

NEWPORT PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Monday 3rd August, 2020 by Zoom**

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

In attendance:

Mrs C. Griffin	Parish Clerk
Mrs E. Edwards	Responsible Financial Officer
Dist Cllr N. Hargreaves	(NH)
4 members of the public	

20/319 Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr R. Bengé (on holiday) and Cty Cllr Ray Gooding.

20/320 To receive any 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary' interests relating to items on the Agenda

The following non-pecuniary interests were declared:

SAy in 330; SAm in 322; SN in 330; JE in 329 and 330; AS in 330; AG in 330; HB in 324, 329 and 330.

20/321 Public participation session (To discuss questions sent to the Clerk, by email from members of the public)

A resident had emailed the Clerk requesting the following should be raised:

- **When the verges are cut on the High St et al by the contractors employed by the Council can they not clear up the cuttings instead of blowing them onto the road. Numerous times I have asked this question and numerous times I have been informed by Howard Bowman "I will have a word with them" . It would appear that the following has happened**
 - 1) HB has not discussed this with the Contractor or**
 - 2)the contractor is not interested in carrying out the instructions.****Whatever the outcome I was under the impression HB together with the councillors wanted to tidy up the village**

The Chairman advised that he has spoken to the contractors and they said that if they cleared up the grass cuttings this would obviously add to the cost. As the

cuttings very quickly dissipate naturally after a very short time the PC did not feel that any changes should be made to the present arrangements.

- The Clerk advised that a question was raised by the Village Hall regarding the Trivselhus drainage plans. These have been forwarded to them.

20/322 To receive a report from our Community Special Constables

The Community Special Constable had sent the following report:

2 intelligence reports with regard to drug dealing

3 local patrols round the village

1 speeding operation

Focused on children and the use of gas.

20/323 To receive reports from District and County Councillors

Dist Cllr Neil Hargreaves had sent the following report:

Local Plan

Detailed meetings are now in progress working on the Local Plan. The main group is called the Local Plan Leadership Group (LPLG), and the political make up is it 7 R4U councillors, 1 Thaxted Independent, 1 Chesterford Independent, 1 Conservative, 1 Green and 1 Libdem. The Cabinet Member for the Local Plan is John Evans who is a lawyer and chair of Stebbing Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. John attends the LPLG but is not a voting member, as of course do a number of council officers. The meetings are chaired by Alan Storah, who was a planning consultant and is on the Planning Committee. The council leader is not on the LPLG.

The cross-party council Scrutiny Committee, which has both investigatory powers and the ability to challenge Cabinet decisions, now has a subcommittee specifically for reviewing the Local Plan work.

This contrasts with the set up for both the previous failed Local Plans where the council leader chaired the plan working group, which reported to Cabinet, which he also chaired, which in turn reported to Council, of which he was leader. Apart from the obvious lack of good governance, being council leader is a full-time job and running the Local Plan as well is too much to perform properly.

The various arrangements for the Local Plan have been put together with the help of two independent experts. Although it has taken some time it was considered vital to avoid the mistakes of the past.

UDC Finances

For Covid, councils are required to send a weekly financial return to the government. This currently predicts a £3.17m hit to this year's UDC finances from losses of revenue and from the costs of carrying out extra functions for the government. Government support has been £1.05m, leaving UDC with a shortfall of £2.12m in this

financial year. It is possible UDC may get some further help, but the arrangements are not certain.

Every council in the country is likely to have to re-cut their budget for 20/21, and we may be doing that in the Autumn. Councils are required to run a balanced budget at all times, which in normal circumstances is achievable as incomes and outgoings are mostly either pre-set like council tax and business rates, or fairly predictable. Unlike a company, which can run a loss and take the hit out of its brought forward reserves, councils are not allowed to switch significant reserves into the General Fund without going through a revised budget process.

Neighbourhood Plan

UDC are still considering the letter from Geoff Gardner concerning the examiner's wording of policy HA1, together with our revised draft incorporating all his alterations, and our revised supporting text. They have asked for an extension to 8th August.

At the meeting, NH highlighted:

Shortgrove

A number of planning applications have been received recently. Shortgrove is no longer under one ownership – there is one owner of the land and woodland and the properties are owned separately. There are no rules whatsoever for parkland; it is not listed and not conservation area. SN will look into whether a Conservation Management Plan is a statutory requirement and whether this would protect it. SAM will speak to a colleague at Audley End regarding TPO's on the trees. SAy advised that he will consult a friend who lives at Shortgrove as he understand there is a Management Group,

JE reported that a site visit has been suggested and if this could be organised that would be helpful.

NH will raise this with Nigel Brown at UDC as the PC wrote to him but have not received a reply. NH will also raise the funding for the footpath at JFAN as confirmation is required that the funding is available.. NH will also speak to Nigel Brown about the application for the two houses at Sparrows End where the opinions of ECC Place Services have been reversed. SN advised that a further objection has been made on this application.

NH also advised that "H" bars are the PC's responsibility and any matters should be referred to the Parking Partnership.

Cty Cllr Ray Gooding was unable to attend but sent the following report:

Clearly the Covid-19 issues have been the major items that we at ECC have been presented with over the last few months and the following is a snapshot of the challenges faced: -

The school term has now finished, and children are at home officially without the need for parents to “Home Educate. However, the majority of our schools in Essex have been open throughout and as the weeks have gone by increasing numbers of children have returned to school.

Schools have needed to adapt quickly to the ever-changing situation. Firstly, through supporting children and parents with their home learning utilising many online platforms to do so. When the government announced that schools will reopen, the professionalism and desire to make the school environment a safe place so that children could return to learning was fantastic. We had an amazing response from schools, and I thank all those teachers and support staff who not only continued to teach key worker and vulnerable children throughout the pandemic but were instrumental when the schools reopened to wider cohorts.

Another part of the education system within the County is Adult Community Learning and ACL has also been supporting residents, communities, and businesses across Essex to quickly and easily access new learning and upskilling opportunities during this time. Impressively, as well as sustaining its apprenticeship training provision, it has also attracted new apprentices.

Furloughed workers have also been supported so they can enhance existing skills or develop new ones. Part of this is the delivery of a ‘Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care’ programme, which will enable more people to gain jobs in the sector at this critical time. This has included the Nightingale Nursing Apprenticeship scheme where the County Council have pledged £1.5 Million to support the training of Staff within the Caring Professions with opportunities to progress to Degree Qualified Nurses.

The Youth Service has been running an extensive programme of activities including:

- Holding a weekly timetable of Zoom sessions that young people can access for help and advice including mental health and wellbeing.
- Our Employment advisers have been supporting those young people at risk of becoming NEET via ‘online’ means with webinars and chats
- Our Targeted Youth Advisers have continued to support those young people on our employability programmes such as ‘Plan B’ and caseload welfare check in’s

- Our Young Carers team have maintained support to their case load, as well as keeping in contact with all young carers that have been referred to the service to reduce social isolation.

As lockdown eases the youth service have been re-engaging with young people through detached street-work sessions across our priority districts enabling them to offer support to vulnerable groups face to face whilst maintaining social distancing.

The number of youth work sessions has risen again this year by 8% compared to the year before, a total of 16,481 youth work sessions. We've seen the number of young people engaging with us increase again this year by 7%, a total of 54,957.

This summer we have a whole programme of activities planned through our Youth Service including our Virtual Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) which continues to support participants with all sections of the award from home.

We have very recently been awarded £56,000.00 from the Youth Endowment Fund. This will enable us to extend our early help offer with online Prison No Way, Sisters in Strength and the Goodman projects for 10 – 14 year olds.

The Youth Service in association with Active Essex and the Early Years teams have also been involved with the plans for Summer Activity Camps that are now running across the County to provide families with the break to enable them to return to work whilst their children are engaged in safe and supportive activities. This will be providing more than 21,000 sessions during August and will be ensuring that children are ready to return to school in September should conditions allow. Most importantly this is all in conjunction with the Holiday Hunger Programme, ensuring that some of our most deprived children continue to have at least one substantial meal per day and In Uttlesford this provision is being operated by the Essex Boys and Girls Clubs.

Lots of work by ECC to support the residents of Essex during these difficult times.

20/324 To approve and authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 6th July 2020 (by Zoom)

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

Proposed: SAy

Seconded: SAm

All agreed

20/325 Chairman's comments

The Chairman advised that he has chased the contractor regarding the fitting of the new wooden gates at the Common and the height barrier across the car park at the recreation ground. The height barrier will be paid for by the Sports Committee. The farmer has now removed the trailer from the Common as there appears no imminent danger of Travellers entering the land.

Chris Barnes has resigned from the PC. I tried to encourage him to stay but was unsuccessful. However I wished him well and made it clear that he would be welcome to come back should he change his mind.

20/326 To receive the Clerk's Report, circulated prior to the meeting

Duly received.

The Clerk reported that:

Frambury Fields - Ellis Trust site - Following the last meeting I spoke to the resident of Frambury Lane who lives adjacent to the site and established that he had been in touch with UDC regarding the proposals. I then put Trivselhus in touch with him. Judy and Stephen attended a meeting with the UDC Planning Committee on 17th July when Trivselhus gave a presentation to the Committee.

The quotation from Ardent Consulting Engineers for the assessment of surface water drainage options was sent to Trivselhus on 17th July but we have not yet received confirmation that we can proceed.

Trivselhus asked the PC to approve the names Banwell Mews and Dawson Green for streets on the development.

These were approved and an alternative was suggested if required.

Planning - Compass database - The Planning and Projects Development Officer, at Saffron Walden Town Council has contacted me regarding the above.

Compass is a database of planning inspectorate decisions, you can search for anything with even very minor information – so it is really helpful for putting cases together, as well as being useful for judging how much effort it's worth putting into a case.

SWTC think it would be really useful, especially in the absence of a local plan. However it's really expensive for a single parish –the annual fee is a little under £4,000 plus VAT.

The subscription allows for 10 logins, so they wondered if this might be of interest to other Parish Councils. Obviously, they would want to share the price fairly, recognising that SWTC is bigger than some parishes.

They would like the Council's initial thoughts on this. **There is a free trial. JE and AS will look into and report back at September meeting. The Clerk will advise SWTC that we are interested and will be back in touch.**

Hercules Bridge - The site surveys are due to be carried, Monday 3rd August and it is estimated they will take two weeks to complete. Debden Road will be closed to all vehicles but pedestrian access will be allowed.

Salt Bag scheme - I have placed an order with ECC for the pallet of salt to be delivered to the rear of Nisa Stores. I have notified Alan Carr.

Trail bikes - I understand these are still causing problems in parts of the village. Residents have been advised to try and get their registration numbers and report to Crime Stoppers or 101.

Permission to place a memorial bench on the Common - I have been asked by the daughter of Bert Rand if a memorial seat could be placed on the Common in memory of her father who lived in the village from 1904 to 2000. I understand he did a lot of work on the Common preparing the football pitch etc., and also helped with the building of the village hall. I advised his daughter that I would raise it with you at the meeting on Monday. The PC has previously agreed to this (there is a seat in memory of Ken Pipe, who had an electrical business and shop in the village, on the Common). She said she was willing to pay for the seat and the plaque but it would also need a concrete base. Please let me have your views at the meeting in order for me to get back to her. **The PC approved the request and will fund the concrete base. The exact location to be agreed.**

Giant Hogweed - Following the last meeting I have sent further reminders to Savills and Anglian Water. Anglian Water confirmed that the Giant Hogweed has already been treated and further treatment will be taking place in September. This work will be carried out annually by Ground Control who are their approved contractors for dealing with this. **Regarding the hogweed in White Horse Lane, AS reported that details of the title number have been obtained but not the owner.**

New sign for road to the Recreation Ground - I have still not received the new sign for the passing bay which has been on order for some weeks. This is taking longer than usual as it is being made for us and we are waiting for artwork.

Dog Fouling - I have received several complaints about dog fouling and have ordered some more cans of the pink spray.

Speedwatch - I have not heard from the volunteer who was endeavouring to encourage more people to join the scheme so I will contact her. I will organise another training session as soon as these are being held again by the Community team.

Newport News - Please note the deadline for the next edition is 1st October 2020.

Reports - There have been reports of overgrown hedges and trees obstructing paths which have been reported. Martin reported some more barbecues and small fires at the recreation ground. The red refuse bags are being removed from the litter bins and burnt. I asked Tom to try and visit when he is in the village.

I have been asked if the tree on the triangle in Elephant Green could be pollarded as large vehicles are knocking branches off. **Quotations will be obtained.**

I have asked Neil Saville to let us have a quotation for installing the nine bollards at the bottom of School Lane. These were purchased some time ago and it was hoped that Martin and a resident would install them in place of the broken bollards. However, the existing ones are set in concrete so it is a bigger job than originally envisaged. One quote has been obtained from Hermitage Fencing.

The owner of Belmont Farmhouse is chasing for the "H" bars to be extended outside his property. He said he is going to ask the Council to explore other options if they are not done.

Pond Common Trust - The Secretary of the Trust has been in touch regarding the annual donation of £55.00. He informed me that the trust is in quite a healthy situation but it has been twenty years since the clock face was re-gilded therefore at some stage this will need to be done and it will be expensive.

Lettice Martin Trust - The Charity was unable to undertake the usual distribution earlier in the year due to the lockdown. It is hoped this will be possible later in the year.

20/327 To receive the Responsible Financial Officer's Report and approve accounts for payment, schedule circulated prior to the meetings

Duly received.

The payment schedule totalling £4,112.85 for 10 items was approved.

Proposed: JE Seconded: SAy All agreed

The RFO reported that:

- An updated report will be sent when the bank statements arrive.
- Some information has been omitted from the Saffron Building Society forms. These will be returned to the Clerk for completion.
- The AGAR forms have been sent to the External Auditor
- All the Allotment rents have been paid.
- Letter of thanks received for the donation to the UDC Food Bank.

20/328 To approve a donation to the Newport Pond Common Trust

It was proposed that a donation of £55.00 should be made to the Pond Common Trust.

Proposed: JE Seconded: SAy All agreed

20/329 To receive reports/updates on Infrastructure/Maintenance

329.1 To receive an update on drainage work on the River Cam adjacent to the Common and on Wicken Water at the bottom of School Lane.

JE reported that she has contacted the Environment Agency and sent a copy of the quotations received from Pearl Drainage. A permit will not be required for the work in School Lane but this will be necessary for the Common.

Some time ago Colin Challenger was contacted regarding the drainage work and he has given permission to go ahead but this may not be necessary, therefore this will

be dealt with separately. JE will contact the Care home to see if they will contribute to the drainage work at the bottom of School Lane

Although it is not the PC's responsibility to carry out this work the PC has a duty to protect the village from flooding as ECC will not clear the silt from the river.

329.2 To receive an update on Bridleway 16

JE reported that a meeting was held with the Primary School and Essex Highways last week and Highways are now going back to the developer to propose that they bring the bridleway up to full highways standard which will cost a significant amount of money. Essex Highways have copies of the deeds and now understand the status of the track and that the PC has a right of way.

20/330 To receive reports/updates on Planning

330.1 To receive a report on Frambury Fields and report of the meeting with Trivselhus and the UDC Planning Committee on 17th July

JE and SAy attended. It was the first time that a developer had held a pre-application meeting with the Planning Committee and they allowed the PC to have some input. We are now awaiting the next step.

As we have not heard from Trivselhus regarding the drainage assessment, JE will contact Phase2planning to find out if we can proceed with the assessment and look at the options. The Village Hall feel that Option B impacts on their land.

The Chairman said this would not impinge on the Village Hall or the car park.

It has been suggested that Trivselhus install a playground on the Common. It was generally felt that play equipment for teenagers on the Common was a good idea, but we are not sure at this stage whether it will go ahead.

330.2. To receive a report from the Planning Working Group

SN reported that it was noticed that ECC Place Services Highways and Conservation department had withdrawn their objections for the two semi detached houses at Sparrows End (UTT/20/0806/FUL) Therefore a further letter of objection was sent to UDC. We are looking into a Conservation Management plan.

NH will follow this up but pointed out that UDC does not have a Conservation Officer.

With regard to the application for the demolition of a bungalow at Shortgrove it would be helpful if the PC could visit the site.

UTT/20/1463/FUL Fire Station, Debden Road (Comments by 4th August)

Extension to Fire Station to include full size appliance bay.

Comments: No objections

UTT/20/1603/FUL Land rear of The Chestnuts, Bishops Way (Comments by 7th August)

Construction of a new dwelling and car port

Emails had been received from two of the neighbours who were present at the meeting and the neighbours explained their reasons for objecting. Following discussion it was agreed that NH will call the application into the Planning Committee.

This application will be discussed by the Planning Working Group at their next meeting on 6th August and a response sent to UDC

UTT/20/1686/FUL Dairy House, Shortgrove (Comments by 22nd July)

Extension and alterations to existing building and for change of use from parkland to garden.

An email has been received from a resident expressing their concerns. The Planning Working Group will agree a response at their meeting on Thursday 6th August.

APP/C1570/W/20/3252096 Chadam House (Comments by 13h August)

JE will review the comments submitted on the original application and send a response

20/331 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

JE reported that UDC have still not been back in touch regarding the funding for the fence. NH will ring Nigel Brown, or alternatively, Gordon Glenday. If they do not respond a letter will be sent from the Chairman.

20/332 To receive reports/update on Liaison matters

To receive a report on the meeting with Joyce Frankland Academy, Essex County Council and the developer on 20th July 2020

The problems of loading the school buses in September when all the children return to school were discussed. The end of the school day will be staggered and children travelling by train would leave first. It was recognised that it will be difficult to load the buses when the children are in bubbles during the school day. Essex Highways agreed the road could be closed for 15 minutes to allow all the buses to be loaded at the same time. The developer will have members of staff on hand, who are accredited, and will legally be able to monitor and oversee the pupils onto the buses. Closing the road for a short time should resolve the problem and it was encouraging that all the agencies agreed to work together. The developer should be on site at the end of August but we are waiting to receive confirmation of this.

The construction management plan was discussed once the building work starts. The PC explained the problems encountered in Whiteditch Lane. The developer seemed very reasonable and offered to have regular meetings to deal with issues when they arise.

20/333 Items for next agenda

To receive a report on the Summer Youth Competition.

20/334 To discuss any Urgent matters of interest to the Parish

DA advised that he has received a request for beehives on the allotments; there are been hives there in the past. The PC had no objections.

20/335 To discuss the co-option of a new Council member

It was proposed that Sarah Burton should be co-opted to the Parish Council.

Proposed: SAy

Seconded: SAm

All agreed

20/336 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held by Zoom on Monday, 7th September, 2020.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Signed.....(Chairman)

Dated: 07.09.20