**Minutes of Haresfield Parish Council Meeting**

**Held in the Village Hall on Monday** **27th November 2023**

**Present:** Councillors Nicky Ford, Ursula Jeakins, John Hunt, County councillor Stephen Davis,

Clerk: Madeleine King e’mail: [haresfieldpc@gmail.com](mailto:haresfieldpc@gmail.com)

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

***Public Participation:***

***Apologies:*** Cllr Alan White,District councillor Mark Ryder

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

***County Councillors and District Councillor’s Report:*** Cllr Davis reported

* Trading standards have seized large quantities of illegal tobacco and related products.
* A new Special School at Sladewood has opened.
* A shortage of educational psychologists is limiting SEND provision in the county.
* Libraries are working to encourage over 50s to get back into work.
* County is ready for winter with 29 new gritters!
* County has gained £4.5 million in a new phase of the bus service improvement plan. The option of a dial-a-ride service is being considered.
* A Christmas holiday activities fund has been launched, for activities and food for children eligible for free school meals and their siblings.
* 750,000 watched Tour of Britain when it came though Glos –Second only to Manchester leg, which was deemed an excellent result!
* Build Back Better funding is available for good causes. £12.5m in total, of which £2.5m is for projects for young people, and especially for children, eg for equipment for local groups.

Local Plan update: As previously stated, following the Inspectors saying the Local Plan (LP) ought to be withdrawn, Stroud DC have submitted a proposal asking for six months to the 31st of March 2024 to provide solutions to the outstanding issues of Sharpness, Wisloe, and the M5 Js 12 and 14. Proposed developments for large numbers of houses, such as Hardwicke, Whaddon, Hunts Grove and others, are impacted by this. This proposal is now before the Inspectors who can either accept or decline it, but the Plan may be sent back to be redrawn which could take two years.

Cllr Davis explained that it is a very unwelcome situation not having a LP, since it sets out protective conditions, such as settlement boundaries. The County Council has a duty to have an ongoing 5-year land supply plan, in which sites are identified for housing development in line with projected population expansion. With the lack of an agreed LP, and the concomitant halting of large-scale projected housing provision, the projected availability of housing will fall below a 5-year level. This is potentially a serious problem since it could enable planning requests for smaller speculative developments to be passed, to make up the shortfall, even if they fall outside agreed boundaries. Appeals against such planning applications would be particularly vulnerable to being unsuccessful.

For Haresfield, the development of J12 is a particular issue, since it will require a huge amount of funding. For example, there could be a long term situation where motorway funding is proposed by developers in relation to an expansion of Hunts Grove across the motorway boundary.

PC decided to look into the possibility of developing a Neighbourhood development plan or village design statement (although this would not change what is in the Local Plan) the development of which would give local people a voice in what sort of development would be appropriate for the village, and which would be considered by planning.

***Minutes of the last meeting:***

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

***Matters arising:***

***Village maintenance:*** Replacement gates and stiles have been put up on the Merryfield entrances. A huge thank you to Martin Hartley for all his work for the village in organising the improvement of these gateways together with the Cotswold Wardens.

***Village Hall & events:*** There has been a welcome request for a Village Hall rental regular booking every Monday evening. PC proposed moving meeting night to a Tuesday, clerk to ask if this suits councillors, then will respond to the committee as appropriate.

Clerk and Dee Gibson-Wain have completed the SDC statutory review of polling stations

Carols in the village: Tuesday 19th, 7pm, singing at the Christmas Tree on the Merryfield, then down to the village hall for mince pies and mulled wine, kindly supplied by the village hall committee. If the weather is inclement, the whole event will be in the hall.

Christmas Chatters – Friday Dec 15th. Mince pies and Christmas cheer.

***Merryfield Trustees:*** Ben Pillinger has been appointed as the new trustee for the Merryfields, taking the place of Caroline Segelov as trustee representative of St. Peters church.

***Woodland:*** Langet Covert – a survey has been carried out and necessary work identified, costs of £550 agreed and this to take place 28 Nov.

Clerk has been notified about an individual cutting wood in the Covert with a chain saw –this is not permitted on the Covert at any time and councillors agreed purchase of a sign for the Covert gate advising this.

***Highways, traffic and parking:***

Clerk and Cllrs Jeakins and Hunt met Gary Wilson, Highways manager, on Friday 24 November, in the wake of lorry causing damage to 2 Starsmead. Highways clarified that Haresfield Lane is subject to a 7.5t weight limit for environmental reasons, and that it is an offence to exceed the road weight limit unless you are loading or unloading on the road. This is a matter for the police (not the Highways department.) PC decided an initial approach to contact some of the companies of offending vehicles in relation to this. In order to do this, details of vehicles using the lane will have to be noted, along with timings of travel.

PC has asked Gary to locate the GCC advisory freight route map, which guides lorries on certain routes in order to ascertain which routes are being suggested to drivers.

Clerk contacted Ian Duck, manager of the St. Modwens site, to express disappointment at the fact that lorries are now accessing the site through the village rather than from J12 as was agreed with the company and to ask for thie assistance in ensuring lorries are signposted appropriately. This matter has been referred to the St Modwen property managers and we await a response from them.

A new reporting system has recently been introduced: <Fixmystreet.com> to enable everyone to report road damage/fly tipping and other street issues, and Gary explained that this is the most effective way of getting the right people to address the problem as soon as possible.

PC enquired about the possibility of having double yellow lines, instead of the current zigzags on the corner by the school. To request the necessary traffic regulation order (TRO) would cost £15,000 and was not felt to be a priority at this stage.

***Correspondence:***

A further email was received from R Cowburn and seen by all members of the PC, and duly acknowledged.

***Finance & Clerks Report:*** Budget – A 2% increase proposed by clerk and agreed, in the light of general price increases, this is a modest increase and below the rate of inflation. Actual amount of precept requested for the 2024/25 year is £11,654.

PC approved the purchase of an accounting package for PC finances @ £12 PER MONTH

Biodiversity – A new legal obligation means that the PC has an obligation to consider what we can do to aid biodiversity, and the clerk has attended GAPTC training on this subject. Initially, the PC will look at ways in which this can be promoted in Langets Covert.

***Transactions/payments agreed:***

*Cheque payments were agreed and authorised by councillors.*

**Any other business:**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.12 pm

**Date of next meeting: Monday 22nd January 2024 – unless amended to Tuesday**