**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIMLEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT SWINDON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 14th DECEMBER 2022 at 7.30PM**

**PRESENT: - MRS Y NOCK (CHAIRMAN) PRESIDING**

 **PRESENT COUNCILLORS: MRS S FROST, MR P HEMMING,**

 **MR R LEES, MR M CRISP,**

 **APOLOGIES:- MRS M SINCLAIR, CCLR V WILSON**

 **NOT PRESENT:- MRS S OLIVER**

 **OTHERS :- MRS S FARLEY CLERK,**

 **NO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT**

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS –**

**Section 17 – reminds Parish Councils to review if any of the decisions made at the Parish Council meeting have implications in relation to crime, disorder, anti-social behavior or community safety in general.**

**Cllr Lees: as a member of South Staffordshire District Council (SSDC), will reconsider any planning applications at District level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations at that tier and at District level will declare an interest arising from membership of this Parish Council when expressing a view on any relative matters**

CRIME FIGURES 15/11/2022- 14/12/2022 AS RECEIVED:

**Main headlines since the last meeting:**

**Burglary Business –**

* **Himley Park –** 23/11 – Report of an out building broken into by cutting the padlock off with what appears to be a disc cutter. Nothing taken, no witnesses or cctv.

**Vehicle crime –**

* **Himley Plantation** – 08/12 – At approximately 20:00hrs a car was securely parked in the lay by whilst out walking, upon return the rear passenger window had been smashed and items taken from within. No cctv or witnesses
* **Himley Country Hotel –** Sometime between 23/11 -20:00hrs – 24/11 – 08:00hrs entry had tried to be gained to a securely parked vehicle on the car park by drilling several holes to the inside door panel.

**ASB hotspots –**

* **Baggeridge Craft Village** – There have been several reports of cars parking up by the craft village during the evenings revving engines, playing load music, they have also gained access to the barriered car park by driving over the gutter wheel spinning and racing around. Vehicles are also parking in front of the barrier to Baggeridge House apartments preventing access to their car park.

Unfortunately, we have no registration numbers of the vehicles, we are regularly patrolling the location and speaking with informants.

**Proactive news –**

* **Operation Cable** targeting ASB hotspots and **Operation Lightning** targeting vehicle crime are up and running frequently, with officers utilising both marked and unmarked vehicles. Up-to-date information regarding these operations can be found on Twitter and Facebook.
* **Please follow South Staffs Police on Twitter**: @SStaffsPolice
* **Facebook:** ‘Staffordshire Police’ & ‘South Staffordshire Police’
* We are looking for volunteers for Speed Watch. If any residents are interested please direct them to <http://www.staffssaferroads.co.uk/my-community/community-speed-watch>
* Please recommend Smart Alert to any residents interested <https://staffordshiresmartalert.uk/staffs/>
* Please feel free to encourage public participants to try reporting incidents via our ‘Digital 101’ service. A private message can be sent to Staffordshire Police pages on Facebook / Twitter, instead of phoning 101 and waiting in a queue.

MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING:–

* Play Safety Report Awaiting quotes for in-filling under swing seats.
* Defibrillators Cheque was signed for purchasing two on Proforma invoice.
* Change of Bank. There is still no explanation on where previous £30 deposit came from.
* Car Boot toilets were removed after sale on 16.11.22
* HMRC penalty charge - Cllr Frost reported that she is unable to speak to someone from HMRC but

the website indicates that the penalty charges may have been cancelled. She is awaiting

confirmation.

* School Road Gulley Covers. The stolen ones were replaced with non-metallic ones.
* School Road Closure. Cllr Nock sent details to County stating measures needed to provide

 temporary bus stops for the planned School Road closure of two weekdays in December. County

 decided that the closure would be moved to Saturday 10th December and hopefully completed in

 one day, thereby not needing to provide temporary bus stops for school journeys. The work was

 completed on Sunday.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS :-

* 22/01104/FUL - The creation of a playground at Himley Hall. Val 05.12.22, Consult to 28.12.22, Deadline 30.01.23. C.O. Laura Moon. No objections.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS AWAITING A DECISION :-

* 22/01005/TTREE 20 Penn Road. Acer spp. (Sycamore) TPO No. 25/1966 - Crown lift by removing three lowest branches. Val 21.10.22, Consult to 10.11.22, Deadline 16.12.22, C.O. Gavin Pearce
* 22/01000/FUL Himley Cricket Club, Stourbridge Road. Proposed boundary ball stop netting on part of southern boundary. Val 18.11.22., consult to 13.12.22, deadline 13.01.23. C.O. Gareth Dwight.
* 22/01008/FUL Land at Cherry Lane, erection of one dwelling with associated access, parking and amenity areas. Val 04.11.22, consult to 06.12.22, deadline 30.12.22. C.O. Tom Nutt. HPC objected for the following reasons:
1. The ecology report states that the *“Construction Zone is of ‘moderate ecological value' consisting primarily of trees and of moderate ecological value and low value improved grassland” and “features of highest ecological value within the development site are the mature trees   and larger orchard trees (cherry, apple, pear). These should be protected in accordance the guidance in BS5837. A tree protection area and root protection zone should be established to avoid damage during the construction phase around all retained trees and hedges”.* This is probably true but the site is on the edge of a cluster of housing which has been added to in the last few years and also opposite a wooded area; and therefore vital as a local corridor for wildlife. If approved, the report also asks for measures to be taken to ensure that aids to wildlife, such as bird and bat bricks are incorporated into house walls and hedgehog gaps in fences; this points to the fact that wildlife would be affected - and does not confirm to EQ4. We have found that ecological reports are completely ignored when planning permission has been granted. No one ever checks on this aspect during or after construction.
2. HPC’s policy is to increase tree planting in the Parish and is actively involved in doing so. This development would involve removing many trees.
3. The layout of the proposed house on the site could suggest that more dwellings would be added in future.
4. There are no special circumstances offered to override the Green Belt policy.  Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist.
5. The site is within the buffer zone of Himley Conservation Area and is within the setting of a number of listed buildings.
6. Highway Concerns: There is no Highways report, the entrance to the site is from a private lane, within a few metres of a traffic light junction on the A449, a dangerous junction.

Highways have since commented that Cherry Lane is a private road and as such, Staffordshire County Council are not in a position to grant access to the proposed development.

* 22/01073/FUL 14 Chalmers Road. Single storey rear extension, Val 15.11.22, consult to 15.12.22, deadline 10.01.23, C.O., Laura Moon.

PLANNING DECISIONS : -

* 22/00963/TREE Cherry Cottage, in Himley Village and Parkland Conservation Area: T1, Betula spp. (Silver Birch) - Crown reduction by up to 2 metres Cherry Cottage Cherry Lane val 13.10.22. consult to 08.11.22. Deadline 24.11.22., C.O. Gavin Pearce. Approved 28.11.22

HIGHWAYS DATA – none received

ANY OTHER BUSINESS INCLUDING RESIDENTS COMPLAINTS :-

* Himley Country Hotel. There was an incident on 20.11.22, police have not released any details. Residents must report any incidents they see to the police.
* Virtual Locality Meeting 24.11.22. Cllr Nock attended. Chief Inspector Chris Cotton gave an in-depth talk on police work and answered questions from Cllrs. There has been a dramatic increase in car theft and Staffs police have joined forces with West Midlands and Motorway police to tackle the problem. For residents in extreme financial difficulty, there is funding available from the Here to Help Campaign, Staffordshire Connects and Community help points, the nearest being at Wombourne.
* The Forest of Mercia replaced and added more saplings to The Playing Field mid-November.
* A449/B4176 junction traffic lights A Wombourne Cllr has encouraged County to change the sequence of the lights to ease the traffic delays from the Wombourne direction. Cllr Nock pointed out to County that it had been tried about 15 years ago but at peak times it caused a build-up of traffic of 2.6 miles back to Milking Bank Island in Dudley on the B4176.
* Parish Council Elections 2023 HPC has been reminded that Parish elections are on 4th May, 2023. Rules state that when a Cllr retires from their position within six months before the day on which the Councillor would have regularly retired (i.e., on the fourth day after the next ordinary election), the PC may co-opt a person to fill the vacancy although there is no obligation to do so. Cllr Lees noted that new rules have been made to prevent fraudulent voting; anyone voting in person at a polling station will have to show photographic identification such as a passport, bus pass or driving license, before they will be allowed to vote.
* Precept for next year HPC will ask for a 2% increase.
* Bus shelter opposite The Dudley Arms Cllr Crisp reported that the shelter was in bad condition and will enquire about replacement costs. HPC needs to consider if vandalism makes a replacement worthwhile.
* Parish Summit The next Summit will be on 9th February, 2023 at the S Staffs Council Offices in Codsall.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT: -

100540 SWINDON COMMUNITY ASSN ROOM HIRE FOR 2022 £110.00

100541 S FARLEY – CLERK WAGES £514.10

100542 HMRC – CLERK TAX £128.40

100543 DEFIBSTORE – PURCHASE OF 2 DEFIBRILLATORS £3204.00

DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING: -  **Wednesday 18th January 2023**

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.34pm