

Ruscombe Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Parish Council

Held via Zoom Video call due to the Covid 19 virus outbreak

On Wednesday 6th May 2020 at 7:30pm

Councillors Present: Mr J May (Chairman), Mr M Evans, Mr P Cassidy, Mrs C Bulman, Mrs K Robson (from item number 70/20) and Mr G Howe.

Clerk in attendance: Mrs R Reid

Mr May opened the meeting at 7:30pm.

63/20 Apologies for Absence: Mr A Wrigley and Twyford Parish Councillor Mrs L Jarvis.

64/20 Declaration of interest: Mr May, Mr Howe and Mr Evans declared that they are directors for the Campaign to Protect Rural Wokingham (CPRW).

65/20 Minutes: Minutes for 1st April 2020 circulated via email. Proposed by Mr May, seconded by Mr Evans, approved unanimously but not signed due to not being together.

66/20 Public Forum: No questions or comments given to Mrs Reid or councillors.

67/20 Liaison with Twyford Parish Council: No one in attendance but Mrs Reid will forward their meeting minutes.

68/20 Update from Wokingham Borough Councillors: Mr Howe reported that WBC are working hard to manage the Covid 19 outbreak. The Royal Berkshire Hospital are reported to be managing within their capacity and do have supply of PPE. Covid 19 is present in care homes across the borough and this has caused an increase in the number of reported deaths in comparison to the equivalent time of year usually. WBC have agreed that care homes cannot accept new residents unless they have tested negative for Covid 19 prior to admission into the home. RE3 refuse tips have been closed however they are looking at how they can reopen, this is expected to help with the fly-tipping problem that has increased since the refuse tip shut. Currently WBC have not seen an increase to the reported cases of child abuse however they do expect an increase once children are back at school and therefore seen by teachers that are often the ones to pick up child abuse and neglect. So far WBC have paid out £7 million to help business stay in business whilst unable to work, they expect to give out at least another £5 million. House building across the borough has currently stopped and it is unknown when it will recommence. WBC are expecting their budgets to struggle for at least this year, this could impact onto the amount of council tax residents pay. Mr Cassidy explained that currently the counselling service that he works for are managing but they are prepared for an increased demand for their services once people are expected to return to school because anxiety could have easily turned into depression whilst being asked to remain at home with less social interaction. Mr May asked if Mr Howe/WBC knew numbers of confirmed cases of Covid 19 by specific area, unfortunately WBC do not have such specific details, just Borough numbers. Mrs Bulman asked if WBC are completing road works whilst the roads are quieter, Mr Howe confirmed that yes, they are.

69/20 Planning application: None to be discussed and RPC have not been informed of the outcome of any that they submitted comments on.

70/20 Neighbourhood Plan: Mrs Reid explained that ONeill Homer the planning consultants helping with the NP had thought RPC might be eligible for a grant this year because of the design policy, unfortunately the policy does not contain enough specific design code to be eligible and RPC felt that starting to gather evidence to be able to include those design codes would not be suitable at this current time, therefore RPC will not receive a grant this year. There will still be approximately £3000+vat to pay ONeill homer but this cost is offset by the fact that Groundwork UK (provider of last years NP Grant) allowed RPC to use grant money to pay for the biodiversity reports instead of RPC paying for them. WBC are conducting the screening opinion and some organisations have not been able to comment on RPC's NP at this current time because they do not have the staff capacity to do so, Mrs Reid is unsure if RPC are forced to wait for comments or not. Currently WBC are not advising anyone to begin a Regulation 14 consultation because of Covid 19 and social distancing rules so we may experience a delay but it is too soon to know for definite.

Mrs Robson entered the meeting whilst Neighbourhood Plan was being discussed.

71/20 Annual Parish Meeting and End of year: RPC will not hold an Annual Parish Meeting this year but written reports (chairman report by Mr May, financial report by Mrs Reid and a Planning report by Mr Evans, as Planning Vice Chairman), these will be uploaded onto RPC website on 15th May. Mrs Reid has prepared the end of year finances and it ready for internal audit, it is unknown how the internal audit will be conducted yet, either once Mrs Reid and Cedric Gilson Internal Auditor are allowed to meet or via Mrs Reid supplying documents on email. Annual Members Meeting is postponed to either later in the year or May 2021.

72/20 Vacancy for Councillor: Mr Bell has stood down and Mrs Reid has informed electoral services, they has provided RPC with a notice of vacancy and Mrs Reid has uploaded this onto RPC website, due to Covid 19 advertising this vacancy onto the noticeboards is not required. This notice of vacancy will remain for three weeks, unless an election is called, RPC can then co-opt, if an election is called then that election will take place in May 2021.

73/20 Speed Indicator Device Location: Mrs Reid has received RPC's SID, councillors agreed the first location to put it up is Ruscombe Lane, next to the business park. Mrs Reid's husband can be one of the two people required to get it fitted, Mr May has agreed to be the other, to be installed as soon as agreeable between them.

74/20 Street Lighting maintenance contract: Mrs Reid was contacted by SSE to see if RPC would be interested in a contract to maintain their streetlamps, RPC did have a contract like this for the old street lamps and ceased this contract once they knew they would be installing new LED street lamps. The LED streetlamps have been in for 2 years now without any maintenance required so RPC do not feel that they would like to take out a contract now.

75/20 RPC insurance policy: RPC's insurance policy requires renewal; RPC can renew for 1 year for £396.48 or 3 year fixed long term plan for £376.66 per annum. Mrs Robson proposed that RPC should take the 3-year plan, Mr Cassidy seconded and approved unanimously. Mrs Reid will set this up with Community Action Suffolk.

76/20 Clerk Pay Scale: *RESOLVED: That by virtue of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business under Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.*"

77/20 CIL:

Stanlake Lane Bridge painting: In principle Network Rail have given RPC permission to paint the inside of the bridge but Network Rail want to know what colour before full permission is granted. Mrs Reid will pass on that RPC would choose green and seek quote to have it painted in anti-graffiti paint.

SID: Purchased

Verge Flowers: Postponed until spring 2021.

Flower box for under Ruscombe sign on London Road: It is ordered as per RPC agreement to order 1 per year and refill existing box. This will be purchased with CIL money.

St James Land: The diocese is still under the impression that WBC want to use the land. Mrs Reid will forward information from the diocese to Mr Howe who will investigate if this is the case with WBC.

Pennfields land: This land is being gifted to RPC from WBC and Mrs Reid is assured this is being processed.

Pennfields parking: Mrs Reid is told a surveyor will inspect the land as to whether it would be suitable for grasscrete.

Co funded CIL project: Mrs Reid has spoken to Jenna William, CIL resource manager and by next month Mrs Reid should have information about a possible co funded project to help prevent flooding on the River Loddon.

78/20 Finance to be approved:

Keep Mobile Section 137 Grant donation £250: Paid cheque #440

Woodley Foodbank Section 137 Grant donation £250: Paid via Mrs Reid online to Woodley Foodbank. Mrs Reid reimbursed with cheque #444

Stock Signs Ltd (SID) £3,223.25: CIL Purchase Paid cheque # 439

ONeill Homer replacement of cheque #428 £1650.00: Paid cheque #438

Community Action Suffolk Insurance Policy £376.66: Paid cheque #443

Clerk wages and expenses £588.90: Paid via cheque #441 for £488.90 and cheque #442 for £100 so Mrs Reid can pay these in via online banking app with a maximum allowance of £500 per cheque.

Nest pension £49.90: Paid Direct Debit

SSE (April) £91.43: Paid Direct Debit

These payments are proposed by Mr May, seconded by Mrs Bulman and approved unanimously.

79/20 Reports from Liaison Reps: None to report.

Mr May closed the meeting at 9:21pm

Chairman Signed _____

Date _____

Chair initials _____

RPC Minutes May 2020