

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ODIHAM PARISH COUNCIL
HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM MEETINGS ON
TUESDAY 16th JUNE 2020 COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

Present: Cllrs A McFarlane (Chair), K Ball, J Coffey, R Coleman, W MacPhee, J Raw, C Seabrook, D Stewart and P Verdon.

In attendance: Andrea Mann – Parish Clerk.

Also present: Hampshire CC Cllr J Glen, Hart DC Cllr K Crookes, Susanna Hope (Hart DC), Neil Landricombe (Environment Agency) and 5 members of the public.

32/20 Apologies for Absence
Received from Cllr M Killick.

33/20 Declarations of Interest
None

The Chair informed the meeting that the public session would be moved further up the agenda after Item 34/20.

34/40 Flooding in North Warnborough

The Chair welcomed Susanna Hope, Neil Landricombe and Cllr Crookes to the meeting who could all contribute towards this matter. The Chair introduced the Mill Corner flooding issue explaining that it was a long running problem which would require a multi-agency response. The issue also involved Thames Water who had hoped to provide a response to the meeting but this was not available. The MP was also involved in discussions. All agencies were working together to establish facts and looking for a way forward.

Ms Hope explained her role as the Hart DC Flood Risk Infrastructure Engineer and said that she had recently been seconded to the Hart DC Covid-19 response. Ms Hope gave a presentation on the flood risk alleviation plans for Mill Corner covering the headlines below, the full presentation of which forms Appendix 1:

- The different agencies and responsibilities.
- The different types of flooding – the most common being surface water and foul water flooding.
- The history of the Mill Corner flood alleviation project and details of funding.
- Project constraints – including funding, the many SSSI's, ancient monument and listed properties.
- Hart DC had concluded that a hard engineering solution was unlikely in such a sensitive area.
- Details of the different water flow routes into the affected area and the single route out. The project looked at ways of slowing the intake flow to alleviate the outflow and one main inflow route had been identified
- Details and benefits of the proposed scheme for natural flood risk management methods.
- Timings.
- Flow monitoring studies were in progress.

Environment Agency Flood Risk Management Agent Neil Landricombe was sorry to hear the village was flooded in February. He acknowledged that Hart was trying to achieve a plan which looked at surface water flows coming into the village and reported that the flood risks in this location were complex due to a multiple of water sources. The Environment Agency led on river flood risk and all agencies worked together very closely. Mr Landricombe agreed to take away the matters raised and talk to the other agencies. He said that the Hart DC scheme was encouraging but this only considered surface water flooding and there were other measures for the Environment Agency to consider, such as property resilience.

Mr Landricombe explained that the Environment Agency flood risk work was managed on a 6 year program with the new program starting in March 2021. A new cycle of projects would be identified over the Summer which created the opportunity to look at other solutions and add them to the program. Mr Landricombe said he would bring in colleagues from the water pollution team in relation to flooding of the River Whitewater.

The Chair made the point that water caused flooding on the other side of the road once the water has passed under the Hook Road.

Hart DC Cllr K Crookes suggested there were issues with capacity of the Thames Water foul water drain to Hartley Wintney which could be a source of the flooding.

Mr Landricombe said that groundwater flood risks were very complex and difficult to mitigate. Built in flood alleviation measures could be the solution but the likelihood would be flood resilience measures.

Councillor questions:

Cllr C Seabrook – asked about the ditch reinstatement and why the land couldn't be purchased for this purpose? Ms Hope said at the time of an enquiry there were twelve different owners of the land which the ditch ran through, all had been contacted in the early stages but only three had showed an interest. The land has subsequently been further subdivided. The land could be compulsory purchased but the cost would be high and the multiple land owners would make the legal process very difficult. The current proposals would deal mitigate the flooding leading Hart DC to believe it was a better option with less complex land ownership issues.

Cllr D Stewart estimated that approximately 136,000 tonnes of rain fell in a 24 hour period onto saturated ground and questioned the capacity of the four pipes under the road and where this quantity of water could be held further upstream? Given scale of the event and frequency of flooding, he considered a larger and more costly scheme was required and suggested a Hants CC Highways scheme to replace the bridge culvert as the only solution.

Public questions:

Mr Walker had previously submitted questions which were answered during the presentation. He agreed with Cllr Stewart's view that a hard engineering solution was required but also that some of the smaller solutions would make a difference and have a positive impact on the community.

Mr Fleming thanked Ms Hope and understood Cllr Stewart's point of view. He

said that the Environment Agency was aware that the River Whitewater failed to meet good water standards under the water quality directive framework and considered part of the problem was due to the inadequate Thames Water network which supplied the area. He said that the North Warnborough scheme was well overdue. A 3 year riverfly survey showed the measures the Environment Agency would need to take to ensure the River Whitewater met the water quality directive framework and the report would be shared with the Environment Agency.

Mrs Fleming referred to the SINC from Warnbrough Greens to Greywell Road commenting that it already retained quite a bit of water which would be additional to the proposed scheme.

Ms Hope said the land was owned by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWT) and discussions had taken place on clearing the watercourse at the top end running along the Greywell Road. There were gravel pits on the rest of the site which were naturally effective in attenuating the water.

Ms Hope concluded by saying that the proposed scheme wouldn't prevent Mill Corner from flooding but it would hold the water back and contribute towards alleviating the larger scale flooding events which occur approximately every 2 years.

Mr Landricombe encouraged all residents to report incidents of pollution to the Environment Agency and Thames Water to help them understand the full picture as well as assisting discussions with between both parties.

Mrs Howells commented that she did try to report issues through all channels but encountered difficulties and asked for improvements to the Environment Agency response.

35/20 Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED

The minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 19th May were approved by Members as a true record of the meeting and would be signed by the Chair in person as soon as practical.

Action:
Clerk to add to website.

36/20 Chair's Announcements

None.

37/20 Public session

Public questions were raised and covered under Item 34/20.

38/20 Update on local response to Covid-19

The Chair reported that there had been fewer requests for help with prescriptions and shopping which she hoped was a good sign. The Chair praised the supermarkets for increasing home deliveries and local businesses for also offering home deliveries. She thanked local businesses for their support and welcomed back the High St businesses.

39/20 Previous Committee Minutes

RESOLVED

The following committee minutes were received and noted:

Minutes of the Planning & Development Committee held on 12th May.
Minutes of the Amenity Area Committee held on 10th March.

Minutes of the Traffic & Transport Committee held on 18th February.
Minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 28th August 2019.

- 40/20 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda and review of the Full Council Action Points list**
The action list included with the agenda was noted.
The Clerk commented that details of the OPC Community grants were now on the website and the next closing date was 30th June. Councillors were asked to spread the word to the community groups and the Clerk was asked to put details on the other community Facebook pages.
- Action:
All to publicise the grants closing date.
- 41/20 Permanent Appointment of the Parish Clerk**
RESOLVED
To appoint Andrea Mann as the permanent Parish Clerk following the successful completion of a six month probationary period. The Chair had circulated a draft letter confirming the appointment to Councillors before the meeting and this would be forwarded to the Clerk and appended to the minutes (Appendix 1).
- Action:
Chair to forward letter to Clerk.
- 42/20 Disciplinary and Grievance Policy**
RESOLVED
The draft Disciplinary and Grievance Policy prepared by the Staffing Committee was ADOPTED.
- Action:
Clerk to add to website.
- 43/20 IT Policies**
RESOLVED
- i) To remove the Email, Internet and Computer Use Policy and Procedures for Councillors.
- ii) To adopt the draft Social Media and Electronics Communication Policy prepared using the SLCC model template subject to 2 minor revisions required to cross reference the Policy with the Data Protection Policy.
- Action:
Clerk to make revisions and add to website.
- 44/20 Community Needs Assessment**
The Chair outlined a project by the Odiham and Hook Lions to carry out a Community Needs Assessment aiming to identify local needs. OPC had been invited to be involved in the project and put forward a Councillor representative.
- The Chair commented that OPC did not have the same level of resources as the Lions and OPC's involvement in the early stages would give OPC the opportunity to help shape the questions and pick up some of the outcomes.
- Cllr P Verdon asked how the project would engage with the community? The Chair responded that the project was very much in the early stages and acknowledged Cllr Verdon's comment on the level of work involved in the Neighbourhood Plan consultation.
- OPC RESOLVED to be involved in the project and agree Cllr A McFarlane as OPC's representative in consultation with Cllr P Verdon.
- Action:
Clerk to notify the Lions.
- 45/20 Poppies at the War Memorial**
Councillors considered The Odiham Society's request for permission to plant sculptured poppies either side of the war memorial which had been created for the various 2020 anniversary events including the 100th anniversary of the war memorial unveiling. The poppies would be in place by 3rd July, the anniversary of the memorial unveiling, in place for one month with WW1 poppies to the left of the memorial and the WW2 poppies to the right.
- Action:
Clerk to respond to Odiham Society.

RESOLVED
Consent was granted.

Financial Matters

46/20 June 2020 Payments

Councillors considered the June payments listing which had been previously circulated by email. The Clerk confirmed that full Council would continue to approve payments due to the higher frequency of meetings and the Finance Committee would be responsible for monitoring payments at the quarterly Finance Committee meetings.

Action: Clerk to set up payments and Cllrs & to complete the payments process.

RESOLVED

The payments listing emailed to Councillors before the meeting was agreed and Cllr R Coleman and Cllr D Stewart were appointed to complete the approval process.

47/20 Investment Policy

RESOLVED

One minor revision was agreed to the Policy making the Finance Committee responsible for monitoring investments.

Action:
Clerk to add revised policy to website.

48/20 Investments

Councillors considered the proposals in the Parish Clerk's report which recommended that surplus funds be invested into a new Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) deposit account.

Councillors expressed concern that the CCLA scheme was not covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) which generated the opinion that no one account should hold investments over the FSCS limit of (currently) £85,000. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED

- i) To open a HSBC Flexible Saver account with the minimum required amount using existing cheque signatories Cllrs R Coleman, A McFarlane, D Stewart and P Verdon.
- ii) To delegate the investment decision to the Finance Committee following the principles:
 - The account should be covered under the FSCS.
 - No investments over the assured amount should be held in one account.

Action:
Clerk to open HSBC accounts and research investment options as directed by the Finance Committee.

49/20 Clerk's Replacement PC

RESOLVED

To approve the cost of £675+VAT to upgrade the Clerk's PC.

Councillors Reports

50/20 Meetings reports from OPC Councillors

Cllr R Coleman reported from two external meetings:

02.06.20, Odiham Commons Steering Group – the main purpose of the meeting was to introduce the new Commons' Ranger who hadn't managed to spend much time on the common since starting due to Covid. The 2020 Stewardship application was in process. The Woodland Management Plan was delayed due to Covid and a site visit had been scheduled for 23rd June.

03.06.20 – North Warnborough Village Hall Committee meeting – the committee were finding life challenging due to Covid and had applied to Hants CC for a grant to see the hall through the challenging period. The Committee had managed to continue employing long term cleaners and would be reviewing their position in September. The Committee had indicated they would also be applying for an OPC Community Grant to help towards large, maintenance projects.

51/20 Reports from other Councils

Hart DC Cllr K Crookes:

- Cllr Crookes had also attended the Odiham Commons Steering Group meeting and supported the new teams' approach of welcoming input from the community.
- Hart DC Covid grants - the Hart DC grants team had directed North Warnborough Village Hall towards government grant options. One High St business application for a Hart DC grant was pending. Over 90% of grant money had now been paid out. Councillors were asked to direct relevant organisations to the small discretionary scheme was still available.
- The Swan in North Warnborough was now owned by Hart DC and he had urged the Hart DC Chief Executive to have the site tidied up. There were no agreed plans on its future.

Hants CC Cllr J Glen:

- Cllr Glen referred to his written report on crime which had been circulated to Councillors before the meeting and praised Jennifer Ludlow for her efforts. The full report is included in Appendix 3.
- Hants CC had responded to requests to extend the household waste recycling centres opening times and was looking at requests to re-institute green waste collections.
- Cllr Glen had recently awarded £500 to the Baker Hall towards the kitchen refurbishment.

The Chair congratulated Accessible Boating on achieving a Queens Award for Voluntary Service. Cllr Glen commented that there was so much praise and appreciation for the canal and he would be writing about this in the near future.

52/20 Date of the net meeting

Members noted the date of the next full Council meeting as Tuesday 21st July at 7.30pm.

Confidential Matters

53/20 Exclusion of the Public and Press

ALL Members unanimously AGREED to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press to consider confidential staffing matters.
(Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Non-OPC members then left the meeting.

54/20 Website Upgrade

The Chair introduced the report from the Website Working Group which summarised the groups research into sector specific website providers and recommendations to move the project to the next stage.

RESOLVED

- i) Somerset Web services were nominated as the preferred contractor to develop the new www.odiham.gov.uk website.
- ii) The Working Group would progress discussions with Somerset Web Services.
- iii) Subject to satisfactory discussions with the Working Group, the contract would be awarded to Somerset Websites in the value of £2,500 plus a contingency of £500. Action: Working Group and Clerk to progress project as agreed.
- iv) A campaign would be launched to the community asking for photographs of Odiham and North Warnborough which would be suitable for the website.

55/20 Staff Related Matters

Councillors considered the Clerk's request to work from home every Thursday, unless work commitments prevented doing so which was agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed..... Date.....