

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12TH JANUARY 2016
7.30 PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE ROOM**

Present : Cllrs Coates, Eassom, Eldridge, Knott, Moore, Smith (Chairman), Tunkle, D/Cllr Mrs S Gallagher and D/Cllr P Whiting, the Clerk and Ms H Eldridge.

1. **Apologies** were accepted from C/Cllr Mrs Compton.
2. Declarations of Interest. The existence and nature of interests in items on the agenda to be declared by Councillors in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.
3. No public present.
4. The previously circulated draft minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2015 were approved after a slight alteration to the wording in item 5(b).
 - a) Matters Arising – The Trustees of the Memorial and Recreation Ground were informed of the decision to appoint Cllr Coates as a representative, this met with their approval, and a meeting has been arranged to discuss this and other matters.
5. **PARISH CLERK APPOINTMENT** – Cllrs Smith, Coates and Knott, interviewed candidates in November for this post. Ms Helen Eldridge was offered and has accepted the position, commencing from the 1st February 2016, this will be for a 6 month probationary period, 35 hours a month, salary agreed at NALC part time scales for LC1 and LC2 grades. A full contract of employment and other details will be finalised. It was also agreed that the retiring Clerk will continue to be employed until the end of February to facilitate a smooth transition. Ms Eldridge was present at the meeting and was introduced and welcomed by Councillors.
6. **PLANNING** – status report as circulated.

W15/1747 – Oakbank - granted, tree refused.
W15/1581LB - Stone Edge, withdrawn.
W15/1797 - 13 Hill Wootton Road, discussed – no objection.

 - a) Neighbourhood Plan. The Chairman reported on progress to date. A Steering Group meeting is planned for 21st January to progress the content of the Plan. This will be shared with parishioners at a public meeting scheduled for 10th March, prior to submission of the draft to WDC. In the meantime the dialogue with WDC is on going, in order to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is in broad conformity with the emerging Local Plan. Resubmission of the latter for examination is expected before the summer.
7. **FINANCE** – status reports as circulated.

Balance in accounts = No 1 £6080.46, No 2 no change = £5425.00 – it is anticipated that the balance in the No 2 account will be cleared before the end of the financial year, being allocated to the Neighbourhood Plan scheme.

Preliminary budget details as previously circulated were discussed, and it was resolved to increase the 2016/17 precept by 3% from £7777.00 to £8010. Clerk will advise relevant officer at WDC.
It was also resolved to make a payment to the Local History Group in response to their request made in 2014, discussed then, but left in abeyance until the financial position was more suitable, for help

with costs on producing their latest publication – and the amount of £300 was agreed. Clerk to action.

Cllr Eldridge declared an interest as he is Chairman of this group and did not take part in the discussion.

b) Payment approved for Clerk's December/January sundries £39.51.

8. PLAYGROUND/MEMORIAL GROUND/CAR PARK

A tree from outside the playground fell during inclement weather over Christmas damaging part of the fencing. Emergency measures were taken by B. Tebby who has now repaired the fence and removed all the debris. No knowledge to date of the costs incurred. As this tree was outside the playground area, details will be reported to WDC.

Fairways Maintenance contract will increase slightly from £1854 to £1910+ vat, - it was agreed to continue with this supplier.

Referring to the plans for improvements to the Village Hall access and car park, Cllr Eassom reported firstly on attempts to improve the lay-by area at the bottom of the slope by the bus stop with some changes, together with resurfacing part of the area, these suggestions, received from WCC Highway engineers were then discussed and approved, C/Cllr Compton had advised, in her absence, that there may be more funding available for this project.

The second part of this project, the car park improvement is likely to cost a great deal, the costs of the Engineers report are being met by the Village Hall committee have escalated and many other costs are likely to be incurred. It was agreed that this project will need further consultations.

Suggestions on a suitable way forward particularly in obtaining grants, were discussed, and this will be an ongoing project for some time. Representatives from the Trustees, Sports Club/LWPC/Village Hall will be meeting shortly to discuss this project.

Clerk advised that maintenance in other areas of the village may need consideration, as there does seem to be an inclination to expect Parishes to take on more.

Periodic maintenance which now appears to be necessary annually, for example cutting back the tinker-tank, and Elms bank may now be required on a more permanent basis. Also the Anchor Inn do not seem inclined to tidy their overhanging ivy, which may also need attention. It was agreed that areas needing maintenance should be inspected, listed and action taken.

9. HIGHWAYS/TRANSPORT/LIGHTING

It appears that very little can be done regarding the parking near the corner of the Hamlet.

Comments have been received from a concerned resident regarding the state of the verges, footpath and hedges on the public footpath from Leek Wootton to Kenilworth together with details of a leaking drain in the road. The Chairman has responded and efforts are being made to identify responsibility and take action. It appears the responsibility for the leaking drain may include Environmental Health and Severn Trent. It was also pointed out that there is considerable difficulty using this footpath at the Leek Wootton entrance caused by overhanging branches and foliage from the hedges.

(note County Highways had already responded by cutting hedges from Broad Lane Caravans to Kenilworth in an effort to reinstate open ditches).

10. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

D/Cllr Whiting presented a brief report on WDC's budget and finances commenting that it is likely there will be an increase in Council Tax, and the need to make savings. It is anticipated, that if details of the revised Local Plan are approved, the picture will become clearer.

D/Cllr Gallagher had nothing further to report commenting that the plans for upgrading leisure facilities had caused some problems which are being resolved.

In her absence C/Cllr Mrs Compton had also reported that budget difficulties are anticipated.

a) Miscellaneous/Correspondence -

Details of the Sports Club Village Quiz on the 23rd January were circulated. It appears no one is available to form a team.

A Public Scrutiny meeting held recently with the Chief Constable and Crime Commissioner Ron Ball was attended by Cllr Moore, who reported a very poor attendance. There is another meeting scheduled at Atherstone on 19th January.

The WRW Forum meets on 28th January, a query was raised that there does not appear to be any reports from SNT's recently.

b) It was agreed that NALC accreditation scheme should be delayed until the new Clerk feels able to address the necessary paperwork. This item is to be revisited in 3-4 months time.

11. There was no other business, the meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

12. Date of next meeting – 9th February, 2016.

Signed.....date.....