

HOOK NORTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF HOOK NORTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 14 JANUARY 2021 AT 7.30PM

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

21/001 **Apologies for Absence** – County Cllr Reynolds,

21/002 **Declarations of Interest:** there were none.

21/003 **Chairman's Announcements:**

21/003/1 Cllr Wilson thanked everyone for attending the virtual meeting.

21/003/2 Cllr Wilson asked Councillors to observe two minutes silence in remembrance of Jem Hayward, a former long-serving Parish Councillor who sadly die in December. The Parish Council send their sincere condolences to Jem's family.

21/003/3 Members of the public are advised to contact the Clerk to the Parish Council at rosemary.watts@hnpc.org.uk if they wish to attend a meeting. To enable attendance a link to Zoom will be sent to them. Residents should note that this will be for the purposes of viewing the meeting only and public participation will only be permitted at the discretion of the Chairman to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted. The 5-minute public speaking rule, as per the Parish Council's Standing Orders, will apply.

21/003/4 A vacancy exists on the Parish Council and interested parties should contact the Parish Clerk for further details rosemary.watts@hnpc.org.uk

21/003/5 Cllr Wilson reminded Councillors that they can only access shared PC documents via their HNPC email accounts and that PC email accounts must be used for all PC business and not for any personal business. Councillors are asked not to use social media to discuss PC business. Cllr Wilson is drafting a Parish Council Facebook page – this will include PC information only and will not be open for public debates, though residents will be able send personal messages to the Parish Council via the Facebook page.

21/004 **Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held 10 December 2020**

21/004/1 Cllr Wilson proposed that the Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 10 December 2020 be resolved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Hicks and passed unanimously.

21/005 **Planning Applications** – (Annex 1) Cllr Duggan reported:

21/005/1 Eight planning/TCA applications had been received since the last meeting.

21/005/2 Cherwell District Council granted six applications. The PC had objected to 20/02199/F Manor Farm, Station Rd.

21/005/3 Cherwell District Council refused 20/02921/F, The Nettings, Netting St – first floor extension to main house and outbuilding replacement. The PC had not objected to this application.

21/006 **Reports of Working Groups**

21/006/1 **Recreation**

- The play area remains open during lockdown.
- **Goals:**
 - Provide a high quality, diversified park for recreation and open space that provides facilities for all ages and interest groups
 - Work with the Environmental working group to provide a high quality, diversified open space that preserves and enhances environmental resources with features to protect natural plant and animal habitats
- **Objectives:**
 - Ensure the ongoing maintenance of the park area and equipment
 - Install more seating to enable more use and enjoyment of the facilities

Initials.....

- Restart planning and quotes for the outdoor gym
- Identify other areas that will increase community involvement

21/006/2

Cemetery and Allotments

- **Objectives:** Allotments
 - Undertake essential repairs to the gates at the top and bottom to ensure they close properly and securely
 - Ensure all holders are aware that they can access water butts
 - Consideration to be given to expanding allotment site as currently have 13 people on waiting list; demand is outstripping supply
 - Visit allotments during spring to check the three allotments identified from the 2020 inspection as not being well maintained, show signs of being worked on
 - Undertake bi-annual allotment inspections to ensure all holders are maintaining and regularly working on their allotments
- **Objectives:** Cemetery
 - Identify stonewaller to repair church wall at Talbot house
 - Put in place prime contractor arrangements to cover repairs to cemetery and church walls for 2021
 - Appoint contractor to undertake a full survey of church and cemetery walls to clarify what works will be required in future
 - Grounds of lower cemetery need to be tidied up or designated as a wildlife zone
 - Investigate if it is possible to make the upper/lower cemetery more accessible to users
 - Work with the Environment Group to consider wild-life areas

21/006/3

Environment

- A number of Councillors attended HNLC AGM on 15 December.
- There is a nationwide project to plant a tree for every child starting school in the next two years. Cllr Shepherd has emailed the Headmaster of the primary school to discuss.
- It was agreed unanimously that two dog bins already in stock will be provided for 1) the Sibford Rd entrance to Scholars' Gate and 2) the Green opposite Wheatsheaf House. Cllr Shepherd will address this before the next meeting.
- **Objectives:** Cllr Shepherd has produced a spreadsheet of objectives which he will send out to Councillors for information in the next few days.

21/006/4

Hook Norton War Memorial Hall

- Government restrictions means that the hall will remain closed until they are lifted.
- Ken Smith has not yet fitted the lights to the outside front wall.
- **Objectives:**
 - Open the hall as soon as restrictions are lifted
 - Consider usage
 - Offer the hall to the NHS service as a possible centre for Covid-19 vaccinations

21/007

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

21/007/1

The Parish Clerk presented the schedules of receipts and payments for January totalling £2,925.47 for the Parish Council and £495.23 for the Memorial Hall (Annex 2, 3). Cllr Wilson moved acceptance of the payments detailed. Seconded by Cllr Hicks and agreed unanimously.

21/007/2

The Parish Clerk had sent Councillors details of spend against budget before the meeting (Annex 4).

21/008

Engagement of Parishioners:

21/008/1

Before the meeting, Cllr Gregory circulated a short article she wanted to put in the next Hook Norton Village Newsletter inviting villagers to contact Councillors on new projects the Parish Council is working on, including the creation of wildlife zones, improving access to transport and tree planting. This will ensure that Councillors take villagers' views into account when making decisions. Cllrs agreed unanimously that a half-page advert should be placed. Further adverts will be posted as appropriate.

Initials.....

- 21/009** **Trees:**
 21/009/1 Cllr Shepherd had sent out three documents before the meeting
 1) Tree List; 2) Tree Maintenance Work Summary; 3) Tree Risk Management Process
 21/009/2 In the light of the Cavanagh v Witley Parish Council (2018), where legal proceedings were instituted against a parish council as owner of a tree which fell into the path of a bus causing serious injury to the driver and damage to a nearby property, Cllr Shepherd proposed that the Risk Management Process be adopted by the Council. This was seconded by Cllr Hicks and agreed unanimously.
 21/009/3 Cllr Shepherd will send the Parish Clerk details of trees in the high risk area to enable her to engage Sacha Barnes consultants to carry out inspections in the Spring.
 21/009/4 Cllr Shepherd had obtained a quotation of £738 + VAT from TreeTech for additional work to trees not tendered for on the eastern extremity of Ironstone Hollow. Cllr Shepherd proposed that the quotation be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Wilson and agreed unanimously.
 21/009/5 TreeTech will provide an invoice for work already carried out in the next couple of weeks.
- 21/010** **Repairs to Churchyard Wall:** Cllr Gregory has obtained two quotes for repairs to the churchyard wall but is finding it difficult in finding a third. One quote is for £2,900 and the other for £1,800. Cllr Gregory will check the quotes to ensure that they are like-for-like.
- 21/011** **Hook Norton Emergency Plan:**
 21/011/1 Before the meeting, Cllr Wilson circulated a draft copy of the Parish Council's Emergency Plan, together with correspondence from Chris Fry as community first responders and James Clarke in his capacity as MD of the brewery. Further help has been offered by Banbury Skip Hire in the form of 4x4s, generators, chainsaws etc.
 21/011/2 Councillors were asked to think of anyone or of any business in the village which could help in an emergency (e.g. local farmers) – suggestions to Cllr Wilson by next week please.
- 21/012** **Hook Norton S137 Grants Policy:**
 21/012/1 Before the meeting, Cllr Wilson circulated a draft S137 Grants Policy.
 21/012/2 Cllr Wilson proposed that the policy be adopted by the Parish Council. This was seconded by Cllr Matthews and agreed unanimously.
- 21/013** **Park Farm Railway Embankment:** Cllr Shepherd asked for this item to be removed from the agenda.
- 21/014** **Report on District Council Matters:** District Cllr Brown reported as follows:-
 21/014/1 **Full Council Meeting, 14th Dec**
3 motions were tabled:
- Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Bill - this called for the establishment of Citizens' Assemblies to lead Government thinking on how to limit global temperature rises and specifically for the Council to take into account the CEE Bill when setting its own strategies, encouraging Cllrs to join the CEE campaign, and calling on all Oxon MPs to sign the Early Day Motion on the CEE Bill. Motion was defeated.
 - Hunting - this sought to ban trail hunting on Council owned land. Motion was defeated.
 - Improving Coronavirus testing and tracing - this sought to undermine the national effort by directing all resources to local councils. Motion was defeated.
 - **Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Discounts 2021-22** - The CTRS helps those with financial problems by reducing their Council Tax, which can be a 100% reduction for those in receipt of one of the main passported benefits (Income Support, Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Based and Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or receiving War Widows or War Disablement Pensions). Between June 19 and June 20 the numbers in receipt of CTR increased from 6,457 to 6,573 (partially explained by Covid). The scheme costs CDC approx. £7.5m per annum with some recoverable from the Government. C/Tax Discounts, on the other hand, are given depending on a property's status, e.g. (i) 25% discount for 6 months, and thereafter zero discount, for unoccupied and unfurnished properties, (ii) 25% discount for 12 months, and thereafter zero discount, for properties undergoing major renovation or repair, (iii) zero discount for 2nd homes, (iv) 100% premium for properties left empty for more than 2 years. It was resolved that the CTRS and C/Tax Discounts remain unchanged for 2021/22.

Initials.....

- **Constitution Review** - this proposed a whole raft of changes to rules of debate, length of speeches, order of the Agenda, finish time of Full Council and Planning Committee Meetings.

21/014/2

Executive, 4th Jan

- **Community Nature Plan 2020 - 2022** - the key purpose of the Plan is to demonstrate the Council's fulfilment of its statutory biodiversity duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Biodiversity is interpreted to describe the variety of life including all plants, animals, their habitats and the natural systems that support them. The vision of the Plan is "to work with partners to protect and enhance Cherwell's natural environment for its intrinsic value, the services it provides, the health and wellbeing of people, its contribution to climate change adaption and resilience, and the economic prosperity that it brings". The Plan requires the local preparation and publication of Local Nature Recovery Strategies to better support spatial planning and will include the establishment of a Nature Recovery Network (NRN) which will map existing nature assets including protected sites and wildlife-rich habitats. The NRN will help inform the Cherwell Local Plan Review, guide key policies relating to biodiversity net gain and develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). A Local Nature Partnership (LNP) needs to be set up to drive the Plan forward, Oxon not currently having an LNP and it is likely that this will be done at County level hopefully by April 2021
- **Annual Monitoring Report 2020** - this annual Report tracks building development (both domestic and commercial) in Cherwell. Key findings in the Report are (i) 1,159 net housing completions in 2019/20 against an annualised Local Plan requirement of 1,142 (thus 22,840 new homes between 2011 and 2031), (ii) at March 2020, there were 9,061 dwellings with planning permission not yet built, (iii) 7,134 new homes to be built between 2021 and 2026, (iv) 445 affordable housing completions during 2019/20, (v) there remains a 4.7 year supply of deliverable sites for the period 2021-26, which is below the usual requirement for a 5 year supply but Oxon has a dispensation for a 3 year supply while the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is developed, (vi) 80,000 square metres of new employment floorspace was completed in 2019/20, down from 100,000 square metres the year before, (vii) at March 2020, there were 365,000 square metres of employment floorspace with planning permission not yet built, (viii) 81 hectares of remaining allocated employment land for which no planning applications have yet been made, (ix) 16 new brownfield sites have been added to the Brownfield Land Register (BLR), and 10 removed as work has either started or been completed on those sites, (x) the BLR includes 43 sites which between them could accommodate 1,315 new dwellings (so, presumably, to prove that not all development is happening on Green Belt or rural sites).

21/015
21/015/1

Report on County Council Matters: County Cllr Reynolds reported as follows:-
There is very real concern about the rapid rise in positive Covid cases in the Cherwell area and he asked that we all continue to keep to the lockdown rules. North Oxfordshire is now in the top 50 areas of positive cases per 100,000.

21/016
21/016/1

Correspondence:
The Parish Clerk had forwarded all correspondence to Councillors during the month and there were no matters outstanding.

21/017

AOB: there was none.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business, Councillor Wilson thanked everyone attending and closed the public meeting at 9.18pm.

Signed
Hook Norton Parish Council
Dated