



Minutes

Meeting of the Parish Council Monday 11th May 2020 7 pm held online on Zoom

Present: Councillors Turley (Chair), Biden, Gilbert, Hidderley, Payne, Wright

In attendance: Mrs Jones (Clerk), District Cllr Leytham, one member of the public

The meeting was held remotely as permitted under The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Open Forum

The Chair welcomed those who had attended. No comments were made by the public.

1. To receive apologies for absence

Cllr Toon had apologised for technical reasons and the apology was accepted.

2. To receive Declarations of Interest

Cllr Hidderley had declared an interest in the Planning Appeal at his property.

3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of 16/3/19

The Minutes were approved and would be signed at the next actual meeting.

4. To receive the Clerk's Report

Covid -19 pandemic – The Village Hall had been closed since late March, the Post Office service was closed until further notice, the taxi service had been suspended, the playground and fitness equipment closed, the picnic area closed, the Best Kept Village Community competition and Great British Spring Clean postponed.

The Website and Elford News Facebook page had been kept up to date with information on grants and other matters relating to the outbreak.

The volunteers who came forward at the last meeting continued to do an excellent job, helping to provide supplies and friendly support to those who were self-isolating. The Parish Council expressed thanks to all those involved. The Chair said there was generally a positive atmosphere in the village, with everyone pulling together during the current crisis.

Maintenance - Alan had painted the play equipment and would complete this, the gate

closer had been fixed, plants would be ordered for the village tubs. Regular mowing and maintenance by Rob had resumed in April, he had been asked to clear the weeds along the path along the hill on the A513 which made it slippery. Andy had continued with mowing along the Avenue. The trees along Church Road near to the Avenue were smothered with ivy and work on these would be organised. Highways had been asked to remove the barrier from the verge near Elford Mill and a team would repair the Fisherwick Road bridge when manpower and specialist materials were available.

Sportsfield Leases – these had been on hold. The Cricket Club had asked about the clause covering the maintenance of the car park: any work required would be agreed during Sportsfield Committee meetings. The Head Lease did not allow parking on the sports pitches, but a local farmer had indicated that he could provide parking instead of the Sportsfield being used during the Scarecrow event. This would be discussed with the Scarecrow Committee as soon as possible.

Resolved: Approved

5. To consider Planning applications

- (a) Current applications:
 - 20/00347/FUH, Model Farm, Peggs Lane, conversion of garage /store to form one-bedroom dwelling. No objection.
 - 20/00504/FUH, Ladyfields Barn, Peggs Lane, single storey extension to rear. No objection.
 - 20/00533/PNH, 2 Mere Pits Cottages, proposed single storey extension to rear. No objection.
- (b) 20/00008/ENF Elford Lowe, Appeal against Enforcement Notice relating to works to create access undertaken without planning permission. Cllr Hilderley had requested a dispensation so Cllrs agreed that he could explain the background to the appeal to the meeting. They decided that the highway safety aspects of the new access outweighed the visual effect on the Grade II Listed Building and rural landscape. It was agreed that the Clerk and Chair would draft a response to be sent to the Inspectorate.
- (c) 19/01707/FUL Elford Sports and Social Club; application still under consideration by the Planning Department.
- (d) 19/00662/REMM Land at The Shrubbery; Planning permission had been granted.

Resolved: Approved

6. To approve Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and Financial Risk Assessment

The policies had been updated to reflect changes to the making of payments and give the Clerk delegated powers to make payments if meetings were cancelled. Cllr Biden asked for the reference to playground inspections to be amended to reflect that these were carried out monthly rather than weekly.

Resolved: Approved

7. To receive questions and reports from Councillors

Cllr Wright observed that dogs were still not kept on leads while being exercised

around the village, and that this was upsetting for those who were afraid of dogs. The Clerk reported that Cllr Toon had said he had been contacted by residents concerned that dogs were allowed by some owners to roam freely on The Avenue grass; they did not clear up the dog waste and this was unpleasant during mowing. Cllr Biden said that this issue had improved on the Sportsfield. Cllr Payne complimented everyone who had celebrated VE Day in the village while continuing to adhere to social distancing guidelines, there had been a good atmosphere with many people celebrating the occasion outside their homes. Cllr Payne also said that the new owners of the property on the corner of The Shrubbery and The Beck had cut the hedge, which had improved the long standing issue of visibility at the junction; they had also attempted to clear the adjacent path but the tarmac was degraded, they would report this matter to the County Council. Cllr Hilderley informed everyone of a serious burglary at a farm in the parish on the night of 7th/8th May when valuable hi-tech farming equipment had been stolen; he warned everyone to be vigilant and to report any suspicious behaviour which could lead to rural crimes being committed. Cllr Biden thanked Cllr Gilbert for maintaining the church clock so it kept time so well. He also asked whether the short right of way across the corner of the field near the playground could be reinstated by the farmer now that the crop had been planted. Cllr Turley would pass on this request.

8. To receive a financial report

- a) Banking** – The bank reconciliation was given, there was currently £16,265 in the current account, the precept of £15,000 had been received. It was resolved to approve the sums of £9,368 earmarked for the playground and £1,750 earmarked for the taxi service. A new Co-op Bank deposit account had been opened and the taxi service monies would be transferred into it. It was also resolved to set up a Paypal account to make payments directly from the current account for sundries, and a reference to this would be added to the Financial Regulations.
- b) End of year accounts 2019-20** – These had been completed and circulated to Cllrs. HMRC end of year reporting had been concluded. Actual payments against budget 2019-20 were in line with expectations regarding salary and expenses, although other payments were higher due to taxi costs (although offset by donations), slight increase to maintenance and increased expenditure on assets.
- c) Audit 2019-20** – The Annual Governance and Audit Report had been prepared and sent for internal audit; once approved at the next meeting the Council could complete the certification, inform the External Auditor and publish the required information.
- d) Home Working Allowance** – there had been an increase in the tax-free allowance to £6 per week and it was agreed to pay the new rate to the Clerk.

Resolved: Approved

9. To consider authorising schedule of accounts for payment

Payments to: M. Jones, salary, reimbursement of expenses £347.63; HMRC £78.20
A. Robey, handyman work £70;
R.W. Harcombe, grounds maintenance £125.00;

A. Cox, mowing, The Avenue, £70
Scottish Power, playground electricity, £10.80
Birmingham City Council, rent £5

Receipts; Lichfield District Council precept £15,000

The Clerk would scan and circulate copies of the invoices.

Resolved: Approved

10. Date of next meeting:

8th June online at 7pm (Zoom)

Everyone was thanked for attending.
The meeting closed at 8 pm.