

Parish Council of Hempstead
Minutes of the Meeting of Hempstead Parish Council
held at the Village Hall on Thursday March 12th

Present: Mr Sean McCarthy (Chairman), Mr David Drane, Miss Diana Frost, Mr Alan Weedon, Mr Nicholas Turkentine, Mrs Laura Saxel, Mr Mark Welbourn, District Councillor Alan Storah and the Clerk. Mrs Rebecca Cox attended as an observer and proposed new Clerk.

The Parish Council meeting started at 8:05pm

129) Apologies for absence: County Councillor Walsh

130) Reports from District or County Councillors:

- County Councillor Walsh had sent a February report that had been circulated. He had also sent an email saying that he would be in touch in due course with Mr Drane to agree a date to walk around the village to discuss areas of concern. Mr Drane would contact him to confirm that he was looking forward to the meeting.
- District Councillor Storah had sent a report, as described below, that had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- Mr Storah raised the current status of the Local Plan, to keep the PC informed. He explained that the Plan has been reviewed by independent Local Government advisors and has been found to be flawed, which will inevitably lead to a new plan having to be created.
- Mr Storah promised to address the issue of the delay in implementation of agreed 40mph limit with the Local Highways Panel to ensure that it will be on their next agenda.

131) Minutes of the previous meeting held 13th February 2020:

- Agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

132) Matters arising: None

133) Planning:

- **Land South of Limes: UTT/19/1756/FUL** - Approved with conditions re cladding.
- **Land north of Old Bakery, High Street. UTT/19/2517/FUL** – AWAITING DECISION
- **Land by Thatch Cottage, Hill Road. UTT/19/2707/OP** – conditional approval with conditions requiring a pedestrian footway etc.
- **Chaseside, UTT/19/3088/ FUL** - APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS
- **Bullsbridge Farm UTT/20/0015/FUL** - Comments submitted AWAITING DECISION
- **Boytons Farm** – still awaiting a response from the enforcement officer. Alan Storah will contact the Planning Officer to chase for this.

134) Neighbourhood Watch and Wellbeing

- Mrs Saxell to attend a Wellbeing conference in Dunmow and to report back in May.
- **Hare coursing** – most recent activity opposite Pollards Cross reported to police.

135) Correspondence:

- **Essex Velo cycling event** scheduled for 20th September. Miss Frost has contacted the organisers to ascertain how we could participate and support this event, but no information can be provided currently. John Wilson has agreed to pull something together in any event.
- **Coronavirus** – Carolyn Nicholson contacted the committee regarding the Parish response to the Covid-19 outbreak. Possible community support for elderly and at-risk residents was discussed. Mrs Saxel agreed to be a contact point for residents requiring support and Miss Frost will draft a letter/email to go out to residents offering support and requesting volunteers. It was noted that there has already been contact between residents offering assistance, which is very heartening. Miss Frost agreed to list volunteers and vulnerable residents.
- **Village of the Year** - Mr Weedon is in receipt of papers and has in hand.
- **Bird Scarer** – the Chairman had received concerns regarding a scarer causing nuisance, but issue resolved.

136) Highways and Rights of Way:

- The 40 mph Speed limit has received 2 objections, hence delay in implementation, which will now be pushed into the next financial year. No details of the objections have as yet been provided.
- Mr Weedon reported on the state of the High Street by Dimmings, raised at the last meeting. No mess on the road was found, issue had at present been resolved.
- County Councillor Walsh to visit the village on 13th March to view areas of concern. It was suggested that the broken barriers on Anso Road and the state of Bobblows byway be raised. As Mr Drane could not attend Miss Frost agreed to meet Councillor Walsh.
- Mr Long still to contact Mr Basham re contracting for some footpath clearance. Miss Frost to ask Councillor Walsh when the council might next cut the footpaths and express gratitude for the last cut.

137) Flooding:

- **Top of Anso Road** – Mrs Saxel took no part in the discussion due to possible conflict of interest. There were apparently drainage issues with the ditch in the vicinity, which may have had a knock-on effect for a drainage culvert located close to houses in the area, causing concern for homeowners as it is at risk of collapse. The flooding onto the road is ECC responsibility, however the ownership of the ditch, and drainage of such, is being ascertained. Mr Turkentine is in contact with those involved and will update in due course.
- **Corner by Pollards Cross** – Mr Turkentine had cleared the drains here and resolved the issue.
- **Blocked drains on the High Street** – Awaiting a response from ECC. Mr Turkentine to keep PC updated as required.

138) Emergency Plan:

- The Chairman, Mr Drane and Mr Turkentine to take this on as a working party. Agreed to meet on 25th March, 8pm at Fridays.

139) Environment:

- **Great British litter pick** – on Sunday 29th March at 10am until 12pm. Litter picking equipment has been sourced, including donations from Coca Cola.
- **Tree survey:** Mrs Saxel has requested a revised quote for the survey of trees in the village. This included some areas not directly under the auspices of the Parish Council. It was hoped that the Church and Village Hall Management committee would contribute subject to negotiation. Mrs Saxel would circulate the final detailed costings when received.

140) Communications:

- **New clerk's email address** – Miss Frost to liaise with website manager to set up new email address.

- **Google Calendar** – Miss Frost is testing this for use by village committees. It will hopefully be up and running, in test phase, for April.
- **Annual Village Assembly and Report** – the clerk reminded councillors that contributions for the report were appreciated ASAP. It was agreed that the Annual Assembly would be held on 1 May at 7:30pm. A brief PC meeting would be held on 30 April at 8pm in preparation.

141) Finance:

- **The certificate of Exemption for the External Audit** – signed.
- **New Printer** to be purchased.
- **Essex Heritage Payment** – signed.
- Internal Audit Papers – The Clerk said that they are aiming to get these to Ross Midgeley before his holiday.
- **Ward Councillors Initiative** - £500 grant towards extension of the village hall car park to improve accessibility. It was agreed to note that these funds would be spent in the next financial year. The Clerk would agree the form with Councillor Storah.

142) Defibrillator:

- Sent out for further volunteers before course to which Diane Franier responded. The course will cost £175 for up to 10 attendees, the Volunteer Emergency Test System will be £45 to set up, the £100 per annum.

143) VE day Celebrations:

- The committee dealing with this were planning to have an afternoon tea party and an evening event with food and activities. It would be on Friday 8th May 2020 and the hall will be suitably decorated. Newsletter article to be published and a good turnout desired.

144) Village Hall:

- As discussed earlier the Ward Councillor's Initiative grant for £500 towards upgrade of the car park.
- There had been a presentation to John Sladen at the last VHMC meeting. He has been one of the key figures in the development of the Village Hall and his expertise will be missed.

145) Appointment of a new clerk:

- A whole Council decision to endorse the appointment of Mrs Cox was made.
- Mr Long will liaise with Mrs Cox and the Chairman in regard to salary and requirements of the job and will provide support as required for the period after handover.
- A contract will be drafted.
- It was agreed that Mr Long would officially stand down as of 1st May 2020, and Mrs Cox would be paid a salary from 1st April 2020.

Future Meetings: Thursdays, 9th April & 7th May at 8pm, all in the Village Hall.

Annual Parish Assembly will be on Friday 1st May.

The meeting ended at 9:53pm