



Loxwood Parish Council

Minutes of the **VIRTUAL** Annual meeting of the Parish Council of Loxwood held on Monday 4th May at 8.00pm.

Attendance: Parish Councillors: Chris Agar; Rick Kelsey; Tony Colling; Simon Laker; Annette Gardner; Roger Newman. CDC Gareth Evans (left the meeting at 20/90). Jane Bromley, Clerk. Two members of the public.

20/73 ELECTION FOR A CHAIR for the forthcoming year. **Cllr Kelsey** had been nominated ahead of the meeting by Cllr Agar. There were no other nominations and Cllr Colling seconded the nomination and all were in favour.

Cllr Kelsey signed the Acceptance of Office Declaration and thanked Cllr Agar for his work as Chair over the previous 5 years.

20/74 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Parish Councillors: Simon Bates and John Lewis.

20/75 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR for the forthcoming year. Cllr Kelsey nominated **Cllr Agar** who accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations. Cllr Kelsey seconded the nomination and all were in favour. Cllr Agar signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

20/76 PLANNING COMMITTEE election for Chair and Vice Chair. **Cllr Colling** was nominated as Chair of Planning seconded by Cllr Newman and all in favour. **Cllr Agar** was nominated as Vice Chair of Planning seconded by Cllr Colling and all in favour. Cllrs Colling and Cllr Agar signed the Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

20/77 FINANCE COMMITTEE election for Chair and Vice Chair. **Cllr Newman** was nominated as Chair of Finance, seconded by Cllr Kelsey and all in favour. **Cllr Kelsey** was nominated as Vice Chair seconded by Cllr Newman and all in favour. Cllrs Newman and Kelsey signed the Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

20/78 FLOOD FORUM Election of Chair and Vice Chair. There was a discussion as to whether a resident could take on the Chairmanship of this Forum. The resident was a retired drainage engineer with a lot of knowledge of the Loxwood system. Should this occur the Forum would become a Working Group with Terms of Reference, decisions being referred to the Parish Council. The resident had indicated that this might be acceptable in the future but not currently as he was representing the Nursery Green residents at this time with regard to their sewerage and surface water systems and as such a conflict of interest might arise.

Cllr Kelsey was nominated by Cllr Colling and second by Cllr Agar and all in favour. Cllr Colling was proposed as Vice Chair and all were in favour. Declarations of Acceptance of Office were to be sent to Cllrs Kelsey and Colling for signing. ACTION Clerk

20/79 APPENDIX 1 RESPONSIBILITIES LIST to be updated. Cllr Kershaw was no longer part of the NP Working Group. Cllr Bates would be asked whether he was still happy to be allocated the playground responsibility with Cllr Newman. Cllr Agar would continue as responsible for personnel along with the Chair and Cllr Gardner. ACTION Clerk

20/80 APPENDIX 2 RE ADOPTION OR AMENDMENT OF TERMS OF REFERENCE for the Finance and Planning Committees. The Parish Council RESOLVED to readopt the Terms of Reference as drafted for the Planning and Finance Committees.

20/81 DECLARATION OF MEMBER'S INTEREST – to receive disclosure of interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting. Reminder that updated Register of Interest need to be emailed to the Clerk before the 1st June Parish Council Meeting. There were no interests to declare for this meeting and the Cllrs noted the request to renew their Registers of Interest for the forthcoming year.

20/82 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – the Parish Council RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Parish Council meetings on 23rd March 2020, the Planning Committee Minutes of the Planning Meeting of 23rd March 2020 are accurate accounts of those meetings.

20/83 APPENDIX 3 ACTION POINT LIST: The Parish Council reviewed the list of Action Points from previous meetings. The action to purchase the VE commemoration bench was to be progressed and the bench was to be delivered to Cllr Kelsey. Cllr Newman would organise the installation. Fixing brackets would be purchased by the installer and he would also lay a hard surface in front of the bench to prevent a muddy surface for users. The location of the bench was to be pointed out by Cllr Kelsey at the time of installation. ACTION Clerk, RN, RK

20/84 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – No speakers

20/85 REPORT FROM WSCC JANET DUNCTON-No report.

20/86 REPORT FROM CDC GARETH EVANS-

I would like to start my address in paying respect to Revd Pauline Lucas (Ifold Parish) who tragically passed away on Friday 10th April. Pauline was an incredible, warm and genuine person who did huge amounts for this community and is a massive loss to us all. My thoughts are with her family and those who were closest to her. She will not be forgotten.

Local Updates

1) I have been in touch with all Parish's in the Ward I represent to support the setting up of Covid-19 Community Hubs in order that those that are most vulnerable in the Ward can be supported. I have also signed up as a volunteer to some of these Hubs and organised a mail drop

in the Plaistow and Ifold Parish. Contact details of all Hubs have been previously sent to all Parish Council Clerks and I keep sharing them on social media to help spread the word.

2) Since we have gone into lockdown there has been a shortage of food-bank donations – local businesses such as Kirdford Stores, Plaistow Stores and our local churches are offering drop off points. Whilst I am on this point many of our local shops and pubs have been vital during this time in supporting the community and those who are most vulnerable. I am very grateful that we have such fantastic local businesses in our community and I hope when this crisis ends they will continue to be well supported by the community.

3) CDC are working hard to solve issues as they arise during this unprecedented time. As District Councillors we have a special ‘hotline’ that we can use for any issues that arise. This is only available to Councillors and not being shared with the public in order to control the flow of traffic. If residents contact the Parish Council with any issues that you don’t know the answer to then please do let me know and I will pick this up on your behalf. Some issues I have been supporting residents in are:

- Getting CDC to offer clear guidance on the bonfires
- Clarifying questions / doubts on refuse and recycling collections
- Action from the Environmental Protection team after a resident was reported to me to be burning Tyres
- Support for residents surrounding Council Tax
- Getting advice for local businesses (i.e. farmers, estate agents etc)

4) I have been contacted by a resident in the ward who is working tirelessly to make scrubs to support carers within the District. I have been helping to link her up with a team of volunteers and also help her to get these scrubs to the places that need them most. I received an update on Friday 1st May stating “we have had a donation from Billingshurst Scrubbers of 80m of material, they did some fundraising and are buying in bulk. We have made quite a good number now, and are working on Petworth Hospital at the moment, with Loxwood surgery next. Then we will start on Royal Surrey.” The resident has a facebook page set up called “For the love of scrubs”- if the parish council would like to know more I can send on further details.

5) Following an update from Kayleigh at CDC I have been informed that this application should be heard at the virtual Planning Committee on 13th May

CDC Updates

1) Councillors from the group I represent have written to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government urging to extend the validity of the current local plan beyond the July deadline. This is an essential delay to enable communities to direct all immediate efforts and attention to the effects of the Coronavirus, prioritising looking after people at this time of need. On this letter we also urged the government to suspend time scales for new planning applications so they can be given due consideration in these challenging times. We fear that not to take these measures may result in unplanned, piecemeal development without infrastructure and in unsustainable locations.

2) Whilst SLT and the different political groups have been conducting meetings using virtual platforms such as Zoom, Formal meetings such as full council business and committee meetings have resumed yet. My group pushed for meetings to be conducted virtually in order that democracy can continue during this period and were successful in achieving this. We needed Full Council meetings, Committees and Panels where decisions are taken by vote to resume as soon as it is possible so that council business and local democracy could continue operating.

Meeting times are:

Planning 6th and 13th May

Cabinet 12th May

DPIP 14th May

Environmental Panel 18th May

Full Council 19th May

3) All opposition parties at CDC have jointly urged (in writing) that virtual meetings can be followed by all and include questions from residents. We are delighted that formal Council meetings are re-starting in May using Zoom; however we must ensure meetings are open, transparent and participatory. Other Councils including WSCC and Horsham District Council have been using platforms such as you tube to livestream the Zoom meetings and including questions the residents have emailed before the meeting so there is no reason CDC cannot.

4) As mentioned from casework I am picking up CDC is continuing to receive reports of bonfires being lit across the district. They will continue sending out further reminders asking residents not to burn any waste under any circumstances during the Covid-19 pandemic. If you are affected by a bonfire, you can report this on the CDC website at: soci.in/reportbonfire_6SaLy More info: <https://www.chichester.gov.uk/article/33909/Council-warns-against-bonfires-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

5) Parking – following the extension of the lockdown by a further three weeks CDC are suspending parking charges in all their district car parks for a further three weeks. We applaud this decision from CDC as it is a vital move to support essential services during this time.

6) Council tax- If you pay Council Tax over 10 Months CDC are considering a change in instalments so that payments will start in June not April. Those that are having issues with payment due to loss of employment or earnings as a result of this pandemic should make contact with CDC as soon as possible. Chichester District is going to be very sympathetic with residents struggling with paying taxes during this crisis. The email is taxation@chichester.gov.uk

7) Climate Officer Update: the new CDC Climate Change Officer has now been appointed and will start work at CDC as soon as possible. This was proposed by my group colleague Cllr Jonathan Brown last year and I am delighted for him to see his hard work on this become a reality.

8) CDC staff and members of the Senior Leadership team were supporting Stonepillow preparing food for the homeless and helping the refuse collection teams over the Easter break. My thanks and admiration goes out to them.

9) The CEO of CDC is pleased to tell you that by the end of the week (1st May 2020), they will have paid business rate grants to all of those eligible. The government has allocated £37million to support businesses in the district. 3,000 businesses in our district have benefited from this scheme. A very small number of our local businesses have decided for various reasons that they do not wish to access them. This money will be returned to central government

Digital District Cllr Surgeries

In this era of social distancing my face to face surgeries cannot continue for obvious reasons until such a time as these measures are relaxed

To replace my surgeries, I am available to meet residents remotely through video calls upon request either through Zoom meetings or Video Calls through Skype or Hangout (ID gareth.evans1979@googlemail.com). Get in touch if you'd like to arrange a time to meet up!

Residents can contact me any time on my telephone 07958918056 or email gbevans@chichester.gov.uk. I can also be contacted via my social media handles. Facebook is @GarethEvansLoxwood Twitter is @GarethEvans79

20/87 CLERK REPORT: A resident had written to the Council to point out that the bus shelter near the Loxwood Sports Pavilion was in need of attention. This was on the list of jobs given to the odd job man to tidy and then assess for repairs. The same resident had asked whether CIL could

be used to purchase a sculpture for the Parish and this was discussed as being a worthy idea but later it was ascertained that CIL could not be used for this purpose. CIL being for infrastructure.

20/88 CONSIDERATION OF THE GRANT APPLICATIONS from:

APPENDIX 4 North Hall Singers -£250. The Parish Council RESOLVED to approve this grant application.

APPENDIX 5 Home Start- £1220 per annum to support one family. The Parish Council RESOLVED to approve a donation of £1220 to support the family in Loxwood.

APPENDIX 6 Four Sight Vision Support- £49 to support one member for a year (1 registered member in Loxwood). The Parish Council RESOLVED to approve a donation of £49 to support the Loxwood member.

APPENDIX 6B Wey and Arun Canal Trust -£5000. The Parish Council discussed the application which was for monies for remedial works to footpaths which neither landowners nor WSAC were prepared to fund. The total expenditure for this works was £15,174. The Parish Council RESOLVED to approve £5000 towards these works.

Cllr Colling raised a donation to the church to enable them to provide a food bank for residents. Cllr Kelsey would speak to Rev Cushing and ascertain his thoughts regarding this. **ACTION RK**

20/89 APPENDIX 7 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR TO 31st MARCH 2020- The Parish Council are recommended to respond to the Governance Statement declaration as a positive to all questions.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to respond positively to the questions A to J and L. Questions K and M were not applicable.

20/90 APPENDIX 8 ANNUAL ACCOUNTING RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2020- The Parish Council are recommended to approve the accounts for the year 2019-2020.

The Annual Return did not show the accounting figures and this item was to be carried forward to the June Meeting of the Council

20/91 APPENDIX 9 INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT ACCOUNTS TO 31ST MARCH 2020 AND REAPPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR (PJ Consultants) FOR THE YEAR TO 31st MARCH 2021- The Parish Council are to note the internal auditors report, and recommended to Resolve that the Annual Return may proceed to External Audit and to Resolve to reappoint the internal auditor for the forthcoming year.

The Annual Return did not show the accounting figures and this item was to be carried forward to the June Meeting of the Council

20/92 APPENDIX 10A AND 10B STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS:

Recommended to Resolve to re-adopt the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to readopt the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

20/93 REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S MEMBERSHIP TO EXTERNAL BODIES. SALC. NALC.

The Parish Council felt that SALC and NALC provided valuable service and RESOLVED to continue membership

20/94 APPENDIX 11 POWER OF GENERAL COMPETENCE: Recommended to resolve to re-adopt the Power of General Competence.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to re adopt the Power of General Competence.

20/95 SET THE DATES AND TIMES AND LOCATIONS OF THE YEAR'S PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS.

The Parish Council are recommended to set the first Monday of the month at 8pm for Parish Council meetings in the Mursell Room of North Hall, should the first Monday of the month be a bank holiday a nearby date will be agreed at the previous meeting and advertised accordingly. There will be no meeting during August except where an urgent matter arises. Planning Meetings will be held an hour or half hour ahead of the Parish Council meeting as required. Finance Meetings to be held in April and November dates to be decided nearer to the time.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to set the above dates, times and location (subject to virus lock down and self- isolating measures) for future meetings.

20/96 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT -See below. The Parish Council RESOLVED to approve payments totalling £13809.95 for the month.

20/97 APPENDIX 12 VE BENCH LICENCE –The Parish Council RESOLVED to approve that the Clerk may sign the licence agreement for the VE Bench Location along Station Road.

20/98 CONSIDERATION OF RESIDENT PROPOSAL FOR A PUBLIC GARDEN AREA FOR THE DOCTORS SURGERY AND FUNDING OF THIS PROPOSAL- The Parish Council recognised that the land around the doctors surgery was owned private land as such reluctantly were not willing to invest in a garden.

20/99 UPDATES AND ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AS TIME ALLOWS:-

- (a) Highway/Roads. There had been some restructuring of WSCC Highways personnel and areas of coverage. Chris Dye and Mike Dare were still involved in our area together with a new officer Chris Stark.
- (b) Drainage/Flooding/ Sewerage Infrastructure- The modelling from Water Environment had been received and some recommendations would be made shortly however, site visits were necessary to achieve this and they were not currently possible. It appeared that any modifications needed would be the responsibility of WSCC Highways and WSCC Education Authority.
- (c) North Hall- Nothing further.

- (d) Nursery Site – A resident retired engineer had been corresponding with Southern Water and it appeared that they would be adopting the sewerage and surface water drainage systems for the site.
- (e) Farm Close- Nothing further.
- (f) School- Remote teaching was being supported and for this purpose the school had had to purchase laptops for teachers from money which had been intended for other purposes. Cllr Newman discussed the possibility of the Parish Council contributing towards the cost of these laptops. In the majority the Parish Councillors were not keen to fund laptop for teachers from CIL or Parish Council Reserves. Cllr Kelsey asked if there was any other way the Parish Council could help the school through this virus crisis.
- (g) Neighbourhood Plan- Cllrs Colling, Agar and Kelsey had been working hard to produce the site assessments for the sites which came forward via the call for Sites. These assessments would be sent to the Planning Consultant for independent review shortly. A grant for the planning Consultants work had been obtained from Locality Groundworks.

20/100 Newsletter articles. Cllr Colling would write a NP Update; NP Questionnaire; V day bench.

20/101 Parish Matters. Songhurst Woods screening appraisal for Clay Pits works had been consulted upon by CDC and the Parish Council had commented upon its shortcomings. It was expected a planning application would come out shortly upon which the Parish Council would again comment.

20/102 Date of the Next Meeting Monday 1st June 2020.

The meeting closed at 10.25pm

WSCC and CDC Janet Dunton Report sent after the meeting:

County is continuing with its work on Children's Services and that's going ahead well with all the inspections that we have from the Commissioner who is taking a close interest in our improvement programme. I may already have told you that the Fire and Rescue Service is also pretty good as well with raised moral among all the Staff in that department and when inspected we had some 2.1/2 thousand backlog of home visits that advise on home safety. This figure is now nil so all good. I am sure this service saves a lot of lives or indeed injury.

Although elected as Chairman of the County Council until May 2021 my activities have been somewhat curtailed. The new High Sheriff was inaugurated via Zoom instead of the parade etc and Cathedral Service. He is a local GP Dr Tim Fooks so he has also been back working in his Practice during this Covid 19 period. He is hoping to hold his Judges Service still, in the Cathedral at as yet an un-specified date.

