**SHILLINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT**

**7.30 PM ON THURSDAY 7th MAY 2020 BY REMOTE CONFERENCING (ZOOM)**

**MEETING HELD UNDER THE TERMS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020**

**PRESENT:** Councillors M Webberley (Chairman), L Gasson (Vice-Chairman), P Acton, P Arron, K Ridout, R White, Footpaths Officer G Rains, Clerk D Green; in addition, there were 5 members of the public in attendance.

**547. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Received from Cllr Kennard

**548. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None

**549. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2020 were approved.

**550. MATTERS ARISING:**

The Chairman commented on the recent illegal occupation of land in Shillingstone by a group of travellers and was thankful that the problem had very quickly been dealt with, although it was not necessarily a Parish Council matter. Cllr Gasson agreed that the situation was a matter for the Police and landowners, not the Parish Council.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Ridout for her assistance in keeping the village informed about the situation using Facebook. Cllr Rideout confirmed that Facebook messaging during this period had to be carefully controlled and a number of posts had been deleted as they were inflaming the situation.

The Chairman also thanked Cllr Ridout for all per assistance in using Facebook to provide village assistance during the Covid-19 crisis; Cllr Ridout said that the initiative had received a lot of support and had worked well.

The Chairman confirmed that the new website is ‘under development’ with a few issues to be ironed out before it can be launched.

The Chairman advised that there will not be an Annual Parish Meeting this year and in all likelihood the Jubilee Cup up will not be awarded, there being only possible candidate at the moment and no real voting mechanism to avoid a ‘coronation’ situation. It was agreed that the award of the Cup will be held over until next year.

**551. PUBLIC SESSION TO RAISE ISSUES**

Tim Cotton of the Tennis Club committee questioned what progress had been made with respect to the ‘ball strike risk assessment’. The Chairman confirmed that there had been something of a hiatus and that the Parish Council had only today (the date of the meeting) received a copy of the report. An initial view was that the contents of the report would necessitate a serious conversation with the Tennis Club, as proposals included an impractical suggestion for an eleven metre high fence. The Chairman proposed that discussion of the subject be deferred to the next meeting to allow time for proper consideration of the implications of the report, and suggested that the Tennis Club approach Clive Nelson of the Cricket Club directly for a copy of the report.

Mke Powell and Bob Yorath raised the issue of the apparently shortened life of the Neighbourhood Plan. Bob Yorath felt that he still felt that the Council was in a strong position having the Plan in place and that there had been approximately 23 windfall gains in terms of new properties counting toward the plan of 47 properties

The Clerk explained that the review of Neighbourhood Plans had arisen following a legal case concerning Suffolk Coastal District Council in 2017, and effectively meant if the plan was over two years old, and a local authority cannot demonstrate a 3 year housing supply, there would be a ‘tilted view’ in favour of development.

The Chairman commented that he felt that the Neighbourhood Plan was a flakey concept subject to the whim of Government policy and could easily be cast aside with other planning laws when there is a need for houses; he also pointed out the inherent contradictions in Shillingstone’s own Neighborhood Plan – the policy of preserving the rural character of lanes - whilst permitting sites on rural lanes, for example, White Pit - to be considered for development.

The Chairman commented that he felt that developers such as Ian Moore were closely watching the situation. The Council agreed to defer any decision to review the Plan until the new Dorset Local Plan is produced later this year.

**552. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

There was no County Councilor present and no report available.

**553. FOOTPATHS**

Graham Rains reported that a dead deer had been found on a footpath but had been quickly dealt with. He had noted how busy the Trailway was at weekends despite the lockdown situation and was particularly hazardous given the number of cyclists using the rote for ‘training exercises’, who generally silently approach walkers from behind; he advised all to keep listening while walking. The Chairman commented that there is a core who treat the Trailway as a ‘cycleway’. Graham advised that some rails have collapsed causing a pinch point where the route is very narrow and this needs to be approached with caution.

Cllr Gasson advised that she has 350 hedging plants to be given away to anyone who wants them.

**554. PLANNING**

**I) New applications received before the meeting:**

2/2020/0303/HOUSE 1A Pepper Hill Shillingstone Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 0TD -

Erection of single storey side extension. There were no objections to this application which is a necessary expansion of a property for family reasons.

The commencement of works on the site adjacent to the petrol station by Blaze Construction was noted. Blaze have contacted the Council to enquire as to whether there was a preference for the naming of the development. It was unanimously agreed of the three suggestions offered, only the name ‘Westleigh Close’ would be suitable.

**ii) Application for tree works conservation area received before the meeting:**

There were no new applications for tree works.

**555. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FUTURE**

This was discussed in the ‘open forum’ above.

**556. FINANCES**

**i) a) Retrospective payments approved:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CQ/Ref** | **Date** | **Amount** | **Payee** | **Reason** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 2385 | 11/03/2020 | £ 140.00 | Stacey Hankin | Cleaning |
| 2386 | 11/03/2020 | £ 17.50 | DAPTC | Website Course |
| SO | 31/03/2020 | £ 611.68 | David Green | Pay March 2020 |
| BACS | 01/04/2020 | £ 27.59 | SSE | Pavilion electricity (paid by DG) |
| BACS | 01/04/2020 | £ 53.60 | David Green | Expenses |
| SO | 02/04/2020 | £ 333.00 | Cricket Club | Mowing |
| BACS | 08/04/2020 | £ 180.00 | Sandisons | Payroll services |
| BACS | 09/04/2020 | £ 105.00 | Stacey Hankin | Cleaning |
| DEBIT | 14/04/2020 | £ 142.80 | DWP | Waste bin charges |
| BACS | 20/04/2020 | £ 1,493.20 | Bourton Fencing | Allotment fence |
| DEBIT | 20/04/2020 | £ 15.36 | Water Services | Allotment supply |
| DEBIT | 20/04/2020 | £ 55.53 | Water Services | Pavilion supply |
| SO | 30/04/2020 | £ 588.68 | David Green | Pay April |
| SO | 04/05/2020 | £ 333.00 | Cricket Club | Mowing |
| BACS | 04/05/2020 | £ 148.80 | Rialtas | Software support |

**ii) Annual grant payments for the forthcoming year**

The Clerk confirmed that Annual grant payments to the Churchyard (£250), the Parish Magazine (£500) and to Shillingstone Youth Club (£250), would now be made following receipt of the precept.

**iii) Banking arrangements**

The Clerk confirmed that he can now make online bank payments and that the use of cheques in most situations will cease. At present the Chairman is authorising any necessary expenditures by email and the Clerk is sending a post payment copy of the bank statement to the Chairman as the audit trail. The Clerk will attempt to set-up a dual payment authorisation with Lloyds Bank although communication with the bank is very difficult at the moment.

**iv) Annual Return**

The Clerk advised that the Internal Audit had been completed and there were no issues to report. He will send the forms & internal audit report to the Council for review and approval at the meeting in June.

**557. PLAY AREAS, RECREATION GROUND AND PROPERTY CHECK**

The play areas were closed from 24th March under Covid-19 restrictions and cleaning of the pavilion was suspended at the same time.

**558. CORRESPONDENCE**

The emails received from Jeremy Dhondy in connection with the Travellers occupation were discussed. The Chairman had responded to these on behalf of the Clerk. The Council felt that his criticisms of the Council’s role in the matter, its website and communication channels, contained unreasonable expectations of how a Parish Council should operate, were inaccurate, wholly unwarranted and would be rebutted. The Chairman will write to Mr. Dhondy on behalf of the Council.

**559. TO AGREE ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA:**

i) Ball strike risk assessment report findings

**560. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was confirmed as being on Thursday 4th June 2020 at 7:30 pm, probably by remote conferencing.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:15 p.m.