Ellington Parish Council

Minutes of Ellington Parish Council Parish Meeting
on Monday 5th May 2020
The meeting was held online via Zoom as per the "*Regulations*" (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)(England and Wales) Regulations 2020).

Present:

Councillors:	Cllrs Chapman, Lumbers, Palmer, Porter and Walters
Clerk/Dist Cllr:	Darren Tysoe
County Cllr:	Cllr Ian Gardener
Public:	2

Open Forum – the increase in dog fouling was briefly discussed. Cllr Porter agreed to publish a reminder to ask residents to pick up their dog waste. **Action: Cllr Porter.** Improvements to cycling routes were discussed **– Cllr Gardener to chase.**

1317. Apologies for Absence - none
1318. To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to any Agenda item - none
1319. The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd March 2020 were approved (Prop: Cllr Porter , seconded by Cllr Walters).
1320. Matters arising from Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd March 2020. Cllr Lumbers reported that the litter picks went ahead. It was agreed to pay the Balfour Beatty Contract in order to get the street lamps fixed and maintained. **Action: Clerk**. [Done]
1321. The Clerk outlined the Coronavirus Continuity Plan and members agreed to amend the Standing Orders to allow online meeting as per the new *Regulations*.
    a) NALC Guidance for Virtual Meetings
    b) Annual Meeting and end of year procedures
1322. Update from District and County Councillors. County Councillor Gardener reported as follows:

The Countywide Hub has been set up is to coordinate the distribution of support to the Shielded Group of residents who are at highest risk for at least 12 weeks. So far 15,000 people have registered in the Shielded category, which means they cannot leave their home and should have no face to face contact with anyone from outside their home. This work could not be done without the support of our partners, particularly District and City Councils, as well as the support from voluntary, faith and public sector partners, totally around 35 different organisations coming together (digitally) every week to consider what more we can do to help and protect people. The Cambridgeshire Hub is using a password to identify themselves when contacting people using their services, owing to scams. Please be aware of Scams, such as direct phone calls purporting to be from Public Health. Cambridgeshire Coronavirus Community Fund provides funding for local projects that need to react quickly to help with COVID 19 issues. If you google Cambridgeshire Coronavirus Community Fund it will take you to the relevant page on their website. The

County Council has contributed to the fund and the panel sits twice a week to consider bids.
Work to convert the Marshall's site into a temporary Mortuary started on 08 April and is know completed. Let's hope it's not needed.
Addenbrokes is anticipating building an additional facility on land adjacent to Car Park 2 to provide surge capacity, it will provide an additional 254 acute beds. The ICU at Addenbrokes will be increased to 350 beds.
The County Council has taken the lead on commissioning additional care provision on behalf of both health and social care. We have purchase c.370 additional nursing, residential and interim beds which are being utilised to discharge people from hospital to clear hospital space for COVID19 cases.
We have been doing well with discharging people from hospital to date, everyone that is fit enough to be discharged has been discharged. At the last update there were around 170 of the additional beds still vacant.
We are supporting care homes and home care providers with PPE issues and access to PPE. The County Council took immediate early steps to source PPE locally, which with the Government drops are seeing us through so far. PPE is being distributed from a warehouse at Alconbury.
The CC has set up Home Learning for Pupils at home which is available on https://www.cambslearningtogether.co.uk Which is a fantastic repository of activities for pupils to compliment work they are getting from school.
If you click on the competition and projects link you will see the project we have set on communities with an IPAD as a prize.
From Monday 23rd March all Cambridgeshire CC Libraries are closed until further notice. During this time:-
Overdue charges have been suspended and return dates have been extended throughout the closure period
A number of digital services will be provided to browse eBooks, eMagazines, eNewspapers and 3 suppliers of eAudiobooks visit our Online Library webpage
The CC Recycling Centres at Alconbury & St Neots are closed, however the County Council plan to reopen the Household recycling centres on Monday 11th May whilst maintaining social distancing. This will be achieved by limiting the numbers on site, in the same manner as operated at supermarkets. No more than 2 adults will be allowed to unload any one vehicle. No staff assistance to unload vehicles and no vans or trailers requiring a permit will be permitted
In light of the current COVID – 19 situation in relation to the Local Highway Improvement Bids for 2021/22 the deadline of 31st May has been removed and the CC will be accepting applications until further notice.

Dist Cllr Tysoe updated Members to report on Coronavirus action taken by the District Council. This included a suspension of car parking fees, the ability to defer paying council tax, support with business rates, setting up a dedicated website (wearehuntingdonshire.org), putting in place measures to provide financial assistance, delivering food, medicine and wellbeing support, and identifying vulnerable people. Emergency food parcels have been delivered throughout the District. The refuge collection has continued throughout the crisis. See appended report.

1323. Finances

a) To approve Cashbook and Bank Reconciliation for 31 March 2020. It was agreed not to re-invest the receipt from fixed-term deposit as there were expected expenditure items in the next few months which may not be successful with grant applications (Village Hall Roof repair).

b) To approve other payments and to note payments made since last meeting. Payments made since the last meeting: Chq 690 BEAM Grass Cutting Invoice 1 £235.00, Chq 691 Function 28 Domain Registration and Monthly Fee £126.00, Chq 692 BEAM Grass Cutting Invoice 2 and 3 £470.00. Payments due: Chq 693 Insurance £407.75, Chq 694 SLCC Membership £44.00, Chq 695 BEAM Grass Cutting Invoice 4 £235.00. Precept paid in: £9,270.

1324. Other Matters to consider/updates

a) Update on A14 Legacy Fund. The PC had received an email approx. 2 months ago stating that there had been delays, but providing an assurance that the work would be done. The Clerk was asked to chase and also to ensure that the additional electrical work on the Village Green would be included, as this was not confirmed in writing. **Action: Clerk. [Done]**

b) Successful 2019 LHI Bid. District Councillor Gardener stated that the COVID-19 situation was causing delays with the County Council implementing the grants. **Action: Clerk to chase. [Done]**

c) ROSPA Report. Cllr Lumbers provided a verbal report on the ROSPA report which covers equipment on the Playing Field and the Village Green. There were no urgent works.

d) Support for Ellington Residents and Coronavirus Grant. It was agreed to monitor the situation regarding the needs of Ellington Residents before deciding how to spend the Grant. The Clerk was asked to write to Ross from Buffaload to thank him for supporting residents with vegetable boxes during the COVID-19 crisis. **Action: Clerk.**

e) Future bids: RES and 2020 LHI Bid. The Clerk was asked to put together a bid for the LHI for village gates which will include speed signs, with the sign near Spinneyfield and Thrapston Road. It was suggested that the PC offers to pay for 75% of the cost, thereby increasing the chance of successful bid. For RES, an application will be made to repair the village hall roof. **Action: Clerk.**

f) Buffaload Site. There had been a couple of informal complaints regarding the condition of the field near the bridge and also a tree had been felled. It was agreed that a couple of reps from the PC would visit the site. The Clerk was asked to confirm the current status of the planning application**. Action: Clerk.**

g) Update on Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk reported on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan and confirmed that he would forward to councillors a copy of the Draft Survey for their input and comments. **Action: Clerk [Done]**

h) Village Hall Update – no update

i) Playing Field Committee Update. Due to the Coronavirus situation, funds were low as there had been no fundraising events. The VH Committee may need assistance with additional woodchip safety surfacing in the near future.

j) Neighbourhood Watch Update – Cllr Chapman reported on an increase in cybercrime and scams, partly due to criminals taking advantage of the COVID-19 situation.

1325. Correspondence. The Clerk outlined the information received from the District and County Councillors, and Public Health England. Members discussed improved ways to communicate with residents, including a PC insert in the Ellington Express.

1326. Items for discussion at next meeting. Updates as per the Minutes.

1327. Date of next Meeting – July 2nd 2020.

May Report from Cllr Tysoe

Council Tax Delayed Payment Scheme

Huntingdonshire District Council is continuing to offer residents the opportunity to push back the start of their Council Tax payments to offer financial assistance to those who are being affected by the coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic.

Refuge Collection, Street Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance

HDC are still maintaining a 100 per cent service on all waste streams, street cleaning and grounds maintenance. HDC is one of just five per cent of all local authorities in the country that are still providing 100 per cent service provision of this nature. This compares nationally to only 20 per cent operating street cleaning normally, 19 per cent offering a bulky waste collection service normally and 41 per cent operating a garden recycling service normally. My thanks to everybody at the District Council for the determination to keep their services running that they are all demonstrating.

Huntingdonshire Community Hub

The Huntingdonshire community hub is making phone calls to vulnerable residents to offer support, delivering food parcels and prescriptions. The County Council is responsible for providing help and support to those residents who have been deemed 'clinically extremely vulnerable' and placed on the shielded list. The 3,000 residents that HDC has contacted so far are people we have identified through other means as being vulnerable and possibly in need of help that they won't get from CCC or the Government because they're not on the shielded list. The work that is going on from the hub really is making such a difference to people throughout the district. We've had people with no family, no other support and no idea of where to turn who are now safe and taken care of because of HDC's intervention.

Distributing Government Grants to Businesses

HDC is delivering more than £30 million of government grants to local businesses. Most of the businesses that are eligible to receive a grant are those that qualify for Small Business Rates Relief and pay no business rates due to the size of their premises. HDC did not therefore hold the necessary bank account details for 81% of all the businesses that we need to pay and have had to source this information. However, we were one of the first councils to launch the application process and to contact businesses and we've been processing and paying grants on an almost daily basis since 3 April. There are also several hundred businesses that have still not even applied. These grants are worth £10,000 or £25,000 and are non-repayable grants (not loans) to help businesses through this crisis. To make sure that we can get this support out as quickly as possible I would urge all eligible businesses to apply via https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/council-democracy/coronavirus-service-update/coronavirus-business-grant-funding/

Call Centre 01480 388388

Our call centre is also operating a normal service, albeit with staff working remotely, and we have trained extra staff to help deal with enquiries more effectively.

Scheme launched for working age council tax support

The Council has launched a scheme to provide additional council tax help during the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative, supported by almost £500,000 of Government funding, is designed to offer a reduction in council tax payments which will initially be aimed at people who are in receipt of working-age council tax support.

Those in receipt of working-age council tax support will receive an additional reduction to their council tax bill of up to £150. There is no need to apply as the reduction will be applied to bills automatically and bills will be re-issued to reflect how much is left to pay following this.

The reductions will be automatically applied to new claims for council tax support as well as those that already exist.

Government has given local authorities across the country this additional funding to help support local people, aiming to reduce the council tax liability of working-age people in receipt of council tax support.

Other Initiatives

Other initiatives include a suspension of all car parking charges, and all market pitch fees (food markets continue to trade as they are helping with the supply of food).

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