WEST HATCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting of the West Hatch Parish Council held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 26th November 2019

**19/46 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**

**Councillors: Read (Chairman), Bray, Harrison-Sleap, Knight, Lodge, and Middleton**

**Apologies: Cllr Thorne (SCC), Cllr Henley (SWaT)**

**Public: 1 parishioner**

**19/47 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**There were no declarations of interests**

**19/48 TO CO-OPT MR DOUGLAS KERR TO THE COUNCIL**

**As Mr Kerr was unable to attend the meeting, it was agreed to defer the co-option until the next meeting.**

**19/49 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**The minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 25th September 2019, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**19/50 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

* **Removal of hedge at Farmers Arms**

**The Enforcement Officer has now visited the site and has confirmed that the removal of the hedge and the erection of the commercial sign did require permission. The hedge needs to be reinstated by the end of the growing season of 2020 and the sign should be removed and advertising consent applied for.The motorhome should also be removed.**

**At the visit a further planning irregularity was highlighted and the owners have been asked to address this issue. The Enforcement Officer has confirmed that the owners will comply with the requests made and the Parish Council will monitor the situation on an ongoing basis.**

**19/51 PARISHIONERS' FORUM**

**No issues raised.**

**19/52 REPORT FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

**Cllr Thorne had previously submitted his report.**

**The salient points included:-**

**The ‘Purdah’ period prior to the December General Election has meant that many County Council decisions will be delayed until after 12th December. The full Council meeting has been postponed until January.**

**The Saturday service of the Park & Ride has now been reinstated.**

**Hinckley Point – Cllr Thorne has recently attended another tour of the site and the message coming out is that there is still plenty of work and contracts available to local businesses and individuals.**

**Brexit Scam – There is currently a telephone scam where callers pretend to be from the NHS Brexit team, requesting bank details so that the patients can still receive their prescriptions once Britain has left the EU.**

**19/53 DAMAGE TO MEARE GREEN ROAD SIGN – TO DISCUSS WHAT ACTION TO TAKE**

**The newly erected sign at Meare Green Lane has recently been demolished by a vehicle. The driver left no details and cannot be traced. The Parish Council will be responsible for the repairs – the posts are intact and need re-installing and the sign is slightly bent so that needs to be straightened. Concerns from at least 2 parishioners have been raised regarding the location of the sign as several accidents have occurred there in the past.**

**The Clerk will contact Traffic Management to request a meeting to see whether the sign can be moved to a different location.**

**19/54 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR 2020-2021**

**A working party consisting of Cllrs Lodge, Middleton and Read had met previously to discuss the budget for 2020-21. The Clerk was also present.**

**During the past 2 years, the Council has incurred expenditure of a non-recuring nature such as part funding the purchase of the defibrillator, the Meare Green sign and repairs to the Meare Green Noticeboard which has reduced the Council’s reserves. No large items of expenditure are planned for 2020-21, although it is proposed that a contingency of £200 is maintained within the budget for unforeseen expenditure.**

**To cover the regular running costs of the Council which is forecast to be £2755, it is proposed to levy a precept of £2700, an increase of £60 from the previous year. Due to a reduction in the Council Tax Base from 135.5 to 132.50, this will result in an increase from £19.58p.a to £20.37p.a per Band D property.**

**Cllr Middleton proposed and Cllr Lodge seconded that the Parish Council levy a precept of £2700 for the forthcoming financial year and this was unanimously agreed by the Council.**

**19/55 TO AGREE BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT FOR APR-OCT 2019**

The Council agreed the Bank Reconcilation statement which was signed by the Chairman.

**19/56 FORMAL EXPENDITURE APPROVAL**

It was **resolved** to make the following payments:

1. Clerk’s Salary £286.00
2. Clerk’s Expenses £ 55.29
3. Royal British Legion £ 20.00

**19/56 PLANNING MATTERS**

Other than the enforcement issues mentioned above, there have been no other planning issues raised.

**19/57 REPORTS OF PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES**

**Footpath Leader –** No report. Mr Kerr, the prospective new member, has expressed an interest in taking over the role of Footpath Leader.

**Trees and Conservation –** No new issues to report

**Highways –** No new issues to report. Correspondence received relating to Highways Winter Service confirms that dumpy bags of salt will still be left at suitable locations within parishes.

Bags of salt previously offered to Parish Councils will not be available this year due to poor take up in previous years but Councils have been reminded that they may purchase their own de-icing materials if required. Cllr Harrison-Sleep still has 8 bags of salt for use this winter.

**SALC –** Cllr Harrison-Sleap was unable to attend the SALC AGM due to ill health but has asked for a copy of the minutes.

**19/58 CORRESPONDENCE AND MATTERS OR REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

* **VE Day Celebrations 8-10th May 2020**

**Parish and Town Councils are being encouraged to hold a short ceremony on Friday 8th May at 3pm to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Suggestions for the ceremony include the playing of the Last Post and the Reveille, and culminating in a Toast to those who served in the war. It is hoped that these ceremonies will take place throughout the country, including the highest peaks of each country within the UK.**

**The Council agreed to look into this further and liaise with the Village Hall and Church to arrange an event which could incorporate key elements of the suggested ceremony. The matter will be discussed further at future meetings.**

* **Closure of Footpath T31/24**

**Footpath T31/24 will be temporarily closed due to repairs on an unsafe bridge. The closure takes effect from 14th November for 21 days. The notice will be published on the website and noticeboard at Meare Green.**

* **Planting of Tree in Memory of Dougal Clark**

**In conjunction with the Village Hall committee, the Parish Council has agreed to plant a tree in memory of Dougal Clark, who played such a prominent role in the Village. Permission will be sought from the PCC to plant the tree in St Andrews Field and a Service tree has been suggested, subject to the family’s approval.**

**19/59 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Tuesday 28th January 2020 at 7.30pm**

**The meeting closed at 8.25 pm**