

# Little Witley Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 8:00 pm

In the Chair: Cllr Hilgrove Kenrick

Present: Cllr Pam Cumming, Cllr Phillip Owen, Cllr Des Buggins, Cllr Bob Jose and District Cllr Paul Cumming.

Apologies: Cllr Ken Pollock

Minutes: Cllr Bob Jose

**In Attendance:** Three members of the public were in attendance.

1. **Apologies** – Ken Pollock sent his apologies.
2. **Declaration of Interest** – None.
3. **Minutes of previous meetings.**
  - 3.1. Minutes of the meeting 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015 were reviewed and accepted. Cllr P Owen moved to accept the minutes and was seconded by Cllr P Cumming. The Chairman signed the minutes.
4. **Matters Arising**
  - 4.1. Report from Vanessa Snape Police Report. The agenda of the meeting was altered in agreement with the Councillors so that Vanessa Snake could provide the police and neighbourhood watch update.

Ms Snape updated Council on the situation with the 14-year-old girl who was reported missing recently; a neighbourhood watch bulletin had gone out and this caused concern with some members of the public. The girl was found and was in the care of the children's home in Abberley. It appears that Little Witley Neighbourhood watch did not pass on the news that the girl had been found unharmed because of technical difficulties which have now been resolved. Ms Snake apologised if any member of the public was unduly affected by this email; but the Chairman reiterated the importance of any such news, especially when a child is involved, we do want to know and the public quite rightly wants to assist however possible.

Councillors were reminded of the shed break-ins last year. This year we have seen a drop in the number of break-ins due possibly to the arrest of a serial burglar. It was also reported that the Tenbury station was not closing but would remain open with fewer staff. Little Witley is still covered by Worcester.

- 4.2. The Meeting was further suspended when Ms Sharon Teasdale, Manager of the children's home, came to introduce herself. She gave background on the working and management of the care home and explained in more detail the reasons behind why the girl who ran away from the children's home and was later found. The Council appreciated her report and thanked her for the good work which she and her staff do at the home.

- 4.3. Casual vacancies – No further interest has been expressed by any members of the public regarding Council positions.
- 4.4. Clerk's position. The Chairman reported that the recent candidate did not wish to proceed as she was waiting on another offer closer to home. This is disappointing as there are no other candidates. The position is still being advertised in CALC.

## **5. Planning matters**

- 5.1. Existing planning applications – none
- 5.2. New applications – None received.

## **6. Local Issues**

- 6.1. Broadband – Cllr Kenrick provided an update on the village broadband. It seems that the majority of the recently reported problems have been resolved, but that there are still several residents who have outstanding issues. Airband has been taking on more staff recently and more experienced staff are working on new installations and it is felt that the new support staff's training is not at the same level.
- 6.2. Speeding Issues – Cllr Kenrick made reference to a recent petition put together by a member of public and left at the village hall with only one signature. There is disappointment with the lack of support from the village on the speeding issue but Cllr Kenrick reiterated his intention to keep the issue at the forefront. Everyone in the village should strive to drive responsibly in order to set an example.
- 6.3. Transport and Highways – Blocked drains were reported in the village; there was question regarding the triangle piece of land on Well Lane and whether the Lengthsman was able or willing to keep this moved. Cllr D Buggins to enquire.
- 6.4. Footpaths and Rights of Way – The finger post at Haven Nursery is missing, Cllr P Owen to investigate.
- 6.5. Environmental matters – Nothing to report

## **7. Correspondence**

- 7.1. Grant Thornton Invoice for auditing of accounts has been received. However it was sent to the address of a previous clerk. However this invoice will now be paid (£60)
- 7.2. Nora Parson's Day Centre – The Council requested further information on the Day Centre including a statement of their accounts which was received and distributed prior to the meeting.

8. **Police and Neighbourhood Watch matters** – The report from the liaison officer was reported on earlier. In addition correspondence by the public was received on the PCC precept asking for an increase of 1.99%. Cllr Kenrick said that no letter was sent to the Council and therefore the Council was unable to express opinion on this matter, but that as individuals the Councillors were free to respond as they choose.

9. **County Council matters** – a report was received by County Cllr Ken Pollock which was read out by the Chairman and a copy is retained on file.

## **10. District Council matters**

District Cllr Paul Cumming reported that the District Council had received its financial settlement figures for the next 4 years however the sum was less than was expected. As has been reported previously the District Council has taken action to reduce costs but that any further savings

would be more difficult to find. The result is a proposed increase of 3.6% in council tax as there is still £300k to find.

## **11. Finance**

- 11.1. Accounts for payment – the following were approved for payment:
  - 11.1.1. Lengthsman payment for £186
  - 11.1.2. Gardening services C Jones - @24
  - 11.1.3. Additional work from Lengthsman of £162
  - 11.1.4. Grant Thornton - £60
  
- 11.2. Agreed Payments to Friends of St. Michael's - a donation of £250 was agreed by Council on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and the annual accounts for year ending 31/3/15 record a donation to Friends of £250 and NPDC of £150. For this financial year, it was proposed by Cllr P Owen and seconded by Cllr D Buggins that we donate £250 to Friends of St Michael for the current financial year; Councillors were reminded that this was part of the agreed budget for this financial year. This was passed unanimously. It was also agreed to discuss and approve donations at the November meetings.
- 11.3. Nora Parson Day Centre – it was agreed that the day centre provides services which residents of Little Witley benefit and it was proposed by Cllr Kenrick to agree a further £150 donation for this financial year which was seconded by Cllr D Buggins. This was passed unanimously.
- 11.4. Reclaiming vat costs from County Council –Cllr Kenrick continues to progress and HRMC are investigating.
- 11.5. Bank Reconciliation – will be provided as part of the Parish Council report. This was not available this month.
- 11.6. The procedure for reclaiming the Lengthsman costs from County Council was raised and further investigation is required – no update on this issue
- 11.7. Precept for 2016. The level of precept for this year was discussed. It was proposed by Cllr P Cumming to keep the precept at £5,000 which was seconded by Cllr D Buggins and passed unanimously. Cllr Jose was actioned with communicating this to District Council. It was also agreed that the precept should be discussed next year at the same time that the next year's budget is set.

## **12. Meetings attended**

- 12.1. No meetings were attended

## **13. Standing orders**

- 13.1. Standing orders were discussed and reviewed. Cllr Kenrick thanked Cllr Cumming for the time spent on reviewing the orders. Cllr Jose distributed the final document to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Kenrick moved to approve the standing orders which was seconded by Cllr P Owen. The motion passed unanimously. The standing orders will be put on file

#### **14. Special Responsibilities**

- 14.1. Village Hall – Cllr Owen gave a report on Village Hall activities and reported the success of the Last Friday of the Month events and the Christmas party.

**With no further business the meeting was closed at 9:30pm.**

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**H Kenrick (in the Chair) 11/01/2016**

#### **Dates of next meetings:**

**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March**

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May AGM and Annual Parish meeting**

#### **Appendix 1: Notes of the Public Question time held before the meeting of Little Witley Parish Council**

Beverley Lowe, Malcolm Lamb and Peter Hill attended the meeting. Topics raised by the public included subsidence on Well Lane which needs to be investigated by Highways, the proposed PCC precept as members of the public received communication, and potholes on the main road.