

**SHILLINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT  
7.30 PM ON THURSDAY 1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2021 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 L Gasson (Chairman), R Harwood, R McNamara, K Ridout, I Suter, R White, Footpaths Officer G Rains, Unitary Councillor P Batstone, Clerk D Green

In addition, there was one member of the public present.

**698. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** None

**699. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr Ridout in relation to Burtons Orchard

**700. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were approved.

**701. MATTERS ARISING:**

The Clerk noted that there are no legal powers for the continuation of remote meetings beyond 7<sup>th</sup> May. The Chairman advised that the Church Centre has procedures in place for safe social distancing and cleaning which would allow face to face meetings be held. The Chairman will discuss this further with Ann Powell.

Cllr McNamara reported that both Shillingstone Primary School and Yewstock School in Sturminster Newton had not been made aware of the road closure in the planning process and this to be taken up for future reference. All were impressed with the standard of the re-surfaced road.

The Clerk confirmed that the request for a review of the possibility of a pedestrian crossing near Augustan Avenue had been made to Dorset Council. Cllr McNamara will pursue this issue in terms of the criteria that have to be met.

The Clerk reported that the installation of the Speed Indicator Device (SID) had been much delayed due to the road closure but was hoping for progress shortly.

The Clerk noted that a resident had reported the damaged verge issues on Brodham Way and was optimistic that these would be dealt with by Dorset Highways.

The Clerk reported that a dog waste bin for the allotments - Trailway path had been ordered.

With reference to the village gates proposal, the Council had been advised that the cost would be between £1100 and £1700 per set of gates and would be subject to a survey. Cllr Suter felt that these were expensive and should be reviewed. The Chairman felt that these are cosmetic and require regular cleaning. It was agreed that a 'project expenditure prioritiser' spreadsheet provided by Cllr McNamara would be used to evaluate projects going forward and may assist sharing ideas within the Parish.

The Chairman noted that a suggestion had been made by a resident for a 'boule' court at the Recreation Ground. This will be discussed further with Cllr White and the resident who proposed the idea; Cllr Ridout mentioned that there is a boule court at the Old Ox Inn if anyone wants to look at one.

It was noted that Cllr Aaron had retired and he would be thanked for his long service to the Council. The vacancy will most likely be filled by co-option.

## **702. PUBLIC SESSION**

There were no issues raised.

## **703. UNITARY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Cllr Batstone provided a brief report:

- Dorset Council is working on how to return to face-to-face meetings. The Council chamber would not permit safe social distancing if all councillors were in attendance and other solutions are being considered.
- she is being assailed by those wanting a 20 mile per hour speed to be introduced but there is a conflict of roles if this is supported
- those involved in the Shillingstone road work should be congratulated.

## **704. FOOTPATHS**

Graham Rains provided a report:

- advised that the perennial flooding problem on the Trailway at Davis Coppice had been resolved with the renewal of drains.
- the vandalized fingerpost on the Trailway by the Recreation Ground had been reported to Dorset Rangers.
- a new information sign has been installed at Gains Cross which references the Big Yellow Bus Project.
- planings from the road surface work it seems will be used to improve some footpath surfaces

## **705. COUNCILOR REPORTS**

**Highways** – Cllr McNamara reported that the Portman Hall parking facility had not been used during the road closure period, but it had been useful to have it available. The Chairman noted that the drains outside Portman Hall should be looked at again.

**Shillingstone School** – Cllr Suter noted that most students had returned to the classroom on 8<sup>th</sup> March and were glad to be back.

**Shillingstone Youth Club** – Cllr Suter reported that two Zoom interactive meetings had been held.

**PC Website** – Cllr Suter noted the improvements to the website and the usefulness of the new planning applications 'tracker' which links directly to the Dorset Council planning portal. New pictures for the website including the river and Keepers Cottage are planned, as is an events page and history archive.

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

**Churchyard** – the Chairman reported that Wessex Archaeology had found some medieval bones and a roof tile in the course of the Church improvements project, which be complete in a month’s time. The Chairman thanked Judith Compton for her excellent write up. The Church would like to rewild the churchyard and to plant some foxgloves; any donations of these are welcome.

**Portman Hall** – Cllr Ridout noted that the Hall is still closed and is undergoing some refurbishment. A ‘Newcomers’ event has been tentatively planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> October. The Village Sports festival is planned for next year which will be the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first festival; this will be intended to benefit a number of village groups.

**Facebook** – Cllr Ridout reported that this has been quiet other than road closure comments; Dorset Council News links have been added to the Facebook page where necessary. There is some confusion between the roles of the Parish Council and the Parochial Church Council – the Chairman agreed to explain the difference in a future Parish Magazine article.

**Recreation Ground** – Cllr White has met representatives of the Tennis Club and assisted with some bricklaying work at the court shelter. Contact will be made with the Cricket and Football clubs. The matter of the boule court will be discussed further.

**Allotments** – Cllr Harwood reported that most allotment holders had now made a start on their plots, it being far too wet in January and February; some freely donated manure had been mostly used.

**Climate change** – Cllr McNamara had attended a virtual meeting led by the Climate Change Emergency Peoples group. This focused mainly on the response to the Dorset Local Plan. There is a further meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> April. Cllr McNamara had noted that the multi-purpose uses of the Trailway, involving walkers, dog-walkers, and cyclists can be unpleasant for some user; the widening of the route for cyclists and other users should be considered. The Chairman noted that the section of the Trailway near Stourpaine has been designed to accommodate both bicycles and horses.

## **706. PLANNING**

The Clerk confirmed that the planning tracker was working and would clarify with the website host how data to this is populated.

New applications considered:

### **1) P/PABA/2021/00798 Eastbrook Farm White Pit Lane Shillingstone Blandford DT11 0SQ**

Prior App - Building for Agricultural/Forestry Use.

There were no objections to this application which is deemed to be necessary for commercial purposes.

### **2) P/HOU/2021/00046 1A Pepper Hill Shillingstone Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 0TG**

Erection of single storey rear extension

There were no objections to this application which involves an extension to the rear of the property and would not appear to impact on near neighbours.

### **3) P/HOU/2021/00103 5 HONEYSUCKLE GARDENS, SHILLINGSTONE, BLANDFORD FORUM, DT11 0TJ**

Demolition of existing porch and erection of new porch

There were no objections to this proposal which is a relatively small alteration to the front of the property.

#### 4) P/HOU/2021/00318 12 ROBEYS RETURN, BLANDFORD RD< SHILLINGSTONE. DT11 0SF

Erection of front extension to kitchen and porch.

There were no objections to this proposal involving an extension to the existing kitchen and the creation of a 'pergoda' from an existing conservatory. There would appear to be no discernable negative impact on neighbouring properties.

### 707. FINANCES

#### i) a) Retrospective payments approved:

The list of payments had been circulated to councillors in advance. These were **APPROVED**.

Date	Payee	Ref	Total	Reason
01/03/2021	David Green	SO	£ 613.42	Pay February 2021
02/03/2021	Shillingstone CC	SO	£ 333.00	Mowing
02/03/2021	Lesley Gasson	BACS	£ 80.00	Painting reimburse
08/03/2021	David Green	BACS	£ 39.89	Expenses Feb 2021
08/03/2021	Shillingstone CC	BACS	£ 25.00	Donation
12/03/2021	Shillingstone TC	BACS	£ 155.00	Reimburse Mower shed work
25/03/2021	Tim West	BACS	£ 30.00	Install Office 2019
30/03/2021	David Green	BACS	£ 613.42	Pay March 2021

#### b) Payments approved:

Clerks' expenses: £ 28.50

#### c) Grants approval

The Parish Council **APPROVED** the following grants:

PCC Churchyard	£ 250
Parish Magazine	£ 500
Shillingstone Youth Club	£ 250
Burtons Orchard	£ 200

The Burtons Orchard committee had approached the Parish Council because of a funding deficit arising from the Covid-19 lockdown and the cancellation of the usual fund-raising events including the dog show and table top sale. This is expected to be a one-off grant; the committee has plans for a resumption of fundraising activities as soon as possible including the apple sale in June and a sale of benches manufactured from the hazel crop.

#### d) Lengthsman contract

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

The Clerk advised that he is in discussion with the Sturminster Town Council and the Dorset Rangers concerning the preparation of a new contract for services, which must include all the verges in the villages and other areas where regular work is necessary (e.g. the Augustan Avenue play area). It must also include provision for regular street sweeps. It appears that there is some funding for verge maintenance available via the Dorset Rangers which will form part of the cost calculation for the new contract.

The billing of lengthsman charges for 2020-2021 has been queried by the Clerk.

#### **708. PLAY AREAS, RECREATION GROUND AND PROPERTY CHECK**

The Clerk reported that cleaning of the pavilion and the Pod had resumed in anticipation of the resumption of sporting activities. Moss has been cleaned from the mower shed on the Tennis Club side and repairs have made.

##### **Play Area fencing**

The Clerk reported that potential costs of the fencing project had spiraled due to the necessity for replacing the roundabout which will need to be moved for safety reasons; this would add around £4,000 to overall project costs which would now be between £12,000 and £13,000. The Clerk advised that the scheme in its present form was unaffordable and would drain existing reserves, and could not be justified in terms of the perceived risks of dogs on the play area. Cllr McNamara didn't think young families would approve of this level of expenditure. Cllr Suter felt that the idea should not be abandoned completely and perhaps an alternative wooden post and rail fence could be considered.

The Council **AGREED** that the proposal to install a metal fence would not be taken forward and a meeting to consider alternatives should be held and community involvement in a decision would be encouraged.

##### **Quarterly Play Area safety inspection**

The regular play equipment contractor has offered to provide a quarterly play area inspection service. The Clerk noted that this would be in addition to the visual weekly checks he makes, would cover both play areas and would provide an additional safeguard in the event of any potential equipment failures. The Clerk recommended that the Parish Council proceed with this arrangement which is relatively low cost.

The Council **APPROVED** this proposal.

#### **709. CORRESPONDENCE**

These items of correspondence were noted:

- A complaint concerning the recording of a meeting. This had been referred to Jonathan Mair at Dorset Council who had responded appropriately. The Clerk advised that under the Audit and Accountability regulations anyone can record any public meeting at any time without the express permission of those attending.
- A note from the Unitary Councillor concerning the proposal by Extinction Rebellion for a 'Mass Trespass' of the countryside on 24<sup>th</sup> April.

- The Community Governance review being conducted by Dorset Council which will review the boundaries and numbers of councillors of parishes. The Council will consider this matter further in due course.

#### **710. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

Election of new Chairman

#### **711. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was confirmed as being on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7:30 pm, by Zoom, this will include the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and an ordinary Parish Council meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:16 p.m.

Signed:

Chairman

Date: