

Swilland and Witnesham Grouped Parish Council

Clerk: Mr. Steven Barron

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Parish Council Meeting

Weds 15th July 2020, remotely via Zoom, 7:30pm

MINUTES

1. Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.
Present: Mr Rush (Chair), Mr Templeman, Mr Hill, Mrs Shaw, Dr Williams, Dr Nicol, Mr Collings and Mr Hindle.
In attendance: ESCllr Tony Fryatt, SCCLlr Gordon Jones
2. The Code of Conduct Declarations of Interest – Dr Williams and Mr Hindle are members of Swilland and Witnesham PCCs (item 18 Finance). Mr Templeman owns land within sites of the ESC local Plan (item 8 Planning)
3. Apologies: Mr Stanley, Mr Hill asked to leave the meeting at 8:30pm.
4. To approve Minutes from the meeting held on 20th May 2020 – These were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.
5. Suffolk County Councillor report – SCCLlr Gordon Jones had submitted a written report which had been circulated to councillors. He gave a verbal update which included the financial C19 challenge facing SCC with a £70m impact cost and lost income, of which £44m was on Adult Social Care, with a £36m gap as the worst case scenario. There would be an impact next year on business rates and council tax. Recovery will be more challenging as furlough support is lost. Reserves would need to be dipped and it was not planned on reducing services. He reported when asked about SCC Sizewell C response, that 54,000 pages of documentation was being studied, his view was the disbenefits outweigh the benefits. The report would come before SCC Cabinet in September. When asked about overhead power lines having a possible extended life and any potential issues for the Parishes, he informed the meeting that there had been a meeting of all Suffolk MPs on the powerlines issue. Councillors expressed concerns and Gordon Jones agreed to take the views onboard.
6. ESC District Councillor report – ESC DCllr Tony Fryatt
Mr Fryatt gave a verbal report which included the following topics:
Update on the ESC Local Plan - Comments on the draft template must be received by 5pm on Friday 24th July; Community Partnerships; Planning Committees now via Zoom; Civil Parking; C19 impacts - Across Suffolk our Councils will have lost an estimated £35 million in income alone (excluding the impact of council tax and business rates) over the 2020/21 period. This is in addition to the net £22m of direct COVID-19 costs (for the 20/21 financial year) we are left with AFTER taking account of Suffolk's share of the £3.2 billion Government COVID allocation. We have of course been hit as hard as any business, while our priority, rightly, has focused on helping our communities and businesses.

Rush 26/9/20

The full briefing was available on PC website.

Clerk thanked Mr Fryatt for the £1k ESC locality grant received towards the Village Hall Acoustics project.

7. Police Report and ASB Meeting update - Dr Nicol reported that there was a meeting 16th July via Skype which he could not attend. Mrs Shaw agreed to attend this.
8. Planning – Mr Hindle reported that there had been a Planning Committee meeting on 7th July. Two applications for the site at Homelands House were on the agenda, one for continued use of storage container and Portakabin for dress hire and storage of musical equipment with associated office. The other was for partial change of use of existing building from office and storage for household goods and documents as permitted by C12/2035 to B1(a) to office use for administration of off-site mini-bus and taxi private hire business.

The site had a history of planning enforcement issues around operations on the site and operating hours which had subsided in the last year or so. Both applications were not objected to but conditions on such that there were no operations on site, admin only, controlled operating days and times and that the future use of the site is closely monitored by ESC to ensure no operational use.

Also reported were:

Application: at West Barn Low Farm Kirby Lane Swilland

No objections during C19 Emergency Measures: Application Permitted by ESC

Applications: East Suffolk ;DC/20/1802/ARM Ipswich Borough;

20/00417/REM Country Park on Ipswich Urban Fringe;

Details of landscaping, fencing and paths for the Country Park which had previously been agreed in principle. It was agreed previously no considered material impact on the Parishes.

A Planning Enforcement case had been raised by ESC investigating a high fence close to the access track in Mill Lane Witnesham. There had been no update on the pending conditional decision on Street Farm. An appeal to the Planning Inspectorate had been lodged for Kersey Croft Kennels, Strugglers Lane, Witnesham which was PC supported but ESC refused.

Mr Collings reported that Fenn Wright had been observed recently at the Saw Mill site and yet another planning application might be pending at land adjacent to Rose Cottage, Mill Lane, but none so far.

9. Highways –
 - a) Gibraltar Crossroads - Cllr Jones apologised that he had not arranged for a site visit yet and that there had still been no reply since mid-January from the PC's letter to SCC Highways. However, he was now in a position to proceed with a site visit. Dr Williams and Cllr Jones would arrange this.
 - b) Other Highways issues- It was asked why the roadworks had taken so long to clear between Witnesham and Westerfield due to Scottish Power works. **Clerk would enquire as to timescale for expected completion.** Grass cutting at Acre Close seemed overdue and **Clerk would establish which contractor to contact and resolve.** Concerns were raised regarding Swilland High Road safety for pedestrians, in particular young children on the stretch just north of the School in regard to speeding vehicles

CR 26/9/20

compounded by having no pavement. Clerk would re-report the leaning 20mph advisory sign to SCC Highways and Mrs Shaw would raise the speeding issue at the next ASB meeting.

10. Footpaths – Mr Hindle had nothing to report. Dr Williams advised that whilst checking the blocked footpath at Newton Hall he had discovered a potential hazard in the form of a nesting Buzzard which was keen to swoop on passers-by. Mr Hindle would take care in this regard when he next visited the site. The footpath opposite the Moon and Mushroom was partially blocked with vegetation. Mrs Shaw would contact the land owner.

11. Playing Field management Committee – Mr Stanley not present.

12. Play Area Inspections –

Mrs Shaw reported that the gate post was still in need of attention and there was a piece of the bird guard missing on the swings. Clerk advised that the gate post had been requested attention to repair which was pending and that the bird guard was probably best reported to the supplier next time we have a repair issue on the site. Clerk also reported that the Play Area and Rec Ground were re-opened on 4th July after risk assessments and appropriate C19 signage was fitted. **More signage was pending deployment.**

13. Recreation Ground – Chair reported that one quote was in and that two would be soon. These were for a zip wire and a climbing frame for older children at the Rec. Ground with another climbing frame for the School site. Once in grants would be sought.

Dr Nicol advised the meeting that fly-tipping had been observed again at the bottle banks in the Rec Ground car park. This had since been cleared but was disappointing to see after the signage fitting to the site.

Mr Hindle reported that Hemlock was evident on the banks of the car park. Mr Templeman offered to meet with Mr Hindle onsite to try to address this.

14. VHMC –

- a) Sound/Acoustic improvements – update Dr Nicol reported that the work was completed in early July and a measured result for reverberation before the work was 2.6 secs and after 1.01 secs. Mrs Shaw thanked Dr Nicol for all his efforts in the project and this was echoed by all councillors.

- b) Village Hall Re-opening COVID-19 risk assessment etc. – Mrs Shaw reported that VHMC had a 20-page edict to follow on what can and can't be done. Clerk would liaise with Mrs Shaw to ensure the appropriate documentation was being referenced. There had been no VHMC meeting and Chair asked that VHMC should have a plan of how and when they might re-open the Hall, but only when safe to do so.

Also, there had been a camper van observed staying parked and used in the Village Hall car park. Mr Hindle reported that the PCC had no issue with this and Council agreed to leave it for now and asked the VHMC to keep an eye on it.

15. Tree Officer- Mr Templeman had nothing to report

16. Allotments - Clerk reported that only Plot 13 at Coopers Close was potentially vacant but was waiting vegetation clearance by a contractor in

CDH 20/9/20

August at the earliest. A potential tenant had been advised accordingly and was happy to wait.

17. Correspondence – The Local Electricity Bill was progressing according to updates received and the Lord Lieutenants letter had been circulated to residents.
18. Finance Update – Clerk as RFO (balances as of 15th July 2020)
- a) Current Account £25,685.87
 - b) Ipswich Building Society £8,472.87 totalling £34,158.74
 - c) To approve Internal Audit Report 2019-20 – **It was proposed, seconded and agreed to approve the report.**
 - d) To review the effectiveness of IA report 2019-20 – **It was proposed, seconded and agreed to approve the effectiveness of the report.**
 - e) To appoint an Internal auditor for 2020-21 – **It was proposed, seconded and agreed that Heelis and Lodge be the appointed Internal Auditors for 2020-21.**

Current financial situation –

Clerk reported that budget adjustments had been agreed by the Finance Committee at their meeting on 29th June. Dr Nicol gave an overview of these adjustments which involved the additional income of £1k from ESC grant, plus £2.5k redirected redundant INR budget to bring the Village Hall project budget up to £4.5k (£1k existing). **It was proposed, seconded and agreed that the budget be increased in accordance with these details by £1k with £47,505 total income and reserves and £47,605 total expenditure.**

19. To approve the following payments (all inclusive of VAT where appropriate)

a) Administration May	£219.82
b) Administration June	£219.82
c) HMRC PAYE Q1	£164.80
d) Printer Paper	£12.45
e) Laminator pouches	£15.44
f) Laminator and Paper	£53.95
g) Village Hall acoustics improvements	£5416.62
h) Play Area Rope Climber repair	£55.80
i) Webcam and mic hardware	£34.48
j) Annual ICO registration	£40.00

The above payments were all approved by council.

20. Matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council –

Dr Williams reported that he would keep an eye on the footpath at Newton Hall which had recently had an issue.

Meeting closed at 9:07 pm

Dr Williams 26/9/20