

## Minutes of Haresfield Parish Council Meeting

Held in the Village Hall on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Present:** Councillors Nicky Ford, Alan White, Ursula Jeakins, John Hunt, District councillor Mark Ryder

Clerk: Madeleine King e-mail: [haresfieldpc@gmail.com](mailto:haresfieldpc@gmail.com)

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**Appoint Chair:** Vice chair Nicky Ford took the chair

**Public Participation:** Martin Hartley, Cara Loukes & Barbara Pond, GRCC

**Apologies:** County councillor Stephen Davis

**Declaration of Interests /Dispensations:** none

**Footpath warden update:** Martin explained to councillors that he has been working to restore footpath signage and has walked all the footpaths in the village and met a number of the famers whose land the paths cross. He has also carried out some minor repairs and cutting back of undergrowth. He has met with the Cotswold Way Volunteers and liaises with land owners about any appropriate action.

In discussion with the Merryfield Trustees, the proposal is to replace the stile between the Merryfield and the field beyond with a proper stile and dog gate, and to replace the Merryfield stile into the village with a self-closing gate.

Martin reminds residents to let him know details of any matters needing addressing. Using What 3 words can be a useful way to note an exact location. You can contact him directly on 07500254321

**GRCC on affordable housing:** Presentation by Cara Loukes, supported by Barbara Pond. Ms Loukes is the Affordable Housing Manager for Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC). Her role is to work with partners and stakeholders to deliver affordable housing by working collaboratively and pragmatically with communities and Parish Councils to provide them with sustainable benefit. GRCC advocates for positive community engagement, parity between voices, and meaningful consultation.

The role involves liaising with Parish Councils regarding Housing Needs Survey (HNS) and the data collected from responses. GRCC, having been instructed on behalf of the Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership that includes Stroud District Council (SDC), is now in a position to send the HNS to the residents of Haresfield Parish. The GRHP, comprising Local Authorities and Housing Associations, has selected Haresfield Parish as part of its cyclical review of housing need across Gloucestershire. The HNS questionnaire was presented to councillors for review and discussion.

The message to residents is that the HNS will be sent directly to each household and Ms Loukes encourages residents to complete it.

**County Councillors and District Councillor's Report:** Cllr Ryder was unable to stay for the entire meeting so reported via email:

(1) Haresfield Lane Further to the enquiry from the resident I contacted both the developer Crest Nicholson and also the county highways team. At the time of the meeting, I had only received a response from Crest as follows: • Crest are planning on opening Haresfield Lane in early December for pedestrians and cycles into Hunts Grove. This will enable both to cross the motorway bridge and reach Harrier Way adjacent to the old farmyard. Contractors will be doing the works to make the surface safe, put in some more substantial barriers and add signage to ensure that it is safe to use. • Access to Harrier Way will enable onward access to the rest of Hunts Grove and out to Waterwells / Davy Way etc. Access along the old Haresfield Lane route to Bath Road / B4008 will not be available until our Phase 2 works are complete. (Remainder of Harrier Way from farmyard site to the new A38 junction). These works have been delayed by the discovery of a previously unknown Openreach fibre. A plan is being developed around this, but implementation is likely to take some time. The A38 junction works are potentially still set to start in January for 12 months, however Crest informs me that the required "Approval in Principle" certificate has not been received from Gloucestershire County Highways. I will make enquiries separately via Cllr Stephen Davies.

(2) Local Plan Review The alliance leadership (Green, Labour, Lib-Dem) at Stroud District Council continues to pursue the current local plan review despite strong advice from the planning inspectors to withdraw the plan to address major infrastructure issues, especially related to J12 and J14 of the M5. The council believes these issues can be overcome in the coming months and has therefore requested a six-month pause instead of withdrawal. The Conservative group at the council have been highly critical of the local plan allocation sites and infrastructure issues for many years, however, have been unable to shift the position of the council. A Conservative councillor (Cllr Hadyn Jones, Berkeley Ward) brought a motion to full council last Thursday, (26th Oct) to reconsider the local plan strategy and potentially withdraw the current plan. This motion was supported only by Conservative members and rejected by the alliance group. Meanwhile, meetings of stakeholders (i.e., neighbouring councils, county council highways, national highways etc.) are taking place at a pace to address the issues raised by the inspectors. Whilst the stakeholders have agreed to the meetings called by SDC, they are not convinced it can lead to success in such a condensed timeframe. For example, GCC Highways have said that this programme is "overly optimistic" and likely to have setbacks when the full facts and costs are considered, such as the fact there is no overall lead for the J14 improvement project, and the publicised costs of £25m for J12 are likely to be closer to £350-£400m! The following is an excerpt from a letter GCC sent to the planning inspectors on 18th October 2023:

(3) Beacon Inn Planning Application The last update on the planning portal was August 2023. <https://publicaccess.stroud.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RPBOWIPNIED00> I have no information on a DCC meeting date being set.

(4) Symmetry Park The following points to highlight since the last council meeting: The applicant has submitted updates: a. Reduced the maximum building height b. Increased the landscape buffer c. Highways and ecology Cotswolds National Landscape Board submitted their continued objection to the proposals citing the adverse impacts on landscape and visual impacts. Tritax Symmetry are calling for a

DCC meeting to be scheduled as soon as possible to determine the application. <https://publicaccess.stroud.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=R1QJ76PN0DB00>

(5) County Division Boundaries Review The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) proposals to move Hardwicke Ward into the new Cotswolds constituency have now been adopted. The BCE have now set their sights on a new review of the County Council divisions, and it is proposed to add one new division for Stroud District "Haresfield & Upton", which obviously has direct implications for Haresfield. The following is an excerpt from their consultation page: At the north of Hardwicke & Severn, they proposed transferring the areas of the Hardwicke ward east of the A430 and M5 (including Brookthorpe, Haresfield and Hunts Grove) into the new division. We agree with these proposals and are of the view that the A430/M5 boundary at the north of Hardwicke & Severn is a sensible one. We note that the boundary between the Hardwicke & Severn and Haresfield & Upton St Leonards divisions as proposed by the two groups divides the Haresfield Parish in such a way as to create an unviable parish ward around Hiltmead Lane; we have therefore amended the boundary in this area to align with the parish boundary (which crosses the M5 motorway) as part of our draft recommendations. Find out more at the link below and note that organisations and individuals can still submit views to the commission online until December 11th, 2023. The BCE will publish its final proposals in March 2024. <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/gloucestershire>

### ***Minutes of the last meeting:***

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

#### ***Matters arising:***

***Village maintenance:*** Thanks to Steve Coates for cutting back the hedge along the Merryfields and to all those who have been out and tidied up the pathway. A request has been made that the laurel hedge be cut back, clerk to obtain a quote for the work.

***Highways, traffic and parking:*** Clerk has again requested assistance from the PCSO with parking at the school, with particular concern regarding continued parking on the yellow zig zags. The drain nearest to the railway crossing (on the Beacon hotel side) has again been reported and is on the Highways list for investigation in the next financial year.

***Village Hall/activities:*** The new door will shortly be installed to the front of the hall, partly funded through a grant from UBB. Carol singing at the tree is to be arranged with the village hall committee providing mulled wine and mince pies at the hall afterwards.

***Incinerator / CLG:*** A meeting was held on 18/10, attended by the clerk. Reported was that The Environment Agency are tightening up the conditions of permits for all Energy from Waste Facilities. They have met with the Javelin Park site and have agreed a plan for the facility to meet these new requirements.

***Woodland Trust:*** The tree survey has been awarded to Matt Meadows. This survey was due to take place last week, we await the survey and its recommendations

**Footpaths/ bins:** The footpath in front of the school, leading to the front of the Merryfield Houses is due for repair shortly.

**Biodiversity:** 1 January 2024 is the deadline for all Town and Parish Councils to take their first action for biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. GAPTC has advised they will be issuing info and the clerk is attending training.

**Merryfield trustees:** Grass seed has been purchased by the PC and sown on the patches on the field. Councillors requested that the stile at the southern end of the field be opened.

**Road closures:** Naas Lane will be closed for a further period in November, dates to be advised.

**Planning:** S.21/2579/OUT. Symmetry Park. See Cllr Ryders report above.

Councillors raised no objection to Application Number: S.23/1986/P14J Location: Dobbies Garden Centres, Bath Road, Haresfield, Stonehouse. Application Type: Siting Solar Panels Description: Installation of solar PV system totalling 200kWp.

Councillors support the decision by Brookthorpe-with-Whaddon Parish Council which objects to Taylor Wimpey's proposed planning application.

**Correspondence:**

- SDC in conjunction with Gloucestershire Police have invited all councils to engage in the newly formed 'Stroud Councillor Advocacy Scheme' This is a new project with the aim of creating and strengthening relationships between the neighbourhood policing team and local councillors. Cllr Hunt is keen to support this group, however it was not possible to attend the inaugural meeting due to the timing. Clerk submitted a question to the meeting regarding accessibility to PCSOs time.
- Regarding a request for the Network rail crossing to be tidied up, clerk reported this (ref 231011-000315) Images of the detritus were sent and we await a response.
- R Cowburn – a further email has been received from Mr Cowburn which he has copied to the planning authority. The email is in response to the offer by the PC to transfer ownership of the BT box to him, which he has refused.
- D O'Bryan re Haresfield Lane – response from Cllr Ryder above to be sent in response.

**Finance & Clerks Report:** November will be budget setting for the 2024/25 financial year and the bank reconciliation has been completed and agreed to September end.

**Transactions/payments agreed:**

*Cheque payments were agreed and authorised by councillors.*

**Any other business:**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.17pm

**Date of next meeting: Monday November 27<sup>th</sup> 2023**