

PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE MEETINGS
Minutes of the Meetings held on Thursday 20th April 2017
at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church

Present:

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

Mr and Mrs I Harvey; Mr and Mrs P Hobday; Mr C Hodgson; Mr and Mrs A Hone; Mr P Jenkins; Mr I Mercer;
Mrs N Nichols; Mrs S Sutherland; Mrs S Talbot; Mrs R White; Mrs J Wilkin;
Visitors: Mr I Klegerman; Mr M Monkhouse; Mr A Towler

Apologies were received from:

Mrs C Bath, Treasurer; Mrs M Clements; Mr S Darbishire, Miss I Davies; Miss E England; Mr J Eustace; Mrs G Hodgson; Mrs L Jameson; Mr D Kelly; Mr M Pemberton; Mr and Mrs E Pile. Ms J Redfern; Mrs J Vandries

Mrs Kelly welcomed everyone to the meetings.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Mrs Kelly thanked Mrs Bath and Mrs Clarke for their work throughout the past year, and also the Councillors for their attendances at meetings and their help and advice.

Chairman Mrs Kelly had indicated that she was willing to stand for a further year. There were no other nominations. It was proposed by Mr Hodgson, seconded by Mrs Hone and agreed nem.con that Mrs Kelly be elected. Mrs Kelly was thanked warmly for all her work during the past year and for agreeing to continue for a further year.

Treasurer Mrs Bath had indicated that she was willing to serve for a further year. There were no other nominations. Mrs Bath was thus elected

Secretary Mrs Clarke had indicated that she was willing to serve for another year. There had been no other nominations. Mrs Clarke was thus elected.

The Minutes of the last Meeting Mrs Clarke read out the minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2016 and these were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

There were no matters arising.

The meeting closed at 7.35pm

QUARTERLY MEETING

1. The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th January 2017 had been circulated and were taken as read. It was proposed by Mrs Talbot, seconded by Mr Hone and agreed nem/con. that these were a correct record of the meeting.

The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 8th March 2017 had been circulated and were taken as read. It was proposed by Mr Hodgson, seconded by Mrs Sutherland and agreed nem.con that these were a correct record of the meeting. (See item 7, Mr Kember's plot)

The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 29th March 2017 had been circulated and were taken as read. It was proposed by Mr Mercer, seconded by Mrs Sutherland and agreed nem.con that these were a correct record of the meeting. (See item 8, HS2)

2. Matters Arising

Trees Mrs Kelly had not made further attempts to contact the County Council tree specialist, but had contacted BT/Outreach concerning the tree which was impeding the telephone lines to Bramleys, Lower End. The response had been that it would be necessary to contact the relevant person at the County Council. Thus Mrs Kelly was asking Mrs Sutherland to take up the matter on a property owner basis and to keep Mrs Kelly informed of her communications.

Highways In response to Mrs Kelly's request for local road signs to be cleaned Patch Byrne had replied that he had pencilled this in for the end of April.

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Hollow Meadow Lane Mr Byrne was now turning his attention to repairs in the lane, but had warned that the work was not imminent.

Flood Signs Mrs Kelly would enquire as to whether the Flood signs borrowed recently from the County Council would need to be returned.

3. Financial

Mrs Kelly wished to record her thanks to Mrs Bath for all her work throughout the year. Mrs Bath had sent copies of her report which were circulated to the meeting, and a copy of which is kept with the minutes. Mrs Kelly read to the meeting the notes which Mrs Bath had provided with the financial statement.

Grass Cutting Mrs Bath had pointed that with the mowing being undertaken fortnightly mulch was often left lying, and in view of the fete, wondered if it would be better to have the grass cut weekly to achieve a tidier finish.

Website Recently it had been noticed that some erroneous advertisement had been added to the title of the website on the Google page. This did not appear to have corrupted the content of the website. Mr Hodgson had maintained the website since its construction, but had indicated that he would like to relinquish this task. Mrs Kelly would issue an email inviting help for this task, but in the meantime Mr Hodgson was content to continue.

Funds in Hand Mrs Bath had also pointed out that the rather large sum was in anticipation of the legal cost of transferring to the village the land donated by Mr Lino Pires. However, there was a significant delay in concluding this matter. This might at some time in the future contravene a requirement that the funds in hand should not amount to more than 2.5 times the amount of money the village receives in annual income.

Village Directory Surplus Funds It was proposed by Mrs Nichols, seconded by Mrs Hobday and agreed nem.con that the surplus funds from sale of the Village Directories should be donated to The Priors Hall.

Auditing

In order to comply with legalities required by the auditors, the meeting needed to agree the requirements listed in the Governance Statement. Mrs Kelly read the details to the meeting, following which,:-

1. The members of the meeting confirmed that there is a sound system of financial control and accounting in place: proposed by Mr Hodgson, seconded by Mrs Harvey and agreed nem.con.
2. The members of the meeting approved the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2017 - Proposed by Mrs Talbot, seconded, by Mrs Harvey and agreed nem.con

Following the meeting the accounts would be internally audited by Mrs Sarah Mills, an accountant from Priors Marston and then externally audited by Grant Thornton. No fee would be payable to Grant Thornton since the turnover was less than £10,000.

From 5th June until 14th August 2017 the audited accounts would be available for inspection at Mrs Bath's home.

4. Cllr Williams Report

Cllr Williams reported on:

The change of leadership of the District Council, with two existing officers now sharing the work of Chief Executive in addition to their own existing roles. The Council now comprised 36 elected members by comparison with 62 in 1998.

The Core Strategy, and its effect in curtailing in the number of inappropriate planning applications.

The District Council Budget which would provide a council tax increase of 2%

The Council was no longer working with adjoining authorities since the trial had not revealed any worthwhile savings.

The result of a By- Election in the Red Horse Ward adjacent to our Ward. Mr John Fielding, the Conservative candidate had been elected. The District Council is thus as follows:

Conservative –30 LibDems – 4; Independent – 1 labour – 1

A copy of Cllr Williams' report is kept with these minutes.

Mrs Kelly raised the question of the Police, in view of the poor response following two recent night time burglaries from outhouses in the village. One person reporting the crime had been told that the police were "too busy". Mrs Kelly expressed surprise that the Police had not requested an increase in their precept in the light of this.

Cllr Williams replied that priority was a factor in this and that we were very fortunate, locally, in the very low level of crime compared with other parts of the county. However he quoted a recent event in Ratley where a serious distraction burglary had taken place and police had been at the scene within 20 minutes. Cllr Williams encouraged anyone with such queries to contact the Police and Crime Commissioner, Cllr Philip Secombe.

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5. Cllr Stevens' Report

Cllr Williams reported on a state of 'flux' in the Council following the recent retirement of the CEO, the Government funding cuts resulting in a further £20m to be cut from a budget already reduced by £90m since 2013, and the imminent Council elections. In addition, the debate concerning unitary or combined authorities remained unresolved.

The County Council's annual budget is almost £400m of which just under half is spent on adult services and almost £100m on children and child protection. The council is working towards closer co-operation with the NHS in order to ensure safe transfer from hospital to home, with adequate care in place. In Education and Children's services pressures continue to mount, especially concerning safeguarding. In education, as more schools become Free Schools or Academies, the County Council has less involvement, apart from ensuring that every child has a place in a suitable school. Southam College has become a Multi Academy Trust, but has undertaken to maintain its former Admissions Procedure.

The county is experiencing the effects of new development in this area, in respect of expansion at Jaguar Land Rover and new housing developments in and around Southam. Roads have become overcrowded and general services are stretched. Solar farms are being proposed and work on HS2 is imminent. In reviewing the year Cllr Stevens reported on the wide variety of additional posts he had held, of considerable prestige and importance. Thanks to his good offices Priors Hardwick now has a bus shelter which is well used. Cllr Stevens reported that he has enjoyed attending our meetings and is pleased to help and advise any villager who may be confused by the complexities of local government.

6. Planning

Warwick Villa Mr Alan Towler, the new owner had been invited to the meeting to introduce his plans for the property. Mr Towler had, prior to the meeting, discussed his plans with immediate neighbours and had recently made a formal application to the District Council. This had yet to be added to the District Council website. Mrs Kelly had possession of the plans and was in the process herself of visiting all the immediate neighbours. Mr Towler was at pains to explain that he was not a developer and was intending to live in the property. He was currently involved with clearing the plot and would welcome any visitors when he was present at the property.

No Man's Land - Footpath Mrs Kelly had continued her research relating to the status of the plot and had recently visited the National Archives in London. In addition Mrs Kelly had received all the completed forms relating to the historical use of the plot by villagers and had passed them on to Marion Boorman in support for the plot to be registered as a footpath in Warwickshire. The case was currently on the waiting list, with a good chance of becoming registered in the not too distant future.

Registration with the Land Registry Further news on this was awaited. However, Miss England had reported that she had been successful in her registration of the section of No Man's Land adjacent to the property. Mrs Kelly had invited Miss England to bring her documents to the meeting, but to date the documents were not to hand. Further, Mrs Kelly had asked Miss England to remove the wooden fence which was restricting access to No Man's Land, and which had now served its purpose, but Mrs Kelly had received neither assent nor refusal to her request.

Mr Kember's Plot Mr Kember's planning application remained valid and pending consideration, but there had been no communication from him. (Ref. agenda item 1 – Minutes)

No 1 Agricultural Houses Garage the application had been withdrawn.

7. HS2

Referring to the meeting held on 29th March Mr Hodgson announced that Warwickshire CC was providing, on 18th May, a seminar during which help would be offered in completing the forms requesting the grants that were being offered.

The meeting on 29th May had discussed how a grant of up to £75K might be used, and had agreed that a children's play area would be the best option, although other suggestions had not been discounted. The most important aspect of the application would be to establish ownership of land to be used for any proposed project. The land outside the churchyard to the west of the Lych Gate, which was currently being transferred to the village from Mr Pires had to be discounted since the legal process had encountered serious delays. Mr Hodgson had further broached the subject of use of the land behind the Butchers Arms car park with Mr Nuno Correia, the new owner of the Butchers Arms, with a further, more formal meeting envisaged. In the meantime Mr Hodgson had emailed a request via the village email list asking for any suggestions or offers of plots of land for sale or rent, suitable for a playground, but neither he nor Mrs Kelly had received any replies.

Other suggestion made at the earlier meeting were reviewed, but it was pointed out that although major repairs to the church were required, such an application would not be favourably regarded since ownership was difficult to establish, and such a project could be seen as not relevant to the whole village. A further suggestion of solar panels as part of the work required on the church roof was discussed only.

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8. Southam/Feldon Community Forum – Wed 15th March

Mrs Clarke reported that these meetings begin at 7.00pm and usually end by 9.00pm. From 6.30pm the Police and Councillors are available to answer informal questions or queries. The meetings consist of feedback and information sharing from the District Council, a report on the work of the police over the previous 3 months, and agreement of their priorities for the next quarter, and then two speakers on matters current interest to the local communities. At present Lydia Smith our Engagement Officer for HS2 is present at every meeting. Also on 15th March Jack Linstead was present to speak on the recruitment of Community Health Champions – people who would form an interface between the community and the NHS. He was able to report that had been set up in

south Warwickshire to join in the fight to save the Horton Hospital in Banbury, which is used by many people in south of our county.

Following this formal part of the agenda representatives are invited to raise any further issues. Comings and goings during the meeting are not unusual, according to people's interest in agenda items, and this is a very pleasant and informative meeting to attend.

9. Village Events

The Silver Spur Races would take place on Saturday 22nd April, with access via the Salt Road. There would be 2 races, the first at 12.00 and the second about 45 minutes later. Everyone was invited to watch. Entry for cars would be £5 and proceeds would go to the Air Ambulance.

The Church & Village Fete and Dog Show, 20th May 2017 Mrs Kelly recorded her thanks to Mrs Helen Stamper and her team who were organising the Fete and encouraged members of the meeting to prepare to donate cakes, bottles, plants, books, raffle prizes, etc in good time.

10. Neighbourhood Watch.

Apart from the two minor burglaries mentioned in item 4 there was nothing to report.

11. The Fessey Charity

Mr Harvey reported that grants had been give to three village residents.

12. The Priors Hall

Mrs Harvey reported that the Hall would be free on Friday evenings during the summer months when the Film Evenings ceased until the autumn. Equipment for a variety of games was available.

The Film Evening for April would take place on Friday 21st April, showing "A Street Cat named Bob"

Mrs Harvey reported a need for help with minor DIY and repair jobs at the Hall. It was hoped to find someone who could attend at relatively short notice and just for minor repairs/maintenance work. Anyone who could help should contact Mrs Harvey. Payment would be available.

13. Correspondence

An invitation had been received to enter a "Village of the Year" competition the winners of which would be featured in television programmes lead by Penelope Keith.

14. A.O.B.

There was none.

15. The date of the next Meeting would be Thursday 20th July.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm