

HIGHLEY PARISH COUNCIL

An ordinary meeting of Highley Parish Council was held on Tuesday 1st October 2019 at 7.00pm at the Severn Centre, Highley.

Present: Cllr. G.Court – Chair, Cllrs. R.Honeybourne, A.Honeybourne, P.Vinall, D.Thakrar, P.Atkinson, D.Scriven, J.Law, D.Bayley, D.Tremellen, J.Marshall, R.Broome
Clerk: Mrs.E.Preston
Parishioners :3

00. Parishioners Time - Tracy Bennett read a proposal to the Parish Council regarding the sale of the Bache Arms public house and asked the Parish Council to consider purchasing it as a community asset. Following discussions it was **RESOLVED** that this be added to the Agenda for the next meeting

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. Apologies for absence. Apologies received N.Barker - work commitments, D.Thakrar - Family Commitments. M.Brooks - Holiday. **RESOLVED** to accept.

02. To confirm the minutes of the meeting dated 3rd September 2019. it was **RESOLVED** to confirm the minutes as a true and correct record. Chair signed the minutes.

03. Matters arising from minutes:-

CCTV – Further meeting to be held with Technical Services and Eon regarding the ANPR system.

Severn Centre Disabled Hoist -Severn Centre Manager is purchasing sloping steps to enable disabled users to access the pool.

Parking Bays Village Centre/Lines Coronation Street– Awaiting response from Shropshire Council.

Castle Inn Update – Awaiting Report from Shropshire Council.

Defibrillator – Contract received from BT. Clerk to obtain quotations for work from Eon and the cost of Defibrillator.

Street Lighting - Clerk still awaiting certificate from WPD regarding street light charges before she can progress the bulk buying scheme from Shropshire Council.

4. Correspondence:

Shropshire RCC - Village Halls Conference - Saturday 19th October 2019

SALC - September Bulletin

Rural Services Network - September Bulletin

West Midlands Trains - Customer and Communities Improvement Fund

Cleobury Country Centre - Level 2 Award in Food Safety.

Shropshire Council - Planning Appeal - Land rear of Beech Croft, Vicarage lane, Highley.

Shropshire Council - Youth Support Consultation Survey

Shropshire Rural Communities Charities - Grant panel members

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Shropshire Council - Country Wide Potholing Scheme
Shropshire Council - Suicide ZCard - Cllr.Vinall to get cards to distribute around the village.
Shropshire Council - Street Trading Policy
Severn Valley Country Park - 50th Anniversary of Alveley Colliery Closure.
SALC - Traffic Calming Briefing.
Shropshire Council - Community Infrastructure LEVY (CIL) update: Agenda next meeting
Shropshire Council - Payphone Consultation
Shropshire Council - Community Led Housing event 22nd October - Cllr.Vinall to attend.
Shropshire Council consultation on proposed post 19 travel assistance policy
Severn Valley Country Park Bulletin
Severn Valley Country Parkrun event - William Lloyd wrote to the Council to follow up on the progress of this event following the Parish Councils funding of the setting up of this event. He stated that they were holding the 8th weekly event on Saturday 8th September each event averaging over 120 participants.
Edward Andrews informed the Parish Council of the Pit in the Park Event on Sunday 6th October starting at 10am

05. To look at any planning applications received.

Planning Decisions

Reference: 19/03375/FUL (validated: 19/08/2019) - Address: 3 Hazelwells Road, Highley, Proposal: Erection of a two-storey extension to side and single storey extension to rear
Decision: Grant Permission

Reference: 19/03585/FUL (validated: 14/08/2019) - Address: 55 Redstone Drive, Highley, Shropshire, .Proposal: Erection of single storey front extension
Decision: Grant Permission

Reference: 19/02791/FUL (validated: 25/06/2019) - Address: Proposed Residential Development Land East Of, Bridgnorth Road, Highley, Shropshire. Proposal: Erection of 20 (affordable) dwellings with estate road, using existing vehicular access
Decision: Refuse

Ref: 18/05321/OUT - Land Rear of Beech Croft , Vicarage Lane Highley - Outline application for the erection of 7 dwellings, formation of new access road and vehicular access - APPEAL to Secretary of State against decision of Shropshire Council to refuse planning permission.

06. Severn Centre - No Report

07. AGAR Report from Auditors

PKF Littlejohn completed and passed the Audit review . **RESOLVED** to accept.

08. Churchyard - June Law - Agenda next meeting.

09. Christmas Lights- Nominations for persons to switch on Christmas Lights

Following discussions it was **RESOLVED** that the Committee of Highley Minors Junior Football Club be invited to switch on the Christmas Lights. Cllr.Tremellen said that the committee work hard to run the club with many children attending and playing football each week.

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10. Shropshire Councillors Report. Cllr. Tremellen

“Given the dire straits that Shropshire Council finds itself in with regard to central government revenue support funding it’s inevitable that “cuts” have to be made with competing priorities leading to controversial decisions, one of which has been the reduction in (and in some cases the complete removal of) funding for public transport, whether in the form of direct funding for ‘community buses’ or the subsidies paid to commercial operators to maintain commercial routes.

It’s a contentious issue, particularly when it comes to support for post-16 transport of students wanting to pursue further education in whatever form it takes and whatever the desired outcome.

We’re lucky in Highley because we have the 125-service bus running from Bridgnorth to Stourbridge at hourly intervals, but if you want to travel by bus to the cinema in the evening then hard luck, because the service ends at 6.30. And getting to the FE or Sixth-Form college of your choice will break most banks!

A few years back I was contacted by the parents of one young local chap who had been warned by his Kidderminster employer that if he was late again he’d get the sack. A plea citing the late running of the 125 didn’t cut it and when it happened again he parted company with said boss. That’s one of those situations “that happens” and it is in no one’s gift to do anything about.

And then there’s the climate change argument, where proponents of radical change insist that “going electric” will sort it. Hmm, depends on the “it”, if that electric-powered bus is running late then the “it” will still happen. Which explains the attraction of the internal combustion engine in private hands, you can go where you like when you like.

Right, so what merit is there in the alternative view that given the will and a bit of logical thinking we can have a public transport system that “works”? That’s a question to be addressed by Professor John Whitelegg, the author of a 2018 report for the ‘Foundation for Integrated Transport’ (Fit) addressing the specific subject of ‘Shropshire Rural Buses’. It’s an interesting read.

Very briefly, in an exchange of emails, John had been insisting that Shropshire Council and its Members had “got it wrong” and I challenged him on that, making the point that as the elected Local Member for Highley my concern had to be about more prosaic matters than realizing the ideal world that he envisaged if only Shropshire Council pulled its finger out. Quite apart from his ideal being damned expensive for a council strapped for cash, the rurality of Highley and the dependency of its population on a highways infrastructure that enabled commuting to work and getting to whichever college offered the courses needed for the post-16s to complete their education sort of took priority.

I’ve invited John to the Severn Centre on the 24th October to a public meeting I’ve called for 6.30 pm.

I also invited Steve Davenport and his deputy Simon Harris to put Shropshire Council’s side of things, but both have declined, not that there is a lot for them to say in defence of the council’s rural transport policy generally and the post-16 school transport particularly.

The informal “assurances” I’ve received over the years concerning the outstanding programme of highways work that was cancelled back in 2017 are now being realised. It genuinely looks as if 2020 will see the High Street resurfacing work done, together with the ‘gateway’ work at either approach to Highley, although there is no detail on those works despite the designs having been completed when the work was original planned to be done in 2017. I’m hoping the old plans will be pulled out of whatever cupboard they were dumped in back then!

I suspect one casualty of the prioritisation that will inform decisions about aspects of that work will be ‘Meg’s Crossing’, located just above the entry to Blything Court on the Severn Centre side, planned to give a safe crossing point for mobility scooters to allow them to avoid the narrow stretches of pavement on both sides of the Bridgnorth Road. A few years back, Roy Broome and I had extensive site meetings with Andy Oliver who agreed the need for such a crossing place, named after the late Meg Yearl whose property neighbours the location of the crossing.

The other item on the list of priorities remains the zebra crossing just up from the Hazelwells Drive junction. I drove past the location this morning and was surprised at the number of parents using it having dropped their children off at school – if it’s that busy at that time, how much busier is it when the parents are **taking** their children to school or picking them up in the afternoon? We need a zebra crossing there more than ever!

Which got me thinking again about not just the access to Shropshire Council’s preferred site at Hazelwells Farm for the 120 houses they’re insisting we take, but the journey to school for the considerable number of children living on what will be a sizeable estate – they are not going to be walking all the way down to that zebra crossing, and I cannot see them using the old contentious footpath from their estate onto Yew Tree Grove and then down to Hazelwells Drive and zebra crossing, can anyone?”

Alteration to the minutes authorised at meeting 5th November

Cllr.A.Honeybourne asked about the use of waste plastics being used to repair road surfaces and it was RESOLVED that the Parish Council write to Shropshire Council to ask if this had been considered.

11. Finance:

PKF Littlejohn	Audit Fees	480.00
HMRC	Tax and N.I.	72.76
M.E.Preston	Salary	967.16
Eon	Removal of Street Light Severn Centre	352.61
Eon	Removal of Street Light Yew Tree Grove	352.61
Eon	Repair of Street Light No 1 Wyre Close	155.15
Severn Centre	Room Hire September	57.60
Technical Services	CCTV upgrade	23,680.43
S.J.Maintenance	Litter picking/weeding	240.00
S.J.Maintenance	CCTV	

Meeting closed 8.55pm

Signed

Date:

DRAFT