

HIGHCLERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Highclere Parish Council Meeting held remotely, via Zoom.app

Tuesday 07 April 2020 at 7.30pm

Members Present: Cllr Norton (Chairman), Cllr Jenkins, Cllr York, Cllr Stoker, Cllr Smith, Cllr Easton, Cllr Nicolls

In attendance: Clerk: Amy White, Cllr Falconer

The Chairman, Brad Norton thanked everyone for making it to the virtual meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

200/19 No apologies received from Cllr Thacker.

2. Declarations of Interest

201/19 None.

3. To confirm accuracy and sign the Minutes of the Council Meeting 10 March 2020.

202/19 It was unanimously resolved that the Minutes be accepted as an accurate record. They were digitally signed by the Chairman, Cllr Norton and will be signed in person after Covid-19.

4. Matters Arising from 10 March 2020

203/19

Item No.	Action	Owner
166/19	Clerk to draft letter to Old Honeyway and neighbouring house to request footpath is maintained. Not actioned due to Covid-19	Clerk
183/19	Clerk to clarify some of the proposed ideas with Kevin Hyde and report back to HPC. Actioned. Actioned but on hold due to Covid-19	Clerk
187/19	Clerk to send SID update to Highclere Society Newsletter. Clerk and Cllr Easton to resolve SID reliability issue. Not actioned due to Covid-19	Clerk Clerk/Cllr Easton
191/19	Clerk to ask BDBC to clear drains along A343 in Highclere village. Actioned but likely on hold due to Covid-19	Clerk

5. Public Participation

204/19 No members of the public were virtually present.

6. Reports from Borough & County Councillors

205/19 This was a change to the publicised agenda due to the availability of Cllr Falconer. Cllr Falconer provided a report which is attached as an appendix to the end of the minutes.

7. Roads and Transport

206/19 The SID has been removed and will be out of action during Covid-19. It was decided data would be sparse as there are far fewer vehicles on the road, and the reliability has been an issue. A new battery has been bought and will be installed after Covid-19.

207/19 Cllr Easton has been asked if signage can be placed in Highclere for the Speedwatch team. It was not understood what exactly the signage requirements were, or even if any had already been purchased. It is understood that Speedwatch is suspended due to Covid-19.

Action: Cllr Easton to clarify Speedwatch signage request from Brian Harling before any decision can be made.

8. Environment

208/19 Footpaths, stiles and swing gates- nothing to report. A post will be placed on Facebook reminding all drivers to take into consideration the increased volume of cyclists and walkers on the roads at the moment.

209/19 Lengthsman: No update on when the Lengthsman scheme will commence for 20/21.

210/19 Litter: The Litter Warden is doing intermittent work as and when possible.

9. Planning including planning applications

211/19

Application Ref	Date Received	Location	Deadline for Comment
20/00794/ROC	17/02/20	Glencross & Glencross Annexe	20/04/20
No Comment			
20/00679/RET	16/03/20	Grantham/Crawley House, Andover Road	07/04/20
<p>Objection:</p> <p>The reinstatement of the 1.8m closeboard fence contravenes the approved planning application 15/00583/FUL which stated, "existing hedgerow would be retained and reinforced".</p> <p>The distance the fence is moved back (0.7 metres) is insufficient to provide adequate growth of the hedge to mitigate the noise reflection from a close boarded fence and not encroach upon the footpath. The hedge should be provided and planted according to the recommendations laid down by the Landscape Team.</p> <p>Tall close boarded fencing is not in keeping with the rural nature of Highclere village as set out in the Village Design Statement and the fence, if it is allowed to be retained as a close boarded fence, should be reduced in height to 1.2 metres to allow retention of the views across to Highclere Park, reduce the noise reflection from the road and match the height of the adjacent property "Fridays".</p>			

10. Neighbourhood Plan

212/19 NP is suspended due to Covid-19.

11. Financial Matters

213/19 Accounts for Payment:

The Clerk presented the following items for payment:

Date incurred	Expenditure	Purpose	Ex VAT	VAT	Total	Online/ Cheque/DD
			£	£	£	
08/04/2020	HMRC PAYE	Clerk Tax & NI			142.25	online
08/04/20	Litter Warden	March Fuel Allowance			13.95	online
27/04/20	Litter Warden Salary	March Salary			509.02	online

27/04/20	Clerk's Salary	March Salary			725.51	online
19/03/20	Clerk Expenses	Flowers for Bereavement			40.00	online
03/04/20	Premier Grounds	SID placement	90.00	18.00	108.00	online
23/03/20	K Liquorish	Flyer printing for Red House, Highclere			162.50	online
05/04/20	Highclere village Hall	Room Hire Jan-Mar2020			22.50	online
Total:					1723.73	

Bank statements

Community Current Account as at 07/04/20:

£2330.98

Business Savings Account as at 07/04/20 -

£36051.81

214/19 The Clerk presented amended Financial Regulations and Standing Orders to allow payments and council business to be conducted throughout Covid-19 without the need for full council sign off. Accounts for payment will be copied to full council for transparency.

Cllr Norton proposed the amended regulations. Cllr York seconded.

Action: Clerk to add amended regulations to website.

215/19 The Clerk confirmed the Audit for HPC has been completed as far as possible. Extensions for external Audit completion will likely be to 30 November 2020. It is unclear how internal Audit will be completed.

12. Correspondence received

216/19 The Council has received an email complaint from a Parishioner about the 2020/21 precept increase. The Chairman has responded.

217/19 Date of the next Council Meeting: The Annual Meeting and Parish Meetings are both cancelled. This means Cllrs in their current roles will continue until May 2021; Cllr Norton will remain as Chair and Cllr York will remain as Vice Chair. Meetings will still be held virtually every month; Parishioners can contact the Clerk for details of how to join.

The meeting ended at 8:40 pm.

Signed _____ Position _____ Date _____

Actions from Meeting 07/04/20:

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Appendix: Update from Cllr Falconer

A) Coronavirus Emergency

The Highclere and East Woodhay NeighbourCare is doing an excellent job supporting this area and also Ashmansworth.

BDBC is producing a daily update to Parish Councils on the direct and indirect co-ordination/signposting roles it is carrying out. I think this has settled down as at first there was a flurry of activity and some confusion. HCC is the designated authority for support as it is responsible for Adult Social Care and Child Services. Supporting it are the borough and parish councils and other support organisations.

In particular, the borough is working with Basingstoke Voluntary Assoc to co-ordinate with local community groups including delivery of food and medicines.

The borough is seeking to get funds provided by govt out to businesses as quickly as possible including grants and business rates relief for small businesses from 8th April. On council tax, all customers paying by instalment will be automatically moved to paying by 10 month instalments starting from June. All customers paying by instalment will have their no payment months in April and May 2020 - this is instead of February and March 2021. Working age residents supported through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme will receive up to an additional £150 reduction to their bill.

Grounds maintenance staff will start cutting from today to ensure sight lines are clear at road junctions. Garden waste and recycling collection has been suspended. There are pressures on weekly bin collections not least because of staff sickness and the need for social distancing. Things are being kept under review. Across the council, 362 staff are working from home and 94 remain on site.

The borough is part of the leadership of the Local resilience Forum for Hants and Isle of Wight area. This grouping of key organisations puts in place emergency plans including, in the case of this emergency, additional critical care bed and mortuary capacity. We are advised that the likely peak for critical care beds will be the 3 weeks from 13th April.

As with other organisations and companies, the crisis will have a major impact on council finances. We are waiting for an early assessment.

B) Other Council Business

Public meetings have had to be cancelled including the Manydown (3500 homes) Planning Committee meeting. Govt has now authorised regulations for holding of "virtual" public meetings by councils (including parish councils) before May 7th. The regulations say members can attend remotely and must be able to hear others and be heard. However, video links are only required where practicable. **There is no need for an APA.**

C) Planning

20/00679/RET Fence opposite Red House

The revised application in my opinion does not materially change the original objections so I have lodged my formal objection. Replies need to be in by 17 April.

19/02178/FUL Hillside Farm

The applicant has already done much of the work which is restoring the field to be suitable for horse grazing. The works have been to remove much of the landscape of the old chicken sheds which were used 20 years ago for eggs and meat breeding. Infill was brought in to bolster the field and not for commercial gain. The applicant says that the fires have been to burn overgrowth and in particular pussy willow. A decision has not yet been made but our Environment team have recently visited the site and asked for concrete and steel to be removed from the field.

