### HIGHLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**An ordinary meeting of Highley Parish Council was held on Tuesday 4th June 2019 at 7.00pm at the Severn Centre, Highley.**

**Present**: Cllr. G.Court – Chair**,** Cllrs**.** R.Honeybourne, A.Honeybourne, P.Vinall, J.Law, N.Barker, D.Bayley, D.Thakrar, M.Brooks, P.Atkinson, J.Marshall, D.Tremellen, R.Broome, D.Scriven

Clerk: Mrs.E.Preston

Parishioners – 2

**00. Parishioners Time –**

Mrs.P.Whitefoot expressed her concern about the opening in the fence on the new development at Staley Grove. She said it was sloped and she was concerned about any of the children coming out from there right onto a main road near to a bend. She also stated that a piece of metal fencing was protruding from the ground. Clerk to contact Shropshire Council Highways to ask them to look at this issue.

**Declaration of Pecuniary interests: Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting. Members are reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the register of member’s interest maintained by the monitoring officer.**

**01.Election of Councillor for Vacant Position .**

Three Parishioners applied for the Vacant Position. Mr.M.Davis, Mr.D.Scriven and Mr.B.Bunar. It was ***RESOLVED*** that Mr.David Scriven be co-opted onto the Parish Council Chair, Councillor Court welcomed Mr.Scriven onto the Council.

**02. Apologies for absence.** NoApologies received.

**03. To confirm the minutes of the meeting** dated 7th May 2019. Following an amendment adding Cllr.Vinall to the Revenue and Resources committee it was ***RESOLVED***to confirm the minutes as a true and correct record. Chair signed the minutes.

**04. Matters arising from minutes:-**

CCTV – Technical Services said start date 8th July .

Severn Centre Disabled Hoist -Severn Centre Manager is looking at this.

Parking Bays Village Centre/Lines Coronation Street– Shropshire Council looking at this.

Castle Inn Update – Shropshire Council stated they have been discussing the best way forward and are writing a report recommending specific action for this property. Once action has been agreed with the legal and senior management teams they will write again to let the Parish Council know how they are looking to proceed.

 Mr .P. Nutting - Meeting to be held on Thursday 13th of June at Shirehall regarding Highways.

Church Street - – Awaiting a reply from Shropshire Council regarding parking problems.

Defibrillator – Awaiting response from BT regarding phone box at Ashleigh Gardens.

Severn Centre – Report from meeting with Severn Centre held on Thursday 30th May 2019. given to all Councillors. Chair/Clerk to take concerns regarding KPI figures and staffing issues to the next monthly meeting.

**05. Correspondence:**

SALC – Shropshire Care Closer to home – Latest News

SALC – Great British High Street Awards Scheme

Housing Plus Group – Merger Details – Update

SALC – Joint funding workshop with VCSA on Friday 21st June,

Rural Services Network – Newsletter.

Shropshire CCG and Telford and Wrekin CCG – update on proposals to become one organisation.

Rural Crime Prevention Evenings – Tuesday 25th June and Thursday 27th June..

Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust –Temporary suspension of inpatient services at Shrewsbury Midwife-Led Unit.

Shropshire Great War Remembrance Service at St. Chads Church Shrewsbury on Wednesday 26th June at 5pm. All Councillors invited to attend.

SALC – Annual General Meeting and SALC 70th Celebrations on Friday 15th November at the Lord Hill Hotel, Shrewsbury.

SALC – Code of Conduct Training 18th July at Dawley House, Telford from 2pm – 4pm. If any Councillors wishes to attend please contact the Clerk.

Allotments – Contract signed for the allotments at Hitchens Way. Councillor D.Tremellen to be the Parish Council representative on this board.

**06. To look at any planning applications received.**

Planning Decision

Reference: 18/05321/OUT (validated: 22/11/2018)

Address: Land Rear of Beech Croft, Vicarage Lane, Highley, Shropshire

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of 7 dwellings; formation of new access road and vehicular access, to include layout (with all other matters reserved)

Decision: Refuse

Reference: 18/04645/FUL (validated: 30/10/2018)

Address: Proposed Holiday Let Log Cabin South of New England Lane, Highley, Shropshire

Proposal: Erection of a log cabin holiday let and parking space

Decision: Refuse

**07. Parish Council Accounts** – Internal Auditors Report/Statement of Assurance.

Internal Auditors Report Received.

A. Statement of Assurance completed by Parish Council. Read by Clerk and Agreed by Councillors. Signed by Chair and Clerk.

B. Accounting Statements for 2018/19 – Agreed and Signed.

**08. Highley Swimming Pool** – Cllr.Broome expressed his concern about the recent published timetable. He said he had been approached by parishioners about the opening hours together with the limiting of people in the sessions. He appreciated that the problem was with the lifeguard situation, but this should have been factored in prior to the pool opening. He was concerned the lack of forward planning by Halo could result in a dip in revenue for the centre as the pool was an important revenue stream.

Other concerns :-

Lack of Advertising for activities and outdated website.

Staffing of the Centre and Lifeguarding

Teen Fitness that was offered by Halo did not include the Severn Centre.

Halo did not appear to be treating the Parish Council as an equal partner. Lack of proper representation by Halo at the last Board Meeting.

Clerk and Chair to talk to the Severn Centre Manager. And these issues to be brought up as Agenda item at the next Severn Centre Board Meeting. It was ***RESOLVED*** that Councillor Barker be elected as a substitute for the meetings in case any of the two Parish Councillors who were on the board could not attend.

**09. Help us Remember D Day Celebrations –** Cllr.Brooks asked that the Silent Soldiers be put up again to commemorate the D Day Celebrations. ***RESOLVED*** that this be done. ***RESOLVED*** that the clerk be given the powers to authorise the purchase of Lamp post Poppies up to a maximum of £500 in money. Clerk also be given the power to look into and purchase the boot print stickers (50 maximum) if they are suitable for putting on pavements.

**10. Police and Crime Commissioner – Parish and Town Council Survey**

**11**. ***Resolution that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.***

Survey Completed by Council

**12. Star Housing** – Cllr. G.Court on behalf of a Parishioner. Parishioner contacted the Councillor to state he no longer wished the Parish Council to consider this issue at this time.

**13.Shropshire Councillors Report. Cllr. Tremellen**

“For the few of you who didn’t know him, if you hear regret expressed at the loss of a guy called Chris Edwards I’d best explain that as the Shropshire Council Commissioner for South Shropshire he was a great supporter of Highley Parish Council (HPC) and the Severn Centre. His going is a great loss not just to us but to Shropshire Council, although “they” won’t agree with that sentiment.

Last year Chris was indefinitely suspended on full salary for an undisclosed “very serious” breach of some unspecified standard. A few of us believed that it had more to do with his open criticism of the Shropshire Council policy of abandoning the Community Enablement Teams in the face of local opposition from virtually every parish council, supported by virtually every county councillor. At the time of the policy’s announcement (confirming a decision originally made by Chief Executive Clive Wright) by the newly-arrived locality supremo Prof. Mark Barrow, I made the point that the decision confirmed everyone’s suspicion that whilst Shropshire Council might know the price of everything, it knew the VALUE of nothing. We still have no idea of why Chris was dismissed. He is already sorely missed despite other senior officers being moved around to cover the vast area of responsibility he had. No one can replace him, and that is a matter of subsequently proven fact not mere supposition based on a sentimental attachment to an individual who found time for everyone. Chris was one of the few human faces at Shirehall.

You will by now – hopefully, if you’ve been reading your emails – know that “we” are pushing for The Castle to be compulsorily purchased by Shropshire Council. By “we”, I mean Ella, myself, and Madge Shineton. I’ve been pushing since I first got an enforcement notice put on the ruin back in 2013, since when I’ve repeatedly pushed for action with four enforcement officers (when we still had them) and subsequently with the various departments who are supposed to have public protection powers. Trouble is, Shropshire Council is reluctant to follow through on assurances because it will cost them money they won’t see back unless and until the building is sold on. Ella and I have pushed the door open a fraction. Madge (a fellow Independent, together with Conservative Gwilym Butler) has a similar situation in Cleobury with one of her older buildings. Madge took up the baton at my request when I was out of my tree and as high as a kite at the end of February and most of March. Because she’s been so involved, and because by joining our two related campaigns together to avoid duplication (makes Shirehall’s job easier and therefore harder to wriggle out of) we present a broader front that is harder to ignore. Whilst we have received assurances, experience inclines us to maintain a degree of healthy scepticism. Madge has a meeting this coming week (w/c 27th May), but as I have various appointments I can’t break (apart from one day which no one else can make) she will continue to have my proxy.

Efforts continue to find an extension or alternative site for the graveyard, although the evidence across the county is of landowners holding out for a ‘development value’ of their land regardless of their chances of ever getting even outline planning permission for it. Highley PC’s own experience proved that, when a local landowner was asked for a price on a small section of land, they spoke with a local estate agent who valued the land at one-third of the value of the 3-bedroomed house they’d build on it. £300,000, therefore the asking price would be £100,000. I would personally put it to the parishioners and spell out the situation and explain what few options remain for the parish council, not least of which might involve their making a decision on whether to become the local burial authority – not as simple as I and others believed, which is why whenever the question of whether to take it on has been asked of other parish councils the response has been a shake of the head and a sharp intake of breath. If the parish council don’t assume responsibility for burials then when the current graveyard is full responsibility for burial reverts to Shropshire Council, which means Highley parishioners (unless they’ve got sizable garden) will be interred elsewhere than in Highley. That’s the reality.

I’ve asked Mark Foxall (officer i/c cemeteries) if he is prepared to come down and talk to the parish council and answer questions (answer questions, mind, not sit through a lecture on the history of Highley parish burials) and he agreed. Ella just needs to set up the meeting. We await his answer.

In my capacity as Highley County Councillor, I met with Pete Davis and representatives of HPC to discuss our dissatisfaction with Halo, specifically the general impression that Halo considered both Shropshire Council and Highley Parish Council (but particularly HPC) as mere funding providers rather than significant stakeholders. I explained to the meeting that whenever I’m faced with a business that is treating me as incidental I ask them how much they’re paying me to do business with them, the answer is invariably that it is ME who is paying THEM. Right, that establishes the basis of the relationship. I’m paying them, it’s not the other way around. I feel particularly aggrieved because as one of the prime movers in getting Halo on board when the Severn Centre Trust board split up, with main player Val Hill making it clear she wanted nothing more to do with it (although she subsequently took a place on the Halo board), then I accept that it was me who not only placed his own trust in Halo but probably had much to do with convincing HPC that it had little choice except to go along with the management transfer if it wanted to retain the Severn Centre as a going concern. The way I openly expressed it in open council session, with both Scott Rolfe (Halo CEO) AND Val Hill (Chair of the Severn Centre Trust board) there was to say that: “Basically, we’re up shit creek and Halo are the only paddle we’re likely to get”. The question that arises now is what was understood to be the nature of that going concern, somewhere along the line a divergence seems to have happened and I, for one, am having real problems identifying the Severn Centre we thought was being taken over with the one we’ve got now. At the initial meetings following that initial decision to merge I asked the Halo representatives the question: “Do you fully understand what you’re taking over?” Three times I got the positive, unequivocal answer: “Yes, of course”.

**14. Finance:**

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| Viking Direct | Stationery | 156.34 |
| H.M.Customs & Revenue | Tax and National Insurance | 72.76 |
| M.E.Preston | Salary | 967.16 |
| Victoria Turner | Internal Audit | 170.00 |
| Information Solution (Web Orchard) | Email set up for R.Honeybourne/A.Honeybourne | 156.00 |
| Eon | Street Lights | 159.54 |
| Eon | Street Lights | 38.50 |
| S.J.Maintenance | Maintenance work | 300.00 |
| S.J.Maintenance | Maintenance work | 150.00 |
| Herbert & Son | Hedge cutting 2018 | 300.00 |
| Severn Centre | Meeting Room Hire | 75.60 |
| Severn Centre | Meeting Room Hire | 100.80 |
| Mr.J.Lilley (137) | Bedding Plants | 83.00 |

**Meeting closed 8.55pm**

Signed ……………………………………………. Date: ………………………………..