

## **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020 at 7pm**

### **This meeting was held remotely in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020**

PRESENT: Cllr Pat Woodfield (Chairman), Cllr Paul Berrisford, Cllr Margaret Briggs, Cllr John Charles-Jones, Cllr Andrew Gough, Cllr John Newsome, Cllr Daniel Raynor, Cllr Patrick Smith, Cllr Colin Starke, Cllr Charles Wardle.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Boyd Elliott (NCC, part), Cllr Helen Greensmith (GBC, part), Averil Marczak (Clerk). A number of residents observed parts of the meeting by video and audio, or by audio link only.

#### **3975. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Jane Stone.

#### **3976. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No additional interests declared.

#### **3977. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March were approved.

#### **3978. CLERK'S UPDATE ON CORONAVIRUS REGULATIONS AS APPLICABLE TO PARISH COUNCIL PROCEDURES, FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING**

The Clerk gave an update on the various regulations and guidance issued since the March meeting:

##### **Meetings**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> April, the government published The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, allowing Parish Councils to hold all meetings before 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 remotely and removing the requirement for an Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

##### **Approval of 2019/20 accounts**

Regulations made week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> April extended the statutory audit deadlines for 2019/20 by 2 months. The accounts/annual return must be approved by WPC by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020. The requirement for the public inspection period to include the first 10 working days of July has been removed. Instead, local councils must commence the public inspection period on or before the first working day of September 2020. The publication date for final, audited, accounts for local councils will move to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

##### **Facilities**

- Playgrounds were closed immediately following an announcement by the Prime Minister on the evening of 23<sup>rd</sup> March.
- Community Centres have been closed by The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020 which came in to force on the 26<sup>th</sup> March, except where used to provide

essential voluntary activities or urgent public support services (including the provision of food banks or other support for the homeless or vulnerable people, blood donation sessions or support in an emergency).

- Cemeteries: The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020 which came in to force on 26<sup>th</sup> March specify *A person who is responsible for a crematorium or burial ground must ensure that, during the emergency period, the crematorium is closed to members of the public, except for funerals or burials.* The LGA advised PCs to shut cemeteries. However, this was later clarified and only cemeteries attached to a crematorium must close. Other cemeteries may remain open with social distancing rules.

### **Grave spaces**

The Coronavirus Act 2020 obliges councils which have burial space to declare, if asked, how many unused grave spaces they have available. The Coronavirus Bill made it a requirement for these grave spaces to be handed over if needed (including reserved spaces), but this appears to be missing or is less clear in the wording of the Coronavirus Act.

### **Staffing**

The government has introduced a scheme to allow some employers to furlough certain members of staff and reclaim a proportion of their salaries. The scheme runs until 31<sup>st</sup> May. Guidance states that where employers receive public funding for staff costs, and that funding is continuing, government expects employers to use that money to continue to pay staff in the usual fashion – and correspondingly not furlough them. NALC’s view is that furloughing may be an option for Councils who have community centres that are expected to generate their own revenue, if the community centre is closed and staff are laid off. The minimum period for furloughing is 3 weeks.

### **Small business grant funding scheme**

This funding is not available to organisations which raise a precept, so local councils would not be eligible.

### **Business interruption insurance**

Zurich are declining any potential claims as Covid-19 is not included in the list of specified infectious diseases.

## **3979. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

The Chairman reported that WPC had followed all government advice in the light of the coronavirus pandemic. Keeping the public safe was the highest priority. Signs had been put up to explain the closure of the Governors’ Field. Furloughing of staff under the government’s job retention scheme was unlikely to be an option. The Chairman thanked the many volunteers who had come out in the village to support their neighbours in lots of different ways; she thanked the councillors who had been involved in these endeavours.

## **3980. FINANCE**

The Clerk presented the financial statement for February and 28 payments, totalling £8953.31 net, were approved for payment. Gross payments over £500: £4268.02 PWLB (biannual loan repayment, Sam Middup Field), £506.79 LGPS (staff pensions).

**3981. RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL OF DECISIONS MADE SINCE 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH IN RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AND ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS**

The Chairman presented details of decisions made:

- Village Hall hire charges waived for Preschool use from 23<sup>rd</sup> March to end May, while Preschool is open only for children of key workers. Rationale: Preschool must remain open with minimum staff of 3 to provide services for keyworker children only. Numbers of children are very small and Preschool will operate at a loss.
- Letters written to staff on 23<sup>rd</sup> March identifying additional activities to be undertaken during lockdown – eg spring cleaning and cemetery records project.
- Confirmed with contractors that grass cutting should continue if possible. Playing field to be cut fortnightly not weekly, as cricket season on hold.
- Annual Meeting of the Parish cancelled and reports to be compiled in the style of previous minutes, to be posted on WPC website.
- Full refunds made available for all cancelled bookings of the Village Hall, normal cancellation fees not charged.
- Closure of Governors’ Field on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.
- Closure of tennis courts on 24<sup>th</sup> March. Tennis Club advised that no charges will be made during closure. Preschool given free access to play on tennis courts during the lockdown period.
- Sign regarding social distancing/use of hand sanitiser put on allotment gate; guidance and advice from The National Allotment Society forwarded to allotment holders.
- Signs regarding use of hand sanitiser put on gates on footpaths following concerns about many walkers touching the gates.
- Cemetery closed to public in line with advice from LGA 2<sup>nd</sup> April; this was reversed on 8<sup>th</sup> April following advice from the ICCM, cemetery remains open to public.
- Detailed plan drawn of cemetery extension to identify free grave spaces.
- Village Hall bin collections reduced to 1 bin, once a fortnight.
- Clerk attended a GBC teleconference regarding “Giving for Gedling”, humanitarian project to get vital supplies to vulnerable residents. The Woodborough Volunteers group have connected with the Borough initiative.

Cllr Charles-Jones proposed, Cllr Wardle seconded, retrospective approval of these decisions and actions. The proposal was approved unanimously. Cllr Charles-Jones thanked the Chairman and Clerk for their work and commented that WPC’s prudence in building reserves would provide security and reassurance during this difficult period.

Cllr Berrisford reported that on 2 occasions GBC had arrived to cut the Smalls Croft Green the day after the work had been done by Gardenscape. While it was agreed that the timing was most unfortunate, it was recognised that without a schedule from GBC these type of clashes could not be managed.

**3982. APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS AND PROJECTS ON HOLD PENDING RESUMPTION OF NORMAL PROCEDURES**

The Chairman presented details of items on hold during the coronavirus restrictions:

- Flooding items: consideration of road levels near Nags Head; sourcing of rake tools
- NALC training courses on planning date and chairmanship
- Resurfacing of Village Hall car park
- Village Hall upgrades: LEDs; tiling in kitchen

- Preschool request to use Village Hall on Wednesday and responses from groups who oppose the request
- Governors' Field: repair of wet pour under seesaws
- Mayflower information board and opening ceremony for new play equipment
- Woods School general purpose governors meeting
- Sam Middup Field permissive footpath
- Woodborough "Village Awards"
- 2 vacant allotments to be assigned
- GBC items: request for new bin near Lowdham Lane bench
- NCC items: potholes reported on 19<sup>th</sup> March; £250 funding for Lowdham Lane bench; 4 Bells bus shelter refurbishment; Lowdham Lane speed petition; Lowdham Lane siding up; hard standing for bus stop GE0276 on Main Street; move Roe Hill no through road signage away from Main Street junction
- Best Kept Village competition cancelled
- Requests received by Clerk since March meeting: planning enforcement item and request to remove bench near 19 Roe Hill

This list was approved. Cllr Charles-Jones reported that the preferred supplier for resurfacing the Village Hall car park was still working through the period of restrictions and there was therefore an opportunity to progress this project. Cllr Wardle agreed to see whether the camera inspection of the drains could be carried out.

### **3983. WOODBOROUGH WEB CONTENT**

It was agreed to include the minutes, and a notice thanking the Woodborough Web and all of the village volunteers for everything done during the lockdown period. It was also agreed to include a notice requesting that dogs should be kept under control and that dog owners should take extra care to pick up and bag any mess.

### **3984. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

It was agreed to order additional dog bags to go in the dispensers on the playing field. It was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr Briggs should both do research into alternative bags and dispensers to try to find a more cost effective solution.

It was agreed to subscribe to the Zoom Pro service on a rolling monthly basis, at a cost of circa £12 per month.

### **3985. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next PC meeting was confirmed as 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

The meeting finished at 8pm.