

## HIGH BICKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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### Minutes of a remote Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 13 May 2020 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Adam Bunting (Deputy Chairman) Councillors: Charmaine Coxon, Roger Keen, Chris McWhirter, Bob Boothby, Councillor Andrew Saywell, District Councillor Michael Clarke and District Councillor Rosemary Lock; Jenny Baker (Clerk)

The Deputy Chairman welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting and explained the reason he was chairing the meeting. Neil Parker, having given the matter some consideration, has decided to resign from the role of Chairman of the Council effective 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020. The election of a new Chairman to be discussed. The Deputy Chairman then invited the Councillors to give their reports:

#### **Councillor Rosemary Lock reported on behalf of herself and Councillor Clarke.**

The Torridge Council offices are closed but work is continuing and applications for small business grants are being processed but Rosemary would like to urge other small businesses to apply for a grant as money is readily available and the process of applying is very easy.

Money is also available for village halls to help them through the current lock-down situation. There are 26 village halls listed in the region but not all of them have taken up the offer of a grant and again those villages who have not applied are urged to put in an application.

Rosemary asked if anyone had noticed the large helicopters flying in the area. As Eaglescott airfield comes under the Parish of Roborough the matter was discussed at their Parish meeting. Following a number of complaints from residents about the aircraft, an application was made to the Planning Department to check whether anything had been changed at Eaglescott to allow for these larger aircraft. The response was that air-space is not covered by the Planning Department so they are not able to enforce any restrictions.

Coronavirus – Rosemary confirmed she had been in regular contact with Councillor Michael Clarke and had received feedback on how the village was coping with the virus situation and in particular the excellent service the Community Shop has been providing, along with other community groups and volunteers.

#### **Councillor Andrew Saywell:**

Firstly, Andrew wanted to agree with Rosemary that businesses should be urged to apply for the grants that are available.

Andrew confirmed that most of his update was covered in an email he had sent through to the Clerk. The full update can be read on the High Bickington Parish Council Website under **Coronavirus News**.

Andrew said how good it was to see everyone again albeit virtually, and that he was pleased to hear that despite everything, thanks to the support of many groups and individuals in High Bickington he had received very good feedback on how the village was coping during the current pandemic situation and thanked everyone for their efforts.

Andrew confirmed that the Deep Moor Recycling site has re-opened and has reported it is very busy but not enormously.

Current data shows there have been 775 cases of Coronavirus recorded in Devon and sadly 18 deaths. It is important to stress that people who have any concerns about their health should contact their GP or hospital. The hospitals have just 53% of beds occupied so there is capacity for patients with other illnesses and plenty of capacity if there is an increase in Coronavirus cases. Doctors are reporting fewer calls than usual and are concerned that people are not getting the medical help they may need.

That concluded Councillor Saywell's update and he confirmed he is available by phone or email if there are any questions.

Councillor Rosemary Lock wanted to add to Councillor Saywell's report that the number of cases of Coronavirus as of 10 May were 83 in North Devon and 36 in Torrington.

The formal meeting commenced:

**1. Election of Chairman for Parish Council 2020/21**

Following the resignation of Neil Parker as Chairman a new Chairman of the Council is required. Deputy Chairman, Adam Bunting is not in a position to take on the role of Chairman at this time. All Councillors are asked to consider the situation and the subject will be moved to the next meeting agenda. This does mean there are now 3 vacancies on the Council.

**2. Declarations of Interest:** no declarations received.

**3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**

All Councillors on the call were able to confirm they had read the minutes and accepted them as correct. The Deputy Chairman will sign the minutes.

**4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**

It was confirmed that there were no other matters not covered by the Agenda.

**5. Barton Meadow Play Area**

**(a)** Three quotes for grass cutting at Barton Meadow have been considered by the Council and the decision was unanimously agreed to appoint Chris Seage as the new contractor at a rate of £40.00 per cut, two cuts per month during the growing season. Chris has previously worked alongside Derek Jones and is familiar with the area and the work required.

**(b)** The sale of the strip of land running down the side of the playing field bordering the property of Mr & Mrs Woodman has now completed. The funds from the sale are ring fenced for the Barton Meadow Play area. The Council would like to thank Mr & Mrs Woodman for their patience in dealing with the sale as the transaction has taken longer than originally anticipated.

**6. Matters raised by the Clerk:**

**(a)** Standing Orders – were reviewed by all Councillors and the Chairman in 2019 but the minutes were not notated to this effect, all Councillors confirmed that the review had taken place and the minutes could be noted accordingly. It was also recorded that the Councillors have been given copies of the Finance Standing Order amended in line with the NALC guidelines with regard to contract values and an addendum added to the Council's standing orders to approve virtual meetings for one year. All councillors agreed the changes.

**(b)** The Clerk confirmed the Council's records were audited by IAC Internal Auditors in April and the recommendations of the audit have been circulated to all Councillors. A response to the Audit report will be prepared for the next meeting.

**7. Maintenance:**

- (a) Highways - the Council have received a temporary road closure notice from Road at Braggamarsh Wood to Lower Braggamash 29/7/2020.
- (b) Councillor Roger Keen reported that he had received a complaint from Mr Hedges at Snape, regarding a family having a picnic on the bridleway and also about a dog off a lead in the area. Councillor Keen has spoken to the Footpaths Co-ordinator at the Council and she has confirmed that Mr Hedges is permitted to put up signs to advise against picnicking on the bridleway and also to request dogs are kept on a lead. The Pathways co-ordinator has agreed to send some sample flyers that might be useful. Councillor Keen has reported this information to Mr Hedges.

**8. Finance:**

(a)	Barclays current a/c statement as at 29 April 2020		£16,628.74
	Money received into Parish Account in April		
	£6,300.49 <i>Torridge Precept</i>		
	£4,000.00 <i>Grantscape</i>		
(b)	Cheques to be issued:		
	100884 IAC Auditing & Consulting	£180.00	
	100885 Information Commissioner		
	(annual Data Protection Registration	£40.00	
	100886 J Baker Salary & Expenses April	£331.87	
			<u>£551.87</u> <u>£16,076.87</u>

Finances were agreed by the Councillors and the Clerk will arrange with the Deputy Chairman signatures on the above cheques.

- (c) Annual audited accounts will be presented to the Council at the next Council meeting for approval and subsequent publishing on the website.

**9. Planning**

- (a) 1/0228/2020/FUL  
 Libbaton Golf Club, High Bickington  
 Proposed Conservatory and terrace to clubhouse  
 PC Decision: Approved                      Torridge: TBA

**10. Items for Information:**

**Defibrillator Training:** The Devon Ambulance Service have contacted the Council to obtain a date when the refresher training can take place. The annual training is included in the Defibrillator support package. The Ambulance service anticipate being able to recommence their training later in the summer. The Councillors all agreed they would like to take advantage of the training offered and that the Clerk should propose a date in October and confirm the exact details nearer the time.

The Deputy Chairman, wanted to close the meeting by mentioning that as this was the first time the Council had been together since the very sad news that Di Carter had passed away, he felt it was important to express his deep sadness and his gratitude for Di's friendship and dedication to the role of Parish Clerk for so many years. These sentiments were echoed by all those on the call and everyone agreed the Parish has lost a special lady and a very valued member of the High Bickington Community.

**Next meeting: June 10, 2020**