# **AMBERLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes from the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 10th September 2020, 7pm via Zoom video conferencing.**

**PRESENT**: Parish Councillors; Chairman – Geoff Uren (GU), Peter Cozens (PJC), Hazel Allinson (HA), Leigh Cresswell (LC), Tim Simpson (TS), Jason Charman (JC) and Alex Beveridge (AB)

Also present: WSCC Leader Cllr Paul Marshall, HDC councillor Diana van der Klugt, HDC councillor Brian Donnelly, Vicky Spiers (VS) the Clerk and 1 member of the public (for part of the meeting).

**1. CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME/UPDATE**

GU welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received and accepted from Laura Rawnsley and HDC Cllr Paul Clarke.

**3. REVIEW AND AGREEMENT OF STANDING ORDERS**

The clerk had circulated the proposed changes to councillors prior to the meeting, which reflect the change in how councillors will vote at remote meetings. Resolved – revised standing orders agreed.

**4.CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR**

GU moved this item further down the agenda.

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None

**6. AGREEMENT OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9th JULY 2020**

The minutes were agreed by councillors and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**7. UPDATE FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Brian Donnelly spoke about the new White Paper on Planning and the methodology which would see Horsham District expected to build 1700 houses per year for the next 25 years (up from current target of 950 per year), it is widely acknowledged that this figure is disproportionate compared to other counties and the Rt Hon. Andrew Griffith MP has taken this issue forward. The White Paper also details changes to the current planning process.

Brian advised that Pulborough PC were looking to introduce some traffic calming measures along Lower Street, which might see traffic displaced to along Greatham Lane/Brook Lane to the A283.

GU asked Cllr Diana van der Klugt if the White Paper on Planning applied to National Parks. Diana advised that the White Paper applies to the whole of England, currently the understanding is that National Parks will be Protected Sites. It is not currently known if neighbourhood plans will have to be updated.

Cllr Paul Marshall advised that Highways England will be announcing the favoured route for the A27 Arundel bypass in October/November, this will be followed by a further public consultation.

Paul advised that he would speak to Matt Davey at Highways WSCC next week regarding the proposal of a footpath from Houghton to Amberley, which Laura Rawnsley and Dr Charles Shaw have been working on.

Paul advised that recently there had been a significant increase in the number of positive Covid tests. The average age for a positive test in March was 71 years old, in July this had fallen to 43 years old. Overall West Sussex is doing well and has lower figures than England overall. Currently there is an issue with testing capacity, which should take 4 to 6 weeks to resolve.

Cllr Paul Marshall left the meeting at 7.28pm

**8. CONSIDERATION OF QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE MEETING**

No questions submitted.

**9. MATTERS ARISING** **(a) Community Speedwatch and B2139 issues** – report received from LR prior to the meeting advises that the Amberley and Houghton CSW has been running for 6 weeks, there are 15 volunteers, so far they have done 13 sessions (including training ones) and have ‘caught’ (and successfully matched) 117 vehicles. All of which will have received letters from the Police. At the Houghton site there are usually 25+ speeders in one session. At the Houghton Bridge site, the group has seen little speeding during the daytime, but some during peak morning rush hour (around 10 speeders per session). There have been issues with the accuracy of picking up vehicles and speed at the Turnpike Road site - our PCSO is coming to reassess this site on the 15th September (sessions are paused at this site until after this).  
Our PCSO will assess the potential for a site on Rackham Road on the 15th September.

On the B2139 WSCC Highways have said that a Traffic Restriction Order (TRO) to restrict weight limit is a non-starter and that they do not have the funds to maintain any new signage. LR and Dr Charles Shaw are planning to go back to Paul Marshall to arrange a meeting with the police to discuss how we could better enforce the current TRO that restricts height and push WSCC to come out to assess signage.

PJC advised that at the last A27 Arundel consultation Highways England said a TRO along the road would have more chance of being successful once the bypass was built.

**(b) Gigabit broadband voucher scheme** – currently hopeful that fibre broadband will be installed along Rackham Road up to Old Bottom Barn, the estimated cost is £37,000 but looks like it will be done as part of BT’s upgrade.

**(c) Community Highways Scheme for Rackham Road** – Stephen Douglas from WSCC Highways has advised the clerk that to progress the application then we would need to provide WSCC with a clear idea about the traffic calming we would like installed, together with costings and plans. He advised that other parishes had used an engineer to scope the project before submitting. WSCC no longer have the services of an engineer who would have previously done this. The clerk and JC are going to discuss further at a meeting next week, but the council agreed that it did not have the funding for an engineer, also there is no guarantee that the application would be accepted under the scheme.

**10. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**(a) Planning –**

The list of current planning applications is as follows;



PJC advised that following a SDNPA planning meeting that he and GU attended via zoom that outline planning permission has been granted for Pickwick, there are plans for 7 houses of which 2 would be affordable housing, the applicant still needs to submit a full planning application, where issues the PC have would be raised again.

PJC advised that following feedback from Tim Slaney at SDNPA, that PADS (Parish of Amberley Design Statement) needs to be updated. PJC will look to form a working party who have the necessary expertise to take this forward.

**(b) Roads and Paths** – JC had circulated a report prior to the meeting, main points – gate at the entrance to Ruffs Path as School Road has been repaired. He is in the process of cutting back the hedge along the pavement of School Road, GU and TS thanked JC for his efforts on this.

**(c) Assets and Amenities** – HA sent a report prior to the meeting, main points - there have been unauthorised use of metal detectors on the cricket field causing damage, the clerk has reported to 101. Repairs are ongoing at both playgrounds, hope to have these finalised by 16th September. Football field is being well used.

The PC is looking to replace the memorial bench to Gerald Butler as this is now beyond repair, Margaret Butler has offered to contribute to a new bench and plaque. Resolved that APC would pay 50% of the cost from the Neighbourhood plan delivery budget.

**(d) Amberley Neighbourhood Plan delivery** – TS advised that with regard to the car park the application for funding submitted to the Government’s Rural Development Programme (RDPE) for an amount of £75,000 had been unsuccessful. As had the application to SDNPA for £35,000 of CIL funding, TS thanked Cllr Diana van der Klugt for all her help with this.

TS advised that the committee is currently assessing other options.

**(e) Amberley Climate Change** – No update this month

**(f) Finance** – The August 2020 bank reconciliation and bank statement were approved and signed. The financial statement for the period 1st July to 31st August 2020 was agreed by council and signed. The council noted the review of the budget as at 31st August 2020.

The financial statement is as follows;



**11. AGREEMENT OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The clerk had sent a copy to councillors prior to the meeting for their review. Review noted the agreement that the clerk can now make BACS payments up to and including £85 without authorisation. Resolved: All councillors agreed.

**12. DISCUSSION ON PARISH COVID RESPONSE INITIATIVES**

GU advised that the Amberley Covid Hub was working in partnership with APC. Some residents had questioned why this was not being run by the parish council, GU advised that currently the ‘powers’ of APC do not allow for us to act outside the parish boundaries, whereas a volunteer group has no such restrictions. There have been a few incidents of residents requiring clarity on quarantine regulations, GU will be sending an email round on Listserve and will ask the Covid Hub to put up posters on the village shop noticeboard.

The council all expressed their great appreciation for all the work that the Covid Hub has undertaken.

The Chairman also expressed his disappointment that he had responded to our MP, Andrew Griffith’s, request for him to nominate Covid champions for Amberley. The Chairman had replied that the Covid Hub team deserved recognition, but has received no reply to his 2 emails on the subject. GU regretted this lack of response.

**13. ANTI SOCIAL MOTORBIKE NOISE**

GU advised that this ongoing issue (especially along the B2139 and A29 – including Whiteways) was often caused by motorbikes with modified silencers which is a problem with bikes capable of 15,000 RPM. Bury PC are currently working with Andrew Griffith MP and Sussex Police on this issue and initiatives such as stopping bikes and noise testing them and employing drones to monitor speeding bikes are currently happening. GU suggested that APC work with Bury PC on this.

Malcolm Pheasey (MP) joined the meeting at 8.05pm and GU asked him to provide an update on the village bus. MP advised that the bus would restart from Monday 14th September, normal timetable with a reduced capacity of 8 passengers. They would like APC to endorse this. Resolved – APC agreed, and the council thanked the village bus team.

**14. REQUESTS FOR DONATIONS**

A request from Age UK Horsham District of £100 had been received to assist them in supplying ‘bags of support’ to elderly residents. Following a discussion, it was resolved that APC would donate £100.

**4. CO-OPTION OF A NEW COUNCILLOR**

Item moved down the agenda. Prior to the meeting the clerk had circulated the application statements from the two candidates (Elisabeth Tooms and Kate McGuire). Councillors undertook a ballot via a zoom poll and co-opted Elisabeth Tooms onto the council. The clerk will arrange all the necessary paperwork. The council offered their congratulations to Elisabeth.

**15. TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

12th November at 7pm via zoom.

GU closed the meeting at 8.22pm.

Vicky Spiers

Clerk to Amberley Parish Council – 15th September 2020