The second collision was on 8<sup>th</sup> September where a car and a coach collided and sadly a 28 year old male lost his life. Collision investigation unit are investigating. Staffordshire Police are appealing for witnesses.

***Proactive news:***

- Local officers have been working during the course of duty and also on overtime conducting Operation Lightning. This is an operation targeting criminals using our road networks and also offences such as driving without insurance / tax / MOT etc. Multiple vehicles have been seized for document offences and the increased visual presence on the road networks also acts as a deterrent to any potential criminals looking to commit crime in South Staffordshire. These operations will continue in the coming weeks.
- Wombourne Neighbourhood Police Officers have been working alongside police officers from our Roads Policing Unit, targeting cross boarder vehicle criminals coming to the Wombourne / Himley / Kinver areas.

1911. **Public Question Time**

The members of the public had been given the opportunity to raise questions

1912. **Finance:-**

**a. Zoom subscription renewal £119.90**

The annual subscription is due for renewal. It was agreed that given the legislation has not been amended, zoom is now of limited use. Therefore, the standard package will suffice. The subscription is not to be renewed at the current time.

**b. Annual donations – Holy Cross Church re churchyard upkeep**

The Clerk reported that a donation of £900 has been made during the last few years. The Parochial Church Council Treasurer had reported that the

costs for the year to 31st December 2020 were £960, those to 31st December 2019 were £1,068. The extent of lock down last year may be the reason for the lower amount. However, at the beginning of this year, the gardener had increased his hourly rate from £10 to £12.50, the estimated costs for 2021 are £1,200.

Cllr. Mrs Rees proposed £1,000 this was seconded by Cllr. Hadgett.

**c. Cheques**

The following cheques were proposed by Cllr. Burton and seconded by Cllr. Mrs Rees

i.	Holy Cross Church	S137	£1,000
ii.	Staffordshire Parish Councils Association	Course (VM)	£30
iii.	Clerk	Salary & expenses	£909.47
iv.	HMRC	Paye	£87.40
v.	Staffordshire Parish Councils Association	Course (LJ)	£30

**1913. Planning matters**

**a. Received**

Nothing to report

**b. Received and responded to:**

- i. PA 21/00513/FUL - Yew Tree Nurseries, Six Ashes Road, Bobbington Staffordshire DY7 5DT - Agricultural storage building – objections raised:
  - The change from the glass houses to the agricultural building is quite substantial. The plans depict a very large building that has proportions of a house rather than an agricultural building and the materials used are not what you would expect for this type of farm building to breed sheep. The application suggests the building is to be clad in oak, with velux windows and reclaimed roof tiles – this seems out of character for a building for sheep.
  - The height of the building is a concern. A number of previous applications for housing have been rejected, please review the reasons for rejection when considering your response to this application.
  - The proposed building is in a prominent position in the middle of the site, would it not sit better at the rear of the site next to the existing barn?
  - If this building is to be used for breeding sheep, would it not have some form of drainage to remove the animal excrement etc., as there are none of the planning application?
  - The current glasshouses are for market garden activity, would it need a change of use if it is to be used for agricultural use/livestock?

**c. Responded to**

Nothing to report

**d. Outcomes:**

It is understood that the Airport planning application revised target date is 11 September 2021.

**e. Enforcement matters:**

Nothing to report

**1914. Airfield matters**

- a. WAAG winding up notice of EGM – Notification had been received with respect to a meeting on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at Tuck Hill Village Hall starting at 7.30pm. The notice stated that WAAG has served its purpose and now needs to be formally wound up. The organisation has been kept in a “mothballed” state pending further expansion plans which are now highly unlikely, particularly in view of the latest housing development proposals.
- b. Cllr. Mrs Rees reported that the Consultative Committee AGM had been held over zoom and lasted a very short period of time. No one from MCR was present at the meeting. It was also reported that:  
There had been increased activity in May due to pilots needing to renew their licences.  
On the 19 September project propeller will take place – it is anticipated there will be a spitfire fly past.  
The new café is now open.  
The next meeting is scheduled for 29 September 2021.

**1915. Correspondence**

Blakelands Fireworks notifications – 17/9/2021, 25/09/2021, 2/10/2021

The Clerk asked if anyone had attended the District Council Climate Change workshop on the 8/9/2021– no one had attended.

Locality Forum – Community Safety and flooding – 30/09/2021

*Circulated by email prior to the meeting:-*

Voluntary sector news for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent (VAST) 17/6/21, 8/7/21, 19/8/21,

South Staffordshire Council (SSDC) - Council news 223, 224, 225, 226, 228.230,231, 232, 233, 235

Staffordshire Parish Councils Association (SPCA) bulletin & Extra bulletin – 17/6/21, 24/6/21, 1/7/21, 8/7/21, 15/7/21, 19/8/21, 26/8/21, 9/9/21

Staffordshire County Council (“SCC”) Highways data 21/6/21, 2/7/21, 9/7/21, 24/7/21, 2/8/21, 10/8/21, 23/8/21, 9/9/21

SPCA courses

Staffordshire libraries Summer reading challenge

Staffordshire libraries update e-newsletter – 2/8/21, 5/8/21

Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Covid data – 21/6/21, 13/7/21, 24/7/21, 2/8/21, 9/8/21

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue – Community Safety Flash –

- tumble dryer and outdoor safety
- reporting an emergency

SCC Community fund 2021

SSC Invitation to climate change workshop 8/9/21

Road closure – Gospel Ash Road – 10/8/21 – 13/8/21

Residents like lower speed limited – M Barr

SSC The Queens platinum jubilee beacons

SSC Streetscene issue 11

SSC Summer camps with access for children in receipt of free school meals

SSC Locality forum – Community safety and flooding 30/09/2021

SSC – Pre-preferred option communications campaign

Staffordshire Commissioner's office – Getting in touch with Staffordshire commissioner's office  
SSC Local Plan presentation to Parishes 7/10/21  
SCC Replacement care engagement

Cllr. Ms Jones provided feedback on the SPCA Data Protection course she had attended. The Clerk raised the issue of emails with Councillors following her recent course. She reminded Councillors that they can be issued with council emails if they wish.

Gavin Williamson MP – Review of parliamentary constituencies - Cllr. Stanton raised attention to this article from Gavin Williamson with respect to and the proposal to place Bobbington in the Dudley borough. She will keep an eye on this and raise it when the consultation opens.

Cllr Hadgett raised a concern with respect to a recent social media post to the "Bobbington Neighbours" facebook page concerning dog fouling in fields with cows and walkers not keeping to the footpaths. He also mentioned the increased dog fouling in the village - a number of comments have been made by locals. This was discussed. It was noted that there were still a number of dog fouling signs around the village, however, it was suggested that a further campaign could be considered in conjunction with the school.

**1916.AOB**

**Flower boxes:** The Clerk has been contacted by a parishioner who maintains the flower box by the Bobbington sign near to Blacklands Barns. She has planted the box twice, however, the plants have been removed both times. She was wondering if there was something we could do in place of flowers. She has subsequently messaged the Clerk to say a neighbour works at a garden centre and has kindly donated some plants. The neighbour suggests that if a request is submitted on letterhead, we can be considered for sponsorship. A discussion followed, it was agreed that wild flower seeds would be desirable, these would also help to attract bees.

**Plant a tree for the jubilee**

It was suggested that this could be considered.

**Date of the next meeting** 20 October 2021

Meeting Closed