

# **HEATH HAYES AND WIMBLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Hayes Green Community Centre, Heath Way, Heath Hayes

## **Present:**

Cllrs. M.Buttery (Chair), J.Aston, D.Baker, D.Bennett, J.Bernard, L.Bullock, P.Dadge, P.Ferraby, A.Fitzgerald, P.Hewitt, S.Thomson, D.Todd

## **In Attendance:**

11 members of the Public

Temporary Clerk for Meeting: Mrs.L.Florence

## **Chair's Announcement and Public Participation**

The Chairman opened the meeting acknowledging the retirement of Mr.Ray Smythe as Clerk to the Council with effect from the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019. It should also be noted that he would also be retiring from his role as Manager of the Hayes Green Community Centre. The Chairman said that he was very sorry to see Ray go and recognition should be given for his 25 year service to the Parish Council. The Chairman on behalf of the Parish Council wished Ray well in his retirement.

The Chairman welcomed a number of residents attending the Meeting to raise their concerns relating to the odours/smells coming from the Poplars Landfill/AED site owned by Biffa. This has been an ongoing problem but has escalated since November. The Chairman informed the meeting the whilst the Parish Council have been actively involved with meetings of organisations and share the concerns of the residents, it is not within the Parish Council's power to take any formal action. The Council are keen to get these issues resolved and will work towards achieving a positive outcome. Cllr.P.Hewitt explained to the meeting the steps that the Parish Council had taken and what the outcome of those meetings were. Residents were stating that the odours are so bad now that they are concerned for the significant health issues that this poses. A lengthy discussion ensued on the issues involved and the fact that it was felt that the Environment Agency have not undertaken their statutory duties in relation to this landfill site and there was a general feeling amongst residents that Biffa does not care. The excuses made by Biffa are not acceptable. It does not appear that the EA report to any governing body. It was also noted that Biffa appear to be undertaking their own quality checks so there is no separation of duty and no accountability evident. Cllr.Dadge posed the question as to what the Planning Authority role was in allowing the application to proceed and if it was known whether there were any further extensions planned. Any site for landfill and waste comes within the remit of the County Council.

It was agreed that an Independent Survey is required to test the air pollution as currently there is no feedback from the Company to produce any evidence of what steps are being taken. It was also highlighted that GP's should be surveyed to ascertain if there had been an increase in health issues related to the Landfill site. It is important that residents keep reporting the problems to the Environmental Agency to keep the pressure on the Company to take action.

The meeting was informed that an emergency Scrutiny Committee had been arranged at Cannock Chase District Council on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January to which Parish Councillors will be in attendance.

Public Participation closed at 7.50 p.m.

1. **Apologies, Consideration of any apologies received in writing before the start of the meeting.**

Apologies were received from Cllr. Mrs.P.Haden

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Declarations of interest were received from:

Cllr.D.Todd - District Council Planning Committee

Cllr.D.Todd - Senior Residents Support Group

Cllr.L.Bullock - Five Ways School

Cllr.S.Thompson – PTA for Gorsemoor School

3. **To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and consideration of any matters arising not on the agenda**

It was noted that not all Councillors had received the Minutes of the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> December so could be signed as a true and accurate record.

**It was resolved:**

**To defer the signing of the Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 until the February Council meeting.**

4. **Planning**

Cllr.L.Bullock stated that he was not aware of any planning applications but that action needs to be taken to ensure that Councillors who have responsibility for planning issues should have the emails forwarded to them. It was noted that Cllr.M.Buttery and Cllr.Mrs.P.Haden currently have overview of the emails for the Parish Council.

5. **Christmas Decorations**

(a) Review of Christmas Lights - A review of the 3 year contract is now required and a meeting has been arranged for the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at Hednesford Town Council to discuss this. A representative from the Parish Council will need to attend the meeting

(b) Business Competition Results - the judging took place and the winner was Joe's Tattoo. The meeting was told that the competition was very well received and looking for the sub-group to take this Competition further in 2020. Cllr.Mrs.D.Bennett said that it was nice that most shops had made an effort and it was a shame that there was only one winner.

6. **Remembrance Sunday 2020**

Cllr.L.Bullock suggested that this agenda item for discussion under Confidential. The Chairman said that a review of this event was discussed at the December meeting and agreed that they way forward would be to set up a small working group to commence planning for this year's event. The Chairman requested that the group meet before the next Council meeting. The membership of the sub committee is:

Cllr.L.Bullock

Cllr.S.Thompson

Cllr.P.Hayden

Cllr.J.Aston

7. **Cannel Mount**

This Project was being taken forward by the Clerk and Councillors did not feel up to speed to enable comments to be made as to next steps. It was noted that Kingsmead School had been involved. It was agreed that the Parks and Open Spaces Committee get an up to date assessment of the Project and feedback to the next meeting.

8. **Newsletter**

Arrangements for the collation of the next newsletter were discussed together with further dates for publication. Cllr.P.Dadge agreed to take on the role of Editor for the next edition. It was suggested that this edition should go out fairly soon to enable the issue of the Landfill site can be reported on so residents know what involvement the Parish Council has had. It was agreed that Cllr.S.Thompson would do a facebook update re the Landfill issue

**It was resolved:**

**That Cllr.P.Dadge be responsible for collating the next Parish Council newsletter to go out as soon as possible. Content to be forwarded direct to Cllr.Dadge.**

9. **Dementia Friends**

Cllr.D.Todd reported on an event that took place at Christmas which was well attended. A monthly meeting is being planned which will become a focus group together with an afternoon tea event at the Library possibly with some entertainment.

Cllr.P.Hewitt said that he attends a Dementia Alliance meeting each month and he would be happy to feedback that back to the Council and suggested that Dementia Friends should be a standing agenda item.

## 10. **Appointment of Clerk and RFO**

Following the retirement of the Clerk and RFO as of the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 the Chairman highlighted the importance of finding a replacement as soon as possible. Some discussion ensued on whether there should now be a review of the role of the Clerk and consideration be given as to whether this should be a post located in the Community Centre with access for the public or whether it should continue to be a home based post. The meeting was informed that whilst decisions are being made it was possible to ascertain if there was a Locum Clerk who could take over temporary responsibility for the day to day running of the Parish Council before going out to advert depending on what Councillors decide is required.

Cllr.J.Bernard suggested that an Audit and Governance Committee be set up which could meet quarterly to review finances, consider policies and would be the Committee that would deal with staffing/personnel issues. This Committee would not have the power to act but would be able to report into full Council. This Committee could look at the current issues of appointing a new Clerk.RFO and consideration of Parish Office. It was agreed that this was good practice and membership of the Committee was agreed as follows:

Cllr.J.Bernard

Cllr.D.Baker

Cllr.P.Hewitt

## 11. **Litter Project**

The meeting was informed that litterpick dates are scheduled up to March.It was suggested that residents are asked what areas they feel need to be considered. Perhaps this could go as an article in the next newsletter. Discussion ensued about an added incentive to encourage volunteers would be to provide coffee/tea/biscuits or a voucher for the Cherished Coffee shop.

## 12. **Reports of Meetings**

Staffordshire Parish Council's Association - Cllr.J.Bernard reported that he had recently attended an Executive Committee and confirmed that there would be no increase in the annual subscriptions for 2020.

Hednesford Town Council Meeting – Cllr P.Dadge referred to the use of technology at the Hednesford Town Council meeting whereby 110 dialled into the meeting. He suggested that the Parish Council should look at the use of technology as an interface with the general public.

Issues with Street Parking - Cllrs reported problems with cars parking on paths which blocks pedestrian access particularly for pushchairs, wheelchairs and Motability scooters. Often these people have to access the road to get past parked cars which is a health and safety issue. One particular area mentions is Chapel Street where it is reported that cars are parked on both sides of the road which would not enable emergency service vehicles to get through. Cllr.P.Hewitt referred to a facility whereby Clear Streets which is the County County Dept where the parking wardens operate from

and he could see no reason why they should not be requested to attend the areas concerned. Some discussion about the Police role in car parking issues.

**It was resolved:**

**To write to Sgt.Burslem at Cannock Police to request police assistance in respect of the car parking issues on Chapel Street.**

SPCA report on Loneliness - a report has been circulated by the SPCA about Parish and Town Councils' responsibilities about tackling loneliness in their communities.. Cllr.P.Hewitt said that he was already a representative on an all party working group to look at this issue and would be able to give feedback to the Parish Council

**13. Accounts for Payments**

Accounts for January as per circulated list were authorised.

**It was resolved: To authorise the listed payments.**

**14. Items for Future Agendas**

- (a) To consider the grant applications for 2020
- (b) To consider the Clerk/RFO vacant position
- (c) Consideration re use of technology and public engagement
- (d) To discuss the mud issues on Hobart Road which is quite hazardous.
- (e) Consider the paper circulated by the SPCA re Parish and Town Councils' role in tackling loneliness.
- (f) To consider a list of jobs for Open Spaces Committee

**15. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020**