

Minutes of the meeting of Bobbington Parish Council
held on Wednesday 20 April 2022 at 7:30pm at Bobbington Village Hall

Present: Councillor: Mrs. L Jones (Chairman)
District and County Councillor: Mrs V Wilson
Councillors: M Snelson, S Hadgett, A Burton, Mrs J Stanton and M Slater
Victoria Morris – Clerk to the Council

1989. Apologies:

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted by Councillor Mrs I Rees.

1990. Declarations of Interest:

Cllr. Mrs Jones, Cllr. Snelson and Cllr. Slater declared an interest in 1992a.

1991. Minutes:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Bobbington Parish Council held on 16 March 2022, a copy having previously been circulated to each member of the Council, be approved.

1992. Matters arising:

a. Affordable Housing

Lesley Birch (Housing Plus Group) has confirmed that no response was received from the landowners. It has, therefore, been assumed they don't wish to proceed. Lesley wishes to pass her thanks and best wishes on to the Councillors and Clerk.

As previously agreed, all options have been considered and a couple explored unsuccessfully, therefore this matter will not be pursued any further at the current time.

The Council members would like to record their thanks to Lesley Birch.

b. Unkempt properties/gardens

No responses have been received from the letters sent to property owners / tenants.

Cllr. Mrs Wilson confirmed that the District Council are aware of the issues, they will be carrying out a site visit and considering the options available.

Cllr. Mrs Wilson agreed to speak to Housing Plus and the District Council with respect to the other concerns and the possibility of a volunteer group.

c. Environmental destruction in Bobbington

Catherine Gutteridge, South Staffordshire Council, had responded to state "*there is no evidence of any planning breaches at the Leaton Lane site relating to the land clearance. I have spoken to Gavin Pearce who confirms that there are no tree offences at the site from a Council point of view. The Forestry Commission may investigate the felling of trees without a license but that is a separate matter for them to investigate.*"

Gavin Pearce, South Staffordshire Council, responded separately to state; "*this isn't a matter for South Staffs Council or the local parish council to become involved with as it is not within the remit of either organisation. The clearance*

works have been referred to the Wildlife Officer at Staffs Police and the Forestry Commission to check whether any breach of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, or requirement to obtain a felling licence, has occurred."

Gavin Pearce has also responded to the original email received as follows:

"Good afternoon, I have checked our records and can confirm that the area to which you refer is not covered by a Conservation Area or Tree Protection Order. It is also unlikely that a contravention of the Hedgerow Regulations has occurred as the land type on which the trees are located is not one that conveys protected status. However, your email has also been forwarded onto Louise Jones (PCSO 6621) Rural and Wildlife Crime Officer, Staffordshire Police. She will be able to look into the possibility that wildlife crimes may have been committed. You should contact her for an update on this matter" Gavin Pearce, Senior Arboricultural Officer, Development Management – Planning

d. Trees surrounding brook between Glebelands and Brantley Lane

The Clerk had reviewed earlier records as requested. In 2014 she had written to Steve Dores at the District Council for advice as 20-30 years prior to that it was unclear as to whether the land was owned by South Staffordshire District Council (SSDC), the developer, the housing association or the house owners. It would appear that the developer was deemed insolvent prior to completing the transfer of the strip of land.

Steve responded to state they had contacted the Land Registry with the result that the land was unregistered. Nothing further was heard. There is a possibility that this was an unknown asset in the insolvency and is therefore Bona Vacantia.

A discussion followed. It was concluded that parishioners would need to take their own advice. The Citizen's Advice Bureau may be able to assist.

e. Replacement tree in church grounds

The Clerk had contacted Mrs J Humphries (Parochial Church Council ("PCC") Secretary) with the proposal to replace the tree under the jubilee scheme. The PCC have already planned to plant a Malus (Crab Apple) to provide blossom in spring and decorative fruit in autumn, the cost is to be met from Flower Guild funds. They have asked if the Parish Council would be willing to do something with the bench.

Cllr. Wilson confirmed the 2022 Community Fund was open for applications. This could be used to assist with funding.

f. SID poles

The Clerk had found the original correspondence which confirmed the poles were for SIDs to be rotated throughout the locality. She had contacted Cllr. Mrs Wilson for an update who had redirected the email to Maggie Quinn at the District Council – a response is awaited.

g. Stiles – Public Rights of Way

Cllr. Hadgett circulated a summary sheet he had prepared. He stated that it is the landowners' responsibility to maintain a stile, however, they can recover at least 25% of the cost from the Highway Authority.

Damaged stiles can be reported through the website, but only one report can be made per stile. It would appear that many of those in Bobbington have already been reported.

Cllr Slater stated that he had reported a number. Someone from the Council had met with him and reviewed the issues, they were to drop a stile kit at the farm, however, nothing further has been heard. Cllr. Mrs Wilson agreed to follow this up. She explained that there was a lack of funding for Public Rights of Way. A stile that has been inspected should have yellow and black tape on it if deemed unusable.

A discussion followed where it was concluded that a number of the broken stiles had been pushed aside. Given there is no livestock in the fields this does not pose a problem. Cllr. Burton agreed to speak to the land owner of those adjacent to 83 Six Ashes Road. Cllr. Hadgett agreed to report the one adjacent to the Red Lion. Cllr. Mrs. Wilson agreed to look into any issues if we provided a list of locations of concern.

1993. **Churchyard**

The Chairman was in receipt of an email from the PCC drawing the Parish Council's attention to the diminishing space available for burials in the churchyard. There are an estimated seven plots remaining and whilst there are very few burials these days, the preferred choice often being for cremation, it is thought we should look to the future. The PCC are given to understand that it is the Parish Council's responsibility to identify additional land for village burials.

The Clerk had tried to research this to little avail and, therefore, taken advice from Staffordshire Parish Council's Association.

The response states:

There is, in fact, no statutory duty on a parish council to provide burial facilities. However, as a burial authority the parish council shares a responsibility with the parochial church council (PCC) to consider what should be done when it is evident that a churchyard's further usefulness for burials is limited. One possibility is that the PCC itself should acquire additional land, preferably adjacent to the existing churchyard as an extension to it, and the parish council may contribute to the related expense (The Local Government Act 1972 section 214(6) provides the power to do this).

The parish council may, however, also provide cemeteries outside its own area (LGA 1972 s 2142)) and it can have arrange to have this function discharged by another local authority (LGA 1972 s 101). Thus if it is not practical to extend an existing churchyard in the parish, a joint arrangement with a neighbouring council may be entered into.

In order to provide a cemetery, a parish council can appropriate land which it owns for some other purpose, or purchase land either by agreement or compulsorily. The parish council may apply to the bishop of the diocese for the consecration of the land concerned.

A discussion followed whereby it was agreed it was best to act before the Churchyard was deemed closed. The Chairman proposed a meeting with the PCC to discuss possible strategies. Cllrs Jones, Stanton and Hadgett will attend on behalf of the Parish Council.

1994. **“Bobbington Jubilee Bash” - Platinum Jubilee celebrations**

With respect to the two grant applications submitted, the South Staffordshire Council application has been successful, the Community Foundation application was unsuccessful. The Clerk has been asked to submit a further application to the National Lottery.

Cllr Snelson reported that tickets are now on sale. Flyers were delivered to houses in the Parish. 150 tickets have been sold to date. Quite a lot has now been organised by the committee. Insurance remains an outstanding issue.

The Clerk reported back on Zurich, who are requesting additional information given the current policy will not cover the event. The Clerk asked whether Event Insurance would be a better option. Cllr. Snelson agreed to look into this.

There is a further committee meeting next week. This is open to the public as volunteers are now being sought for the event. Meetings are also being held with the airport management and catering facilities.

A number of local businesses have provided sponsorship. The Parish Council wish to thank these organisations for their support.

1995. **“Bobbington Bake off” - Tom Butler Cup**

The Clerk has designed the poster based on current knowledge and asked that a number of outstanding issues be discussed:

- Age categories – the Clerk proposed 0-11 years, 12-18 years, 18+ years – this was agreed by all present
- Prizes – it was agreed there will be a prize for the first 3 in each age category with the overall winner receiving the Tom Butler cup as in previous years
- Date / time – it was agreed that entries would be deposited from 11am with judging to take place at 12 noon. The day will be determined by the availability of the judges (proposed sometime during Thursday 2nd June – Saturday 4th June)
- Entries can be in the form of a cake or cupcake(s)
- The event will be open to the public.
- It was agreed that due to potential allergens, food hygiene etc cakes will not be used at the Bobbington Bash instead they can be collected after the winners have been announced.
- Announcements – winners will be announced at the judging and again at 5:30pm at the Bobbington Bash on Saturday 4th June 2022.

The Vineyards have confirmed they are unable to provide a judge that weekend. An answer is awaited from the Red Lion and Blakelands. Both the Chairman and Cllr Mrs Wilson confirmed they were happy to be involved. Sir Gavin Williamson MP will also be approached.

1996. **Highway Matters**

a. Flooding - Six Ashes Road

The Clerk had received notification of a road closure on 1 July 2022 between 8am and 4pm for Six Ashes Road from Bridgnorth Road to Church Lane for Highway Drainage Works - jetting of culvert under carriageway required. (Blocked Gully Wagon Required).

The Clerk had contacted Diane Firkins at Staffordshire Highways with the Council's concerns as requested. Dianne had confirmed there were no reports of flooding issues reported to them since the end of 2020. She reminded the Councillors that they have the report it system on the website that enables anyone to report any highway related matters including flooding issues. Reports of faults can also be made via the my staff app. Whilst willing to help Diane has 16 Parish Councils to look after so doesn't have the resources unfortunately to report all matters for us. It is far easier for her to investigate a report that has already been made. By providing her with the reference number she can then look at where they are with any outstanding or unresolved enquiry related matters.

Following the email last month, Diane had raised a report to the Reactive Inspector to attend site. This site visit has now been carried out. The Inspector has raised a job for the CCTV to attend site, as there does appear to be a leak on the previous dig down location. This job has been scheduled to be attended to towards the end of May. They shall also be looking to clear the culvert further up the road near to the Six Ashes Inn at the same time.

Diane had also answered the query with respect to earlier work carried out. She stated they have had the blocked gully wagon attend on 22.07.21 to a blocked gully outside Alder Farm. In March 2021 they attended to 9 jammed lid gullies to ensure they were free for the next due visit by the gully wagon. A closure in September 2021, where they combined works under this closure such as resetting sunken gully frame by Bobbington Farm, some carriageway repairs, kerbing and footway patching near to 1 Brantley Lane, hedge clearing work, the dig down work near to College Farm, and repairs to a pipe near Alder Farm which was full of roots and a further 7 jammed lid gullies.

The additional work at the end of the May should resolve the new leak that has occurred. Cllr. Wilson shared the Parish Council's frustration and also agreed that the original issues were never resolved. Prior to the meeting she had carried out a site visit with Cllr. Burton and agreed to follow this matter up with Highways.

b. Tom Lane - visibility splays

The Clerk had reported this issue on the website as requested by Diane Firkins at Staffordshire Highways.

In respect to the request for details of the earlier work carried out Diane had stated the tree surgeons carried out some removal of low branches from trees, and reduced the crown which were overhanging the grass verge they also trimmed a small section of hedge to improve the visibility from the junction.

c. Local Road closures –

- i. 4 May 2022 due to Dudley Kingswinford Running Club 10K – Roads affected - Mile Flat, Greensforge, Worlds End Road, Chester Road, Mill Lane, Great Checkhill Road, Greensforge Lane, Greensforge
- ii. 21-24 April 2022 7:30am – 7pm – Temporary road closure, 4273629 R&A - Girls' Under 16 Amateur Championship, Highgate Common, Enville

d. Rights of Way

Draft report in relation to a s.53 application for the addition of a public bridleway in the parish of Bobbington. Our Reference: LN650G (information circulated by email) – A brief discussion concluded that there were no objections or comments to be submitted.

1997. Reports from Committee Representatives

Corbett School

Cllr Burton reported that Mrs Crook is leaving at the end of the Summer Term. It is understood that the role has been advertised.

Village Hall

Cllr. Mrs Stanton reported that new blinds have been ordered and will be fitted in the next few weeks.

Church of the Holy Cross

Mrs Humphries had informed the Clerk that commencing in May, church services will be held on just two Sundays in the month, the second and the fourth. Special services will still be held on other Sundays when they occur.

The Team Rector, Revd. Paul Brown, retired at Easter and a replacement will be sought.

It was noted that there was a sign on the Church noticeboard stating that the church would no longer be open during school holidays. It is understood this is due to vandalism. Obscene comments have been left in the visitors' book and vases or flowers scattered over the churchyard.

Community Speed Watch ("CSW")

Cllr. Burton reported that there had been no activity since the last meeting. It was noted that the temporary traffic lights had served as a good traffic calming measure!

Police Crime Report

Burglary –

There were no reported incidents involving Burglaries between 16/03/22-20/04/22

If you are aware of any that have happened, they need to be reported via 999 or 101 so that it can be looked into.

Vehicle Crime –

There have been no reports of vehicle crime between 16/03/22-20/04/22.

No ASB Jobs have been reported within the timeframe of the last report.

It was noted that there was no mention of the vehicle which had collided with the green street cabinet resulting in there being no telephones or internet for many in the village nor the police chase from Kinver through Gospel Ash Road.

South Staffordshire locality forum – Community Engagement

The Clerk reported that the focus was engaging volunteers in parishes. Many had been impressed with the volunteers coming forward to help their communities in lockdown, communities now need to consider how they could seek that engagement to help their local areas – the obstacle being that many have returned to work and other commitments.

A discussion followed. The Clerk was asked to place a post on facebook to establish if there was any interest in a “Friends of Bobbington” group. This would be an informal group of volunteers willing to help with e.g. litter picks

1998. Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

1999. Finance:-

a. Insurance

The Clerk was in receipt of two renewal quotes, both from Zurich insurance. One was the same policy as the existing, the other a similar scheme which is now available as an online scheme, but is being offered to all existing customers during the first year. The level of cover is slightly better and the premium lower than the existing policy. It was agreed to accept the new scheme, subject to the outcome of the jubilee event insurance discussions.

b. Clerk's annual salary review

It was agreed to adjourn this to the next meeting.

c. Annual donations:

i. Corbett School

Cllr. Burton reported that the High Fives tournament has not yet been planned, however, the football tournament will take place, as will a Commonwealth themed cricket tournament at Enville. Cllr Burton proposed a donation of £250 towards the costs of medals for the events, this was seconded by Cllr. Snelson.

ii. Halfpenny Green Air Scouts (“HGAS”)

Adrian Perry, Chairman of HGAS had notified the Clerk that there are currently 64 young people across all sections, all of whom live within 6 miles of the airfield. As a group they continue to support local activities and plan to resume the annual churchyard tidy up this year. Any help with the rent charges would be welcome as this remains the major expense. Cllr Burton proposed a donation of £250 towards the rental costs, this was seconded by Cllr. Hadgett.

d. Cheques:

The following cheques were proposed by Cllr. Hadgett and seconded by Cllr. Mrs Stanton.

i. Corbett School	\$137	£250.00
ii. HGAS	\$137	£250.00

2000. Planning matters

a. Received and responded to:

- i. PA 22/00277/FUL; Owls Rest Barn Blacklands Barns Six Ashes Road Halfpenny Green Staffordshire DY7 5DP; Additions and alterations to existing dwelling - no objections in principle, other than the extensions change the character of the property so that it is more like a traditional house, rather than a barn conversion.
- ii. PA 22/00225/LUE; Lavant House Church Lane Bobbington Staffordshire DY7 5DH; Use of land as domestic garden in excess of 10 years – No objections

b. Outcomes:

- i. PA 21/01250/FUL Brelades, Long Common, Claverley, Staffordshire WV5 7AX; The proposed development is to rebuild a severely damaged 2 storey dwelling in the same position, size, layout and visual appearance as the existing. The only remains of the existing building is the steel frame which has been declared beyond repair by the structural engineer – approved with conditions

c. Responded to: Nothing to report

d. Outcomes: Nothing to report

2001. **Airfield matters**

Nothing to report.

2002. **Correspondence**

Blakelands Country House – Notification of fireworks displays

- 21 May 2022 at 10:30pm
- 22 May 2022 at 10:00pm
- 4th June 2022 at 10:15pm

Circulated by email prior to the meeting:-

Brian Edwards MBE South Staffordshire Awards 2022

- Brian Edwards Lifetime Achievement award
- Helping hands award

A couple of nominations were made, the Clerk will review the nomination forms.

Voluntary sector news for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent (VAST) 24/3/22, 8/4/22

South Staffordshire Council (SSDC) - Council news 260-24, 261-25, 262-26, 263-27

Staffordshire Parish Councils Association (SPCA) bulletin & Extra bulletin – 21/3/22, 28/3/22, 4/4/22, 11/4/22, 18/4/22

Staffordshire County Council (“SCC”) Highways data

Staffordshire libraries news and update April 2022, May 2022

Staffordshire Fire Service – Community Safety Flash – accidental dwelling sale

Cllr Wilson – Dept for transport; bus funding in Staffordshire

Cllr. Wilson – SCC £500k funding open for grant applications to tackle loneliness and isolation

SSDC Section 106 report qtr 1 2022

SSDC Correspondence from the leader of SSC 4/4/22

The Community Foundation – Best Kept Village community

SCC – Independent chair and scrutiniser for Staffordshire safeguarding children’s board

Community Speed Watch (CSW) training opportunity in Kinver

SSDC Wishing you a wonderful Easter

2003. AOB

Cllr. Burton had been made aware of a party who is interested in purchasing the Airport from the existing owners and maintaining it as an Airfield. The person has spoken to MCR who are not willing to sell unless their application for planning is refused. The person would like to present their ideas to the Parish Council before investing if possible. Cllr. Burton wished to share the information with other Councillors to ensure everything was disclosed.

Date of the next meeting 18 May 2022

Meeting Closed