

PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE MEETING
Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held on Thursday 19th January 2018
at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church

Present:

Mrs C Kelly, Chairman
Mrs C Bath, Treasurer
Mrs M Clarke, Secretary
County Councillor Bob Stevens
District Councillor Chris Williams

Present: Mr H Darbishire; Miss I Davies; Mr I Harvey; Mr and Mrs P Hobday; Ms T Hicks; Mr C Hodgson; Mr S Hyde; Mr D James; Mr and Mrs E Pile; Mrs S Talbot; Mr A Towler; Mrs C Wareham; Mrs J Wilkin.

Mrs Kelly welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies were received from:

Miss I Davies; Mr S Darbishire; Mr J Eustace; Mrs B Harvey; Mrs G Hodgson; Mrs E Jameson; Mr I Mercer; Mrs N Nichols; Rev C Parkes; Ms J Redfern; Mrs S Sutherland; Mrs J Vandries; Mrs R White

2. The Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes had been circulated following the last meeting. It was proposed by Mr Hodgson, seconded by Mrs Bath and agreed that these were a correct record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

Trees

There had been no news of any progress from Mrs Sutherland.

Highways

Mr Kelly had photographed the rut at the side of the road in Lower End and sent the pictures to Patch Byrne, who had noted them.

Regarding the name of the lane leading to the canal, Mrs Kelly had consulted past residents and the Planners and had concluded that there had been no change of name and that the lane was still part of Lower End. It is a minor road and thus the County Council has a duty to maintain it because it gives access to the sewage works. However, until current construction work on property is complete the council is reluctant to begin repairs.

Welsh Road

Leading to Southam, from the T junction at Church End, the edges of the road are deteriorating, and the surface in a few places is beginning to break up.

Grit Bins

There is only one grit bin, which is at Lower End and it is full. It was stressed that the grit is intended only for the roads, and it is the responsibility of the village to inform the CC when a refill is required.

Recent snowfall

The village wished to record its gratitude to our Snow Warden, Mr H Darbishire and to Mr B Nichols who had used their tractors to clear the village roads of snow on Sunday 10th December after heavy snowfall.

Drains

The drains were now all in order.

There had been a brief flood on the corner at the exit from the village to Wormleighton and Patch Byrne had been informed. Official Flood Warning signs were now available in the village, and the drains would be jetted asap.

4. Financial Report

Mrs Bath was currently preparing the end of year accounts to 31st March 2018. There was currently £4,909 in the accounts with outgoings of approximately £200 expected before the year end. Mrs Bath would prepare the accounts for audit, and warned that this process would be different from that followed in previous years.

Precept

Mrs Bath reported that the precept had stood at £1,750 for several years and this had resulted in a surplus.

Mrs Bath was proposing that we maintain the precept at this level in view of the following:

The legal cost incurred in conveying Lino's plot of land to the village.

Increased costs of labour.

Funding to support our bid for a grant for a community area from the HS2 Community Fund.

Mrs Bath's proposal was seconded by Mr Hodgson and generally agreed.

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5. District Councillor Chris Williams' Report

Cllr Williams reported that the District Council was in the final stages of establishing its Council Tax for the next financial year. The indications were that the Council Tax would increase by 1% (a third of the 3% currently allowed by the government) and resulting in an increase of £1.36 per year for a Band D property. The District Council itself faces inflationary increases of 2% but proposes, for the coming year, to fund the revenue gap from its reserves. However, it would be for the Elected Members to finally decide on the any increase at the full council meeting on Monday 26th February. The SDC receives approximately 8p of every £1 of Council Tax. The County Council receives approximately 80p and the remainder goes to the Police and Parish Council precepts. A copy of Cllr Williams' report is kept with these minutes.

6. County Councillor Bob Stevens' Report

Cllr Stevens reported that following the recent consultation process on the future of Children's Services the CC debate had resulted in a compromise in some areas and a delay of closure in others. Several of the smaller centres are in leased premises which expire in the next 2 years and it was expected that leases would not be renewed.

The final Local Government Settlement had arrived just before Christmas, and was only just in line with the predicted (and planned for) amount. This took no account of any unforeseen pressures which might arise during the year. There remained the option to increase the Council Tax, by 1% over and above the 1.99% already permitted, but this would be taken up with increased costs on care of children and the elderly. During the snowy and frosty weather the County Highways Dept had kept open over 40% of main roads and had maintained at least one route in and out of each village. Grit Bins would be refilled at the request of the villages.

Cllr Stevens predicted that 2018 would be dominated by financial savings – as more and more pressures are handed down by the government without the resource to support them. The Police would receive extra precept, and there would be influences on the CC from beyond its boundaries such as Brexit and the naming of Coventry as the next City of Culture.

A copy of Cllr Stevens' report is kept with the minutes.

7. Planning Updates

No Man's Land and Grove Cottage

1. Allotment Plot Mrs Kelly reported that she had been led to believe that an option which Mr Kember had taken on Mr Taylor's plot had expired, and Mr Taylor was now requesting a meeting regarding the future of the plot. This meeting had been agreed for Friday 20th January.

2. Registration of No Man's Land Mrs Kelly had liaised with Mr Mercer and Mr Olver and had re-checked the measurements of the area. Miss England had also been consulted.

A reply from the Land Registry as described in the last minutes was still awaited.

In the meantime it was noted that No Man's Land had been kept in very good order, thanks to Mr Cutt and easy access to the agricultural land behind the village had been maintained.

Doe Bank Manor

The additional stable block, still under construction at the time of the meeting, had not received planning approval, and discussions were still ongoing with the Enforcement Officer. It was expected that a further planning application would be received and Mrs Kelly would inform Cllr Stevens if and when this arrived.

Mrs Kelly reminded the meeting that if anyone was thinking of making a planning application, the first move should be to consult the village.

8. Lino's Land

There had been some doubt as to the progress made by the solicitors. However Lino had recently been in contact with the solicitors who had advised that the documents were to hand and awaited only a signature from one of the Executors.

9. HS2 and the Community Area and Community Fund

Mr Hodgson reported that the collapse of Carillion had brought fresh doubt over the HS2 project. It was envisaged that the two other companies with contracts for the work would take over the work or introduce a new partner. However, further ramifications may serve to unsettle the project in general.

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The Community Area Project.

The Community Fund Project Committee had completed the application, which had been approved by Groundwork, the intermediary group. Unfortunately, Playscape Designs who had promised to supply a plan for the area, but were now under new ownership, had so far failed to do so. Mrs Bath was currently making

efforts to remedy the situation, via the former owner, but if necessary, the committee would approach an alternative designer.

A copy of Mr Hodgson's report is kept with these minutes.

Fund Raising

There remained the need to raise funds from the village to support the application. Mr H Darbishire announced that he would be having an Open Farm Sunday on 10th June and offered the village the use of a marquee in which to provide and sell food during the day – 11.am -4.00pm. The previous event in 2016 attracted over 400 people. All proceeds from sales would go to the Community re Project.

Mr Darbishire was thanked warmly for his offer.

Mr Hodgson added that the HS2 Action Group also had some funds available which could be used to support the application.

So far £765 had been raised by village residents out of £3,000 agreed, in addition to funds promised directly from the Village Meeting.

10. Emergency Plan

Mrs Kelly reported that although this was not officially necessary, recent events had prompted her to update the Emergency Plan. This lengthy document includes information regarding assistance both local and in the surrounding area in the case of an emergency. Thus, the plan includes names of people in the village with appropriate skills, knowledge and equipment. The revision would be appropriate since there had been many changes of people in the village in recent years. Mrs Kelly asked people to be patient and respond as soon as possible when she sends round an email asking for information.

The plan also includes provision for checking on all vulnerable (including those living alone) people in the village.

11. Grit Bins

There was one bin at Lower End – as described in item 3.

12. Burglaries and internet scams

There had been two recent burglaries in the village and two individual sightings of suspicious vehicles.

Mrs Kelly frequently received from Southam SNT warnings of both internet and telephone scams. She thus advised everyone to ensure that all parts of their properties were securely locked and to be very wary when answering unusual telephone calls or emails.

Our village email list is an excellent means of warning people in good time of potential danger.

13. Dogs

Mrs Kelly reminded people the meeting that lambing time was approaching and many local paths cross fields where sheep are kept. Therefore, extra care should be taken when walking dogs.

There had also been recently, in and around Church End, concern relating to 4 aspects of dog walking:

1. A number of dogs had been allowed to roam freely, unattended around the area.

2. There had been an increase in people not picking up after their dogs.

3. Some people had cleared up, but then left the bag by the side of the path.

4. Some people had been walking their dogs around the village off the leads and these dogs had not always been under the close control expected.

Mrs Kelly would send an email message round the village explaining the concerns of the village meeting.

14. The Fessey Charity

Mr Harvey reported that he and Mrs Bath would meet to make the annual allocation.

15. The Priors Hall.

The Film nights were continuing.

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16. The Village Directory

Mrs Clarke reported that the Directories were selling well in Priors Marston, but only slowly in Priors Hardwick. Printing costs had been covered and all surplus was being donated to The Priors Hall.

Mrs Kelly would remind the village of its availability via the village email list.

17. Village Website

Mr Towler observed that the Emergency Plan was currently on the website and asked if he should remove it in view of the recent legislation on Data Protection. It was thought that since all whose names were included

had formally given their permission and that legislation did not come into force until May this year, this would not be necessary.

Mr Towler again asked village residents to inform him of any information or events which might be included in the website – or reports of any recent events etc

With reference to the Neighbourhood Watch page, Mr Towler observed that it was almost empty. The meeting agreed that we should have someone to replace Miss England who could then liaise with Mr Towler. Mrs Kelly would send round another email.

The news and events page was also very poorly subscribed and Mr Towler wondered if we should consider something like 'Facebook'. There was discussion, but no decision.

18. A O B

Centenary of the end of WW1

November 11th would be a Sunday and Mr Darbshire had offered to arrange for a beacon to be lit at 7.00pm. As for previous such events this would be registered nationally, but only as an event for the village and not open to the public.

Thanks were offered to Mr Darbshire for his offer.

19. The Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting would be Thursday 26th April.

This meeting would include the AGM when officers are appointed/elected.

Mrs Kelly announced that she would be willing to stand as Chairman for one more year only.

Mrs Bath and Mrs Clarke were both willing to continue for a further year.

Other nomination/offers in all three cases were invited.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.33pm