



PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL
Working together for a better future

PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL **HELD VIRTUALLY USING MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY 26TH MAY 2020**

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England and Wales) regulations 2020 ("the Regulations") came into force on 4th April 2020. The Regulations enable local councils to hold remote meetings (including by video and telephone conferencing) for a specified period until May next year.

PRESENT: Cllrs: Hare (Chairman), Clarke, Court (from Min.180), Esdaile, Harvey, Kay, Kipp, Lawson, Trembling, Riddle and Wallace

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs H Knight (Clerk)

The meeting opened at 5.00pm

The Chairman welcomed all and gave an introduction and summary of events leading to the establishment of virtual meetings due to the pandemic situation.

177. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Henly due to technical issues, and this absence was approved.

178. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made and no changes to the register of interests.

179. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

It was noted that Cllr Bernard Allen had duly completed his declaration of acceptance of office following co-option to the Council at the meeting held 20th February 2020. The Chairman advised that unfortunately, due to pressures of work arising from the pandemic crisis, Cllr Allen had had to resign his position in the past few days (see agenda item 7).

180. MINUTES OF FULL COUNCIL

In reviewing the Minutes of the previous Council meeting, a Member queried why his question regarding Broadband provision in Pulborough had not been included in the minutes. The Clerk agreed to check meeting notes and respond to the Member.

The Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 20th February 2020 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and that the Chairman would sign them.

Clerk's Report

Due to the length of the report, the Clerk gave a summary and a written report would be circulated (attached as Appendix 1).

181. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public attending, and therefore no adjournment of the meeting.

182. CO-OPTION TO THE COUNCIL

One application had been received (details circulated to Members). Unfortunately, however, the applicant had subsequently withdrawn their application for personal reasons. They had indicated that they may apply again at a later date, if a vacancy remains.

183. COUNCIL RESIGNATIONS / VACANT SEATS

The Clerk reported that Cllr Sue Finlayson had resigned from the Council in late March. The Notice of Vacancy had been duly published for residents so wishing to call a by-election. No by-election had been called and therefore this seat was now available for co-option. In addition, Cllr Bernie Allen who recently joined the Council, had subsequently reluctantly decided to resign due to extreme pressure of work.

This meant that in total three vacancies now existed. The Clerk would arrange appropriate public notification of these as soon as practically possible.

184. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders for this item in order to consider this matter. It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Financial Regulations in order to consider this matter.

The Clerk reported on the need to put in place additional delegated authority where not already covered in the Council's Standing Orders, due to the new operating procedures necessary as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Under new legislation Council meetings could now take place 'remotely' and all previously scheduled physical meetings had been cancelled. However, this was not always practical for all councillors or feasible within the same frequency of meetings, for example committee meetings were not now regularly taking place. Additional delegated authority would ensure the efficacy of the Council and the ability for operational decisions to be made that would not fit into the timescale of an online meeting. This would be a temporary arrangement only whilst normal physical meetings were not being conducted.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the extending of delegation of Council decisions to the Clerk, or in her absence the Deputy Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, or in his absence the Vice Chairman, during any period of restricted activity declared by the Government in respect of emergency or pandemic situations such as the Covid-19 virus: Such delegation to enable the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to its residents and ensure business continuity measures, to include planning application recommendations, consultation responses and financial / reserves transfers.

185. SPORTS PAVILION REBUILD PROJECT

The Vice Chairman/Chairman of Finance & Policy Committee gave a brief update. He had been liaising with Ray Qusted regarding production of an updated brochure for the business case presentation including financing of the project, a final version of which was now awaited and would then be produced. He had been making enquiries about possibilities of hirers such as mother and toddler groups.

A contact from the Cricket Club had been proactive in seeking grant possibilities for the whole project. Sussex Clubs for Young People (SCYP) were enthusiastic about the possibility of joining the project so that a base at the new premises could provide somewhere older youths would feel more comfortable in. SCYP had contacts for potential funding and access to a professional bid writer (this may be a charged service).

The Chairman gave updated Members on SCYP's current activities online supporting young people. The Clerk advised that one of the partners from Studio 5 Architects would be retiring at the end of July, and the remaining partner would be restructuring the company under a new name. Council would need to decide whether they wished to continue using their service. Members felt that it was likely that the relationship could continue, unless there were any changes to previously agreed terms. The Clerk would check this and report back.

186. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No significant plans had been received for decision. Other more minor ones and some tree works applications had been discussed through email consultation where necessary.

187. RATIFICATION OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the following actions taken since the previous physical meeting on 20th February 2020, whilst Council had not met physically (not including planning applications responses:

- Parish Council response to HDC Local Plan consultation (previously circulated)
- Parish Council response to HDC Body Worn Camera consultation (previously circulated)
- Parish Council response to HDC Community Partnerships proposals (previously circulated)
- Parish Council response to Pulborough Community Partnership Visitor Website proposals (previously circulated)
- Clerk's attendance at SLCC webinar training sessions on: 20th April 2020; 20th May 2020; 22nd May 2020; 9th June 2020. Topics for these included staff appraisals, project management and HR/supporting staff items. The webinars cost £30 +VAT each.

188. LOWER STREET CAR PARK

Members had received separately a list of proposed improvement works by HDC to Lower Street Car Park, which were noted. It was also noted that although the HDC engineer in contact was anticipating an autumn start, the timeframe and HDC budget was not confirmed.

189. NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS

Members noted the Neighbourhood Wardens February and April 2020 written reports. A separate report for March was being produced, as the Covid-19 situation had interrupted usual routines, whilst the wardens were actively involved in setting up and co-ordinating the Pulborough Community support Hub in response to the emergency.

Following proposal from the Chairman, with all in support, it was **RESOLVED** to record in these Minutes the council's appreciation for the work the Neighbourhood Wardens have been doing.

190. CORRESPONDENCE

The Correspondence was noted (previously circulated to Council) and is attached as Appendix 2. There were two lists circulated since correspondence from the cancelled 19th March 2020 meeting had been brought forward to this meeting.

191. CHAIRMAN'S ANOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT MATTERS

The Clerk had included this new item for prudence under the current crisis. This provided the opportunity for the Chairman to report on urgent matters.

The Clerk suggested that with Members' agreement it would be more practical going forward to convene virtual meetings of full Council and the Finance & Policy Committee only, on an alternating monthly basis, all decisions being directed into these. It was **AGREED** to continue on that basis for the time being.

The Chairman reported that the previous decision to move to Reg. 14 public consultation on the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan had had to be delayed due to the pandemic lockdown, when it had been considered inadvisable to proceed. However, it now seemed that Government would be allowing public consultations to proceed shortly, with the result that it may be possible to proceed from mid-July through August.

192. PAYMENTS

Members had received copies of four payment lists dated/processed 26th March, 16th April, 30th April and 11th May 2020. Members ratified the following payments made by cheque, direct debit or bank transfer, noting that the relevant authorisation forms would be physically signed at the next available opportunity :-

| Payee | £ |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Mr F Bushby - transfer already sent | 20.00 |
| Arun Mowers | 2,073.88 |
| Business Stream | 4.71 |
| Mr F Bushby | 22.05 |
| Horsham District Council | 43,819.00 |
| Kent County Council | 305.52 |
| Pulborough Social Cte | 57.00 |
| Laker Building & Fencing Supplies Ltd | 23.85 |
| Ingenio Technologies | 30.00 |
| Horsham District Council | 26.60 |
| Horsham District Council | 47.20 |
| National Westminster Bank | 5.00 |
| Daisy Communications | 25.79 |
| WSALC Ltd | 1,774.70 |
| Wesley's Window Cleaning | 216.00 |
| Fire Risk UK | 107.88 |
| WSCC | 8,577.48 |
| Mrs L Underwood | 28.60 |
| HDC | 26.60 |
| HDC | 35.40 |
| National Westminster Bank | 5.00 |
| National Westminster Bank | 29.00 |
| National Westminster Bank | 25.85 |
| Pulborough Social Centre | 1,479.29 |
| Daisy Communications | 26.48 |
| National Westminster bank | 2.45 |
| WSCC | 8,277.52 |
| WSCC | 8,403.82 |
| Kent County Council | 318.80 |
| Kent County Council | 382.97 |
| Wey & Arun Canal | 15.00 |
| National Westminster Bank | 22.25 |

The meeting closed at 6.35pm

.....Chairman

.....Date

Clerk's Report**Appendix 1****Items from meeting 20.02.20**

Min. 165 Pump Track Proposal: Due to Covid-19 related meeting cancellations and the young people concentrating on school exams, no further development has been brought forward. Contact from the group will hopefully be re-established in due course.

Min. 166 Pulborough Neighbourhood Plan: Council approved progression to Regulation 14 public consultation, and the Steering Group intentions were underway for March commencement of this statutory 6 week period. Unfortunately, the pandemic situation has put matters on hold as it was felt, and HDC advice supported, that public consultation would not be feasible or fair during social restrictions. Last week, however, advice has been received which indicates that Government is now supportive of Neighbourhood Plan public consultations taking place – the Government has stated that physical engagement consultation is not statutory, therefore an online/remote consultation would meet requirements. Full discussion has not yet taken place with the Steering Group, due to the lockdown situation, however it is now hopeful that we may be in a position to progress Reg 14. in July if not sooner. Council may be asked to approve spending NP budgeted money on publicity of this, such as a leaflet door drop of consultation information access or banners/gateway signs.

Matters subsequent to Coronavirus lockdown/cancelled meetings of March and April 2020Staffing matters:

At the start of the lockdown (ie from W/C 23rd March onwards) arrangements were made for Clerk and Deputy Clerk to work from home, ensuring as much as possible council work could be carried out remotely via email and remote computer access. Some tasks, such as preparation of year end accounts, necessitated some dedicated physical office attendance, which was carried out with appropriate social distancing etc. measures.

External working staff, ie pavilion cleaner, weekend and weekday litter wardens, and groundsman were all initially instructed to remain at home until further notice. Much research has been undertaken in trying to establish whether parish councils would be eligible for Government support grants such as the Job Retention Scheme. Clear information has been difficult to find, but it seemed unlikely we would be eligible. In the event no application was made and some staff were brought back into work duties over the past couple of weeks. The Clerk has kept in touch regularly with staff to keep them as informed and supported as possible – the Council has a corporate, as well as moral, duty of care to ensure staff wellbeing, including responsibility for safe home-working.

Currently all staff except for pavilion cleaner are back on full duties as having risk assessed roles of Groundsman and Litter Pickers these are deemed safe for return to work. The pavilion cleaner will be resumed as soon as practically possible – although the sports pavilion is out of use a control regime for minimising contraction risk of Legionella bacteria needs to be implemented. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk are each attending office one day per week separately (normally Clerk - Tuesday and Deputy - Wednesday). Neighbourhood Wardens are mostly working remotely, having been deployed principally on co-ordinating the Community Hub Scheme initially as per their recent reports. Safe practices in the office will be introduced and Government advice adhered to.

General/Financial:

Apart from PPC, no other Village Hall users have occupied and the VH remained closed. The Manager has today advised that they are looking at some return to normality over the coming weeks/July. The pre-school is starting back from 1st June.

The VH was asked for reconsideration of the April rental invoice but although they have said they may reconsider at some future point (depending on their own financial situation) the request was initially declined as they pointed out we are continuing with some use of the building and have secure storage there.

Investigations was also undertaken as to whether PPC is eligible for the Small Business Rates Grant but HDC has confirmed we are not. *NB: subsequent pursuing of an application for this grant was successful.*

Pulborough Community Bulletin / PPC Annual Report and Annual Parish Meeting:

Eyelevel Design decided not to publish any of their May community bulletins – this was a combination of lack of advertising revenue and distribution/social contact issues. They are hopeful of discussing in July the normal August newsletter.

Delays as a result of the pandemic crisis and the lack of Pulborough Community Bulletin meant the PPC normal May Annual Report was not available. It is hoped to still issue this as soon as practicable to be available on our website – possible Council may wish to consider still distributing with the August Community Bulletin, or even as a standalone letterbox doordrop (both of which would of course have a cost but is provisionally already budgeted for). Due to the lockdown, both the Annual Council Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Parish (electors) were cancelled. A notice explaining this and the delay in having the Annual Report and Council accounts available for public inspection was posted on the Council website/Lower St car park notice board.

With Member agreement by email, the Council has taken the step of not having an Annual Council Meeting at the present time, as new legislation allows for this to be delayed until May 2021: This included, with Member agreement, the option for the Chairman to continue in office for a further year and all other appointments to remain unchanged.

CORRESPONDENCE**Appendix 2****List 1 (from cancelled meeting of 19th March 2020)****WSSCC**

- Budget Update 14.2.20 (*previously forwarded to Cllrs*)
- Notification of Agenda and papers for Chanctonbury CLC meeting 11.03.20 (*previously forwarded to Cllrs*)
- News release 19.02.20: Inspectors find West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has made 'tangible improvements'

HDC

Email 11.03.20 from Economic Development Officer advising that the new digital tourist information screens will for the time being display public health information in light of the Covid19 outbreak, and will not be touch screen operated. Testing of screen content and other technical issues will continue in the background in the meantime.

NALC

Chief Executive's Bulletin 11.3.20, including updates/guidance regarding Coronavirus situation. (*Forwarded to Cllrs with covering email from Clerk*)

HALC

Email 27.2.20 with copy of letter sent to HDC Leader about housing numbers (*previously circulated*). Also advising of SALC company structure and next HALC meeting on 07.02.20 at 7.30pm at Ashurst Village Hall when guest speakers will be Insp Ben Starns (Joint Action Group) and Mr Adam Chalmers (HDC Director of Community Services, discussing climate change).

Sussex Police

Sussex PCC e-letters: 14.02.20, 21.02.20 and 06.03.20. Topics include Consulting with Sussex residents; Victims' charities receive funding; More tasers for Sussex Police.

Highways England

A27 Arundel Improvement Update link to their web page: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a27-arundel-improvement/> (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

UK Power Networks

Details of Stakeholder engagement Roadshow Tuesday 17th March, Brighton i360, 9.30am-1pm followed by lunch and i360 tour. Roadshow topics will include Tackling Climate Change - our Green Action Plan; Supporting vulnerable customers; Improving network resilience. Register at stakeholder.engagement@ukpowernetworks.co.uk (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

Billingshurst Parish Council

Minutes of BPC Local Plan Working Party meeting 09.03.20 and agenda for next meeting on 16.03.20, with invitation for a Cllr from each of Pulborough and West Chiltington PCs to attend. (*forwarded to P&S C'ttee, EH attending*)

West Chiltington Parish Council

Minutes of Joint Parish Councils meeting 04.03.20 (*copied to Cllrs under item 8, attended by IH, JW, EK and LT*)

Nutbourne Residents Association

Details of BigSTAND campaign against Local Plan proposals for new houses at Adversane. (BigSTAND is a separate formation of residents associations, details at www.bigstand.co.uk)

APCAG

E;Newsletter 29.02.20 re New Gatwick Noise Management Board and Noise Community forum meeting February 2020.

PAGNE

E-newsletter February/March 2020

CAGNE

Bulletins 105 and 106 February/March 2020

The Wiggonholt Association

Email 11.03.20 regretfully cancelling Climate Change Public Forum 'Food for Thought' on Friday 13th March 2020, due to Coronavirus. They hope to reschedule the meeting later in the year.

(forwarded to Cllrs and shared on social media)

Publications

Clerks & Councils Direct March 2020, issue 128

List 2 (up to 26th May 2020)

WSSCC

Chanctonbury CLC draft minutes 11.03.20

<https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=180&MId=2036&Ver=4>

Press release 11.05.20: Highway improvements total more than £1.7m – 11 improvement projects were completed or nearly completed by WS Highways just before the Coronavirus lockdown. The various schemes across West Sussex "represent a significant investment in our highway network and will benefit a wide range of people, including pedestrians, cyclists, bus users and horse riders."

HDC

Assets of Community Value Scheme – Application No. CA15/12 The Rising Sun, The Street, Nutbourne, Pulborough West Sussex RH20 2HE: Copy of notifications to owner and potential community bidder that six-week interim moratorium period ended on 6th April 2020, and that a further four and a half months comes into effect, ending on 24th August 2020.

Email 09.04.20 from Neighbourhood Warden Supervisor updating on warden duties during Covid-19 *(forwarded to Cllrs)*

Business Grants: Confirmation from LGSS Revenues and Benefits that parish Councils are not eligible for the Small Business Grant & Retail, Hospitality & Leisure Grant, following Clerk's enquiry *(decision subsequently overturned for Pulborough PC)*

NALC

Various emails from 24.03.20 to present with advice/guidance on Covid-19 impact for councils *(most regularly forwarded to Cllrs for information)* Matters covered include financial impact, grants, community support, legislation changes, holding remote meetings, HR advice, allotments.

SALC

Various emails from 26.03.20 to present with advice/guidance on Covid-19 impact for councils *(most regularly forwarded to Cllrs for information)* as above for NALC.

Sussex Police

Sussex PCC e-letters: 13.03.20 – Recruitment of 100 extra PCSOs and new recruitment drive for more police officers; 19.05.20 – Addressing rural crime, and recruitment of 129 officers for Sussex by March 2021 following Government uplift, plus a further 250 to be recruited following local council tax contributions.

Sussex Resilience Forum: Letter 26.03.20 outlining SRF response to Covid-19 situation. SRF incorporates membership from Sussex Police, West Sussex Fire & Rescue and East Sussex County Council amongst others, ensuring strategic information flow and communications with Government and communities on latest developments with the crisis.

MP

Letter 27.03.20 from Andrew Griffith MP to Clerk thanking the Clerk, Parish Council, volunteers and Pulborough resident Felicity Stroud for efforts in co-ordinating community support and public

information during the pandemic crisis. A similar letter was sent to PPC Neighbourhood Wardens thanking them specifically for their work in setting up the support hub locally.

SDNP

Email 02.04.20 from SDNP Ranger Charles Winchester offering assistance to parish councils and volunteer organisations with resources such as volunteers, vehicles etc. during the pandemic crisis (*acknowledged with thanks and forwarded to Neighbourhood Wardens*)

Pulborough Neighbourhood Wardens

Weekly Newsletters from 4th May onwards, distributed to community and Cllrs, plus Horsham District Age Concern Newsletter 2

Email 20.05.20 from Vanessa Green outlining current status of Pulborough Community Hub activity, having supported 193 residents, and that her cover of the hub will be reducing to

Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays 0900-1700 with reclaimed hours of leave on Tuesdays and Thursdays for the time being. (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

Eyelevel Design / Pulborough Community Bulletin

Confirmation that after much consideration the decision has been taken, with their distributors, not to produce community bulletins for this quarter, which would have been due to door drop in May. Eyelevel Design will be in touch around early July regarding Quarter 3 when it's hoped to have more clarification to decide on commencing distributions again.

Pulborough Community Partnership

Minutes of PCP Management Group meetings held 16.03.20 and 18.05.20 (virtual). (*forwarded to Cllrs*).

Nutbourne Residents Association

Neighbourhood Watch News and Local Volunteers Update: Email 14.05.20 reviewing the West Chiltington and Nutbourne Action Group (WS&NAG) set up in response to the Covid-19 situation and supporting residents in that geographic area.

PAGNE

Email 04.05.20: Copy of letter to Secretary of State for Transport seeking the commissioning of a far-reaching review of the aviation industry and regulatory mechanisms, in light of the series of failures that have impacted the industry over the last year, culminating in the Covid-19 pandemic.

CAGNE

E-newsletters/Bulletins 107 March, 108 May and 109 May 2020.

Publications

Clerks & Councils Direct May 2020, issue 129