**Minutes of Haresfield Parish Council Meeting**

**Held in the Village Hall on Tuesday** **26th November** **2024, 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Councillors Nicky Ford, Alan White, Ursula Jeakins, John Hunt, County councillor Stephen Davis, District councillor Demelza Turner-Wilkes

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

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***Appoint Chair:*** Vice chair Nicky Ford took the chair

***Public Participation:*** Richard Gibbs

***Apologies:*** Cllr Mark Ryder

***Declaration of Interests /Dispensations:*** none

***County Councillors and District Councillor’s Report:***

Cllr Davis Reported**:**

* Consultation on revamping the Merrywalks in Stroud is underway.
* Fire and Rescue service has had a report on historical racism – independent report was commissioned which now itemises individual cases and what is to be learnt from it. The Service was classed as institutionally racist until 2018, actions for improvement have been agreed and are being implemented.
* GCC has supported the Fostering Service film, *Everything.* (Well worth a watch – a very moving little film Ed. <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/fostering/everything/>)
* Trading standards – have had a successful prosecution for selling illegal vapes
* Children – HOF – Holiday Activities with Food programme is continuing. Bookings from 2 Dec.
* GCC has signed up to ‘One Plan’, aiming to make Glos a better place for children
* Solar panels have been placed on the Commoners Court Office – good to be leading the way on using existing roofs for these, rather than putting them on open land.
* Pedal Easy scheme is running: you can rent an electric bike for 6 months and have the option of buying it, with all the rental payment being refunded. The scheme aims to encourage this alternative form of greener transport.
* Boundary Commission is redrawing boundaries to make a more equitable division between County Councillors. The boundary for Haresfield will move and we will have a new County Councillor. Consultation still ongoing for this.

Cllr Ryders report via email:

* Winter fuel allowance: reminder that you can only get this if you are receiving Pension Credits. Even if you only qualify for a very small amount of Pension Credit, registering for this unlocks other benefits so it is well worth doing if you are eligible. If you are not sure about whether you could be claiming pension credits, do contact your clerk, Maddy King (haresfieldpc@gmail.com), or you can contact the District Councillor for guidance: cllr.**demelza**.**turner**-**wilkes**@stroud.gov.uk
* Hunts Grove / Haresfield Lane – The plan for the development extension of 750 houses to Hunts Grove was formally agreed some time ago, but the application to begin the development is awaiting agreement about the infrastructure needed. There should be 2 access roads onto Haresfield Lane and it is very concerning that this is not in place, since it creates dangerous situations for Hunts Grove residents when access is temporarily blocked, for example by an accident. There are currently 3.5k residents using one exit and entrance. It is deemed absolutely essential that the development does not go ahead until the proposed road junction improvements are in place. There is a concern that Crest will continue with the development without securing the junction improvement. The decision will go to Stroud DC, but Highways is a consultee, and GCC recommend that planning permission can’t be granted until work on the junction is started. A design for the junction has been agreed, but there have been technical issues relating to the flyover which have caused delays. Note that once the road junction construction begins, it will take at least a year for this to be completed, so there is no likely reopening of Harefield Lane on the horizon for a considerable length of time.
* Stratford Park Leisure Centre has now reopened as Active Lifestyles Stroud.

***Minutes of the last meeting:*** The minutes of the previous meeting dated October 22nd were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

***Matters arising:***

***Village maintenance:*** The Parish Council thanks Chris Walkley for his recent work to remove a tree which blocked the Little Haresfield Road after storm Bert. Additional trees obstructing the road to Stonehouse has been noted and clerk will contact Standish parish regarding the clearing of these.

***Highways, traffic and parking:***  Cllr Hunt reported that wooden posts outside his house have been knocked down by an unknown vehicle. PCSO Jordan Perry contacted for advice.

Concern was expressed about cars park the wrong way round, after dark, making them hard to see and increasing the likelihood of accidents. After dark, drivers should remember that they have an obligation to park cars in the direction of the flow of traffic, so that reflectors are visible. Note that this is a requirement of the Highway Code and there is a concern that insurance may be invalidated by illegal parking!

Clerk to contact SDC street wardens for possible support with parking issues in the village. SDC has street wardens who could possibly be involved.

***Village Hall:*** VH was sent a form by the valuation office, completed by clerk. Now having to be repeated due to wrong form having been sent.

***Energy from Waste & CLG***: The grant awards have now all been approved by the UBB oversights committee and both applications from Haresfield were successful.

***Biodiversity* –** report from Rich Gibbs

* Swift boxes are in place at UBB, the PC thanks UBB for both purchasing these and installing them.
* Wood donated for more swift boxes – Rich is building these and councillors agreed that they be offered out to the village with suggestions for a donation towards future biodiversity projects.
* Owl nesting boxes would be very suitable for our area and the logistics of these are under consideration. National Lottery funding is a possibility.
* Himalayan Balsam is a priority for next year – this is spreading along Beacon Lane. It infests waterways and outgrows the native flora. Permission may need to be sought for removing this – Clerk proposes a letter to local land owners to request permission to work on this.
* In December, PC clerk, Merryfield Trustee representative Jenny Knight and Rich are meeting with Cotswolds Landscape team; part of National Trust; regarding development of wildlife corridor. (Link with the national review, Lawton report, *Making Space for Nature*.)
* Wildflower Meadow by the flagpole: the yellow rattle didn’t take well in the first year. Continuing with seed collected from the existing plants in an attempt to get this to establish.
* Suggestion that residents could make voluntary donations to the PC specifically ringfenced for biodiversity projects.
* Clerk and Rich Gibbs working together on Biodiversity Plan for the village. Councillors thanked Rich for his ongoing support.

***Website***: Our current provider is going to provide the updates to the site to enable the PC to be compliant with the new recommendations for all councils to have a .Gov domain – Cllr White has cast a professional eye over the proposed changes and recommends them. Clerk to action accordingly.

***Merryfield trustees:*** Concrete for the memorial bench for Caroline Segelov awaits drier weather before installation can be made. Clerk has ordered a plaque for the bench, with the wording chosen by Caroline’s children.

***Planning:*** CllrNicky Ford attended a course with The Council for the Protection of Rural England and shared info relevant to planning applications in the future.

No comments were submitted in relation to Application Number: S.24/1276/REM Land At Quedgeley Trading Estate East, Haresfield, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. Reserved Matters (appearance, layout, landscaping & scale) for the erection of 12 no. industrial units (within 6 buildings) for light industrial (E (g)(iii) general industrial (B2) & storage & distribution use (B8) with ancillary office & associated infrastructure pursuant to outline planning permission (ref. S.16/1724/OUT & S.19/2744/VAR) Respond by date: 09.12.2024

Councillors raised no objection to Application Number: S.24/1987/HHOLD Location: The Leys, Beacon Lane, Haresfield, Stonehouse. Application Type: Householder Application Description: Single storey dining room and porch extension.

Councillors raised questions regarding the highways situation to Application Number: S.24/2024/OUT Location: Land South Of, Haresfield Lane, Hardwicke, Gloucester. Application Type: Outline Planning Application Description: Development comprising up to 620 dwellings, land for a primary school and all associated landscaping and infrastructure. All matters are reserved for future determination with the exception of the accesses from Haresfield Lane. Respond by date: 13.12.2024. Up until now the site was in the local plan and noted as a strategic allocation site as an extension to Hunts Grove. This provides certainty to the developer that they do not need to fight for the principle of development, plus provides the Council with some certainty of housing numbers in the pipeline. Regarding the highways situation, it is understood that the additional traffic that the site will generate is already “baked in” to the projections by highways – i.e. that this will not be viewed as additional vehicle load on to Crosskeys roundabout and the M5 J12. Councillors are concerned about the increase in traffic from the site without the infrastructure to support this and will be raising its concerns regarding implementation of upgrades prior to development.

Closure of Dobbies: PC asked Cllr Turner-Wilkes to enquire about the proposed development of this site. Rumours suggest there may be a new garden centre but none of these is confirmed.

Symmetry Park: PC asked Cllr Turner-Wilkes for an update on this – what is happening and when, including the proposed road widening which was a condition of the Symmetry Park planning approval.

***Correspondence:*** The consultation on the Stroud District Council Plan which sets out the key priorities and objectives for the next five years is open until Dec 9th. Please respond here: <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/about-the-council/have-your-say/consultations/our-district-s-new-council-plan/>

Safe Streets & Roads in Glos, a new vision to introduce a 20mph limit on many of the county’s roads, is being re launched on Dec 3rd, clerk to attend on behalf of the PC. Haresfield PC passed a motion to support this back in 2021.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) completed a review

of Gloucestershire County Council boundaries earlier this year. This review introduces

some updates to county divisions in the Stroud district. For Gloucestershire

elections on Thursday 1 May 2025 Stroud district will have 11 County Divisions and 11

County Councillors (up from 10), with a new division: Haresfield and Upton St Leonards. LGBCE’s full recommendations and maps of new wards can be viewed at: https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-

reviews/gloucestershire#43456

Stroud Councillor Advocacy Scheme – Cllr Ford to attend on behalf of the PC.

***Finance & Clerks Report:*** Clerk presented the draft budget for councillors to discuss. It was agreed that no rise in the rate of precept was required for the financial year 2025/26.

***Transactions/payments agreed:*** *Cheque payments were agreed and authorised by councillors.*

**Any other business:** There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.40pm

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 28th January 2025**