

## Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2019

**Present:** Michael Hutchings (Chairperson), Ian Macfarlane, David Peet, Jenny Peet and Simon Purcell.

**Also present:** Julie Ferguson (Clerk), District and County Councillor William Wallace and District Councillor Hayward Burt.

There were 45 members of the public present at the start of the meeting.

**The meeting started at 19:30.**

**1. To receive any apologies.**

No apologies had been received.

**2. Public Open Session** - to consider any matters raised by members of the public.

A member of the public complained that additional street signs had appeared in Cowpath Lane warning of children. In light of the Community Plan Policy to reduce unnecessary street furniture it was felt that many country lanes have children present and this should not alone warrant warning signs. Michael Hutchings said this subject would be discussed by the PC at Agenda item 6 vi).

Michael Hutchings expressed thanks to the organisers of the Gardening Club for putting on a fantastic show.

**3. Members' declaration of interests.**

Michael Hutchings declared a personal interest in any issues relating to the Charlton Horethorne Community Land Trust as he is a director of the trust.

**4. To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 24 June 2019**

**RESOLVED:** It was proposed and agreed to approve the minutes as presented.

**5. To hear reports from:**

a. **PCSO John Winfield** was not present.

b. **District Councillor Hayward Burt** urged residents to visit the SSDC Local Plan review before it closes on the 16<sup>th</sup> September. A drop in session at Wincanton is to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> August and an internet link would be provided to the Clerk, which could be forwarded to parishioners on request.

*Action Parish Clerk*

c. **County Councillor William Wallace** reported that the grant of £600 for the purchase of goal posts had been agreed. They would be for both village and school use, to be located on the community field which was the property of Sherborne Estates. The PC thanked William for his efforts in securing the funding for the goal posts which would be a welcome addition to the field.

**6. Council Matters, including implementation of the Community Plan (CP)**

a. To receive reports from members on their areas of responsibilities, specifically in relation to the CP including:

i. HD2 provision of a minimum of four affordable homes in the Parish (MH)

To be included in the discussion for Agenda item 9c.

ii. To hear an update on the work of Charlton Horethorne Community Land Trust (CLT).  
(Mark Hughes)

To be included in the discussion for Agenda item 9c.

iii. HD3 provision of small number of downsizing/retirement homes in the village (MH)

To be included in the discussion for Agenda item 9c.

iv. HD 4 & 5 provision of a small number of workshops and office units in the village (IM)

Ian Macfarlane said that he would be attending the next meeting of the 'Working From Home' group which was to be held in the Kings Arms on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> August at 8pm.

*Action Ian Macfarlane*

- v. ES1, 2 & 3 – investigation of the demand for new facilities for young children, teenagers and sporting activities (JP)

There was nothing to report.

- vi. TRS 1 to 7 – Traffic and road safety issues (SP)

Simon Purcell said that he was organising a road sign inventory, in light of a number of new signs appearing throughout the Parish. The results would be reported in the Parish Magazine.

**Action Simon Purcell & Jenny Peet**

b. Defibrillator Group

- i. To report on a meeting with a group of parishioners about the feasibility of acquiring a defibrillator. (IM)

Ian Macfarlane reported that he was liaising with the defibrillator group who had already met with the Community Heartbeat Trust (CHT). The CHT had offered a managed solution which would simplify the involvement of the PC. The Clerk had approached SSDC and the application was subject to a 90 day consultation period which it was hoped would be complete in time for the October PC meeting. The Clerk had been advised that the Phone Box was listed.

**7. Financial Matters**

- a. To approve payments of:

Zöe Godden	Expenses June 2019	£51.02
Julie Ferguson	Salary & expenses June & July 2019	£244.11
HMRC	PAYE June & July 2019	£47.40
SALC	Councillor planning training	£30.00
SSDC	Election fees	£245.67

**RESOLVED: it was proposed and agreed to approve the payments as presented and that Trevor Gill and Ann Reeder would sign the cheques.**

**Action Parish Clerk**

- b. Any other financial matters.

No other financial matters were raised.

**8. Correspondence**

- a. Email ref: Millennium Green.

An email had been received from a visitor to Millennium Green, reporting that dog faeces had been found on the green. Simon Purcell said that he hoped the report was an isolated incident as he had cut the grass recently and had not found dog faeces. It was agreed that the situation would be monitored and any problems reported to the Millennium Green Trust.

**Action Simon Purcell**

- b. Email ref: Street furniture.

An email had been received from a resident of the Parish objecting to a number of highway warning signs appearing in the village. David Peet explained that, since the signs are warning of children and are located close to the school, they could be viewed as necessary. Councillor William Wallace further explained that the County Highways Department had a compulsory statutory duty to erect warning signs on roads near to schools.

- c. Email ref: Route 60+

An email had been received from Somerset Road Safety Team offering to run a free of charge talk to older drivers with the aim of keeping them on the road, safer for longer. It was agreed that this would be a good activity to hold in the Parish. Michael Hutchings asked for it to be put on the agenda at the next PC meeting.

**Action Parish Clerk**

**9. Planning**

- a. To report any relevant planning decisions made by SSDC: **19/00975/FUL** – Land adjoining Wynfield, Cowpath Lane, Charlton Horethorne. DT9 4NR – **Granted with conditions**  
**19/00486/FUL** – Heron Farmhouse, Old Bristol Road, Sigwells, Yeovil, DT9 4LN – **Granted with conditions**

**Noted.**

- b. To consider the following planning applications and make recommendations to SSDC

There were no new planning applications.

- c. To report the receipt of, and consider a response to, a letter from Grass Roots Planning Ltd (GRPL) on behalf of Hopkins Estates Ltd (HEL).

Michael Hutchings opened the discussion explaining that the letter received 10 days earlier presented 3 different concept options for a proposed development on a field to the east of Harvest Lane, Charlton Horethorne.

It comprised a total of 25 houses to include 9 affordable homes with additional commercial/industrial units. Vehicle access would be via Harvest Lane and pedestrian access via North Road. They planned to bury overhead cables, retain some hedgerows and had also offered garden extensions to 2 neighbouring properties. He explained that the PC's role would be to have an open mind on the development. They would open up the dialogue and be involved in discussions, providing guidance to ensure the best outcome for the village and residents. Any negotiations for the purchase of land for affordable housing would be conducted by the CLT.

Jenny Peet said that her initial thoughts were that it was a pleasant design, however she was aware that these were simple concepts with no detail attached.

Simon Purcell said that the concepts were simply marketing material and bore little relevance to the final application that would inevitably be submitted.

David Peet was interested to meet with GRPL and HEL. He felt that it was important to get to know them and their intentions for the development.

Ian Macfarlane pointed out that the CP detailed a maximum of 20 new homes, to include 4 affordable homes & workshops. The proposals were in excess of this, albeit very well thought out and professional.

Michael Hutchings asked Councillors William Wallace & Hayward Burt for their views. WW explained that they were on 'watching brief' and had no opinion.

Michael Hutchings asked Mark Hughes to speak on behalf of the CLT.

Mark Hughes firstly established that nobody from HEL or GRPL was present at the meeting, before going on to summarise the proposals from the CLT point of view. The main points made were as follows:

- The CP showed a requirement for housing had been identified, therefore it shouldn't be a surprise that HEL had responded with a proposal that almost reflected the CP.
- Permission being granted is not a done deal, there are challenges in changing the land from agricultural to residential and building outside the development boundary.
- CLT had tried and failed to buy the land. The sale price to HEL was reported to be £195,000.
- CLT main aims would be to secure some affordable housing so that it would benefit people who had longstanding links to the village.
- Risk that more land could be developed and that, after permission is granted, viability issues can be used to reduce the quality and increase the density of the housing.
- The role of the CLT would be to influence the process as much as possible to end up with a development that meets the needs of the village.
- CLT intended to engage with HEL & GRPL to work with them, being careful to create a legal structure & processes to ensure that they cannot remove the benefits being sought.

#### **20:25 The Chairperson allowed a public open session (meeting closed).**

Michael Hutchings invited members of the public to speak on the proposals. A number of points were made as follows:

- Thanks were given to Jenny Peet for arranging the displays in the Village Hall and on the Parish Council notice board on the Village Green which have helped many people to better understand the plans.
- 6 properties along the eastern side of the site are affected by the options submitted.
- By offering 3 options, people are misled into choosing which one is best instead of considering if development on this scale can be justified.
- Proposal is excessive, using prime agricultural land with no suitable highway links.
- All 3 options should be rejected.
- CP identified a need for 20 houses by 2026 and new development should be provided via infill sites.
- SSDC local plan identifies Charlton Horethorne as a rural settlement where development will be strictly controlled. Five year housing land supply is ahead of target in rural areas.

- Because of the topography of the land rising from east to west, the development would sit in the backdrop to the village, interrupting the landscape setting and damaging the appearance of the area.
- Any properties should be built in local stone reflecting the traditional character of the village.
- Water run off needs to be managed. Potential to increase flood risk in the area.
- CLT needs to have freehold ownership of the affordable housing, which needs to be retained in perpetuity and the homes not subject to a right-to-buy agreement.
- The proposal should be rejected because affordable homes are never affordable, the development is 25% larger than what is in the CP and the development will only get bigger.
- Villagers have asked for infill sites, but nothing ever happens because of the NIMBY effect.
- Developers will always present something that is larger than what they really want to build, because it inevitably is cut back by the planners.
- It is too big, but it should be considered further because the village needs more housing. It could be acceptable with careful management.
- Many of the people objecting are living in new houses in the village.
- When do Highways get involved? They should be involved in these early discussions.
- The vibrancy will be lost if new families are not brought into the village. The effects would be felt in the school, shop and numerous village organisations & clubs.

**20:50 The Chairperson re-opened the meeting.**

Michael Hutchings brought the public session to an end and asked each Councillor for their views on meeting with CLT, SSDC, HEL & GRPL.

David Peet said that SSDC should be asked if they have been in contact with HEL & GRPL, but was unsure if CLT should be involved at this stage.

Ian Macfarlane said that SSDC should be involved and that the meeting with HEL and GRPL should be in conjunction with CLT as there are common interests.

Simon Purcell agreed that SSDC and CLT should be invited to control the affordable housing aspects.

Jenny Peet agreed and said that CLT had been working hard to satisfy the CP.

Michael Hutchings said that the proposal will lead to a full application and that compromise would be required. He was unsure if CLT would want to be involved at this early stage, but might want to watch and wait until an application is received.

Councillor William Wallace said that SSDC would not want to be involved in a meeting at this stage. It was therefore agreed by all Councillors that SSDC would not be invited to attend the meeting.

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed for the PC to request a meeting with Hopkins Estates Ltd. & Grass Roots Planning Ltd.**

*Action Parish Clerk*

**10. Items of Report / Future Business**

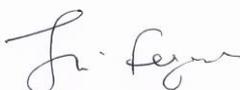
Michael Hutchings reported that he had seen an article in the Blackmore Vale Magazine saying that a local business, Olive's Kitchen (based in Stowell and owned by the Alhusens) was a finalist in the small business of the year, and offered congratulations.

**11. Public Open Session** - to consider any matters raised by members of the public.  
There were no matters raised at this time.

**12. Date of Next Meeting:** 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2019

**The meeting ended at 20:55.**

**Agreed & signed by the Chair** \_\_\_\_\_



Julie Ferguson  
Parish Clerk

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_