



**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 28<sup>TH</sup> JULY 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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, Esdaile, Harvey (from Min. 196), Henly (from Min.196), Kipp, Lawson and Riddle

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs H Knight (Clerk)  
1 member of public (part of meeting, left at Min.197)

*The meeting opened at 7.00pm*

**193. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Kay due to ill health, and this absence was approved.

**194. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CHANGES TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

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

**195. MINUTES OF FULL COUNCIL**

The Council **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and that the Chairman would sign them.

Clerks Report

Nothing from previous meeting – no further news on car park improvements.

**Neighbourhood Plan Reg 14 Update**

As Cllrs will know, following Government advice public consultation commenced on 6<sup>th</sup> July, running for 8 weeks until midnight on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August (exceeding the statutory 6 week period). Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, it hasn't been possible to arrange physical drop in information sessions and the library is unable to accept a hard copy. As much publicity as possible is being given to the consultation – principally online but also village gateway banners will be up next week, Sussex Local published information, a press release has just been issued to local area newspapers, information has been in the July Church magazine and will be in the August Pulborough Community Bulletin.

Additionally, a local trader kindly offered to have the main Pre-Submission document pasted across her empty shop window, which is drawing some interest. The NP Steering Group has held a public Zoom session in July and two more are planned, one for evening of Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August and daytime of Friday 10<sup>th</sup> August.

### **Future Parish Council meetings and office working**

For the time being, virtual meetings look set to continue into September, NALC advice being to still avoid physical meetings if possible. As the Council doesn't usually meet in August (apart from P&S which has been cancelled) this doesn't have too much effect. We will continue to operate emailed decisions of majority where necessary, under existing Standing Orders and Financial Regulations or delegated authority. It is hoped that from September whilst still having virtual meetings, the previously scheduled committee meeting dates can be resumed.

Government advice is that employers can choose to return to work from 1<sup>st</sup> August. The pandemic is not over and social distancing measures are still required. Therefore since most work by Clerk and Deputy can be carried out remotely, combined with the Council 'recess' and staff holidays in August, it is felt sensible to continue a mix of remote and office working. The Deputy Clerk and I currently work 1 day per week separately at the office (Heather Tuesdays, Lisa Wednesdays) with some additional and shared days when necessary. We plan to increase to two days each, with some shared days from September. The office will remain closed to public for the time being, apart from pre-arranged appointments where necessary. Emails are accessed daily and the office landline messages are picked up at least weekly. Office opening and staff attendance will be reviewed in late August /early September in line with emerging advice.

### **Annual Report**

The Finance & Policy Committee made the decision not to print the Council's usual Annual Report, this year, which would normally have been available for the May Annual Parish Meeting and May Pulborough Community Bulletin. Covid-19 caused initial delays to process, including the editors deciding not to publish the Q2 May Bulletin. The earliest edition of the Bulletin would now be mid-August distribution and it was felt that this was less pertinent being several months late. Instead, the Annual Report would be published on the Council's website as soon as possible and any public can still request to receive a copy electronically or by post. The final report is yet to be assembled as the Planning & Services Committee Report was awaited. The non-printing represents a saving to the Council on budgeted printing/distribution costs.

### **Small Business Rates Grant – Covid-19**

As reported to the Finance & Policy Committee, the opportunity to apply for this Government grant was taken. The application was initially declined as it was thought that parish councils weren't eligible by definition but with some perseverance that was overturned and PPC received a £10,000 grant. Government has now made clear that parish/town councils with owned rateable premises are eligible for the funding. It is hoped this will be useful funds if needed to offset reduced Council income from sports pavilion tenants and multi-sports facility hire.

## **196. ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING**

*The meeting was adjourned from 7.10 to 7.16pm for a public speaker. The member of public had confirmed their wish to be identified at the meeting and in minutes.*

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Sarah Browne, who had asked to speak to Members about her recent bid to purchase The Rising Sun public house, Nutbourne, under the Assets of Community Value scheme (as a registered asset). Mrs Browne explained that she wished to ensure the pub remained as a valued community hub and wanted record made of her intentions to bring the pub and restaurant back into use and safeguard it from potentially becoming developed or changed into housing accommodation by planning application, should her bid not be accepted. Another person had previously entered an expression of interest to Horsham District Council, triggering a moratorium

period, which may result in an offer being made by them within the moratorium deadline currently imposed.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Browne for informing the Council. Mrs Browne left the meeting after this item, and the meeting was reconvened.

**197. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2019/20 (FINAL)**

Members had received the Internal Audit Report 2019/20 (Final), which had been carried out remotely on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Members were pleased to note that no issues had been identified and no recommendations made for improvement during the two reviews of the year. Members commended the Clerk and Deputy Clerk for their work, having been thanked in the report for their assistance during a more challenging than usual final review. The Chairman drew attention too to the report comments on the swift transition into an irregular working regime successfully managed by Clerk/RFO and Deputy Clerk and the Members, which had proven suitable and effective for the Council's needs.

**198. END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)**

**198.1** Members noted receipt of the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20 section of the AGAR, which had been duly signed by the internal auditor.

**198.2** Members considered the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 (Section 1, AGAR). It was **RESOLVED** that the Council's response to Statements 1-8 be 'Yes', noting that Statement 9 was not applicable, and that Section 1 be duly signed by the Chairman of the meeting and by the Clerk.

**198.3** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Accounts for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

**198.4** Members considered the Accounting Statements 2019/20 (Section 2, AGAR). It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Accounting Statements 2019/20 and that Section 2 be duly signed by the Chairman of the meeting, noting that this had been signed by the RFO prior to presentation, as required.

**199. SPORTS PAVILION REBUILD PROJECT**

The Clerk confirmed that the newly formed Studio 5 (London) Design Ltd, operational from the end of July, would work with the Council under the same terms and conditions as agreed with Studio 5 Architects Ltd. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the continuance of engaging the company's professional services.

Members considered the proposal to seek pre-planning application advice from HDC, at a cost of between £500-750 HDC advice fee and Studio 5 costs of £360 + VAT. It does not guarantee planning application approval but could identify any potential issues, enabling a more informed formal planning application in due course. Once a formal planning application is granted (in due course) this may put the Council in a better position with potential project funders, bearing in mind also that planning approval is valid for 3 years. It was **RESOLVED** to authorise Studio 5 to submit a request for pre-planning application advice to HDC on behalf on the Council.

**200. SPORTS PAVILION – SNOOKER ROOM ROOF LEAK**

The Clerk reported details of a recent serious roof leak above the Snooker Hall, which had also caused damage to one of the club's snooker tables. Members had received a quotation urgently procured from the Council's usual property repair contractor for £1,930 (no VAT). It was noted that this was a new leak but possibly related to a leak around autumn last year, when two potential solutions were quoted for: The Council had at the time opted to go with one section of repair solution but not pursued the additional section quoted for.

Considerable discussion ensued as to whether it would be prudent to obtain at least one other quotation for comparison or whether it was better to act promptly in repairing this leak before further heavy rain caused additional damage. Members spoke for and against both courses of action. It was noted that the work quoted for included a sealing compound with a 10 year guarantee. The Clerk advised that it had proved difficult in the past to obtain quotations at all, or on a like for like basis, despite attempts and given the urgency of the situation only the current contractor had been approached.

A proposal was made and duly seconded to seek a second quotation and following voting the motion was lost. It was subsequently **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation of £1,930 for Derek Paxton Property Maintenance Service to carry out remedial work as quoted which was: To clear all debris, trim back raised felt edges exposed due to decay, vacuum any water from roof as required; To coat roof with sealing compound (acrylic waterproofing with reinforced fibres) which will run into all crevices giving an overall seal, with a 10 year guarantee.

**201. NEW PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE (referred from F&P C'ttee 23.06.20)**

At the F&P Committee meeting, it had been proposed that an additional quotation be sought and there were some doubts over the aesthetics of the website quotation received at that time, comparisons being made with a nearby parish council website and another professional website design provider.

Members now considered two quotations of £1,200 + VAT by JNR Computer Services and £1,345 + VAT by Vision ICT for the development, installation and hosting/maintenance of a new website, as already budgeted for by using the community Benefit fund EMR balance. The Deputy Clerk had prepared a comparison table so that Members could easily review both quotation provisions on a like for like basis as well as cost implications. The Clerk advised that the draft website would be shown to Councillors before going live, with an opportunity to input on final version. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation of £1,200 + VAT from JNR Computer Services, to include a request that if possible JNR gives a presentation to Council, either physically or online, in September.

**202. 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.

Cllr Clarke reported in his capacity as a District Councillor that a new application had been submitted for the Gypsy Traveller site a New Farm Lane, which would be likely to come before the HDC 2.30pm Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August Planning Meeting, which the Parish Council may wish to be aware of.

**203. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REG. 16 CONSULTATIONS**

Notice had been received from HDC of three Neighbourhood Plan Reg 16 public consultations. Members had received links to all three online consultations and also copy of a submission made by a member of the public opposing the Steyning Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that no recommendations had been made by Pulborough Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group but that the Council had previously commented on the Steyning NP Reg 14 pre-submission stage.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to submit a formal response to HDC for the Steyning Neighbourhood Plan in the same vein as was submitted for the Reg 14 stage, namely that Members are concerned that the allocation of no new houses in the Steyning NDP increases the pressure on Pulborough and other neighbouring parishes. It was further **RESOLVED** that no response would be made regarding the Billingshurst and Ashington NDP consultations.

**204. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Correspondence was noted (previously circulated to Council) and is attached as Appendix 1.

There were no points of note, however the Chairman advised that he had been reappointed as Chairman of APCAG.

**205. CHAIRMAN’S ANOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT MATTERS**

The Clerk advised that in the interests of streamlining meeting business as much as possible to deal with essential or urgent items whilst virtual meetings had taken shape and meetings were less frequent, she had taken the temporary step of removing items for Reports from District and County Councillors and Reports from Representatives to Outside Bodies. It was hoped to re-introduce these as soon as practical.

The Chairman reported that he had attended a HALC meeting and PCP meetings (online). The PCP is about to launch a new website; there will also be a new Pulborough tourism website and Pulborough Traders Association also recently launched its website. The WildArt Trail was still officially closed due to a damaged culvert awaiting repair, which had been delayed by the lockdown, hence no new marketing of the WildArt Trail yet. A relaunch is planned. A display of the history of Pulborough Railway Station had been installed at the station and a forthcoming film show is planned.

The Chairman also reported on initiatives to regenerate Lower Street trading: The PTA with PCP had recently submitted various projects to HDC on request, including a pavement widening scheme, for potential funding from the Re-opening High Streets Safely EU grant.

Cllr Clarke gave a short report on various HDC matters: HDC was having to revisit capital projects budgets to help meet loss of income following the pandemic crisis. One such project being cut was the Lower Street Car Park refurbishment unfortunately, meaning that there was now no budget or timescale for this yet.

Sports centre swimming pools were facing problems re-opening due to huge financial difficulties and discussions were taking place at HDC on their future.

£950k had been disbursed by HDC from the Government Covid-19 grants; Various market town projects had been approved by panel to move to next stage of applying for Re-opening High Streets Safely funding, this included road narrowing schemes such as the proposal for Lower St.

Cllr Henly advised that the PDCCA were in discussion with Age UK about Government policy and guidance on the safe resuming of activities such as the Wednesday / Lunch club.

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and those regularly responding to emails to help keep Council business moving: The conscientious approach and ongoing work was appreciated.

It was noted that there was no payments list to report, all necessary payment authorisations having been undertaken following delegated authority and financial regulation procedures. Actual lists would be ratified at a future meeting.

***The meeting closed at 8.18pm***

.....Chairman

.....Date

**CORRESPONDENCE****Appendix 2****WSSC**

- Town and Parish News 05.06.20: Proposals revealed for 21km of temporary cycleways in West Sussex, one for each district/borough area (if approved) to promote cycling as a replacement for journeys in areas which until the Covid-19 outbreak were heavily reliant on public transport. WSSC could receive up to £784k in funding if successful (*forwarded to Cllrs*)
- News release 16.06.20: Ten year climate change plan to be examined by the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee on 24.06.20, before being adopted by WSSC in July.
- Town and Parish News Issue 16 July 2020 - items include: Plans published for protecting West Sussex residents from the spread of Covid-19; Gigabit voucher scheme for residents and businesses in rural areas; Select and collect library service (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

**HDC**

- E-newsletter 08.06.20 – items include: First new affordable homes approved for Council owned housing company; Horsham District Open Spaces Survey 2020; New Chairman, Cllr Karen Burgess, elected (*forwarded to Cllrs*)
- Local Plan Briefing Note from Cllr Claire Vickers (*forwarded to Cllrs*)
- Covid-19 Information and advice for public and businesses 10.06.20 – items include: Preparations underway to open District's high streets safely; Car park charges to resume from 15.06.20 (*forwarded to Cllrs*)
- Email correspondence June 2020 with HDC Economic Development Officer regarding setting up of Local Task Teams to develop projects and funding bids assisting local economy/retailers

**NALC**

- Chief Executive's bulletins 29.05.20 and 03.06.20 – topics include: NALC chairman's latest open letter thanking councillors for their hard work and paying tribute to clerks and council staff at the heart of building back communities; Re-opening High Streets Safely Fund and NALC lobbying for parish councils to be able to access funding in their own right (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

**SALC**

- Bulletins 08.06.20 Funding and grants bulletin June 2020 and 22.06.20 New advice on Co-options/Elections and new draft Code of Conduct being considered (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

**HALC**

- Agenda and papers for meeting 15.07.20 (*forwarded to PPC reps*)

**Sussex Police**

- P&CC e-newsletters 29.05.20; 05.06.20, 19.06.20, 26.06.20 and 17.07.20. Topics include: Sussex police recruitment on track; Retirement of Chief Constable Giles York and appointment of current Deputy Chief Constable Jo Shiner; Appointment of 64 new officers.
- E-alerts: 03.06.20 New team launched to tackle countryside crime in Sussex; 02.07.20 Jo Shiner announced as next Chief Constable of Sussex

**Pulborough Neighbourhood Wardens**

- Warden's monthly report May 2020 (*forwarded to Cllrs and on website*)

**Pulborough Community Partnership**

- Minutes of PCP Management Group meeting held 13.07.20(virtual). (*forwarded to Cllrs*).

**Age UK Horsham District**

- Press release announcing Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and Age UK Horsham District merged on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

### **Residents**

-Several correspondents complaining of disturbance / nuisance caused by noisy motorbikes, Clerk's responses and communications with Neighbourhood Wardens, Sussex Police (PCSO) and MP Andrew Griffiths – liaison ongoing, setting up of Community Speedwatch by Sussex Police being investigated.

-Other resident complaints received regarding ASB/drugs/litter on recreation ground (reported to police) and disturbance by increased watersports enthusiasts using river Arun – Clerk has responded to each concern.

### **APCAG**

Agenda for AGM 28.07.20 at 5pm (virtual meeting) and Update on Gatwick (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

### **PAGNE**

E-newsletter 27.06.20

### **CAGNE**

E-newsletters/Bulletins 110 June 2020 and 111 July 2020

### **Gatwick Airport**

Update June 2020 from CEO, distributed to households closest to airport and parish councils across East Surrey, West Kent and Sussex (*forwarded to Cllrs*)

### **Publications**

Clerks & Councils Direct July 2020, issue 130