

Minutes of Haresfield Parish Council Meeting

Held in the Village Hall on Tuesday Sept 24th 2024, 7.30

Present: Councillors Nicky Ford, Alan White, John Hunt, County councillor Stephen Davis, District councillor Mark Ryder

Clerk: Madeleine King e-mail: haresfieldpc@gmail.com

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Appoint Chair: Vice chair Nicky Ford took the chair

Public Participation: Charlotte Tilsley and Dee Gibson-Wain

Apologies: Cllr Ursula Jeakins

Declaration of Interests /Dispensations: none

County Councillors and District Councillor's Report: Cllr Davis reported that SDC have launched a new suicide prevention strategy, digital boot camps to improve digital literacy have been introduced at libraries and a 'Thriving Community' grant has been launched. With 25 roads closed as at the meeting date, measures recently introduced to alleviate flooding with 4000 trees having been planted and beavers been introduced into the Forest of Dean. A Stroud crowdfunding scheme has been launched, with SDC putting up £100,000. Any proposal need to be matched by crowdfunding, and it was confirmed that parish councils could apply to this scheme.

Hunts Grove (HG): Crest are still struggling to provide a date for completion, however all monies that had been agreed to be paid towards education by the developer have been received by SDC. Crest have also committed to build the roads. Crest have indicated that they are planning to put the HG extension planning in by December, with the site already having outline planning.

Cllr Mark Ryder reported: James Brain is the replacement for Mark Russell (Head of Planning Strategy). He lives in Hardwicke, which can only help with an appreciation of the J12 and infrastructure issues!

Many rail improvements which had been secured by our previous MP, Siobhan Baillie, have been pushed back by the new government. The cycle path through the district, at Standish, has been delayed due to the discovery of a gully which requires repair work.

Local Plan Update: SDC has sponsored design work for both M5 J12 and J14. Those initial junction designs have been agreed in conjunction with GCC and National Highways and will be sent to the planning inspectors next week. They will be posted on the plan examination library at the same time: <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/planning-and-building-control/planning-strategy/stroud-district-local-plan-review/local-plan-examination/examination-library/>

The government have instructed the planning inspectorate that any local plans that require more than six-months work should be thrown out and those authorities must start again assuming the draft NPPF and housing numbers. SDC was already granted a ten month pause (Feb-Dec 2024) under the last government which puts it in a stronger position than other authorities that are earlier in the process, as SDC can continue under the old regime for this draft plan.

NPPF Government Proposals; Everything is geared around removing barriers to deliver a massive increase in new housing numbers, the target being 1.5m new homes over the next five years.

The government hope to achieve an end-game whereby the local housing growth achieves 0.8% growth in housing supply per annum on average across England. The new proposals on housing numbers will mean that every authority in England, outside of London, will see an increase. The concerning aspect to this is the impact on rural areas. Stroud District is currently working to a delivery of 630 dwellings per annum, this will increase to 844 +5% buffer. That is an **18% increase**, and an extra 3,200 homes to find by 2040.

SDC believes it is well placed to deliver more homes itself (as a Council home provider) if measures were introduced to free up financing. It is felt that the government must look to local authorities to have any chance of meeting the housing growth the government is looking for. The new government have been indicating that this will be an important factor and that changes will be coming to facilitate that. A huge constraint on delivery generally is the construction labour market where there are shortages in all key trades. SDC feels it would not be competing with the general market and could overcome the labour shortages.

Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of the previous meetings dated June 2024 and July 2024 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising:

Village maintenance: A resident has been in touch with details of a potential flooding mitigation scheme, further details are required to determine whether this is suitable for the parish.

Village Hall committee update: Dee Gibson-Wain reported on behalf of the village hall committee that the Community payback team workparty had done lots of work at the hall, including painting the outside of the hall, the porch and all the fences as well as cutting the hedges. Hall bookings are up with both Pilates and band bookings regular users. The smoke alarm is due to be replaced with the legal requirements of this currently being checked. The Haresfield mosaic created by the craft group will be mounted on the side of the toilet facing the road, for all to view. No accounts were presented on this occasion.

Energy from Waste & CLG: Clerk has attended the grant awarding meetings and a final meeting is required to allocate the awards, at which stage they will go to a UBB panel for approval. Next environmental meeting is 24th Sept.

Highways, traffic and parking: Highways manager, Gary Wilson, has instructed an investigation of the blocked drain on Beacon Lane that has been reported by the pc. He has also listed the repainting of the yellow zig zag markings outside the school for the next financial year. Councillors raised the issue of the dangerous overnight parking of lorries outside the Indurent site (formerly St Modwen). Clerk to contact the site manager in the first instance.

Village activities: The Chatters lunch was the best attended pop up café so far. Harvest Lunch will be served on Saturday October 5th, with sittings at 12 and 1.30.

Network Rail: Complaint NR SR - 240822-000475 regarding clearing the area at the rail crossing has gone back and forwards between the NR Community officer and the clerk. Despite repeatedly asking for the area to be tidied up and the ballast bags; not the ballast itself; to be removed due to plastic deteriorating in the area, NR are not prepared to take action. The issue of Japanese Knotweed along the track has also been raised with NR, a reply is awaited.

Community Resilience Forum: Charlotte Tilsley attended the inaugural meeting of this forum, representing the pc, for which she was thanked. The forum discussed natural disasters of all nature as well as support and planning for them should they happen. It is possible to develop a neighbourhood resilience plan, however it seems that there would be little benefit for a parish as small as Haresfield. A register of vulnerable residents was also suggested and councillors felt that this would be a positive step to support those who would benefit from additional support in the event of an event. A separate article is to be put in the Herald with more information regarding this, including how to register.

Biodiversity: UBB are keen to be involved in the swift box project, to site nesting boxes on the energy from waste site, and ongoing discussions are taking place with UBB volunteering financial assistance for this.

Merryfield trustees: A bench to commemorate Caroline Segelov will be sited on the Merryfields in accordance with the wishes of her son and daughter, Gareth and Becky, who attended the latest meeting of the trustees. Trustees are keen to replant the hedge at the southern border of the Merryfields, clerk has liaised with the Stroud Landscape Project who are currently undertaking a project to replant hedgerows and will meet the trustees onsite to assess suitability.

Road closures:

1. Temporarily close part of the C206 Colethrop Lane from outside the property known as 'The Hollies' to outside the property known as 'The Old Vicarage' for a distance of approximately 102 metres. The reason for the closure is for Openreach pole testing and tree cutting works. The said road is expected to be closed between 09:30hrs and 15:30hrs on 8th October 2024 only or until the works have been completed. For further information, please contact Gloucestershire Highways on 08000 514 514 or visit www.gloucestershire.gov.uk. Alternative Route – as signed on site. Emergency access, and pedestrian access to adjacent properties, will be maintained.

Councillors are concerned about impact on residents and the school, clerk to notify school of the closure.

2. TTRO 4330 Colethrop Lane, Haresfield, will be closed from 28/10/2024 to 01/11/2024 to allow for culvert works by Severn Trent Water.

Planning: Councillors had no objection to Application Number: S.24/1519/HHOLD Location: Colethrop House, Colethrop, Haresfield, Stonehouse. Application Type: Householder Application Description: Erection of a replacement porch, two storey and single storey rear extensions and alterations to dormers and first floor. Alterations to existing driveway.

Correspondence: The pc has been notified of an incident at the school in which a resident, on two mornings at the beginning of term, was reported to drive past the school and verbally abuse school parents. School advised that this has been reported to the police. Councillors discussed a recent incident at the Court where the defibrillator was required. It was agreed to publicise the village defibrillator to ensure that all residents are aware of its location and to consider signage placed strategically to direct visitors to it.

Finance & Clerks Report: From 1st October, parish and town council websites will be checked for compliance with being WCAG 2.2AA ready, clerk to ensure this is the case and take appropriate measures if not.

Three quotations were obtained for renewal of the insurance, which is due 1st October. Councillors agreed to continue cover through Community First who offered the best value for money. Auditors PKF Littlejohn have received and logged the notification of exempt status for the year ended 31 March 2024 submitted for Haresfield Parish Council.

Bank has been reconciled to end of July.

Transactions/payments agreed:

Cheque payments were agreed and authorised by councillors.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.28pm

Date of next meeting: Tuesday October 22nd 2024