

Minutes of the meeting of Bobbington Parish Council
held on Wednesday 17 May 2023 at 7:30pm in the Jubilee Room at Bobbington
Village Hall

Present: Councillor: Mrs. L Jones (Chairman)
Councillors: A Burton, Mrs I Rees, Mrs J Stanton, M Slater, S Hadgett and M Snelson
Victoria Morris – Clerk to the Council
Chloe Martin – Clerk to the Council Designate
2 members of the public

2162. **Apologies:**

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

2163. **Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

2164. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED that the amended minutes of the meeting of Bobbington Parish Council held on 19 April 2023, a copy having previously been circulated to each member of the Council, be approved.

2165. **Matters arising:**

a. Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer vacancy

The sub-committee interviewed three candidates. Following discussion, it was agreed to offer the position to Chloe Martin. Chloe has accepted the position and was in attendance this evening. Terms and conditions will be discussed and clarified in a closed meeting at the end of this meeting.

b. Areas with persistent potholes

The Clerk requested a list of areas with persistent potholes to forward to Cllr. Wilson

- Tom Lane to B4176 junction
- Six Ashes Road / Church Lane junction and 50m either side of junction
- Gospel Ash Road
- Church Lane (road collapsed at edges)
- White Cross crossroads
- Six Ashes Road, College Farm to Brantley Lane
- Highgate Road
- Lutley Lane to Mere Lane
- Morfe Lane (Enville Parish)

2166. **Churchyard**

It had originally been intended that Cllr. Mrs Stanton would attend the next PCC meeting, however, it had become apparent that this meeting was solely to discuss the upcoming annual meeting. As such, it had been agreed that Cllr. Mrs Stanton will attend the annual meeting at the end of the month. Therefore, this was adjourned to June.

2167. **Highway Matters**

a. Flooding – a review of problem areas**i. The brook adjacent to the Glebelands, Six Ashes Road**

Cllr. Mrs Wilson had chased Diane Firkin in this matter (as opposed to Andrew Brett who was originally dealing with this matter). The enquiry sent was not in line with our knowledge, therefore, the Clerk had clarified the request for additional information. Diane stated that she understood “*the original letters were concerning a fence which had been installed over the bridge, therefore, not all property owners were required to be contacted over this initial matter, I believe Andrew has this in hand.*”

The Clerk stated that this was not her recollection of events. The Councillors agreed that first contact was made due to the flooding of the brook resulting in houses and gardens being flooded. A review of the brook found a lot of rubbish which restricted the water flow.

It was agreed the Clerk would write to all households adjacent to the brook, thanking them for the actions taken so far and requesting that as riparian landowners they continue to monitor their area to prevent further blockages.

ii. 77-79 Six Ashes Road

In response to the Clerk's request Cllr. Mrs Wilson had made enquiries of Diane Firkin as to whom was contacting the property owners with the outcome of enquiries. Diane's response was a little surprising:

“As this is a private matter, highways have not been involved. Were the Parish going to contact the resident over this matter?”

This matter was passed to Cllr. Wilson several years ago. Highways conducted some enquiries following the recent site visit, then offered in a follow up email to contact the property owners, it seems this is no longer the case. The Clerk has responded to Cllr. Wilson and Diane with a copy of the follow up email questioning the change in stance.

A brief discussion followed as to the issues. Cllr. Burton asked whether the home owner did own the last portion of their drive as he doesn't. Cllr Snelson agreed to visit the property owners and discuss matters further.

b. Tom Lane - visibility splays

Diane Firkins, Staffordshire County Council Highways Team – had responded to Cllr Mrs Wilson's chasing email to state:

“Our Highway Inspectors have visited this location on a number of occasions but have not identified any safety issues, this route is on a monthly inspection route and should the hedge be deemed as being unsafe then the Inspection team will raise any necessary work. It is also noted that we have had no public concerns over the hedge at this location. With increased visibility can generally lead to high traffic speeds.”

It was agreed that any concerns reported to the Parish Council will now be logged on the County Councils web page.

The Clerk agreed to speak to Cllr. Mrs Wilson to determine if any further steps could be taken as the Councillors were minded to make a formal complaint. The Clerk was asked to review the history of the matters for further discussion.

b. Other highway matters

Cllr. Hadgett had reported the manhole cover opposite Bannockburn, a grid and cone have been placed there until work is carried out – timescales are unknown.

Cllr. Hadgett reported that the road sweeper had attended earlier in the month.

2168. Friends of Bobbington

The next meeting is due to be held on Saturday. It was noted that Church Lane needs tidying as the hedge has been cut. Also, the pavement from Bannockburn to the school need clearing.

It was agreed volunteers would meet at 10:30am at the Red Lion. Both Cllr. Mrs Stanton and Mrs Jones gave their apologies due to prior commitments.

It was noted that one Parishioner litter picks on her walks and agreed that litter pickers would be beneficial. The Clerk designate agreed to make some enquiries.

2169. Reports from Committee Representatives

Corbett School

There was nothing further to report (see Annual Parish meeting minutes)

Village Hall

Cllr. Mrs Stanton had nothing of any significance to report. The AGM is due to be held at the end of the month.

It was noted that the Jubilee room had not been tidied / cleared and the radiator was blocking the rear access door.

Church of the Holy Cross

There was nothing further to report (see Annual Parish meeting minutes)

Community Speed Watch (“CSW”)

There was nothing further to report (see Annual Parish meeting minutes)

Health & Wellbeing

There was nothing further to report (see Annual Parish meeting minutes)

Police Crime Report 16/03/23 - 17/04/23

Statistics:

Burglary (residential):

None reported

Burglary (business):

None reported

Vehicle crime:

None reported

Anti-social behaviour:

None reported

Suspicious Incident

On the morning of 17/05 there were several reports of a homeless male near to the Primary School, from the description given Officers located the male and it was confirmed he was a homeless person from the Lancashire area, Officers were concerned about his behaviour and he was taken to a homeless support centre in Wolverhampton.

Policing operations of note:

PCSO's and Officers on the neighbourhood Policing Teams have been trained to use the speed gun in conjunction with Community Speed Watch, we will be conducting speed checks around the location and will add to the reports.

2129. **Public Question Time**

There were no questions from the members of the public present.

2130. **Finance:-**

a. Insurance – renewal 1 June 2023

The Clerk had checked the online option as requested. The cover seemed a lot more comprehensive (the Clerk provided details). The cost was slightly lower (£241). It was, therefore, agreed that the online policy should be taken out.

b. Internal audit year ended 31 March 2023

The internal audit has now been completed. The internal auditor's letter was read by the Chairman, there were no points raised for the Councillors to consider.

c. Certificate of Exemption

The criteria was reviewed and agreed, as such, the certificate of exemption was signed, ready for submission.

d. Governance statement annual return 31 March 2023

The annual governance statement was reviewed and completed.

e. Accounting Statements 2022/23

The Clerk provided copies of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023. No questions were raised. It was proposed and seconded, that they be taken as read, this was agreed by all present. The Chairman and Clerk signed the annual return.

f. Review of Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment

The document was reviewed and approved. The Clerk will make the necessary amendments to reflect the new insurance arrangements once the new policy is active.

- g. The following cheques were proposed by Cllr. Mrs Stanton and seconded by Cllr. Hadgett:
- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|------|
| a. Zurich Insurance | Annual insurance | £241 |
| b. CPRE | Annual subscription | £36 |

2131. **Planning matters**

- a. Responded to:
- i. PA 23/00314/FULHH – 2 Brantley Lane, Bobbington, Stourbridge, DY7 5DA; Two storey side, single storey rear and front extension – No objections.
 - ii. PA 23/00236/FULHH – Farthingdale, Crab Lane, Bobbington, DY7 5DZ; Demolition of conservatory and extension to provide dining room, bedroom and bathroom - No objections.

2132. **Airfield matters**

New premises license - A number of parishioners have received correspondence from Dangerous Sheep events with respect to mediation, however, nothing has been received by the Parish Council. It is currently unclear as to why the Parish Council have received no correspondence. A public meeting was arranged, however, as no one confirmed their attendance the license applicants did not attend.

A brief discussion was held following which the Clerk was asked to contact the licensing team to enquire about decision timeframes etc.

2133. **Correspondence**

Circulated by email prior to the meeting:-

Voluntary sector news for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent (VAST) 27/04/23, 04/05/23

VAST training and events newsletter 02/05/23

South Staffordshire Council (SSDC) - Council news round-up – 307, 308, 309

Staffordshire Parish Councils Association (SPCA) bulletin – 17/04/23, 24/04/23, 01/05/23, 08/05/23, 15/05/23, 22/05/23

SPCA job vacancies – 25/04/23

SPCA Staffing changes & statement 21/4/23

What's going on this May in Staffordshire libraries

Gavin Williamson MP – May constituency update

CSW Monthly update 05/05/2023

CPRE Friend the results of star count are here

SSDC What's happening at your library in South Staffordshire in May

CPRE 4/5/23 Hedgelife help out is here

Society of Local Council Clerks – Does your council need current planning advice? – Cllr. Mrs Stanton requested approval to attend this course, which was given.

SSDC South Staffordshire libraries June 2023

SSDC Parish Summit 8/6/23 9am-12noon

SSDC Section 106 report locality 5, May 23

CPRE It's time for a rooftop revolution

CPRE Can you help our hedges?

2134. **AOB**

Cllr. Burton noted that there had been some issues with the website not being available during the month. He was aware the Clerk had already spotted this as he was copied into an email - he asked whether these had been resolved? The Clerk confirmed that the IT team at the County Council had resolved the issues, however, the news page was still not working correctly. Cllr. Burton agreed to take a look.

Cllr. Snelson asked whether the Parish Council could consider an action plan for their next term of office, given a number of matters had not been successful (e.g. affordable housing) and he felt we were not as proactive as some parishioners may expect. The Chairman stated that although we had not reached a successful conclusion to the affordable housing it wasn't for the want of trying. We had explored every avenue possible. However, there were success stories; we have supported the incorporation of the Friends of Bobbington Group, held successful events for the Queen's Jubilee and recently hosted a health and wellbeing event. A long discussion followed. The Clerk designate suggested a forward plan, she agreed to provide some examples for review at the next meeting.

Cllr Snelson asked about a neighbourhood plan. Cllr. Mrs Stanton and the Clerk felt that the work involved was significant as were the associated costs, it was agreed it may not provide significant benefit to Bobbington. These plans have a greater significance to larger parishes.

Date of the next meeting 21 June 2023

Meeting Closed