

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of Comberbach Parish Council held on Tuesday 5th May 2020

Present

Mr J Ryder (Chairman in the Chair)
Mr J Bradley
Mrs R Bradley
Mr R Holt
Mr S Hornby
Mrs J Johnston

Ms DJ French (Clerk)
Mr S Penwill (RFO)

CWAC Cllr P Marshall

The Meeting started at 7.15pm.

1. Public Open Forum

No Members of the Public were present.

2. Apologies for absence - none

3. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest – none

4. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th March 2020

(20/21) RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2020 be approved as a correct record.

5. Parish Council business during the CoronaVirus Pandemic

The Council considered the report of the Parish Clerk. The Report outlined the new regulations that allowed virtual meetings and decision making and specifically disapplied the requirement to hold an Annual Meeting in May 2020.

(20/22) RESOLVED that

- (a) The report and arrangements during the current CoronaVirus pandemic be noted;
- (b) The Council does not hold an Annual Meeting until May 2021 and all current appointments remain until that date and as set out below:
 - Chairman – Councillor J Ryder; Vice Chairman – Councillor S Hornby
 - Finance Committee - Councillors J Bradley, Hornby, Johnston and Ryder;
 - Staffing Committee - Councillors R Bradley, Hornby, Johnston and Ryder;
 - Planning Committee – Councillors J Bradley, Holt, Hornby and Ryder - the current arrangements set out below be confirmed:

“the Clerk has delegated power to respond to planning applications by taking soundings from members of the Planning Committee which will be given due consideration when drafting the response. If Members of the Committee do not agree on their response or the application would have a serious impact on the community then the application will be considered by the Parish Council”

Representatives on outside bodies:

- Comberbach Memorial Hall Management Committee – Rena Bradley;
- Recreation Committee – John Ryder
- Fete Committee – John Ryder
- Bowling Club – Jim Bradley;
- School Liaison – Steven Hornby;
- Litterpick – Jill Johnston.

- (c) The Clerk be granted delegated powers to take any urgent decisions subject to consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman and copied to all Members of the Parish Council.

6. Annual Audit

The Parish Council considered the Annual AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return) and associated finance documents:

- End of year financial statement
- Review of the financial year
- Summary of significant variances.

The RFO referred Members to the Annual Governance Statement, section 1 of the AGAR which asked Members to confirm that there was a sound system of internal control and the Accounting Statements in section 2 where confirmation was sought that a system of receipts and payments was used and the accounts were a fair representation of the financial position of the Council.

The Council also gave consideration to delivering the Audit File to the Internal Auditor. There were a number of options including recorded delivery, hand delivery or using the services of a courier company.

(20/23) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 be approved and signed by the Chairman; and
- (b) the Audit File will be delivered to the Internal Auditor using recorded delivery.

7. Progress Reports and Updates

The Clerk advised that an account had been set up on the Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) Council website for reporting various matters including potholes and blocked drains. All Members could use the login details circulated to report new items or check progress of existing items. She had circulated the information regarding the CWAC App which could also be used to report any issues including pinpointing the location on a map. Due to the pandemic the website was only accepting urgent items rather than routine matters.

The items raised at the previous meeting of the Council regarding contacting the CWAC Chief Executive about highways issues and the Primary School regarding defibs had not been actioned due to the recognition that public services were

currently using resources to deal with urgent matters arising from Covid-19. These items would be reviewed in 3 months and actioned as soon as appropriate.

(20/24) RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

8. Cheshire West and Chester Councillors' reports

CWAC Councillor P Marshall updated:

- Funding had been received from Central Government which was being used to support various services including homelessness support and Business Support. There had been queries around eligibility criteria for Business Support and Councils were to be given some discretion. There would also be discretion for small business units located in shared premises.
- Household Waste Recycling Centres were to reopen shortly; this would be based on strict selection criteria which was currently being confirmed.
- A Hub was operating in Ellesmere Port with various functions including helping with pharmacy collections and provision of supportive phone calls etc. A Hub could also be established in Northwich if required. There was a Covid-19 testing centre in Ellesmere Port as well as others in Crewe and Knutsford; these were managed by the Ministry of Defence and access was based on the nearest location rather than Council boundaries.
- A number of CWAC staff had been temporarily redeployed to alternate roles and there was significant use of remote and home working.
- There had been a number of constitutional challenges to running the Council on a remote basis issues, however, remote decision-making meetings were now taking place. A hybrid full Council meeting may take place in future with some Members present in person and others joining via technology.
- The 'Inspire' website was available for sharing good news stories.

9. Planning

9.1 Planning decisions were listed in Appendix 3.

9.2 There were no enforcement matters.

(20/25) RESOLVED: That the planning update be noted.

10. Recreation Area

10.1. The Council had approved funding within the budget for replacement picnic tables including some that were disabled accessible and some that had games table tops. There was also funding for replacement benches. The Chairman had produced a report outlining options and suppliers including the use of recycled materials.

10.2 The annual RoSPA inspection had taken place in April. There had been no significant issues raised. There was some damage to the feature pencils but these had now been repaired with filler. The Inspector had advised that the proposal to fit phenolic/buffalo board over the decking on the multi play area was an acceptable

solution. A budget was proposed to purchase the materials and pay for installation works. Members queried whether the solution would cause water to settle on the surface making it slippery. This could be resolved by fitting the board at a slight slope.

10.3 The Chairman had carried out various repair and maintenance works to the equipment and other works were proposed.

(20/26) RESOLVED: That:

- (a) 4 replacement picnic tables be purchased from NBB Recycled, 2 to be disabled accessible and 2 to be standard, with 2 having game table tops; in addition, 3 bench seats be purchased from NBB Recycled, at a maximum cost of £5,000 to include fittings and delivery;
- (b) the annual RoSPA inspection be received and noted;
- (c) a budget of £150 be approved for the purchase of materials (phenolic/buffalo board) and sealant to fit over the decking on the multi play unit, plus a budget of £100 to pay for installation by S Ross and the boarding be fitted with a slight slope;
- (d) the Chairman be reimbursed the following sums - £16 for two detergents for jet washing the MUGA frame; £52 for chains and padlocks for locking the Recreation Area; and £16 for sanding disks for various repairs;
- (e) a budget of £150 be approved for paint and brushes for general painting at the Recreation Area; and
- (f) a budget be approved in the sum of £100 for materials for preparation and repainting of the 3 light standards at the car park entrance plus a budget of £100 for labour.

11. Highways

The Clerk reported that the new gateway signs were in production and a delivery date was imminent. They would be stored pending installation.

(20/27) RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

12. Accounts and Finances

12.1 The Parish Council accounts to 31st March 2020 were submitted at Appendix 1.

12.2 The list of payments was in Appendix 2.

12.3 The Quarter 4 budget report and End of Year Financial Statement 2019/20 was submitted.

(20/28) RESOLVED: That

- (a) the accounts in Appendix 1 with a balance of £13,901.75 and £36,657.55 in reserves be noted;
- (b) the payments in Appendix 2 be approved; and
- (c) the Quarter 4 budget report and End of Year Financial Statement be approved.

13. Correspondence

The list of correspondence was received.

The RFO explained that the Council had been selected for an Intermediate Audit which meant providing some additional information.

The correspondence schedule included reference to the purchase of 96 bottles of hand sanitiser. The Chairman explained that a number of bottles had been allocated to be given out with the Afternoon Teas being provided to vulnerable residents on 10th May. Some could be provided at the Village Store to be given free of charge or for a donation. They could also be offered via Facebook and to the Primary School.

(20/29) RESOLVED: That:

- (a) the correspondence be noted; and
- (b) the hand sanitiser be made available as discussed at the meeting including at the Village Store; via Facebook and offered to the Primary School.

14. Exclusion of Public and Press

(20/30) RESOLVED That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed – matters relating to an individual

Part 2**15. Parish Council Annual Award**

Members discussed the recipient of the Annual Award. Members discussed a number of options and recipients who could be recognised for their work during the current pandemic.

(20/31) RESOLVED That

- (a) The recipient of the Annual Award be deferred to the next meeting; and
- (b) The Heritage Phone Box include 2 new designs – one to be based on a rainbow as a Thank You to all Key Workers and one to celebrate the Little Gem Award for the phone box awarded as part of the Best Kept Village Competition 2019.

16. Urgent Item – advertising in the Newsletter

The Council discussed advertising charges for the Newsletter. It was noted that many advertisers were small businesses whose business was restricted due to the pandemic. It was proposed that advertisers be offered free advertising for the year and this be communicated to all current advertisers along with the Council's good wishes.

(20/32) RESOLVED: that the RFO contact current advertisers to advise that advertising charges are currently suspended and passing on the Council's good wishes during the current difficult times.

The Meeting closed at 8.20pm

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 14th July 2020.

Signed Chairman

Appendix 1 Accounts for 31st March 2020 were approved

Current account: £13,901.75	Reserves: £36,657.55
Cash book: £13,589.75	Unpresented cheques: 1 in the sum of £312.00

Appendix 2 Payments

Item	Amount	Cheque	Power
Synchroprint – Covid leaflet	£112.80	22635	LGA 1972 s 111
JRyder – reimburse maintenance costs	£203.42	22636	LGA 1972 s 111
SLCC – Clerk CiLCA fees	£250.00	22637	LGA 1972 s 111
Playsafety - ROSPA inspection 4/20	£94.80	22638	LGA 1972 s 111
SLCC – RFO subscription 20/21	£65.00	22639	LGA 1972 s 111
HMRC – PAYE to 5/4/20	£240.60	22640	LGA 1972 s 111
HMRC – PAYE to 5/10/19	£232.60	22641	LGA 1972 s 111
Zurich Municipal – Insurance 20/21	£743.96	22642	LGA 1972 s 111
Shane Ross – Maintenance 01-20	£600.00	22643	LGA 1972 s 111

SLCC – Clerk subscription 20/21	£92.00	22644	LGA 1972 s 111
Signs of the Times gateway signs	£7,405.26	22645	LGA 1972 s111
Clerk expenses – Microsoft office, virus protection (both for Clerk and RFO), printer ink, mileage	£170.27	22646	LGA 1972 s111
Hotribs Ltd – Website costs Apr 20	£37.80	22647	LGA 1972 s111

Appendix 2b Pre-Authorised Payments

Item	Amount	Cheque	Power
Hotribs – Mailbox fee, PAP 1914	£21.60	22632	LGA 1972 s 111
CCDT Payroll 20/21, PAP 1915	£312.00	22633	LGA 1972 s 111
Synchroprint, CVN March, PAP 1916	£182.00	22634	LGA 1972 s 111

Appendix 3 Recent planning decisions by CW&C

Erection of greenhouse/summer room (retrospective)	Appeal submitted
Erection of garden shed - retrospective	
Removal of existing tile hung cladding and replacement with render, 21 Burgamot Lane	Pending
Single storey side extension, conversion of garage and widen access to provide 3 car spaces, Woodcroft, Marbury Road	Pending