**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIMLEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT SWINDON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON WEDNESDAY 19th FEBRUARY 2025 at 7.30PM**

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

 **PRESENT COUNCILLORS: CLLR S OLIVER, CLLR R LEES, CLLR G BOWEN,**

 **APOLOGIES:- CCLR V WILSON, MR S BROWNE**

 **OTHERS:- MRS S FARLEY (CLERK)**

 **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:- NONE**

**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**

The minutes were ratified for both December and January meetings

**MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING :-**

* Sink Hole: We have been advised by C Cllr Wilson that after 3 inspections “From the original enquiry you can see the verge has a slope which runs down to the stream and brook. There is no “sink hole”, I think the verge has just eroded over time, but there are no safety concerns with the kerb, there is not a footpath here that anyone should be walking on. Across the road there is a footpath that allows pedestrian movements, leading up to the traffic lights. Having spoken with Mark Keeling, he tells me this is not even County Council land. Where the cabling is, however, some work will take place in due course”.
* Gospel End Flats area: Clerk to check with Street Scene that tidying this area is on their list of jobs waiting to be carried out.
* Cleaning of benches, picnic tables, notices and swing seats: These will be jet washed in March.
* Lime tree in Land off Plantation Lane: Following notification of danger from a lime tree from a neighbour, a director of Taylor Reed Homes has asked if they are allowed to remove it; however, the director had informed us that planning permission is required as the tree is covered by a Tree Preservation Order. We advised Taylor Reed Homes of this.
* Himley Notice Board:   Clerk has made enquiries and we can claim back costs of a Shelley Signs board up to £1,000 from the Village Centre Improvement Fund. It was decided to claim for a notice board instead of another bench as the existing notice board is rotting and notices get wet. Noticeboard has been ordered and the Clerk will complete the paperwork for the reimbursement of the cost of the noticeboard.

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS :-**

* 25/00118/FULHH   Rose Cottage, Plantation Lane. Single storey rear extension and two storey front extension. Val 14.02.25, consult to 14.03.25, deadline 11.04.25, C.O. Caitlin Harper. No Objections.
* 24/01056/FULM   Land at Park Farm, Himley, (rear of Himley Hall). The temporary development of a battery energy storage system (BESS) with ancillary infrastructure to provide balancing services to the electricity grid. Val 29.01.25, consult to 08.03.25, deadline 30.04.25, C.O. Imogen Hopkin.

Himley Parish Council sent the following objection to this application:-

The site is in Green Belt.
This land produces food for animals, it is cut for hay every year.
The nearby farmhouse would suffer noise disruption.
The site can be seen from a public Footpath, especially in winter when leaves have fallen.
The access road to be constructed crosses a Public Footpath.
The site is surrounded by woodland, including Ancient Woodland and deciduous woodland. There are roe deer, muntjac, brown hares, buzzards, badger tracks and fox visible most days in this area.
The nearby Spring Pool is one of a series of lakes and brooks feeding the Great Pool in the grounds of Himley Hall and onwards to the brook within gardens in School Road. These brooks are inhabited by protected species and would be affected by run-off from the site.
There are monkey puzzle trees on the farm of historic interest, they were planted when Dowager Lady Ward occupied the hall (mid 19 century). They should remain.
Where will drainage from toilets and welfare building go?

There is no right turn out of the proposed access/exit point as it is on a 70-mph speed limit dual carriageway, well known for having the outside lane also full of faster traffic with drivers trying to overtake as many inside-lane vehicles as possible before the dual carriageway ends.
BESS installations are known to be a fire risk so some of the above points need to be taken into consideration and the fact that there are many acres of trees in the vicinity with much wildlife means that if there is a fire, it could be catastrophic to a very large area. The nearest Fire Station only has Retained Firemen, other manned stations are probably 15 and 20 minutes away having to travel through urban areas with much traffic.
Please confirm access to the National Grid will be available within 3 years.
Please bear these points in mind whilst considering this application

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS AWAITING A DECISION -** None

**PLANNING DECISIONS**  -

* 24/00875/FULHH   20 Penn Road, Side infill extension. Val 16.10.24, consult to 10.11.24, deadline 11.12.24, C.O. Caitlin Harper. No objections.     Approved with conditions 30.01.25

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS INCLUDING RESIDENTS COMPLAINTS :-**

* School Road: The road has been swept and pavements weeded by Street Scene’s Extra Work and ground conditions have allowed the Playing Field hedge to be cut.
* Himley Lane:  Flooding under the Railway Walk Bridge; the gulley and underground pipe which connects to the brook is obviously blocked as a whole section of road floods in heavy rain; it has been several years since it was last unblocked. This has been reported to County.  44280, 09.02.25.
* Gullies in School Road: Many are full of leaves and tree debris. This has also been reported to County. 4428022  and will be considered on the next planned inspection of the area.
* Crooked House: The Public Inquiry into the demolishing of the unlisted building without planning permission, scheduled for 11th March 2025, will now not go ahead as planned but be held in obeyance until such time a future date has been set. The owners, ATE Farms Ltd. appealed to The High Court to delay the meeting.
* Himley Lane: Pothole on bend by The Plantation which was reported 15.06.22 was repaired to a good standard by 13.02.25.
* Clerk suggests we open a bank account giving interest, she will enquire.
* Clerk will arrange to update the bank signatories to add Cllr Bowen and set up online banking access for him.
* Clerk is in the process of updating ‘The Circuit’ contact details for the defibrillator at The Summerhouse in Gospel End.
* The Clerk advised that the VAT claim had been processed and that £682.85 for the period 1/6/2023 – 31/12/2024 had been received into the bank account.
* Cllr Nock is to attend the Locality Forun on 27/2/2025, this is a virtual meeting 6-7.30pm
* There was no playing field update received from the resident living adjacent to the field this month.

**ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:**

* 000036 - Swindon Community Association - Council chambers usage for 2024 £110.00
* 000037 - South Staffs Council – grounds maintenance £121.31 (2nd quarter 2024/25)
* 000038 - Y P Nock - Website annual fees – re a personal online payment to Chipmonk Computers £85.00
* 000039 - Shelley Signs – Noticeboard for Himley £990.00
* 000040 - Shelley Signs – Delivery charge for noticeboard £132.00

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING: -  **Wednesday 26th MARCH 2025 at 7.30pm**

**COUNCILLOR VACANCIES**

There are 3 vacancies for Parish Councillors on Himley Parish Council.

Please contact the clerk via email if you would like further details regarding this – himleyparishcouncil@gmail.com