

NEWPORT PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Tuesday, 5th May 2020 by Zoom**

<u>Present:</u>	Cllr H. Bowman	(HB)	(Chairman)
	Cllr D. Alexander	(DA)	
	Cllr S. Amos	(SAm)	
	Cllr S. Ayles	(SAy)	
	Cllr C. Barnes	(CB)	
	Cllr J. Emanuel	(JE)	
	Cllr A. Gerard	(AG)	
	Cllr S. Naik	(SN)	

In attendance:

Mrs C. Griffin	Parish Clerk
Mrs E. Edwards	Responsible Financial Officer
Dist Cllr N. Hargreaves	(NH)
Cty Cllr R. Gooding	(RG)
2 members of the public	

20/262 Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

20/263 To receive any 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary' interests relating to items on the Agenda

The following non-pecuniary interests were declared:

HB in 267 and 268; JE in 269, 273, 274 and 275; CB in 273, 275 and 277; SN in 273; AG in 273; SAy in 273.

20/264 Public participation session (15 minutes available if required)

Residents had emailed the Clerk requesting that the following should be raised:

- I thought I would contact you about the very positive reaction to my Newport News line Facebook post showing a wild flower meadow and a suggestion that this would be great in our village.
Howard Bowman has commented in the feed that ' it is something the parish council would do in collaboration with volunteers. The parish council is improving The Common and any volunteer help would be welcome'.
Do you have any suggestions on how this could get off the ground? Do the volunteers have to organise themselves first or would the PC make a call on volunteers for such a project?

The Chairman confirmed that a 1M wide strip running down by the wall at the rear of the houses in London Road, would be suitable for wild flowers. If a group can be formed and are prepared come up with a plan to maintain the area I would be very willing to monitor and supply any seeds, equipment etc. The Chairman will contact the volunteer who raised the question.

JE pointed out that there is already a lovely wild lower area at Salmon Field and it may be possible, in future, to plant the Riga areas as well.

- Has the Parish Council approached their solicitor regarding the possibility of a judicial review on the JFAN Appeal.

The Chairman advised that the Parish Council have not contacted their solicitor regarding a judicial review.

- Has the Parish Council contacted Geoff Gardner or the Legal Department at UDC regarding the JFAN Appeal. I have contacted Nigel Brown and sent him an extract from the Minutes of 14th April. In his reply he said he felt the PC's stance appeared to be correct. Although he was equally disappointed with the decision. he did not think that the Inspector in any way erred legally. He added that he is not a lawyer but does not feel that there would be any grounds for a Judicial Review. The Inspector came down with a different planning balance which he is quite entitled to do.

The Parish Council have not contacted Geoff Gardner or the Legal Department at UDC and do not intend to do so as there are no grounds for a Judicial Review. The Parish Council do not like the decision but will not be taking this further. We will not spend any more time on this and the matter is now closed.

20/265 To receive a report from Special Constable Tom Morement

SAM explained that SC Tom Morement has been seconded to Chelmsford, hopefully this is temporary. Our second Special Constable, Steve Dale, is undertaking his training in Saffron Walden and when this is completed he will be able to come to Newport and do some patrolling but at present we do not have a date. It is hoped that by the next meeting more information will be available.

HB and SAM will arrange a meeting with the Special Constables as soon as it is possible.

20/266 To receive reports from District and County Councillors

Cty Cllr Ray Gooding had sent the following report and highlighted some of the issues:.

It is to be hoped that we have seen the worst of the Covid-19 and clearly my colleagues in Adult Social Care have been hard at work regarding the care homes in Essex and the vulnerable people who are in them. It is evident that across the

country this has been a significant factor of the pandemic and the number of deaths has been higher than normal. To date whilst there have been 1027 deaths in Essex Hospitals that are related to Covid-19 there have also been 79 deaths in Essex Care Homes that are also directly related to the virus.

RG explained that the situation in care homes is a big issue in Essex and nationally and part of the problem is that there is a constant requirement for people to be placed in homes but it is difficult to do that and, at present, we have to look after people in the community rather than in a home.

In future the NHS may consider taking over social care but, in my opinion, this needs to be delivered locally.

On Sunday we are told that the Prime Minister will give a statement that will outline the next steps in this process and most importantly will detail the proposals for the reopening of the schools. From my point of view as the Cabinet Member with those responsibilities it has, for the last few weeks been as if I were in the eye of the storm. Having ensured that schools were provided with the necessary information and support during the closure process we will now be entering an even more uncertain phase of reopening them again. There will obviously be varying views on which children should return and who should not and parental views will lie on both sides of that argument.

One of the major parts of that will be the re-establishment of the home to school transport services but that is just a part of the issue with Passenger Transport. Passenger numbers are currently running at less than 5% of the normal and in rural areas some of the services are at considerably less than 1%. The concern is that whilst ECC have continued to maintain all of the statutory and non-statutory payments, the income of the Operators has been decimated by the loss of the commercial fare paying passengers. We have already seen one company go into liquidation as a result of this and there are likely to be others that will withdraw from the service. Whatever happens the shape of passenger transport in Essex will be significantly different in the future and I am currently working with officers and bus companies to plan for that future. There will need to be a review because, in the future, people will work from home a lot more.

The County has had a tremendous number of people coming forward to volunteer and it was not possible to use them all. However, we are keen not to lose that provision so we have put together a profile to use volunteers more effectively and the PC might like to be part of that.

I am talking to Youth Services in the hope that we can organise a virtual presentation and I will liaise with the Clerk on that.

The Chairman thanked RG for his report.

Dist Cllr Neil Hargreaves reported:Local Plan

The UDC Draft Local Plan was withdrawn last week. We now have to put forward a plan for a plan. NH highlighted issues to request from it.

1. We have to agree how many houses have to be built. The response prepared by JE last week laid out very clearly that it is impossible to build the required number of houses.
2. Mike Young has looked at it from a different angle. The numbers of houses we are required to build by the government is top of the scale when compared with other authorities. We need to try and negotiate in order to get the number down.
3. The document that I prepared which looked at policies from the withdrawn plan, some of which were put into the Neighbourhood Plan, and linking back to the adopted plan so we can produce a supplementary planning document. This was included in the motion for refusal which was passed last week at UDC.
4. We set out a Project Management plan with a list of things to do, time frames etc.

Currently I am on the UDC Planning Policy Working Group but that may change..

Neighbourhood Plan

The Examiner has sent his draft report asking us to take some policies and recommendations out and change some of the wording. If we comply with this we will be able to send to referendum. The group will be meeting later this week to discuss the changes.

The Chairman asked if it will be possible to establish a Management tier. NH confirmed that there are very good people involved who are very capable of doing this.

JE advised that she has arranged a meeting, by Zoom with Nigel Brown on Monday, 11th May to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan. She has already spoken to him about the withdrawal of the Local Plan because we have referenced various policies from the Local Plan in our Neighbourhood Plan. He has confirmed that even though the Local Plan is no longer valid we can adopt and retain the policies.

All the things that a new community needs to be close to in order to be sustainable are really limited. Nigel Brown agreed because there is very little suitable space available for development other than the Gt. Chesterford area.

If you look at Newport, there is very little space to build on that has suitable access. The Chairman pointed out that Newport has had more than its fair share of new housing so should be excluded from any more development for some considerable time. We need to ensure we explain in the Neighbourhood Plan the situation with the Appeals.

20/267 To approve and authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 14th April, 2020

It was resolved that the Chairman should sign the minutes as approved.

Proposed: JE

Seconded: CB

All agreed

20/268 Chairman's comments

The Chairman reported on a recent Sports Committee meeting, held by Zoom, when the following matters were raised:

- The £2,000 has not been paid to the PC from the Sports Committee for the new road surface from the Primary School to the Recreation Ground. (The RFO advised that the cheque has been signed and will be paid into the PC account as soon as the current measures are relaxed)
- It was suggested some time ago that a Community building at the recreation ground to include the Scouts, Cricket pavilion, possibly the Social Club and Parish office should be investigated. The PC approved £3,000 to look at this. A local architect was engaged and he has done some rough sketches. We are now waiting for one of the groups to respond on these. Once they reply the Architect can prepare some drawings which will be made available.

20/269 To receive an update on arrangements put in place during the Coronavirus(Covid 19)

1. The Parish Council

The Chairman reported that everything is running very smoothly. We have an informal meeting every other day. It was suggested that this should continue on either a weekly/fortnightly basis when everything is back to normal.

2. The Village Shop and Pharmacy

The Chairman thanked JE for everything she has done to help the Village Shop including organising the rota for volunteers (this may need to be extended on Sundays). Alan Carr was quite concerned at the outset about supplying a service to the village and he is extremely grateful for all the support the Parish Council has provided. JE said she was so grateful to the amazing team of volunteers who stepped forward to assist with this. SAy thanked JE for also organising the newspaper delivery throughout the village as this has helped to keep people out of the shop.. However, the Shop is concerned that the Pharmacy has opened a shop which has a door that opens on to the slope which goes to the car park. This is extremely dangerous. People going to the Pharmacy are also using the Shop car park.. JE advised that this is subject to a UDC Enforcement order.

CB reported that parts of the village are not receiving the local Saffron Walden Reporter . This will be taken up with the distributor.

3. Other authorities

SN advised that she contacted the Care Home and at present they have six residents and have adequate PPE. RG asked the PC to let him know if there is a problem. I also contacted Andrew Yarwood at the Youth Club to make him aware of the resources on offer from ECC. The Youth Club may need support at a later stage. I have also made a booking on the Health & Wellbeing Forum which is being organised by EALC later this month.

20/270 To receive the Clerk's Report, circulated prior to the meeting

Duly received.

The Clerk reported that:

- Phase2planning have advised that Trivselhus are continuing with the plan for developing the field between the Primary School and London Road and as the exhibition planned for April had to be cancelled they will in due course put an article in the local paper. In future they will be referring to the site as "Frambury Field" rather than "land west of London Road".
- Essex Highways have advised that the footbridge at the bottom of School Lane does not appear to be an asset belonging to ECC although they have undertaken minor maintenance in the past. They have suggested that the only other funding source would be through the UDC Local Highways Panel.
- Work is due to take place on the Hercules bridge, off Debden Road, which goes over the river. This is due to take place week commencing 3rd August and will last for five days. I contacted the Fire Station to ensure they had been informed and they have said it will have a huge impact on the fire station. They have been told that there will be no pedestrian access from the High Street either, which will prevent the crew from getting to the fire station. The PC have suggested that it might be possible to use the Village Hall car park and offered to approach the Village Hall if this would be suitable.

The Clerk will contact the Fire Station again and ask for details of their back up plan if the Fire Station is out of action. DA advised that it would be covered by Saffron Walden fire station.

- Other villages have reported an increase in dog fouling during the lock down.
- The household garden waste collection service has resumed and UDC have been asked if there is any news on reinstating the fortnightly collection from the Allotments.
- The Playground Inspection will take place in May
- GWB Horticulture will be chased again for a quotation for maintaining the existing wooden boxes
- Our Caretaker continues to advise me of any maintenance problems requiring attention and these have all been reported to ECC or appropriate authorities.
- Two residents thanked me for making the minutes of the last meeting available on the website and they hope this will continue.
- The Giant Hogweed at the rear of Bowker Close has been reported to Savilles.

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- A complaint has been received regarding noisy neighbours and people breaking lock down rules.

20/271 To receive the Responsible Financial Officer's Report and approve accounts for payment, schedule circulated prior to the meeting

Duly received.

The RFO advised that:

- An updated report will be sent when the bank statements arrive.
- E-on have sent a new contract which will be forwarded to you.
- BT have been asked to refund the PC following the error on the last bill.

The payment schedule showing 8 items, totalling £2,656.20 was approved.

Proposed: SAy Seconded: SAm All agreed

20/272 To receive a report on the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2020 and the Internal and External Auditing process in view of the lock down.

The RFO reported that as soon as we are able the Internal Audit will be completed and the necessary forms will be completed for the External Auditor,

20/273 To receive reports/updates on Planning

273.1 To receive a report on the UDC Local Plan

This was covered under 20/266,

273.2 To receive an update on Appeals

No appeals have been lodged during the month.

273.3 To receive a report from the Planning working Group

To discuss the following planning applications and any additional planning applications received after the publication of the agenda, agree responses and any other planning matters.

JE reported that the Planning Working Group (PWG) are meeting by Zoom and this is working very well. Since the last meeting:

- The Glycolan response has been completed.
- The response on noise levels at the Bricketts development was disappointing. RG said he would be happy to help on noise issues if details are provided.
- Place Services has opposed the application from The Fuchsias on heritage grounds
- The planning application for the Coach & Horses was circulated which has resulted in numerous replies to date from people inside and outside the village. AG pointed out that the application contravenes several planning and Neighbourhood Plan policies which the PC should include in their response. SN suggested writing to the newspapers.

- A resident has asked if we could publicise all planning applications on the PC Facebook and the Website. NH suggest using Google drive with a link from the website. The Clerk will investigate and report back.
- AG said as he is no longer a member of the UDC Planning Committee, he would be happy to join the Planning Working Group.

UTT/20/0843/FUL Five Acres, Whiteditch Lane, Newport, CB11 3UD (Comments by 12th May)

5 new build residential units and associated parking

(Would all members of the PWG send comments to JE as soon as possible).

UTT/20/0353/LB Belmont House, Belmont Hill, Newport, CB11 3RF (Comments by 13th May)

Basement walls to be underpinned

Comments: No objections

UTT/20/0805/FUL Land At Bury Grove, Whiteditch Lane (Comments by 19th May)

Erection of two detached dwellings, garage structure and remodelling of existing garden and access (renewal of UTT/17//0890/FUL)

UTT/20/0815/FUL Land at Bury Water Nurseries, Whiteditch Lane (Comments by 20th May)

Section 73A Retrospective application for the erection of two refuse stores, a maintenance store and a sub-station.

(This application is from the Care Home. The sub-station has been swapped for storage for refuse bins)

UTT/20/0806/FUL Land north of Sparrowsend Cottages, London Road (Comments by 22nd May)

Erection of two new semi-detached cottages

(CB will look at before the next PWG meeting).

UTT/20/0931/HHF 5, Granta Mead Close (Comments by 25th May)

Erection of single storey rear extension

(Conditions were imposed when Granta Mead was developed that all extensions require planning approval).

UTT/20/0234/FUL Land adjacent Branksome, Whiteditch Lane (Comments by 19th May)

Proposed change of layout to that approved under UTT/19/0937/FUL (Retrospective change of use from agricultural land to residential garden space, retention of bunding and landscaping)

20/274 To receive reports/updates on Green Spaces and Sports**To receive an update on the new Public Right of Way from Whiteditch Lane to Bury Water Lane**

Currently awaiting a second quotation on the fencing,

NH will chase UDC regarding the £10,000 funding

JE reported on an email received from JFAN advising that they will be looking at the feasibility of widening the path on Cambridge Road and providing improved support for the bridge near the Toll House. They will also be making the trees safe by the Croat and Toll House. The email received will be circulated.

20/275 To receive reports/updates on Village Improvements**To receive an update on Bridleway 16 to the Recreation Ground**

CB advised that a "Passing Bay" sign is required and he will discuss with the Clerk..

20/276 Items for next agenda

To receive a report on the river clearance.

20/277 To discuss any Urgent matters of interest to the Parish

277.1 RG confirmed that ownership of the footbridge still has to be resolved. He spoke to Rissa Long and it is still in hand but it will be difficult to establish ownership. Essex Highways repaired it in the past just because they were working in the area but that doesn't mean they are responsible.

277.2 JE pointed out that the PC requested a safety review of the Bury Water Lane/School Lane junction but we have not received a reply. JE will forward the original email to RG and he will follow up.

277.3 SN reported that a truck recently hit one of the houses in Bury Water Lane and ECC said they would look into but we have not heard anything from them.

277.4 NH advised that there is no access to the footpath behind "The Elephant" because if you try to get on to the path you have to go onto private property. Network Rail have to reinstate and can do so by compulsory purchase. DA reported that our Caretaker has looked at it and it will take two days to clear. HB will confirm that the PC would like him to go ahead with this.

20/278 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held by Zoom on Monday, 1st June 2020 at 7.30pm. Members of the public to send any questions to the Clerk by Friday evening, 29th May. The meeting to be advertised on Facebook and on the website with link to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.32 pm

Signed.....(Chairman)

Dated: 01.06.20