

Upton Snodsbury Parish Council
Held at Upton Snodsbury Village Hall Tuesday 19th November 2013
Open Meeting 7.30pm

Present: Steve Share SS (Chair), Paul Seymour PS, Catherine Milner CM, Terry Eagle TE, Jim Round JR. Roger Peart (RP)

In attendance: Louise Salisbury (Clerk/RFO), 15 members of the public, District & County Councillors Linda Robinson, Rob Adams.

Agenda

13/66 **Apologies:** None received.

13/67 **Minutes:** Approval of minutes from 3rd Sept 2013. Agreed as a true record. SS signed.

13/68 **District/County Councillor Reports from Linda Robinson & Rob Adams:**

LR reminded people of the WPAG meeting to discuss the appeal for the Broiler Units. Meeting Monday 25 November 8pm Village Hall,

The SWDP is still progressing, currently with Inspectors prior to public consultation. There is likely to be a review on the number of houses required. Possibly up to 30,000 houses throughout Malvern, Worcester and Wychavon. PCllrs asked if it was possible to obtain a broad indication of the percentage increase for Wychavon. LR said she could ask to see the policy. It was likely that a higher proportion of new houses would be within Wychavon. Worcester was short on room; Malvern has several 'areas of natural interest'. PCllr suggested flats could be an option within the city centre. Within Upton Snodsbury a possible 27 new homes could be built instead of 16 originally.

RA reiterated the pressure at District, planning is currently a 'free for all'. Regarding the Orchard Site planning – RA stated that Dave Pilcher at Highways did have a preference for Cutts Pool access, but would have to review the plans with what a developer had proposed within a planning application when submitted.

County Council are proposing cuts to subsidised bus services which could affect the village (Service 350 and 566). Questionnaires would be available in the shop or could be completed online at:

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/transport-and-highways/transport-review.aspx>

Cllrs asked RA & LR for advice on how to keep the bus service going. The suggestion was that people be realistic is what they ask for, i.e. accept a reduction in the numbers of buses or maybe increase fares.

RA drew attention to the Worcestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership who have produced a short remembrance film capturing video testimonies of 11 World War II Veterans who live in Worcestershire. The film 'We Did Our Bit' is available to view online on Worcestershire County Council's YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/worcsccl/videos>.

Alternatively contact Alan Smith on asmith3@worcestershire.gov.uk or call 01905 822836, for more information.

RA mentioned speeding on the A44, particularly fast motorbikes and stated this was something he was keen to sort with highways. Cllrs were disappointed with the fact that all diagonal lines painted outside the school were yellow – this was not what was agreed. RA suggested a letter be sent to John Fraser or John Hobbs in Highways. **(Cllr TE to action)**

13/69 **Crime Report:** Nothing received

13/70 **Progress Reports from Parish Activities:**

Neighbourhood Plans

Cllr SS reported back from a meeting at Wychavon. Neighbourhood Plans would be created at Parish level which would give an ability to control planning development (not stop it), within the boundaries of the SWDP. This could mean that we could say 'what, where and how' planning is allocated. Some parishes have complied NP's but the process has proved extremely time consuming. One example at the meeting was a council in Oxfordshire that took 5,000 man hours over 2 years. Whilst NP's were a great idea, in reality they are unlikely to be achievable.

RA stated that a Parish he knew of had used a consultant at the cost of £50,000; the whole process took 4 years. He would not advise it for a village such as Upton Snodsbury. The village would be better off using Community and Parish Plans – which are already in place.

LR added that Upton Snodsbury would be the smallest Parish in the UK if it was to consider NP's. It may be worth grouping together with other Parishes to add weight to the plan. NP would have to be 'pro-development' as it would not be of any benefit for planning applications already set. Parishes with NP's in place would benefit from 25% of all developers contribution, without an NP that contribution would be 15%.

Precept

Cllr CM explained that this years Precept was £3,090. If the Precept is to stay the same next year an increase of approx. 16% per household would be seen due to the withdrawal of funding at Wychavon. At Band D this would equate to a £17.63 increase per annum. The finance committee is due to meet prior to the January Parish Council Meeting to agree the Precept.

New Homes Bonus

A change in the NHB has meant that funds available to Parish had decreased from £2,700 to £860. **Cllrs to decide how this is to be spent before all funding disappears.**

Cllr TE had sent a letter to the Chief Executive and Central Government to reiterate the disappointment felt following the withdrawal of promised funds. The Parish Council had earmarked the funds for an additional VAS to help reduce speeding on the A422.

LR mentioned that as a village we would see more development and could benefit from developer funding in the form of Section 106 funds. These funds could be utilised for various projects to benefit the community such as leisure facilities (park or football ground) or to help with a VAS to reduce speeding. Section 106 funding is only available once plans are passed and building underway – although it would be beneficial to think now about where funds could be spent.

Highways

Cllr JR – nothing to report, general lack of progress with contacting Highways.

Grass cutting

Cllr PS – nothing to report.

New Cllr

Cllr RP formally welcomed as a member of the Parish Council by SS and all Cllrs. Cllr RP has lived in Cowsden for 30 years, albeit working away. Now two years into retirement Roger felt it was time Cowsden was represented on the Parish Council and hopes to do a good service to the community.

Cllr SS stated that the Parish Council are still one member down, if anybody would like to apply please contact the Clerk.

Heating Oil Thefts

Cllr TE wished to add that thefts of heating oil are still continuing and urged everyone to use padlocks. Some thefts have taken place in daylight with tanker trucks which have naturally not raised suspicion.

Cala Homes are looking at a development on the Orchard site, in addition to the Garage site. The Garage site is currently experiencing delays due to litigation issues with the land. PCllrs expressed concerns that they were being messed about with Cala Homes. Cala did not approach the PC for a meeting prior to a public consultation; the Council requested this with Cala. PCllrs stated they were subjected to bad feelings from residents over the uplift in proposed units at the garage site, and would like to ensure that this does not happen over this planning application. The PC sent out a newsletter that requested feedback from villagers on how they wished the PC to respond to the planning application. Of the forms received back – the majority of parishioners indicated option (c) below:

- (a) *We oppose any development of the orchard site. (If we are unsuccessful, planning permission may still be given and through Church Lane and School Lane).*
- (b) *We accept the proposal of development of the orchard site with access through Church Lane and School Lane.*
- (c) *We accept the proposal of development of the orchard site but negotiate access through Cutts Pool*

Cllr SS asked for more responses to be handed in. The Parish Council want to ensure they have a clear indication of how the Village wishes the Council to respond. There are concerns over the village population increasing by a third, and worries that the Orchard Site may be developed prior to the garage site. Cala have allegedly stated they have a letter from Highways saying that they do not object to access via School Lane. Cala Homes consultant has also advised that Cutts Pool access is 'not an option'.

LR reiterated that when the SWDP was first discussed the preferred site for development was the garage over the orchard. Highways have stated that the access via School Lane was viable with some adjustments. Cutts Pool is subject to a 'ransom strip'. It is known that the adjustments to School Lane would cost £15,000, therefore if the access via Cutts Pool is going to be a cheaper option for Cala – they may look at it. Planning Inspectors will only look at what is in on the application – they will not necessarily be aware of an alternative access. Presently NO planning application has been submitted so LT urged the PC to discuss the access issue with Highways and WM Housing now. It would be difficult for the Parish Council to negotiate a different access route once the plans are submitted. Highways are statutory consultees; it would be difficult for the planning committee to refuse an application on access grounds if that access has already been approved by Highways.

A vote for a meeting with Peter Blake and Dave Pilcher at Highways was proposed by Cllr SS, seconded by Cllr TE, all in agreement. It was also agreed that LR and possible RA attend the meeting as witnesses. **CM to arrange meeting urgently.**

Floor given to members of the public:

Could the Parish Council not override the decision of widening the junction at School Lane – state it is not a possible route – not give Cala an alternative access?

Resident of 'Homeleigh' raised concern that their sewage stopcock was in the middle of the proposed access route. Any excavation would have a detrimental effect. 'Homeleigh' stands alone and is not service linked to other properties- how would Cala deal with this. If the access road is the width of a 5bar gate – then access would be less than 6 feet from the property.

School Lane is heavy with pedestrian traffic. It is the route to the Church and Village Hall – used constantly throughout the day by school children and older people.

Several cars are parked up School Lane and Church Lane at school opening and closing times and in the evenings for events – this makes access difficult.

Many of the residents of School Lane are unable to turn cars in driveways – or have no driveways. Meaning they are required to reverse out onto the road or park on the route.

School Lane access is difficult at the best of times – dustcarts regularly have problems. Fire engines or ambulances would have problems accessing – someone could lose a life.

It would be a pity to turn a relatively safe 'village lane' to a through road.

School is a 'first school' – the children are infants; large construction traffic could prove hazardous.

Would the Village benefit from canvassing CPRE, Woodland Trust or forming a focus group to tackle this planning application – similar to the Broiler Farm group?

Have Cala completed traffic surveys as well as pedestrian surveys? These would give a true account of footfall in the area.

Has everyone completed the Cala questionnaires – they gave a two week deadline, this would be an ideal way of showing we are not happy with the access/development.

PC concluded that they would respond to the planning application once it had been published – giving what they hoped would be a view of village opinion. The PC urged everyone to respond to the planning application via the WCC website also.

Meeting closed.

A handwritten signature consisting of a large, stylized 'A' followed by a horizontal flourish that extends to the left and then curves back to the right.