

PRIORS HARDWICK VILLAGE MEETINGS

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28th April 2022

In the Church of St Mary

Present

Stuart Hyde (SH), Chairman

Carolyn Bath (CB), Treasurer

Margaret Clarke (MC), Secretary

District Councillor Nigel Rock (NR)

Rob and Anita Barritt; Ian Bath; Richard Cutt; Isabel Davies; John Eustace (JE); Ivan (IH) and Barbara Harvey; Paul (PH) and Rosemary Hobday; Candy Kelly (CK); Alan Kinnear; Lucie Penruddock; Joy Redfern (JR); Thierry Stortenbeker; Sue Talbot; Alan Towler (AT); Eddie (EU) and Ann Ukleja; Ros White

In attendance – Elton James, Chairman, Priors Sports and Social Club

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SH invited CK to take the chair for the election of officers.

Election of Officers

1. Chair Stuart Hyde (SH) had indicated that he would be ready to stand again. There had been no other nomination and SH was elected unanimously.
2. Treasurer It is the prerogative of the Chairman to invite a Treasurer. SH had invited Carolyn Bath (CB) to continue as Treasurer and she had agreed.
3. Secretary There had been no nominations and Margaret Clarke (MC) declared herself happy to stand. She was re-elected unanimously.

As this was to be the final meeting for AT, CK took the opportunity to thank him very sincerely for the enormous amount of work he'd completed for the village in establishing and maintaining the Village Digital Communications system, which had been a huge support during the pandemic, and the Village Website. The meeting heartily endorsed CK's words.

PRIORS HARDWICK QUARTERLY VILLAGE MEETING

1. Apologies were received from:

Hugh Darbshire; Simon and Angela Darbshire; Tonia Hicks; Christopher(CH) and Gabrielle Hodgson; Charlie Holland; Libby Jameson; Gill Kinnear; James Mayne; Ian and Debbie Mercer; Sylvia Sutherland;

2. The Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 20 January 2022 had been circulated and were taken as read. It was proposed by AT, seconded by CK and agreed nem. con. that these were a correct record of the meeting.

3. Priors Sports and Social Club

Elton James, the newly elected Chairman of the club wished to address the meeting concerning recent changes to the structure and status of the club. A document describing the changes had been emailed to all residents of Priors Hardwick and EJ explained the details of these and the advantages which would result for the club. On a show of hands, only two members of the meeting were current members of the club.

The initial aim of the new committee would be to raise funds in order improve the quality of the clubhouse and the tennis courts and to make the club more open and available the village as well as to members. The grounds would be open to all at weekends and during school holidays and had now been made secure for dogs to run free. It was hoped eventually to be able to employ a paid manager for the premises. Thus, EJ was encouraging more members to join the club with family subscription at £25 pa or £15 per individual.

In response to a question EJ stated that the Club had about £20K in the bank

SH thanked EJ for his presentation and EJ left the meeting.

A copy of the Sports and Social Club letter to residents is kept with these minutes

4.Matters Arising

- Planning

Mrs Jameson's application for Hollow Meadow had been approved.

Mr Taylor's application for land off St Mary's Close had been rejected.

No Man's Land

SH offered the thanks of the meeting to JR and the team who had replanted the hedge along the side of St Mary's close, and begun to prepare for wildflowers to grow along the length of the plot.

Mr Taylor had written to SH stating his assumed right to use the length of No Man's Land as access to his plot and objecting to the work being done. SH would respond to his letter and present a copy to the next Village Meeting.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

A discussion ensued about the use of this levy and if property in the village might attract it that could be used for projects in the village. If a CIL is collected as part of a development 15% will go to the Parish. In the case of a parish meeting the District Councillor has a role in advising the Village Meeting on uses for the CIL. There has only been one recent substantial development, 20/01952/FUL, where a decision notice required a CIL contribution of £21881 (15%= £3283) as reported at meeting. However, confirmed after the meeting, 100% relief has been granted for that site.

Another Waste Bin?

CB had ascertained the that cost of an additional bin would be £450 including installation and £110+VATpa for the cost of regular emptying. NR had investigated the possibility of a grant towards the cost – but none was available. It was decided not to proceed with this matter.

An enquiry revealed that the bin near the Lych Gate should be emptied fortnightly, but in fact it was only being emptied once every 4 weeks. CB would investigate.

The Bank Accounts

CB had researched the possibility of moving our accounts to Lloyds where it was thought that charges were not being levied on charity accounts. However, this turned out not to be the case – but a later enquiry had proved more hopeful. RC pointed out that Online accounts would be cheaper, and that some were actively inviting new customers. However, CB reminded the meeting that many people in the village still preferred to use cheques or cash.

Light in the Phone Box

Thanks were recorded to Ben Marsh-Lazell who had replaced the broken light in the phone box. MC had written thanking him.

Volunteers for the garden adjacent to the Lych Gate

It was thought that two people were considering taking this on.

5.Councillor Updates – District Councillor Nigel Rock

NR had sent his original report some time before the meeting but brought to the meeting a very recent update.

Road Closures These are ongoing and constantly changing. The Severn Trent work at Chapel Green, Napton had been completed, but HS2 works around Southam remain ongoing.

Council Merger

At a meeting after Easter Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon District Councils agreed to call off the merger. NR was concerned about this in view of the time and expense that had been spent on it and was apprehensive about the eventual effect on the two councils.

Covid 19

NR had found it difficult to find objective data but at the time of the meeting the infection rate appeared to have fallen to about 500 in 100,000

HS2

The boring of the tunnel under Long Itchington Wood had begun.

Council Tax Rebates – A-D Bands

The Council had received before Easter the software to pay the £150 rebate which the Government had announced earlier and had been working to apply these. The Council was also considering a discretionary scheme by which to help any who are not covered by the main scheme

Electricity

On 25th April the Council discussed the possibility of arrangements for communities to sell electricity other than through the established licenced arrangements. This had cross party support of more than 300 MP's and found similar support within the District Council.

Homes for Ukranians

The Government scheme is complicated and is just getting off the ground. NR was grateful to Council staff who had been doing their best in difficulty circumstances.

Arrangements for new food bins

Some concern was raised about the new system due to begin in August 2022. NR referred to the latest booklet from the District Council, published in March 2022 and distributed to every household by Royal Mail. The centre pages gave some information and sources of more information. It was thought that more preparatory work would be required to get this scheme off to flying start – possibly Road-shows. Of more concern was the matter of how to deal with used nappies and medical sanitary-wear.

Copies of NR's reports are kept with these minutes.

Interjected Item – Byfield Medical Centre

JE wished to inform the meeting of a recent Planning Meeting relating to the proposed new Medical Centre at Byfield. This meeting had been better tempered than the previous one, and the District Council was now minded to approve the plans. However, the Highways Authority was still objecting. Thanks to the delays which had already taken place the cost of the project had risen from £1.2 to £2.8m.

6. Finance

Mrs Bath presented the areas covered by the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year 2021/2022.

6.1 The Annual Internal Audit Report had been circulated before the meeting and was reviewed and noted. There were no issues raised.

6.2 The internal control measures in place were described and reviewed by the meeting. These include the exercise of electors' rights to inspect the books during a given period. This year the inspection period will be from 13/6/22 to 22/7/22.

6.3 The internal controls were considered effective, and approval of the Annual Governance Statement was proposed by CB, seconded by CK and agreed by the meeting.

6.4 The Statement of Accounts had been circulated for review before the meeting. CB highlighted that the hedge laying costs for No Man's Land had been paid out of last year's funds but will be recovered from this year's precept.

6.5 Approval of the Accounting Statements was proposed by CB, seconded by IH and agreed by the meeting.

6.6 CB explained that the Village Meeting meets the qualifying criteria to exempt itself from External Review, having both income and expenditure less than £25,000, having been in existence for more than four years and having had no issues raised in previous External Reviews. To certify ourselves exempt from External Review was proposed by CB, seconded by JR and agreed by the meeting.

7. The Fessey Charity.

IH reported that he and CB had met with Rev Gillian and had made one donation of £60. In view of the lack of 'needy' people in the village it had been agreed to permit also grants to people up to the age of 25 to support education. Invitations for applications would be invited in preparation for the time when funds became available. In line with the terms of the Trust Deed, the needy and elderly would be given preference.

8. The Website and Village Digital Communications

AT announced that this would be his last report, due to his imminent move abroad. Since the last meeting there had been little of immediate interest to report but 76 messages had been sent round the village. The rota for volunteers to mow the churchyard still had a few vacancies, especially for July. AT explained that the time required in keeping the website up to date was between 2 and 6 hours per month in total and expressed his willingness to spend some time with a volunteer to take over this post. Eddie Ukleja volunteered for the post – to the relief and gratitude of the rest of the meeting.

9. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

HD had already begun to build the beacon on the hill for the celebration on Thursday 2nd June. The beacon was due to be lit at 21.45. It was agreed that there be a 'bring your own/share' meal on the green beginning at 18.30. SH would send fliers round the village just before the event with any further details. There would also be a short service of thanksgiving for the Queen, her life and reign on the green at 11.00 on Sunday 5th June. This would be similar to that on Remembrance Sunday and would last 20-30 minutes.

10. Community Area- Project Enable

CH had sent a report which MC read out.

Since the last meeting The Dioceses of Coventry had approved our Statement of Significance thus giving permission to proceed with a formal application for a Faculty to progress the project.

This requires provision to the Diocese of the architect's working drawings and detailed schedule and specifications – which could cost as much as £13,000. The PCC would not risk this amount of money on the mere possibility of getting the required permission. Without the permission we would not be eligible for the HS2 grant.

CH consulted with the Diocese who have now agreed to review the situation, and might offer us a Certificate of Recommendation which we could use to back up our grant application to HS2.

Ch had also consulted Irvin Klegerman of Wormleighton who had, in the recent past, followed the same procedure in seeking a grant from HS2. The church had applied jointly with the Parish Meeting for the grant – and had been successful.

CH was therefore seeking an undertaking from the Village Meeting to join the church in the Project Enable application. There would be no cost implications. It was proposed by MC, seconded by RH and agreed nem.con that the Village Meeting join with the church in the Project Enable application for a grant from HS2.

11. HS2

CK had attended the quarterly Steering Group Meeting at HS2 headquarters. Lighting, traffic and temporary lights were subjects discussed as being popular complaints. JR and others mentioned the number of trees being felled and the condition in which the land near the T junction had been left. CK observed that the finished design for the railway and landscaping had not yet been finalised but that fewer trees than originally planned had been felled. CK had also taken photos of the flooding at the corner below Hardwick Hill on 16th March and had sent them to Mike Lyons, Delivery Director of Phase 1 HS2 who would be meeting with EKFB and would raise this matter with them.

CK emphasised that the village should make use of the complaints hotline. Registering concerns helps guide HS2 as to where and how they are failing in their relationships with local communities and need to make efforts to improve.

12. Planning

The Old Vicarage, Freestanding Annexe

EU displayed planning drawings of the proposed property, copies of which are kept with these minutes. The property would become part of The Old Vicarage but sited behind the existing cowshed at the end of the garden of The Coach House. The following points were made from questions raised by the meeting; A new access would be via the drive to The Old Vicarage. The property would initially be for AU's aged mother. Using the rising slope of the hill the main living area would be on the first floor, with a Carer's accommodation on the ground floor (built into the hill). Disabled access to the main living area would be by platform lift. There would be ample parking space in the courtyard between the property and the cow shed which would remain unaltered. Mrs & Mrs Ukleja left the meeting.

There being no further questions or comments voting resulted in 19 people in the meeting and 5 by proxy, offering no objections and one abstention.

Land Adjacent to Chinnerys

PH brought to the attention of the meeting deviations to the planning application 20/01952/FUL that was supported at the Village Meeting on 24th August 2020. The deviation of most concern has been the addition of a clear glass window directly overlooking the rear garden of the neighbouring property. Representation to the Planning Department was made at the end of 2021 and they have subsequently confirmed that an amended planning application is required. As at the Village Meeting an amended application had not been received. Following enquiries after the meeting, a non-material amendment application is registered on the planning portal but a notice is not issued to advise. As such people will need to keep an eye on the portal if they wish to comment.

PH would speak to Sholto and Cassie Toner, the owners of the property, to inform them that it has been raised as a planning matter at the Village Meeting.

13. A.O.B

Highways

- The water leak at the top of High Lane had been repaired – thanks to CH.
- The loss of road edges opposite the bus shelter and further along the same road going north is getting worse and with a large pothole on the bend just before the Morrells Farming barns.
- Road markings around the village continue to deteriorate – some have now almost disappeared.
- Many thanks to all the people who picked up an amazing amount of litter from the approach roads to the village on the clear-up day, 9th April

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Lamp light- Mr and Mrs Holland offered a light similar to those in the Butchers Arms car park for any dark site in the village. It was thought a message on the village email might be of help.

Bluebell Woods Philip Robinson wished to advise the village that the bluebells are now in full bloom and that visitors are welcome from this weekend. But please ensure that all gates are closed and be aware of the sheep.

The date of the next meeting will be Thursday 21st July 2022

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm