

HOOK NORTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF HOOK NORTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD THURSDAY 9 JULY 2020 AT 7.30PM

Present: Councillors: Watkins, Hicks, Brotherston, Wilson, Duggan, Muller, Shepherd, Porter, Noviss, Gregory, Matthews, District Cllr Brown and Mrs Watts (Parish Clerk/RFO). There were no members of the public in attendance.

20/078 **Apologies for Absence** – County Cllr Reynolds

20/079 **Declarations of Interest:** there were none.

20/080 **Chairman's Announcements:** Cllr Watkins advised the meeting as follows:

20/080/1 "I have decided that I will not just be standing down as Chair on the 31 August, but will be resigning from the Parish Council completely. After over 7 years of playing a very active role in Parish affairs, 2 ½ of them as Chair, I feel it is time to make room for new individuals to play their part.

I would like to thank all those of you who have been supportive, in particular Allison Hicks as Vice Chair. In addition, a special 'Thank-you' is needed for our Parish Clerk – Rosemary Watts, without whom the role of Chair would have been very onerous and difficult.

It just leaves me to wish the new Chair 'Good Luck' as they ready themselves to take over this role on 1 September. I sincerely hope they enjoy carrying out this role as much as I have done. Thank you."

20/080/2 Cllr Hicks thanked Cllr Watkins for her years of service on the Parish Council. This was echoed by fellow Councillors.

20/081 **Appointment of Chairman 1 September 2020 – May 2021:**

20/081/1 Cllr Watkins proposed that Cllr Wilson, who had indicated her willingness to stand, be asked to be Chairman from 1 September 2020 and for the remainder of the year. This was seconded by Cllr Hicks. Those in favour - 7

20/081/2 Cllr Shepherd proposed that Cllr Duggan, who had indicated his willingness to stand, be asked to be Chairman from 1 September 2020 and for the remainder of the year. This was seconded by Cllr Gregory. Those in favour - 2

20/081/3 There were no other nominations and Cllr Wilson was duly elected Chairman from 1 September 2020.

20/081/4 Cllr Wilson will sign her Declaration of Acceptance of Office and return it to the Parish Clerk for counter-signature.

20/082 **Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11 June 2020**

20/082/1 Cllr Watkins proposed that the Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 11 June 2020 be resolved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Hicks and passed unanimously.

20/083 **Revised Standing Orders**

The Parish Clerk had circulated revised NALC model Standing Orders to all Councillors before the meeting to take into account Covid-19. Cllr Watkins proposed that they be adopted by the Parish Council. This was seconded by Cllr Hicks and agreed unanimously.

20/084 **Report of the Planning Co-ordinator on Planning Applications – (Annex 1)**

20/084/1 Five planning/TCA applications had been received in June. There were no objections, although the PC drew the applicant's attention to HNNP HN-COM2 which seeks to protect and enhance rights of way (20/01422/F Nil Farm, Tadmarton Heath Road). 20/00467/F – further amendments to this application at Crushill Farm – Cllr Muller will contact the Planning Officer to ascertain exactly what the alterations are.

20/084/2 Cherwell District Council had granted fifteen applications.

20/083/3 Cherwell District Council had refused two applications, 20/00234/F Falcons Nest, Park Road and 20/00805/F Highway House, Park Road.

20/084/4 20/01329/TCA Old Dairy, Brick Hill – withdrawn by applicant.

Initials.....

- 20/084/5 Application 20/01650/TPO was received just before the meeting – Pendula, 9 Old School End – fell 3 No. silver birch trees. Nine Cllrs objected to the felling of all three trees without evidence that they were all causing damage.
- 20/084/6 District Cllr Brown will send Cllr Muller planning application guidelines on ‘Call In’.

20/085
20/085/1 **Reports of Working Groups**
Recreation

- Lockdown restrictions on play areas were lifted on 4 July. Councillors carried out a risk assessment of the play area and its use on 29 June (Annex 2). Advisory notices regarding use have been put in the park and on all play equipment. The PC wants the children of the village to be able to enjoy using the playground again but due to the nature of the site, it is not able to provide permanent supervision of the facility, to provide hand sanitizer or other hygiene facilities at the site, or to provide regular sanitization of the equipment. Use of the playground is therefore strictly on the understanding that the responsibility for following Covid-19 social distancing and hygiene guidelines remains fully with the parents or adults in charge of children using the playground. Details can be found on the PC website www.hnpc.org.uk

Guidelines for Use of the Play Equipment

1. Children of any age using the play equipment must be supervised by a **Responsible Adult** at all times.
 2. Use of the play equipment is at the risk of the Responsible Adult, who should have read the paragraph above and be clear about the risk of virus transmission when using the equipment.
 3. The UK Government’s current ‘Social Distancing’ Guidelines must be followed in all parts of the Playground at all times.
 4. Children should sanitise their hands before and after using play equipment, and should be encouraged not to touch their faces while using the equipment.
 5. The **Responsible Adult** is responsible for cleaning the equipment before and after use if they deem it necessary.
 6. No food or drink should be consumed in the playground. Members of only one household at a time may use any one piece of play equipment.
 7. Children who are showing symptoms of Covid 19, or who are part of a household where any member is showing symptoms or has tested positive for Covid 19 within the last 14 days, are not permitted to use the play equipment.
- Replacement play bark for the zip-wire has been put down.
 - In April the Parish Clerk asked Playdale to carry out the annual inspection of play equipment but this has been delayed because of lock-down. She has now ascertained that the inspection is scheduled for week commencing 27 July.
 - A wooden pole holding netting has collapsed. Cllr Matthews will remove it.

20/085/2 **Cemetery and Allotments**

- On 23 June, PC contractors inspected the cemetery to ensure that Japanese Knotweed was under control/eradicated. No problems have been reported.
- A tree in the upper cemetery has fallen – it will be left in situ to encourage wildlife.
- Two roses on a grave were recently damaged. At the request of the plot holder, Thomas Fox Landscaping gave a ‘without prejudice’ donation of £30 to Katherine House Hospice as a gesture of goodwill.
- A 5 metre length of stone wall in St Peter’s churchyard has fallen where ivy has been removed. The area has been taped off. Cllr Duggan had sought four quotations: Dave Smith £2,000; Roger Hunt £2,700; Chris Hobbs – unable to carry out work; Pete Hibbard – no response. Cllr Duggan proposed that Dave Smith be appointed to do the work as a matter of urgency. This was seconded by Cllr Brotherston and agreed unanimously. The repairs should begin within 4 weeks.

20/085/3 **Environment**

- On 14 June, sewage was seen running downhill in Manor Field. Cllr Porter reported the matter to Thames Water and they sent out an emergency team to deal with it.

Initials.....

- Bus shelter – in January it was agreed that the Parish Council will pay for a bus shelter to be installed between Ironstone Hollow and Hollybush Rd. This would be in remembrance of VE Day 75th anniversary. OCC Highways Department had approved the scheme. Cllr Brotherston has asked Dan White and Adam Hope to provide quotes.
- Cllr Shepherd asked what could be done about vegetation overhanging roads and private properties. The Parish Clerk explained that landowners are responsible for dealing with this, not the Parish Council. To ascertain ownership contact OCC fixmystreet in the first instance and failing that, the Land Registry.

20/085/4 **Hook Norton War Memorial Hall**

- The War Memorial Hall remains closed due to Covid-19.
- The hall will be deep cleaned once the government sanctions the opening of community halls. A full risk assessment of hall usage will be carried out before the hall opens.
- A hand sanitizer unit has been purchased and put in the hall entrance for hirers to use and 'wash hands' notices displayed.
- Ken Smith has carried out PAT testing of appliances.
- Insurance requirements - a certified inspection of the hall's electrics is due by 31 July.

20/085/5 **Environmental Action Group**

- Cllr Muller had sent an update to Councillors prior to the meeting (Annex 3). Working Groups are asked to update the plan monthly.

20/086 Finance/Schedule of Receipts and Payments for Authorisation by the Council:

20/086/1 The Parish Clerk presented the schedules of receipts and payments for July totalling £4,049.36 for the Parish Council and £332.42 for the Memorial Hall (Annex 4 and 5). Cllr Watkins moved acceptance of the payments detailed. This was seconded by Cllr Hicks and agreed unanimously.

20/086/2 The Parish Clerk had sent Councillors spend against budget figures before the meeting (Annex 6).

20/087 Tree Survey

20/087/1 Treotech's quotation for the 3-year contract had been accepted and Cllr Shepherd had contacted them to arrange Year 1 urgent works.

20/087/2 Councillors discussed and agreed unanimously that trees bordering Station Road and Ironstone Hollow should be coppiced.

20/087/3 Cllr Shepherd had identified areas which need to be discussed at the September meeting:

- The Shearing (T3) - Fell and grind **OR** deadwood.
- Land opposite School (T12) Apple - Formative prune **OR** fell
- Cemetery (T24 & T27) - to undertake a resistograph reading to investigate decay.
- Replacing trees that have been lost since the first Tree Survey was conducted?

20/087/4 Cllr Shepherd reported that he thought over 100 trees were no longer identified on the current tree survey. Councillors asked that he check and verify this number.

20/088 Wildlife Zones

20/088/1 Cllr Shepherd had had informal discussions with a number of diverse groups and individuals on this subject. All parties were enthusiastic but views expressed were diverse.

20/088/2 Areas of concern - how to avoid creating an area that is attractive to antisocial behaviour, the costs and future maintenance. Seven zones had been identified and Cllr Shepherd had distributed a working document before the meeting (Annex 7).

20/088/3 Cllr Shepherd will endeavour to identify people who will take responsibility for the creation and future management of each zone.

20/089 Planters

20/089/1 In December 2019 Cllr Noviss was asked to source quotations for eight stone or wooden planters for the entrances to the village. He will progress this for the September meeting. Permission to install them on the highway will need to be obtained from OCC.

20/090 Engagement of Parishioners

20/090/1 Cllr Duggan asked if Councillors can think of ways of improving engagement with residents. He suggested each working group considers this topic in their monthly update. Were survey monkey, social media or Facebook options?

Initials.....

- 20/091** **Report on District Council Matters:** Cllr Hugo Brown reported as follows:
 20/091/1 CDC has continued to function at all levels and some Cllr meetings have been held virtually. Of all the services provided by CDC probably the one most appreciated by residents during the Lockdown was that the bin-men continued to carry out their rounds. The other service which would have proved of vital importance to those in need was the efficiency with which CDC handed out (i) Government grants for eligible businesses and (ii) housing benefit and Council Tax concessions for eligible households.
- 20/091/2 **Full Council Meeting, 20th May**
 This should have been the Annual Council (marking the start of the Civic Year) but was instead down-graded to a Virtual Extraordinary Meeting of Council. As the Annual Council was abandoned, all members of Committees remain unchanged and thus I stay put as Vice-Chairman of the Accounts, Audit & Risk Committee and a Member of the Planning Committee. (I am also a Non-Executive Director of a Cherwell/South Northants owned company, called CSN, which manages Revenues and Benefits on behalf of both Councils). The main Agenda Item of this meeting was to pass the measures necessary to permit Virtual Meetings to be held
- 20/091/3 **Executive, 16th June**
 This was a Special Executive called to consider the "Covid-19 Recovery Planning: Re-start, Re-cover, Re-new" Report document prepared by Officers. This is a public document and can be found on CDC's Website <http://modgov.cherwell.gov.uk/documents/s44073/Covd%2019%20Recovery%20Planning%20-%20cover%20report.pdf>
 Amongst other things, the report lays out the financial impact to CDC of the pandemic and lockdown amounting to £4.7m (arising from loss of income, increased expenditure and slippage in planned savings - the full impact of un-collected rent from commercial property has not yet been fully realised) although this is partially off-set by £1.6m received from the government.
- 20/091/4 I was delighted to have been able to support a grant of £250 from my CDC Covid-19 Fund to Hooky Neighbours to enable them to help those supporting vulnerable households through the pandemic.
- 20/092** **Report on County Council Matters:** Cllr Reynolds had not submitted a report.
- 20/093** **Correspondence:**
 20/093/1 The Parish Clerk had forwarded all correspondence to Councillors during the previous month and there were no matters outstanding.
- 20/094** **AOB:** there was none.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday, 10 September 2020 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business, Councillor Watkins thanked everyone for attending and closed the public meeting at 8.41pm.

Signed
Hook Norton Parish Council
 Dated