

ST. NICHOLAS HURST PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD VIRTUALLY (VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS) ON
MONDAY 1st FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors W. Smith (in the Chair),
Curry, Holdstock, Lyon, Mansfield, Pilgrim, I.
Smith and Turvey.

OFFICERS: Mrs. M. Bradshaw (Clerk).

PUBLIC: One member of the public.

PART I

9088 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stephenson.

9089 Prejudicial Interest

There were no prejudicial interests to declare.

9090 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 4th January 2021 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman at the first available opportunity.

9091 Matters Arising

The following matters were noted:

- the Chairman has downloaded data from the recently purchased speed device and is analysing the data with Councillor Mansfield. The camera was due to be relocated last weekend but this was delayed due to the localised flooding in the village;
- flooding over the previous weekend has resulted in road closures, namely at Wards Cross. Sandbags have been provided to residents where required and pressure is being put on Thames Water to address this problem area; and
- a new sign has been produced for the youth shelter at School Road playpark requesting that users be courteous towards neighbours. The Chairman confirmed that he had spoken with the new area Police Sergeant who has agreed to monitor the area for anti-social behaviour.

9092 Public Forum

The Chairman welcomed Maggie Sanderson to the public forum. She reported that some neighbours of Martineau Green had reported an increased use of the green over lockdown with children playing football, erecting temporary goals and climbing trees. Cases of gatherings have been noted with a reported case of the Police dispersing people. Mrs Sanderson asked the Parish Council if anything could be done about this and whether they would consider writing to residents of Martineau Green and neighbouring roads. She felt it more appropriate that children should be playing football in School Road playpark where there were pitch facilities.

Members discussed the problem but agreed that Martineau Green is a public open space to be enjoyed for recreation. Councillor Lyon noted that many residents will have purchased their property specifically for the luxury of neighbouring outside space where their children may play. They did not condone any malicious damage to trees but agreed that it was not for the Parish Council to police the behaviour of children playing. Councillor Turvey noted that it is a particularly fractious time at present with all people feeling the strain of being locked indoors. Members hoped, that as schools return and lockdown eases, the green would revert back to its usual footfall.

9093 Covid 19 Update

The Chairman confirmed that the vaccine programme is rolling out very effectively across the Borough which is extremely pleasing news.

9094 Neighbourhood Planning

The Chairman confirmed that the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group had met on the 20th January 2021 with a further planned meeting on the 17th February 2021. Work continues on policies which is an extremely long task requiring much research.

9095 Church Hill Petition

The Chairman confirmed that the road markings have now been placed on Church Hill with the signage due to follow shortly.

9096 Allotments/Howard Larkin Memorial

Work at the allotments has been commissioned and is due to commence imminently. Councillor Curry asked whether consideration could be given to bins/skip at the allotments and Members agreed this was not appropriate.

It was noted that allotment rents had not been increased since 2015/16 and were not reflective of neighbouring allotment charges in other Parishes. After consideration, Members agreed that a 5 pole allotment should be increased annually from £20 to £30, a ten pole from £35 to £60. A new charge, for a two and a half pole, would be introduced in the value of £15 as a number of plot holders are now sharing smaller plots.

9100 Correspondence

Litter Picking

The Chairman reported that 35 volunteers had assisted with litter picking along the A321 the previous weekend. A staggering amount of rubbish had been collected which filled six skips. The increase in litter has markedly increased since the opening of the smart motorway compound and the Chairman has flagged his concerns to WBC. Eighty volunteers within the village have now been delivered litter picker sticks and high visibility tabards.

Signage within the village

The Clerk presented, on behalf of a parishoner, concerns regarding the temporary highways signage placed around the village. The signage in question, namely at Church Hill and the surrounding area, was placed following complaints received by WBC regarding large vehicles accessing unsuitable roads to cross to the smart motorway compound. After discussion Members agreed that, albeit the signs do not look attractive, they are serving a purpose and should remain.

RESOLVED: the Clerk to respond to the Parishoner with an update.

Damage to fencing around village pond

Councillor Lyon noted that one of the concrete bollards around the village pond had been damaged leaving the rail unsupported.

RESOLVED: the Chairman to speak with the contractor who installed the bollards originally and arrange a replacement.

Notification of application for full variation of Premises Licence

The above had been received in respect of Stanlake Park Wine Estate, Waltham Road, Twyford, RG10 0BN (Licence number PR0425). Comments were requested from WBC.

RESOLVED: the Parish Council had "no comment".

9101 Information Reports

There were no information reports to bring to this meeting.

The virtual meeting ended at 8.30 p.m. to enable a Part II item to be discussed in relation to neighbourhood planning. Maggie Sanderson thanked Members for their time and left the call.

Signed.....

Date.....