

**Minutes of the Meeting of
LONGHOPE PARISH COUNCIL
held on Monday 17th October 2016**

PRESENT: Cllrs. C Tilling (Chair), T Barnes, M Phelps, A Toomey, S Collins and L Isko

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Maliphant (Clerk), County Cllr. B Robinson and 68 residents

1. Stan Stephens

CT gave a brief remembrance of the life of Cllr. Stan Stephens, who had passed away on October 10th. The meeting kept a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

2. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. D Attrill and District Cllr. Dave East

3. There were no declarations of interest

4. Public Forum

There were three issues raised in public forum:

Premises licence application for Holly Bush Farm

Kevin Oxlade the Chair of the May Hill Society read a summary of points raised at the May Hill Society AGM the previous week, attended by approximately 60 May Hill residents:

- It appears that a substantial number of properties on May Hill are being severely affected by the noise generated from events at Holly Bush Farm. This appears to have been happening for the last 18 months, before any changes are made to the premises licence.
- Looking at the current premises license, it appears that the premises is only allowed to sell alcohol and does not have permission to have amplified music.
- Holly Bush Farm submitted a planning application in 2015, that was approved by the Forest of Dean Planning Department. A condition was put on the premises, within this approval, that any activity conducted would not generate any noise that exceeded 5 decibels above background noise. This is a very low threshold that must be being exceeded, for the residents of Mayhill to have experienced the noise levels they have reported.
- It also appears from the latest planning application (2015) that permission was given for camping in certain areas of the land. It has become apparent that camping is happening on a regular basis outside of these areas and on some occasions, right next to houses adjacent to the A40. In the 2015 planning application, the applicant stated that camping would occur approximately once per quarter and people will only be staying for one night.

Mr Oxlade added that the fact that so many May Hill residents had attended the parish council meeting showed there was a high level of concern regarding present and future business activities conducted on this site that would severely affect the occupants of this rural location. A major concern was that within the variation application it is requesting permission to have amplified music for outdoor plays/dance performances, live/recorded music and film soundtracks

There followed considerable discussion involving May Hill residents and the owners of Holly Bush Farm around the application. One voice spoke in favour of the Farm and the operation there of the Hillside Brewery, but other concerns were raised, including:

- Concerns about further noise following a music, play, dance and film licence to midnight every day except New Year's Eve, when it would be 2 am
- Noise from people outside had been heard all through the summer
- There could be other special occasions when the premises are open to the public later than midnight, not just New Year's Eve – for example, the Hillside Brewery website advertises stag and hen parties
- Activities on site had been growing over time, and may increase even further
- It was not clear from the application that the outdoor permission requested would be restricted to the barn patio
- On bonfire night cars were parked all over May Hill village

The Farm owner Mr Peter Williamson responded to several of these points, noting that the new barn building on site had been particularly designed with better sound insulation. There were no plans for further development on site, and parking issues were being addressed. Camping only took place at special events, it was not a campsite open to the public – there had been 12 camping nights in the previous year and a half, though there could be up to 28 days camping per year on any site without special permission. The current permission allowed for individual tents to be put up for 4 weeks at a time with no return within 4 weeks, there are no other conditions regarding frequency. The premises licensing application had been put in following the previous parish council meeting knowing it would come to this meeting for open discussion, and there had been a number of letters of support from local people.

MP advised that noise concerns should be taken up with the environmental health department of the District Council for monitoring.

Allotment fees

Several allotment holders had attended in response to a written invitation from the parish council, noting the recent increase in costs in managing the allotments site and the potential for an increased annual allotment fee. After much discussion about the relevant responsibilities of the parish council and the allotment holders, two of the allotment holders volunteered to manage the bank area inside the allotment fence, on the basis that the parish council dealt with weeds etc. outside the fence. One volunteered to plant wild flowers along the line of the removed schumaker trees, and these offers of help were gratefully received.

A4136

Two residents raised the issue of increasing noise from the main road, particularly along the 60 mph stretch, where the worst offenders seemed to be motorbikes. As well as noise, there had also been two accidents recently involving cars leaving the Richard Read site. As a separate matter, there was concern about the pathway along the Latchen which needed some maintenance to prevent it becoming dangerous, particularly for older people walking with sticks. LI responded with a summary of continuing discussions with County Highways about the A4136, including the potential for an engineering solution at the junction with

Velthouse Lane which would help slow the traffic. She would add both concerns to the list of issues to be discussed with new highways officer Rhodri Grey at a forthcoming site visit.

5. Planning

The circulated progress report on planning applications was received with thanks.

After discussion, it was agreed that the parish council would make an objection to the Holly Bush Farm licensing application, to be drafted by the clerk based on the evening's discussions and the policies in the emerging neighbourhood development plan, with the text to be confirmed with members before sending. **ACTION: AM/AII**

6. The minutes of the meeting on September 19th were agreed as a true record and signed accordingly.

7. Members' Reports

LI reported that a proposed engineering solution for the Velthouse Lane junction had gone to County Highways for consideration. She added that the youth club had not yet decided how to spend their recent grant, but were interested in better lighting for the recreation ground, which TB confirmed was already being considered for the tennis courts.

BR spoke to his recent email suggesting that grant money could be available for road safety proposals if matched by contributions from parish councils, and it was agreed to pledge £50 towards this fund.

AT reported that with local footpath warden Roger Cox she had walked up Hobbs Lane, which was the definitive route between Station Lane and the A40, and the only footpath from Longhope to May Hill. The tarmac road stops at the last bungalow above the village, then water had cut a deep gully in the bridleway above, making it unsafe for people or horses. It was agreed to add Hobbs Lane to the forthcoming site visit with highways officers. AT added that research was still going on into planning processes around developments at Holly Bush Farm, and MP confirmed that while a recent visit by the District Council enforcement officer had found no issues on site, Clive Reynolds the head of the planning service was looking into the matter again.

CT raised the issue of the parish council's store of salt for use on roads in the winter, and offered to contact the new owners of Longhope Welding to confirm their support.

8. Committee Reports

(a) Latchen Room Management Committee

SC reported that the steelwork was in place for the extension to the Latchen Room and brickwork had begun. The only concerns were a crack in the wall of the gents toilets, possibly due to subsidence, and drainage issues at the bottom of the rear wall.

(b) Recreation Ground Management Committee

TB said there had been no committee meeting recently to report back from.

9. Clerk's Report & Correspondence

A number of agenda items were discussed:

- After the public forum discussion with allotment holders, it was confirmed that the allotment fees would not be increased for 2017
- The land on May Hill let for the benefit of the Longhope Charities Committee's work had been rented since 1974 at £100 per annum, but was now covered in bracken with the fencing in very poor repair. Putting the fencing right would cost very much more than a year's rent, and it was agreed to confirm the details of the original land gift and to discuss future letting with the Charities Committee. **ACTION: AM/AT**
- Details had been sent of a proposal for a new mobile phone mast in the village, and it was agreed there was no more to say until a planning application was made
- It was agreed that notifications of future planning applications would be posted on the parish council website. **ACTION: AM**

There were a number of items of correspondence including:

- The District Council had written to say that the Local Council Tax Support grant from Government would cease from the next financial year
- The District Council had also sent out the annual rough sleeping survey, focusing on the night of October 19th / 20th
- County Highways had sent details of new double yellow lines proposed for the junction of Church Road, Old Monmouth Road and the Latchen, and it was agreed to support these, subject to informing the nearby post office stores **ACTION: AM**
- A request to sponsor a viewing map for the trig point on May Hill was approved

10. Finance

The following invoices were approved for payment:

Glebe Contractors	912.00	Removing allotment hedge
Centigen Facilities Management	66.00	Grass cutting
Merlin Waste	50.85	Dog waste collection
PATA (UK)	22.50	Payroll costs
HM Revenue & Customs	17.40	PAYE
Andrew Maliphant	560.52	Salary - September
Andrew Maliphant	37.33	Expenses – September
Severn Trent Water Ltd	79.17	Allotment water supply

The latest financial report was received with thanks. It was confirmed that following problems in April only five payments for parish grass cutting would be made in line with the contractor's offer. The clerk was asked to research the potential for making a contribution to a local cancer charity in memory of Stan Stephens. **ACTION: AM**

Only one written tender had come through for replacement fencing at the allotments, the clerk was asked to get two more quotes then go ahead with the cheapest. **ACTION: AM**

11. Localism and Neighbourhood Plan

MP said there was nothing more to report on the neighbourhood plan. BR advised that the Government had requested another 3-400 housing sites for the District Allocations Plan.

12. Next Meeting - Monday 21st November at 7 pm

Signed:.....Chairman. Date:.....