

**MINUTES OF THE KINVER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> MARCH 2022 AT 95 HIGH STREET, KINVER**

PRESENT: Councillors JK Hall (Chairman), Mrs C Allen (Vice Chairman), D Light, G Sisley, H Williams, S Anderson, S Jones, I G Sadler and County Councillor V Wilson.

Members of the public: Dr R Painter, Mrs B Owen, D McGirr, Mrs Wiseman, D Wiseman, D.Hough, Mr and Mrs Darby, M Griffiths. Mrs K Thornton, Mrs L Clayton, Mrs N Clifton, Miss L Barratt, Inspector D Wain and PCSO Millichap.

49/22. Apologies for Absence.

Councillors Mrs S Harris, P Wooddisse, Ms E Lord, K Slade, E Simons and Miss V Webb sent their apologies.

50/22. Declarations of Councillors' Interest.

There were no declarations of Councillor interest.

51/22. To receive for confirmation and adoption, the Minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022.

The minutes of the meetings held on the above date, were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

52/22. To receive a report from PCSO's re incidents and statistics for Kinver

The report from the PCSO Millichap was circulated to members prior to the meeting relating to incidents in the Parish for the last month. This was noted.

Chief Inspector Wain addressed the Council he thanked members for the invitation and opportunity to address the Council. There have been 280 crimes in the past 12 months for the Parish of Kinver that have been reported, in his opinion statistically it is a safe place to live.

He has been commander for the past 18 months, and in this part of South Staffordshire we have an issue with criminals coming over the borders from neighbouring authorities. They see it as a soft option to come to Staffordshire.

Since taking over his role he has campaigned to get the response base changed from Cannock, as the distance the Police cars have to travel to get to an incident in to Kinver is not acceptable, as this is too far. These officers start their shift in Cannock and return to Cannock. There are 2 officers normally at Wombourne, but it takes a while to get from Wombourne to Kinver also.

The Inspector has put in a new ANPR camera system funded from the results of crime, and they have had a lot of arrests from this system. There are 6 proactive operations from the Neighbourhood Teams, but this is not enough, although it is better than we have had before. All new PCSO's are based in the South Staffs area.

Ring door bells supplied by SSDC have been fitted, faraday bags are being supplied to people to help stop car crime to deter criminals in our area.

ASB was high in this area but this has dropped off since the summer months. The local crime Facebook page helps with getting information and intelligence data.

Crime this has reduced significantly in recent months, however in June – August 21 there was a spike. South Staffordshire Police do work closely with Neighbouring Police Authorities. To help combat the increase of burglaries, crime prevention advice is required to help and the Police have a part to play.

He thanked County Councillor Mrs V Wilson for support for asking for more resources for the Police and as a result of this support he now is able to control response officers and get them based locally. This request was fed back by the Safer Neighbourhood Panel, and was listened to, so the Police infrastructure is being changed for the better. Officers are now working out of Wombourne 24/7 again. The response times are key and these are going to improve.

Councillor G Sisley asked how the ANPR system works. Chief Inspector Wain reported that it's a semi covert camera system, they read a number plate and it goes back to the central control room and this flags up suspect vehicles coming into the area, or is used as evidence to prove that vehicle was in that location following an incident.

Cllr Mrs C Allen reported that Hyperion Road had a spate of car thefts, burglaries, entering into the house also. She believes one of the offenders lived in the Kingsway and had an ASB order on them, she asked if these are still used?

Chief Inspector Wain said that these orders are not really used now, but they do last 5 years. Councillor Mrs C Allen stated that following the spate of incidents, things have improved as residents have put bollards to stop cars being stolen and CCTV cameras have been installed also.

Chief Inspector Wain stated that the CCTV style doorbells are very good and do prevent crime. In June the new system of having officers based at Codsall will improve the issues.

Cllr S Anderson thanked him for attending and asked is there anything as a Parish Council we can do to help, he noted that in the past crimes are not always reported due to the 101 system. Chief Inspector Wain reminded people that if an incident is in progress, then a 999 call must be made, then followed by 101 or report it through social media. If those people that use social media report that way, it frees the phone lines for those that need to use them. The Police have installed more lines to help answer the calls quicker.

County Councillor Mrs V Wilson thanked Chief Inspector Wain for what he's done since being in post. The public need to be proactive in their own security and it's great that we now have Wombourne and Codsall station being manned again.

Chief Inspector Wain has a twitter page, and the Council can message and keep him informed of what's happening in Kinver. This would be helpful and the Facebook page.

Chief Inspector Wain and PC Millichap left the meeting at this point.

53/22. Public Participation – 15 minutes for members of the Parish to raise matters with members of the Council

Standing orders were raised to enable members of the public to speak.

Dr Richard Painter he is a Swindon Parish Councillor, he reported that the Prospect School service contract has been cancelled. This was cancelled due to costs to support the normal 242 service for Kinver. A new service is 242S is being commissioned. The transfer from the Prospect service to support the Kinver Bus route is unfair on the residents of Swindon as they cannot access this 242 bus service, it never goes to Swindon. Would Kinver Parish Council support Swindon people / neighbouring parishes and ask that the situation is returned to the previous service? He spoke directly with a pupil using the new service and they wanted this to go back to how it was, primarily on the grounds of health and safety.

Mrs B Owen addressed the Council she also has come about the busses and she has been using the busses regularly and their have been no service problems. She has experienced problems with getting an appointments with Drs and has ben informed that there are no injection clinics. She asked how does she get involved with the school new Community agreement?

Mr D Hough raised the issue, re the 242 and the 242s bus service. He has concerns re the service from SCC. The amended bus 242s is for the school children. The dedicated school service takes 15mins now is going to take nearly an hour, and the new replacement bus does not have seatbelts either.

He has raised this with MP Gavin Williamson and he has spoken with SCC who state this is not a cost cutting exercise. However, this was later changed and it is a cost cutting service. He has emailed them again. The other issue is capacity the primary school service is still a 57 seater coach and there is capacity for the secondary school children to catch this also. The capacity is a 57 seater coach this has not changed (although SCC said it had been reduced to a smaller coach) so this is incorrect information was given from the SCC.

Mr Davidson has spoken to the school transport division to ask has a risk assessment been taken? They confirmed it has. Mr Darby requested a copy of the risk assessments and has asked using FOI. His questions are:-

Why has it taken so long to be informed.

Why was it changed – cost cutting?

Why can't catch bus with the junior school children?

Why has this been put together with Bobbington children?

Mr M Griffiths – Himley resident - Do we understand the urgency of this matter? Do you support increasing the risk of health and safety and welfare issues of the school children in the local LEA. All at increased risk of an RTA by catching a bus without seat belts. The service is now going to be more miles per day and therefore an increased risk with no benefit. With regard to the increase risk issue, the prospect coach crashed in Bobbington, 3 children on the coach were badly affected by seeing this. It took time to get his daughter to go back on the coach. Will we support the decision or not? In addition to his comments when we are talking about this issue its peoples children not just bus routes.

Mr M Darby asked for the process of how the next meeting happens. He reinforced their comments of the fellow people that raised this issues. Mrs Darby raised her concerns that the increased service is being pushed as an improved service for the 6<sup>th</sup> formers, but this could not help them as many do not finish at 3.30pm to catch the bus home.

Standing orders were re-instated.

58/22. To discuss any further information on the new bus service route and the loss of the bus service for school children

County Councillor Mrs V Wilson gave an overview of the situation, Select bus services helped Kinver at the end of last year and have run the new service this year after bidding for the contract. The only way to proceed with the service due to cost implications is to amalgamate the school and bus service. This is happening all over the Country. For Kinver 28 children will have a shorter bus journey to school but 19 children will have an increase of a minimum of 55 mins journey. This is too long for a child to travel and the bus company and SCC have tried to reduce the times and have not been able to do so. Kinver will retain their bus Service the 242 and this would not be the case if this change had not been made, the service would cease.

The normal bus service can be used for children at the age of 16 so we need to keep the service.

2000 children travel by public transport in Staffordshire and there is no issue with safety. There have been many nasty comments online, accused her of taking back handers, using this to get votes on the back of this. In her role as County Councillor there are difficult decisions to be made and they cannot always please all people all of the time.

This route could still be unsustainable even with taking this action, if Government funding is withdrawn for the 242 service.

Standing orders were raised to enable Non Council members to speak.

The headteacher Mrs Clifton reported that the 6<sup>th</sup> formers use the prospect busses and they use the Mini busses to move across the school sites, from the basis of the school she understands the need to keep a bus service. But she stands with her parents, and she was not consulted on these changes. She does not think these are fair having school children travelling for 55 minute journey. With Covid children are still suffering with Mental Health issues. Students that are struggling and families. She supports and wants to work with SCC for the 19 children that are affected. The school are trying to find their own solutions for these families. They would welcome a reconsideration of mitigating the situation. If a private arrangement is found by the school then she would like to ask for some financial help.

County Councillor Mrs V Wilson and she has spoken to the local Community volunteer bus services, they have covenants on their uses, one is for the elderly, the other bus needs a driver to commit to a daily route. The 242s bus passes, if they are not used would cause financial issues to the 242 bus service.

Mrs Clayton stated that this is not an easy decision, decisions are made inline with SCC policies. There was no change in policy so it did not need to be consulted.

The Chairman suggested that a meeting with the School and the County Council for them to discuss this further.

Councillor D Light clarified that the red minibus can only operate for transporting people over 65 and can only operate within the Parish. When you reach 70 you have to stop driving mini busses, if you wish to carry on with driving you have to have a medical each year which has an impact on the ability to get drivers.

Cllr S Anderson reported, it would be very sad to lose the 242 Kinver bus service, we need to keep this service. He does understand the problems of the parents from Hyperion Road, and their safety concerns. It is imperative that we keep communication open to try to get the best solution. The perception is coaches have seatbelts and busses don't so people feel they will be less safe on a bus.

Councillor Mrs C Allen raised the following points:-

A lot of children have not caught the bus this week, due to the changes. One evening the bus took 1 hr and 15 minutes to get back. The bus times for pick up need to be adhered to as she has witnessed the bus leaving early.

Notice should have been given of the changes for discussion to take place.

The 228 bus was much more useful as it incorporated Russells Hall Hospital and Merry Hill and this should not in her opinion have been stopped.

1. The amount of time it will take unnecessarily out of a child's day, for what should be a 15 minute journey would now take an hour each way. The letter from the school transport team says travel time in one direction for a High School aged children is 90 minutes. Section 34 says 'for secondary school age is 75 minutes.' It would appear they don't know their own rules. I can understand this time limit for a child living out of the area. But for our children to be taken in the wrong direction, away from the school, to do a round robin journey, to come back to almost their starting point, is not acceptable.
2. Section 35 quotes 'For arrangements to be suitable, they must also be safe and reasonably stress free, to enable the child to arrive at school ready for a day of study.' Children have been stuck at home learning remotely for nearly two years. Anxiety and mental health issues amongst those children has risen dramatically. How will this improve their mental well-being and make them ready for the school day?
3. Seatbelts must be provided to children under the age of 16. Regulation 45 part 3 page 18. It states public sector busses do not require seat belt as they don't travel fast as they stop frequently. The 242s bus will not be in public service it is a school bus, therefore requires seatbelts.
4. Covid has not gone away. I presume by the end of February all restrictions will be lifted and face masks will not be enforced. Imagine a bus full of children spreading their germs.
5. If there are 40 children from Hyperion road, why is it necessary to prolong the school bus run unnecessarily? It will taking 10 hours per week out of their day to do a 34 mile trip.
6. Prospect coaches had a contract until 2024. We believe Prospect were given 9 weeks notice of cancellation. Why was it cancelled? What cost was incurred to break the contract?
7. LA did not consult with the school. On a Tuesday and Wednesday the school day ends at 4pm. The 242s bus will not cover this late finish. Are the children just left to their own devices to get home?

County Councillor Mrs V Wilson reported that the County Council have to make decisions set in National policy set for schools by the Government, she reiterated that it is not local SCC policy. In response to the 9 weeks consultation period - County Councillor Mrs V Wilson, in the contract there was a line that said about amalgamating the services. She had no idea of this, and she knew nothing about this until it was raised by the public. She apologises she was not told about.

Cllr S Anderson asked if the Hyperion Road children could catch the junior school bus which has vacant seats, while the 242S service continues to serve the outlying parishes. County Councillor Mrs V Wilson asked that this question is formally emailed to her to be passed for further discussion with Officers. The Home to School transport team will be asked to comment on this question.

The Chairman asked how is it funded the school service – The Select Bus is funded by the 48 passes issued to the children, one per child and is paid to the bus company. The Junior school bus is a contract service.

Councillor Mrs C Allen proposed that we write a letter to SCC stating we are very concerned with the changes to the school bus service and we urge the County Council to look at all possible solutions (co-operating with the schools). This was seconded by Councillor S Anderson. It was carried on a vote.

Councillor Mrs C Allen reported the 242 bus survey finishes on Friday, at the moment 16 want the bus and 70+ do not wish to have this service. It was agreed to wait until the consultation has finished and discuss it further at the April meeting.

54/22. To receive an update on the lighting for the Holloway

The order for the 2 x lights to be fixed to the wall by the Cross on the Holloway has been placed at a cost of £1300, and fitting is £330. This was noted.

55/22. To receive an update on the purchase of the new vehicle and EV charging point install costs

Two quotes have been received to fix the EV point in the garage for the new Parish Vehicle. Three electricians have been asked to quote and looked at the job. The costs are either £760+vat or £1213 (no VAT) and an additional cost

of £125 for a longer lead which is required to reach the charge point. It was proposed by Councillor D Light and seconded by Cllr G Sisley to purchase the new point and the lead. On a vote this was carried.

The £22,000 has been received from the PWLB and is in the Parish Councils bank account. This was noted.

56/22. To update on any further concerns raised by the public re the Doctors Surgery

An informal meeting took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February, the meeting that took place was very informative and positive.

57/22. To discuss and agree new councillor email address provider

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

59/22. To appoint a new representative for Kinver United Charities

A representative is required for this charity – Cllr S Jones agreed he will take the seat.

60/22. To receive the minutes and any recommendations from the following Committee meetings: -

Planning and Development Committee 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022  
(including update on NPlan if applicable)

There were no recommendations to the Parish Council all recommendations were sent directly to SSDC. Therefore the minutes were accepted.

Finance Committee 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022

It was proposed to recommend to the Parish Council that:-

- The 3 year projections as set out as appendix 3 to these minutes are accepted
- The accounts as set out as appendix 2 to these minutes are accepted.
- The grant application for the Youth Café is agreed at £272.00
- To agree that the reserve funding for the Neighbourhood Plan of £1800.00 for the wildlife survey.
- A maximum sum of £2000 is allocated for the Queens Jubilee Celebrations to be funded in the next financial year starting on the 1/4/22
- EV Point costs to be discussed at the Parish Council meeting when costs have been received. (taken under 55/22)
- The licence be renewed for the Methodist Church Car park at a cost of £600, to be funded from the car park budget line in the new financial year from 1/4/22.

The above recommendations were agreed and the minutes accepted.

61/22. County / District Councillor to address the Council on any matters relevant to the Parish

There were no items reported.

62/22. Report of the Chairman

There were no items reported.

63/22. To receive and note the report from the Clerk including Burial Ground Superintendents report.

New s137 rate for 2022/23 £8.82 per elector

NALC update on pay increases for 2021/22 to be announced shortly – email from SPCA

Correspondence on ASB and water turbine on River Stour

#### **SPCA Training events**

Superintendent's report - Issue resolved relating to a new headstone, 2 x new burial plots for February.

This was noted.

64/22. Reports from Members sitting on Outside Bodies for the Parish Council.

None were reported.

65/22. To receive the accounts for payment since the last meeting.

The accounts were agreed and noted.

66/22. Items for future Meetings

Giants Well – Autumn, community use agreement, school bus service, Bus service comments Hyperion Rd, Jubilee celebrations, Cllrs email addresses.

67/22. Dates of Next Meetings –

Extra Ordinary Meeting (6.00pm)  
Leisure and amenities Committee (7.00pm)  
Planning and Development Committee  
Parish Council meeting  
Finance and General Purposes Committee

9<sup>th</sup> March 2022  
9<sup>th</sup> March 2022  
16<sup>th</sup> March 2022  
6<sup>th</sup> April 2022  
27<sup>th</sup> April 2022

draft

**Accounts for payment for March Parish Council meeting 2022**

<b>Accounts for payment</b>	Description	Total
Barclays Bank	Monthly charge	8.00
B A Beevers	Works to Giants Well	396.00
British Telecom	December bill	358.14
Candela	Proforma invoice for Holloway lights	1560.00
Ebay	coat hooks and tape remover	9.45
Edge IT Systems	Annual support	556.80
Express Mowers	Servicing equipment	863.49
Fuel	for van and equipment	100.00
HMRC	March	1614.03
Ikea	Book case and laptop stand	34.00
J R K	Supplies	92.31
Nplan	Land searches	225.00
Screwfix	Supplies	185.52
SCC pensions	March	2322.27
Staffordshire County Council	Van lease	354.48
Stourton Village Hall	Room hire	63.62
Viking Direct	Supplies nplan	117.07
Viking Direct	Stamps for APM / supplies	42.65
Water Plus	Rates Kinver Edge toilets	27.74
		<b>8930.57</b>
<b>List of Monthly Direct Debits</b>		
Utility Warehouse	Garage electricity	16.58
Utility Warehouse	95 High Street Gas and electricity and mobile phone	362.28
Utility Warehouse	Kinver Edge Toilets	11.78
Utility Warehouse	High Street Toilets	139.08
Salaries	March	5874.06
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6403.78</b>
	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>15334.35</b>
<b>Receipts</b>		
Burial Fees		890.00
Vend electric	December	234.26