

**Minutes of Withersfield Parish Council meeting held at 7:30pm on
Tuesday, 14th July 2020 via Skype**

Present: Cllrs Terry Rich (Chairman); Ian Kinloch (Vice-Chair); Frank Eve, Peter Lord; Clerk: Laura Crump; and parishioner: Julia Korona.

1. Apologies for absence

Received from District Cllr Stevens and County Cllr Evans.

2. District Councillor's report

None submitted.

3. County Councillor's report

- An additional £500m funding package and further support for Councils was announced on July 2nd. The new support will help local authorities to cover income lost during the pandemic, relieve spending pressures and plug any financial holes that have emerged over recent weeks.

- In Suffolk we are launching our own Coronavirus dashboard — to ensure that residents get the full facts and not media hype. The Multi-Agency Information Cell (MAIC) has introduced a new service, 'Coronawatch', led by the Public Health Function of the County Council. The online 'Coronawatch' dashboard gathers all publicly available data on COVID-19 in Suffolk in one place. From this dashboard, you are able to access national and local data including confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19), deaths from coronavirus and care home outbreaks.

We have used additional information on emissions from our air quality measuring stations in Ipswich – at the peak of the lockdown, (31 March-7 April), CO2 emissions were down 61%, and NOx emissions down 66%.

Coronawatch Dashboard - www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/jsna/coronawatch

- Suffolk's Local Outbreak Control Plan will be triggered where there are suspected or confirmed COVID-19 outbreaks in any setting or community within the county. The plan outlines measures to prevent, manage, and contain outbreaks of Coronavirus and protect the public's health.

An outbreak is defined when there are two or more cases in high-risk settings, or a greater than expected occurrence of COVID-19 compared with the usual level for a particular place and time.

- The team in charge of procuring PPE have succeeded in never having run out of supply of PPE in Suffolk. Throughout the period the team has issued 2.3m items of PPE to frontline SCC staff, care homes, emergency dental practices frontline district borough staff.

- The recycling centres re-opened in mid-May with a system of pre-booked appointments and are now taking trade waste. The re-use shop at the Bury St Edmunds site opens later this week. To book: visit - <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/waste-andrecycling/book-a-recycling-centre-time-slot/> Suffolk Recycling Centres are open and you can book either a 15-minute or 30-minute time slot depending on the nature of your visit (see 'How to book').

- Covid19 update West Suffolk Hospital: As of 13 July: 254 patients have been admitted testing positive for Covid19, 137 Covid19 positive patients have recovered and been discharged home. Sadly 79 patients have died after testing positive for Covid19
- A Lowestoft-based charity is the first organisation to benefit from free solar panels, as part of Suffolk County Council's Renewable Energy Fund. The council's £400,000 Renewable Energy Fund is open to eligible businesses looking to reduce their energy costs and carbon footprint through solar power. Businesses with a relatively high daytime energy demand and large roof space, and who are interested in applying to the Renewable Energy Fund, can contact Sarah Gill at Groundwork Suffolk sarah.gill@groundwork.org.uk or call 07720 098980
- Visit suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus for health advice, service changes, business support and schools' guidance. Keep up to date on the latest guidance on COVID-19 from central government here: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

4. Public Forum for parishioners

No parishioners attended the meeting.

The Chairman closed the public section of the meeting.

5. Co-option of new councillor following resignation of Cllr Molyneux-Summers

Julia Korona had contacted the Parish Council following a Councillor vacancy arising, to express her interest in joining the PC.

The Chair welcomed Julia and invited her to introduce herself and explain her reasons for wanting to join the PC.

Julia reminded the PC she had attended the last PC meeting in May and had participated in the discussions involving a planning application which was largely disputed among fellow parishioners. From this experience, Julia felt she would like to become more involved within the community and use her time to effectively support the parish. Julia has lived in the village since 2003 with her family and works locally. She also fundraises for and volunteers at a domestic violence charity based in Sudbury.

The Chair proposed to co-opt Julia Korona onto the Parish Council, which was seconded by Cllr Kinloch, with all Councillors being in favour.

6. Declaration of members' interests for any agenda item at this meeting

None.

7. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th May 2020

These were approved – proposed by Cllr Eve and seconded by Cllr Lord.

8. Matters arising - updates from previous Parish Council meeting

a) Update on car parking problem along Melbourne Bridge – Cllr Eve

Cllr Eve told the PC of his communications with David Chenery about the need to extend the double yellow lines along the road to prevent the dangerous parking. He was informed that this would require a Traffic Regulation Order, which could be tacked onto the TRO being prepared for the village for the buffer zones and 20mph limit, but would ensue additional costs in excess of £5,000. A lower cost option is the erection of warning signs.

The PC were in agreement that this response from Highways was not acceptable and do not feel the PC should have to pay for this to be rectified, nor wish it to delay the previous TRO for the buffer zones and 20mph zone being implemented.

Cllr Eve is to meet with County Cllr Evans and David Chenery to discuss the matter further for a solution.

b) Progress with the Neighbourhood Plan

As agreed from the last meeting; no further action has commenced due to difficulties from the current pandemic. This is an ongoing, yet pending, project.

c) Removal of the sofa in the bus shelter on Burton Green

Cllr Lord looked into whether the sofa could be removed by SCC, however he discovered that fly-tipping is deemed as the responsibility of the land owner to remove.

After some discussion among the PC, Cllr Lord suggested a feature go into the Withersfield News asking parishioners their views on this sofa.

Cllr Korona agreed to write a piece and provide a photograph for the village news – proposed by Cllr Kinloch and seconded by Cllr Korona.

d) Meldham Flood Park – Cllr Huckstep

Cllr Huckstep was unable to provide his update because of technical difficulties in joining the virtual meeting. The Clerk informed the PC that a meeting was in the process of being arranged with the Environment Agency and 2 members of the PC to discuss issues at the Meldham Flood Park. Cllr Eve suggested an item for discussion on the agenda for this meeting, could be the car park – which would help ease the parked cars along the road at Melbourne bridge.

9. Covid-19 - update and any future actions

The leaflet containing phone numbers of those in Withersfield offering their support to others during the crisis, had been re-circulated to the parish in the latest edition of the Withersfield News.

It was agreed that the system would continue to run, even though there hadn't been any requests for help for some time, in the event of a spike in Coronavirus cases.

The PC believe it would be premature to arrange a 'post-Covid-19' event as yet, and will perhaps re-visit this idea at a later date.

10. To receive an update from the Traffic Working Group

Cllr Eve briefed the PC on the recent meeting of the TWG, where they reviewed their recent efforts with the buffer zones and 20pmh limit zone. They decided their next aim would be to press forward with the ANPR scheme Cllr Evans' is working on with local parishes.

Cllr Evans' had summarised the Withersfield TRO report which she had sent through ahead of the meeting, as:

1. 40mph buffers approved
2. 20mph in the centre of the village approved, but we have to fund any necessary traffic calming measures locally
3. The 20mph will be monitored in a year to check compliance

The Parish Council agree with the decision and content as per the document, to follow this approach.

A meeting will be set up by Cllr Evans' with Cllr Eve and David Chenery to push forward with a time scale and further deliberations with the 20pmh zone.

The Chair congratulated the TWG for their efforts in getting these schemes approved. He informed the PC that he is holding off on sending out the letters asking those for their pledges towards these traffic calming measures, until he can share a time frame and more details with them, which Cllr Eve will endeavour to find out at his upcoming meeting.

11. Proposal for creating a hard parking area at the village hall including funding options - Cllr Huckstep

As Cllr Huckstep was unable to present his proposal due to having technical difficulties, the Chair gave a brief explanation of what Cllr Huckstep had put together for the consideration of the PC, which included the potential costs of installing Grasscrete blocks for improved parking at the village hall.

It was agreed that the estimated quotations of this proposal would be an expenditure which goes beyond the means of the PC.

It was proposed by Cllr Kinloch and seconded by Cllr Eve, for this item to be re-visited at the next PC meeting to allow for further investigation into more modest solutions to the problem, potential funding sources, and for Cllr Huckstep to be able to present the scheme himself.

12. Finance

- a) Presentation of monthly accounts – Income and Expenditure and Bank Reconciliation

- b) To note payments made since last meeting

These were noted and agreed – proposed by Cllr Lord and seconded by Cllr Eve.

- c) To note variation to last year's accounts as outstanding payment for the 3 bins installed

It was noted that the invoice for the bins installed last year had come through in this financial year.

- d) Consideration of Internal Audit Report from SALC

The report was deliberated and the PC were overall happy with its outcome. There were only a few recommendations raised by the auditor - the Clerk will formulate an action plan to address these items which will be presented at the next PC meeting. Proposed by Cllr Kinloch and seconded by Cllr Lord.

- e) To note Annual Internal Audit Report received for AGAR which has been submitted
- f) Quarterly report of expenditure and comparison to budget
- g) To note the clerk has completed a re-declaration of compliance under the Pensions Act 2008.

These were all noted.

13. Correspondence

- a) Email – Village Signs

Concerns had been raised by a resident with multiple highway signs through the village. Cllr Eve had taken it upon himself to inspect the signs in question and volunteered to write a report of the signs in which he believes are problematic with accompanying photos, and report this to Highways.

- b) Letter – The Queen's Message

Noted.

- c) Email – Model Code of Conduct Consultation (PC to devise a corporate response)

The PC discussed and agreed to accept the new Code of Conduct. Clerk to send response to this effect - proposed by Cllr Rich and seconded by Cllr Kinloch.

- d) Email - The Great British September Clean

Although the annual village 'Spring Clean' had to be cancelled due to the restrictions at the time, there is a possibility that a village clean in September could go ahead. It was agreed that the Clerk will enquire further into this and if the village is permitted, Saturday 19th September is the proposed date by the PC.

14. Planning

- a) Borough notifications since last meeting:

These were noted.

- b) Applications received since last meeting:

All were noted.

DC/20/0623/FUL - Milton House

The Chair briefed the Parish Council of his experience where he represented the PC at the committee meeting for planning application DC/20/0623/FUL, where the decision of the district council planning committee was to refuse the application by a vote of 30 to 2.

There will be another committee meeting at the beginning of August where the application will be reconsidered alongside a risk assessment, which the officers prepare, of what is the risk to the Council if members refuse the application and an appeal is then pursued. On behalf of the PC, the Chair will reiterate that this application is clearly against the Council's published policy.

The PC agreed to continue to make representations and also encourage other residents to request to speak at the committee meeting to reemphasise the collective view of the parish towards this planning application.

DC/20/0864/LB – Jacobs Manor

It was agreed the PC would comment positively towards planning application DC/20/0864/LB – proposed Cllr Rich and seconded by Cllr Korona.

Cllr Kinloch drafted the following comments in favour of the application on behalf of the PC:

“Withersfield PC has considered this application and are very positive about it. The applicant intends not only to repair any degradation, but intends where possible to replace any original features, structural and cosmetic, which have been replaced. Further the intention is to install uprated materials, replace with updated electrics and install a new modern heating system.

The overall intention is to recover the buildings to their former glory but also have a modern efficient and environmentally friendly heating system. This building is without doubt the most prominent and prestigious in the village (and indeed has been used for television and film sets). This is a golden opportunity to ensure its integrity and we strongly recommend the acceptance of the application.”

15. Agenda items for meeting to be held on 15th September 2020

- Graveyard reservation markers

The meeting closed at 21:01