

Huish Episcopi Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Huish Episcopi Parish Council (HEPC) held via the virtual platform 'Meet' on Monday 20 July 2020 at 7pm.

Present:

Cllr Shirley Nicholas Chairman
Cllr Graham Lock Vice Chairman
Cllr Robert Crumb
Cllr Julia Gadd
Cllr Arwyn Harris
Cllr Barry Horsgood
Cllr Keith Peto
Cllr Jane Redfearn
Cllr John Wood

Lisa Newby Parish Clerk
County/District Councillor Clare Paul joined
District Councillor Tiffany Osborne
4 members of the press and public

On 4th April 2020 the Government introduced the Local Authorities (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings)(England) Regulations 2020 to allow local councils to meet remotely up to and including 7 May 2021.

Public session opened at 7:00pm.

There were no questions from the public. A briefing was given by Cllr Paul. Notes from the briefing and additions are found in appendix 1 at the end of the minutes.

Meeting opened at 7:06pm after the public session

55/2020 To receive apologies for absence and to note and approve reason given

All councillors present

56/2020 Declaration of interest

None

57/2020 Approval of minutes

The accuracy of Item 49/2020 was queried, but clarified by the clerk. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on 22 June 2020 are a true record. The minutes will be signed at the next face to face Parish Council meeting.

58/2020 Matters arising from the minutes

None.

59/2020 Planning

a. To discuss planning applications received since the last meeting

SCC/3723/2020 North East extension to existing quarry, Bowdens Lane Quarry. No objections.

b. To note applications still in progress

17/01217/CPO/cond7. Variation of Condition 7 of permission 17/01217/CPO to increase annual output to 21,000 tonnes of stone., Bowdens Quarry, Bowdens Lane, Huish Episcopi. No objections.

19/02678/S73. Vary condition 2 of approved plans Land OS 4562 Ducks Hill Langport TA10 9EN. No objections.

20/00912/HOU. Erection of a single storey extension, The Cottages, Wagg Drove, Langport TA10 9ER. No objections.

20/01078/FUL. Demolition of buildings, conversion of an existing building into ancillary living accommodation and garaging. Land at Wearne Farm, Main Road, Wearne. The Parish Council have no objections to this application, but the application has been referred to Area North committee on 22 July 2020. Cllr Nicholas and Cllr Wood to attend this meeting, with Cllr Nicholas speaking to support the application.

20/01112/FUL. Change of use of 2 existing holiday units to straightforward open market dwellings. Merricks Farm, Park Lane, Huish Episcopi. No objections.

20/01551/HOU. Demolition of an existing lean-to and erection of a single storey extension to the rear of the building, Stratfield, Newtown Road, Huish Episcopi, TA10 9SE. No objections.

c. To note decisions notified since the last meeting

20/01211/COU. Change of Use of land from the stationing of 74 static holiday caravans to the stationing of 74 park homes. Bowdens Crest Caravan and Camping Park. Application withdrawn (13/07/2020)

60/2020 Highways and Car Park

a. Bus Shelter on Somerton Road

The consultant engineer has been unable to quote for the further design work. A question was raised regarding the certainty of the pocket of land from Persimmon Homes to facilitate the bus shelter for the parish. It was **RESOLVED** to contact Persimmon to obtain firm commitment of

provision of the land for this project, and to contact a local design firm and County Council Highways to gain further advice to move forward.

b. Park Lane Huish Episcopi

Cllrs Nicholas, Lock and Crumb recently attended the Drayton Parish Council meeting regarding public right of way on this drove. After some discussion of the matters raised at the Drayton meeting, it was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council would not take any part in establishing where the right of way lies.

c. Speed Indicator Device (SID)

The Memorandum of Use has been signed by Somerset County Council authorising the use of a SID in the approved locations. This means the SID project can move forward. It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the £5800 from the annual budget to go ahead and order the device and arrange the training for the volunteer team. Some questions were raised: the lengthsman will take part in the moving of the SID, and the batteries will be charged by volunteers and Cllr Wood.

d. Community Speed Watch

Speedwatch sessions have been reinstated with the aim to reduce the percentage of vehicles speeding down from 3.6%. Speedwatch in Wearne has recommenced, and the Small Improvement Scheme recently completed has shown a reduction the number of vehicles speeding. Posters are to be circulated to recruit more volunteers. A recent post on the Langport Community FaceBook page has had positive feedback.

e. Car park usage agreement with Huish Academy

The Academy have had an agreement with the parish council for the last two years to contribute to the car park rates in return for using the car park as an overspill for the Academy site. It was **RESOLVED** to reduce the amount of the contribution normally requested by half, as the school has been closed due to COVID-19.

f. Huish Bridge Enhancement Project

Cllr Lock has attended the project site and commented on the works proposed by Langport Town Council (LTC), with the suggestion to wait to contribute until after the works were completed. Comments from Cllr Gadd raised concerned about maintenance or a cash contingency in the long term. Signage regarding 'dogs on a lead' and cyclists giving way to pedestrians were also discussed. It was suggested that the Parish Council wanted to be part of the planning for this project. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Crumb and Lock attend the LTC River project meetings moving forward.

61/2020 Reports from meetings or training attended by Council members.

Cllr Peto attended a 'Carbon Free' meeting recently, and recommended that HEPC needed to recognise and declare a climate emergency – "HEPC acknowledges the climate emergency and will work with the relevant community groups to champion becoming a carbon neutral community by 2030." It was **RESOLVED** to support this motion and declare a climate emergency. A carbon audit is required, and Cllr Peto is to research further information and pricing, and approach neighbouring councils to support and contribute.

A short (unplanned) report was received regarding the Langport and Huish Episcopi Youth Group (LHYG). During lockdown, the normal Tuesday sessions have been unable to take place, neither have the Super Saturday sessions. There has been a great deal of support work behind the scenes taking place: support packages, food parcels and food vouchers, outreach and one to one sessions and small group work via social distancing (adhering to guidelines) and virtual platforms. Outreach work is planned for the summer.

62/2020 Accounts

a. Approval of payments

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the payments listed

Receipts and payments for July meeting (up to 10 July 2020)	Debits	Totals	Credits	Totals
Current account balance brought forward from June 2020				£45342.98
Receipts				
Allotment rent			£18.00	£18.00
				£45360.98
RFO authorised				
Highfield Developers authorised May meeting	£480.00			
Leveller advert for clerk position	£78.00			
Clerk June salary adjustment due to tax code amendment	£34.20			
Additional bank charges (allotment rent cheques)	£5.10			
	£597.30	£597.30		
To be authorised July 2020				
Lengthsman (July and August)	£600.00			
Clerk salary (July and August)	£1140.96			
HMRC (June and July)	£199.40			
Payroll (May and June)	£10.00			
SALC training 26/06/2020	£30.00			
R Carter maintenance Tree removal	£30.00			
	£1754.38	£1754.38		(£2642.66)
Balance carried forward to September meeting				£42718.32
Reserve Account balances 1 July 2020				
Unity Trust reserve Account				£46982.87
Credit interest received 30 June 2020			£46.85	£46.85
Total				£47029.72
Nationwide account reserve account				£50029.38
Balance carried forward to September meeting				£97059.10

63/2020 Grant Applications

a. PROMISEworks grant application

A grant application for £2000.00 a year for two years was received to support the PROMISEworks mentor programme for young people. It was **RESOLVED** to approve £500 per year for two years.

64/2020 Parish Council Policies

a. Adoption of policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt a Data Protection (HR) policy.

b. Review of policies

It was **RESOLVED** to review the existing policies as listed:

Code of conduct

Complaints policy

Document retention policy

Equal opportunity policy

FOI and publication scheme

Grant awarding policy

Keeping chickens on the allotment policy

Risk assessment and management policy

Social Media policy

Training policy

There was some discussion regarding the policy to keep chickens on the allotment. The keeping of chickens is permitted by law and this policy is viewed as a proactive measure rather than encouragement.

65/2020 To discuss the Council and Committee review report

This report was presented and agreed at the March meeting, and deferred for discussion due to COVID-19 lockdown. It was **RESOLVED** to defer further discussion until a replacement clerk had been recruited and appointed.

66/2020 To determine the interview panel for the recruitment of the new clerk

A discussion followed with the suggestion of an interview panel. It was **RESOLVED** that the interview panel would comprise of Cllr Nicholas, Cllr Redfearn and Cllr Harris, with Cllr Lock being a reserve panel member. All applications had to be forwarded to the whole parish council to view during selection. The clerk needs to have local government experience and be the best qualified person for the job.

67/2020 Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting is on Monday 21 September 2020 at 7pm. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, meetings are likely to be on a virtual platform for the foreseeable future.

A discussion of the traffic calming measures at Hanging Chapel (not on the agenda) followed with the query regarding consultation, which Cllr Peto responded to.

The clerk confirmed that parish council meetings would be on a virtual platform until the guidance permitted a change back to face to face meetings.

Cllr Horsgood confirmed that the Sports Club is now open.

Meeting closed at 8:32 pm

Appendix 1 Public Session opened at 7:00pm

With no questions from the members of the public and press present at the meeting, Cllr Paul gave the following briefing. Cllr Osbourne joined the meeting just after 7pm:

District Council: Cllr Paul confirmed that South Somerset District Council (SSDC) was having an Area North meeting this week, and that a planning application in the parish was on the agenda to be discussed. SSDC planning function is still very challenged staffing wise, with the head of planning also leaving.

District Executive meetings are lively due to the Unitary debate, looking forward to viewing the business case.

County Council: Cllr Paul confirmed that all household waste centres are back online. Libraries have launched a successful click and collect service. The Climate Fund, available to all Town and Parish Councils, is due to be launched in September with the first bids to be granted in October. Cllr Paul encouraged applications from HEPC, and to contact her for ideas if need be.

Somerset Rivers Authority meets this week for scrutiny. The business case for a Unitary council is put in front of the full County Council next week. There is a COVID outbreak management plan in place for Somerset. Community Engagement for the county has a public meeting on 31 July.

Public session closed at 7:06pm