

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES, 12th MAY 2020, 19:30

Present were:

- Nicky Brooks (Chair)
- Graham Soame (Parish Councillor)
- Eileen Mawle (Parish Councillor)
- Martin Wilson (Parish Councillor)
- Martin Wilson (Parish Councillor)
- Lysette Nicholls (Parish Councillor)
- Mark Walker (Parish Councillor)
- Jackie Johnson (taking minutes)

This meeting was held by ZOOM - members of the Parish were invited but asked not to contribute unless on a previously notified matter. Emails after the meeting would be welcomed.

Two members of the public joined.

1. Apologies: none.
2. Declarations of interest: none.
3. The minutes from the previous meeting held on 31st March were signed by Nicky Brooks as being a true record of proceedings.
4. Matters of concern from Parishioners. It was recorded that this was not a full AGM due to the Covid-19 situation and that as part of that process the Parish Council would normally assess whether the Neighbourhood Plan needed reviewing along with ensuring that the Defibrillator at the village hall had been serviced and was in working order. Nicky Brooks had received an email reminding of us of this and asking that we do a review at this time as it is uncertain when and a full AGM might be possible. Nicky Brooks agreed and said that the defibrillator had been checked two weeks ago and that the Neighbourhood Plan has been in frequent use and was still good for purpose. She also pointed out that if we were to make changes to the Neighbourhood Plan, we would need to hold another referendum. Mark Walker said that a Parishioner had brought a concern to him that they were unable to access the footpath from High Cogges to the A40 behind the Paddock, (Russell and Anne Cherry to be informed and asked to take a look in their capacity as Footpath Wardens). A second concern was at Chorley Farm on the A40 where there appears to be some sort of excavation and 'tipping'. It was agreed we would contact the District Council.
5. Matters of concern from County Council or District Council: none.
6. Matters arising from minutes not covered by the Agenda: none.
7. Constitutional Matters. Changes due to Covid 19 and 'lockdown' have led to a postponement of the AGM Public Meeting.
8. Financial Reports.
 - a. The 'Year End' Reports, Budgets and Accounts for both the Parish Council and the sub-committees were presented for the Councillors' information. It was, however, agreed that these would be published at the full public AGM. The accounts have to be scrutinised by an independent assessor. David Taylor has agreed to do this. Nicky Brooks will fill in the official form and bring to the next meeting before submitting it.
 - b. The Parish Council can reclaim VAT, on behalf of the Village Hall. Martin Wilson pointed out that in order for this to happen all receipts needed to be made in the name of the Parish Council. For transparency, Nicky Brooks suggested changing this process whereby all VAT reclaims would, in future, be immediately refunded to the Village Hall Committee

- rather than contra-balancing at the end of each year against the donation that Village Hall Committee usually gives to the Parish Council. All were agreed.
- c. At the end of year 2019/2020 The Parish Council held a balance of £1705.34. This had arisen mainly because the last clerk (KWB) didn't charge for his services. Lysette Nicholls was concerned that this would not be enough to pay a Clerk. Nicky Brooks confirmed that this amount plus the rise in the precept (already agreed) would ensure there would be enough funds should a clerk be appointed.
 - d. The Village Hall Council Tax has been cancelled for 2020 due to the Covid-19 situation.
 - e. The football pitch lease would be £150pm, but Eynsham Park Estate have to ask for the money and if they don't ask it is not payable.
 - f. If the playground lease were to be signed a sum of £150pa would be payable.
 - g. Martin Wilson confirmed that the grass cutting is £250 plus VAT, £300 in total.
 - h. The Parish Council took out a loan in from WODC for the village hall refurbishment. The Village Hall and the Parish Council each pay half. Nicky Brooks reported that there was now £19,000 left on the loan and that if / when the donation from the Solar Farm project was received (£40,000) this could be paid off.
 - i. Martin Wilson stated that the playground had not received all the expected grants and therefore didn't have enough funds to proceed with the hoped-for purchases.
9. Payments to approve. The Parish Council insurance is due in June 2020. Nicky Brooks explained that we had signed up for a three year term which was now ending. The renewal under the same terms (3 year period) had increased by £30. It was discussed whether, in the current circumstances, we could ask for a discount, but after some discussion, we would continue with full cover.
10. Nature Recovery Project. Graham Soame stated that there had been an amazing response to this project. There had been a lot of planting of wildflower meadows and he suggested that South Leigh had an open meeting similar to the one set up by Eynsham. Nicky Brooks suggested that this could happen after the AGM. Eileen Mawle began a discussion regarding the water quality in the Lymbrook stream saying that she thought the stream started on the South Leigh side of the A40 and that cattle use the Lymbrook for drinking which may cause problems. It was suggested that the landowners could be involved in a discussion to try and mitigate the problem. Lysette Nicholls stated that she had emailed the Local Rivers Trust with a tentative enquiry. Martin Wilson thought the Lymbrook started at the other side of the A40 under the dual carriageway and Mr. Summerfield owned that land. Eileen Mawle said that she was trying to think of ways to improve the water quality. Graham Soame reported that he was sure there were water voles in the Lymbrook and stated that the water had never been tested. Lysette Nicholls had looked into the water tests and an authoritative test would be in the region of £384. Nicky Brooks confirmed that the Parish Council would support this issue in principle.

11. Facilities:

- a. Village Green. The issue of the electric power cable through the tree on the corner of the village green had been assessed by Southern Electric and there had no safety concerns. The insulation of the wire is intact. SSE do not cut branches, it is not in their remit. The Parish could do it themselves but it would be expensive. It was considered safe.
- b. Bus shelter. The bus shelter is due to be painted, Graham Soame was overseeing the project. Jackie Johnson was going to arrange some sort of painting of the inside by children in the village. The issue of painting of the bus shelter railings was discussed with Martin Wilson stating that he thought the Parish Council should not be painting the galvanised railings as it created a job that would need to be redone later. The paint and scrape volunteers will decide when they come to do the job, while noting that the 'paint and scrape' group is not a sub-committee of the Parish Council but a group of volunteers.

12. Planning:

- a. Shuttles Cottage application has not been decided. Nicky Brooks submitted a comment stating that our first priority is to follow the terms of our Neighbourhood Plan.
- b. The A40 / Shores Green OCC presentation was noted. Landowners with adjoining land had been contacted by OCC for permission to conduct surveys on land.

13. Traffic: Nicky Brooks reported that OCC had completed their traffic monitoring - this was to monitor the numbers of cars not speeds. The reported figures seem to fit in with our knowledge although it is to be noted that one of the weeks of the survey was half term. Lysette Nicholls reported that the traffic was picking up again following 'lockdown'. She was hoping to resume speed monitoring but had been advised not to resume at the moment.

14. Churchyard: There was to be a churchyard working party due to the falling of a dead elm in the hedgerow.

15. Scarecrows / 'End of Lock down' BBQ: The scarecrow competition was very well supported and everybody agreed that the scarecrows around the village were wonderful. There was divided opinion as to whether to have a competition every year, and it was decided to leave it to see if there was interest next year. The 'End of Lockdown' BBQ was on hold for now.

16. Interim Newsletter: Lysette Nicholls had constructed an interim 'Lockdown' newsletter which had been circulated electronically.

17. AOB: Mark Walker reported that the road to High Cogges had completely failed. Nicky Brooks recommended that he report the issue to 'Fix My Street'. Eileen Mawle brought up the subject of the painting of the railings over streams / culverts; she was concerned about the colour from a safety point of view, they were now green but originally white, and asked if anybody had consulted any other authority. There was no further discussion.

The meeting was concluded at 20:30.

Dates for the next Parish Council Meetings: 23rd June, 4th August, 15th September, 27th October and 8th December.

These are provisional and dependent on 'lockdown' arrangements. The Parish Council doesn't normally meet in August due to the holiday and the date in October is half term and so may well need to be moved.