### HIGHLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**An ordinary meeting of Highley Parish Council was held via video conferencing on Tuesday 2nd February 2021 at 7.00pm .**

**Present**: Chair :Cllr.M.Brooks, Cllrs**.**  P.Vinall, N.Barker, D.Tremellen, J.Law, ,J.Marshall, R.Honeybourne, A.Honeybourne,. D.Bayley, Mr.D.Thakrar.

Clerk: Mrs.E.Preston

Parishioners: 2

In Attendance: PC Steve Mellor

00. Parishioners Time (15 minutes) - **Speaking at a Meeting** - You do not have the right to speak at a meeting unless invited to do so by the Council.  If you wish to speak /attend, then you must contact the Clerk beforehand so that a link to the meeting can be emailed to you.

***Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting. Members are reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether the interest is entered in the register of member’s interest maintained by the monitoring officer.***

**01 Apologies for absence and reasons for absence**

Apologies received Cllr. M.Phipson – unable to access Zoom. Cllr. A.Rodgers – work commitments

Absent no apologies: Cllr. G.Court, Cllr.R.Broome.

**02 To confirm the minutes of the meetings dated 5th January 2021 – *RESOLVED*** that the minutes were a true and correct record. Chair to sign the minutes,

**03. Election by co-option of Parish Councillor to fill vacant position.**

Applications received from Mr.T.Quinn and Ms.N. Hindley

Both applicants addressed the Council. It was ***RESOLVED*** to co-opt Mr.T.Quinn to the Parish Council.

**04. Matters Arising**

CCTV – Clerk reported that it was planned for the Technical Services to be on site to work on the ANPR System and Severn Centre week commencing 8th February 2021

Youth Project – Two Volunteers to take part in training with Shropshire Youth Association. Thanks to Pete Vinall for all his work.

**05.Correspondence** (

SALC – Census information

SALC – Election Training – 26th February- Clerk unable to attend, Cllr.Vinall to attend.

SALC – News in Brief - Contact Information, Lockdown Summary

Severn Valley Country Park – Letter and Report. Requesting confirmation of financial support for this year. – This has already been agreed for this year.

**06. Planning**

Address: The Caravan, Land Adjoining Abberley View, Church Street, Highley, Shropshire, WV16 6NA

Proposal: Variation of condition 1 attached to planning permission 17/03498/FUL dated 12/10/2017 for the temporary siting of a static caravan.

Applicant: Mr Brian Cook (The Caravan, Land Adjoining Abberley View, Church Street, Highley, Nr.Bridgnorth, WV16 6NA, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 4PX) – ***RESOLVED*** No Objections

**Planning Decisions**

Reference: 20/04581/FUL (validated: 01/12/2020)

Address: 74 Yew Tree Grove, Woodhill, Highley, WV16 6DG

Proposal: Erection of a first-floor side extension

Decision: Grant Permission

**07. Email System – from December 2020 Meeting –** Following discussion Cllr.T.Quinn to look at the quotation with a view to obtaining further quotations, ***AGENDA*** next meeting. n

**08. Silent Soldier Statue -** Clerk reported that the Silent Soldier to the south of the village had been stolen, the other Soldiers had been removed ad put in storage until nearer Remembrance Sunday. Cost to purchase new Soldier was £125.00. ***RESOLVED*** that a new Soldier is purchased to replace the stolen one. PC Steve Mellor offered to raise a crime report

**09. Community Governance Review –** No Comments

**10. Medical Facilities –** Cllr.Tremellen concerned and disappointed about the CCG and its behaviour towards the patients. It appears the CCG are not concerned about small rural practices.

Concern from Councillors about issues with the practice premises***. AGENDA*** item for next meeting.

**11. Churchyard *Maintenance – RESOLVED t***o defer this item until we hear back from Philip Dunne MP. ***AGENDA*** next meeting.

**12. Maintenance Contractor** – ***RESOLVED t***o agree with the recommendations of the Revenue and Resources Committee and increase the rate of pay for the Maintenance Contractor

**13. Shropshire Councillors Report**. In these reports I try my damnedest to stay positive, especially with us being surrounded by a doom and gloom pierced only by a vaccine-generated sunbeam that holds out the glimmer of hope of an end to this fearsome pandemic, but these are supposed to be reports of what I suppose are the “political” (small ‘p’) events that affect our uniquely compact community, and finding anything positive in what’s happening at the soon-to-be closed Shirehall is, without putting too fine a point on it, more than just a tad difficult. I make no apology for treating my audience like adults and reporting on things as they are.

Highways remains the focus of attention it has been for as long as I can remember, except that the intensity of that focus has increased by an order of magnitude in direct proportion to the cuts in Shropshire’s highways budget.

Knowing how hard highways has been hit by Shropshire’s need to meet the ever-increasing cost of children and adult social care, it is difficult to be critical of portfolio holder Steve Davenport without qualifying the criticism by saying that whilst it is not all down to a failure of strategic management, the complete lack of supervision at ground level points to lack of effective operational management at the point it is most needed. The obvious, although ideologically problematic, solution to that would be to do what I have advocated for many years… bring it all back in-house!

Councillor Pete Vinall did a run from the B4555/B4363 junction (Kinlet end) to Eardington to assess the latest highways work and came back with what we expected – a catalogue of failures that in my crude way could be summed up in two words, the second of which would be “take”.

The other issue that has taken up a fair bit of time has been the vaccine roll-out. I did ask Peter Nutting where he had been whilst neighbouring council leaders were challenging Shropshire’s position at the bottom of the vaccination league table, but answer came there none. Not that I expected one, to be honest, Peter Nutting is not only a believer in but an advocate of the policy of ‘ignore them and they’ll go away’. A seasoned politician, he has arrogant disregard programmed into his DNA. He does not care because with the lockdown and a move to a virtual council, the shift of power from the elected body to the Executive is pretty much complete. Shropshire Council is now a business.

That was a realisation that hit me a few years back, not long after Peter Nutting replaced Malcolm Pate in a palace coup that saw him wreak a terrible revenge on those who had conspired to get him removed from his Cabinet position. His first declaration as leader of the ruling group at Full Council following the 2017 local elections was to dismiss the Planning Task & Finish Group whilst it was still deliberating changes to the makeup of the planning committees. He did not suggest it, he did not ask for it to be put to the vote, he declared it as a matter of fact. He started as he meant to go on!

Which explains why we are still waiting for the outcome of whatever deliberations were supposed to take place over the provision of a ‘safe’ crossing to protect children emerging from the access to the 20-home development behind the telephone exchange. The “treat ‘em mean” (without the “keep ‘em keen” bit) philosophy practised by Peter Nutting has been adopted and honed to perfection by Shropshire’s planning department. If anything personifies the arrogant disregard of Shropshire Council for the impact of planning decisions on Highley it is what is happening with the TC Homes development.

Remember, there is a condition on that planning permission that states that the houses cannot be occupied UNTIL a crossing is in place, something which a highway planning officer was supposed to be working on. A few weeks back the head of planning, Ian Kilby, gave TC Homes the go-ahead to build the houses, mentioning “improvements” to a crossing that does not yet exist and which no one involved in the development (including TC Homes) has any idea about. I questioned Ian Kilby about that. I am still waiting for an answer. The officer dealing with the matter simply ignores all emails, but she does have a reputation for that. (When I chased up an answer to an earlier enquiry I had an email from TC Homes thanking me because they had also been waiting on an answer to the same question. Now that is not just unprofessional, it is bad.)

There have been changes in our Safer Neighbourhood Team, PCSO Sue Eden having retired in December after a long and distinguished career with the police. She was a great officer to have working for us, kind and professional and not afraid to speak her mind. I am not aware of any plans to replace Sue directly, but a new sergeant looks as if she might bolster the team, I just hope she sticks around because we need people who want to know the area well enough to respond to concerns that might not be important in the greater scheme of things, but important enough to upset a settled community like ours.

And for the first time ever, at last week’s Performance Management Scrutiny Meeting I stormed out of a meeting after an angry exchange with the leader of the Labour group, Alan Mosley, who had arrogantly barged into my asking a question about disabled parking at the proposed relocation of Shirehall to a new civic centre in the Pride Hill shopping centre. It was a display of arrogance that put Peter Nutting to shame and for which there was no excuse, not that Alan Mosley needs an excuse to steam-roll his way through anyone else’s concerns. But as a prominent member of Shrewsbury Town Council and indifferent to what happens elsewhere in the county, he was only living up to his form.  
  
He was angry that I appeared to be taking up time that he wanted for himself, time constraints on questions from Members now being more tightly enforced. The irony is that those constraints are designed to rein in people like Alan Mosley whose monotone political ramblings are what makes him one half of what I call “the suicide squad”. Asked by a councillor friend what I meant by the expression, I explained that by the time Mosley and one other (who shall remain nameless to protect, in this instance, the innocent) had finished their monologues you were on the verge of slitting your wrists.

**13. Finance:**

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| Lee Gough | Christmas Tree | 400.00 |
| S.J.MAINTENANCE | Maintenance issues | 411.00 |
| M..E.PRESTON | Salary | 1012.06 |
| HMRC | Tax & NI | 80.05 |
| Hiline Electrical | Christmas Lights | 438.26 |

Meeting Closed 8.35pm

Signed: ……………………………………………………Chair Date: ……………………………………………..