

HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 9th February 2021. This was a virtual meeting (video and telephone conference call) of the Parish Council held on the digital platform Zoom.

In Attendance

Harbertonford Councillors

Cllr Beamish: Not present
Cllr Bowley: Present by video link
Cllr Hambly: Present by video link
Cllr Janes: Present by phone
Cllr McDonnell: Present by phone
Cllr Waite: Not present

Harberton Councillors

Cllr Camp: Present by video link
Cllr Croft: Present by video link
Cllr Davidson: Present by video link
Cllr Hockings: Present by phone
Cllr Phillips: Present by video link
Cllr Williams: Present by video link

Others

D.Cllr McKay: Not present
C.Cllr Hodgson: Present by video link
Clerk Ms Radford: Present by video link
Members of the Public: 2

Public Session No members of the public were present.

Agenda

1. **Apologies** Cllrs approved reasons for absence.

2. **Declaration of Interests**

- 2.1 Register of Interests: Cllrs were reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
- 2.2 No interests were declared on items on the agenda.

3. **Reports for information from:**

3.1 County Councillor (C.Cllr) It was reported that

- 3.1.1 Budget C.Cllrs have been busy in extensive discussions on managing Devon County Council's (DCC) million pound budget and to take into account predicted impacts of COVID. The budget has yet to be approved.
- 3.1.2 Road infrastructure The C.Cllr expressed disappointment that new road infrastructure works are in the pipeline but the County is not keeping up with good maintenance, so there is still really big problem. It was commented that the new highways budget only allows 1/5 for non-vehicular access route. Despite hearing that active travel is really important, little or nothing happening in that direction. There is concern that new roads will be built but old ones will be left as green lanes.
- 3.1.3 Care in the area A network of local organisations that meet regularly had identified significant worry about mental health, particularly those who continue to feel vulnerable due to the pandemic. With a 12 week wait between vaccinations those shielding will have another 4 months of staying at home. Continuation of befriending and food box schemes are considered vital to continue social contact over this period.
- 3.1.4 Road configuration and speeds at Harbertonford Design work continues, although the budget for the works will not come in this year. C.Cllrs do not think it acceptable that the 20 mph trial expected to take place at Newton Abbot 2 years ago still has not commenced.
- 3.1.5 Cllr questions to the C.Cllr
 - 3.1.5.1 Potholes at Gerston Cross Cllrs commented a van had to be towed from the flooded pothole at Gerston Cross in the week. Highways cannot fix the pothole because it is always flooded when attending. It was reiterated that remedial work is required where the hedge is pressed into the bank. Walkers are clambering onto the hedge and bank to avoid the water and there are concerns that someone might accidentally fall into the road.
 - 3.1.5.2 Long term maintenance of western bypass bank Cllrs commented that DCC had done a good job on the bank but asked about long-term maintenance. The C.Cllr responded that the works included a lot of replanting and drainage works as they went. It was noted that visibility is much improved and if this had been maintained over the years the tree works would not have been necessary. It was suggested that the verge be meadow planted with pollinators to enhance the appearance of the area and would be cheaper in the long run. It was also asked why the works didn't continue for the full length of the bank.
 - 3.1.5.3 Pot hole at the garage It was reported that a vehicle had lost a wheel. The C.Cllr commented that in such cases an application can be made for compensation.

3.2 District Councillor No report

4. **Minutes It was RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Harberton Parish Council 12th January 2021 as an accurate record.

It was raised that the January meeting had continued until 10:45pm and there was some discussion on how to ensure meetings were more efficient. It was noted that Harberton is a big parish and there is often a lot of business to cover. It was agreed that it would help if written reports from District and County Councillors were received in advance of the meeting with meeting papers, consider these as read and raise any questions during the meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk write to both Councillors to make that request.

5. **Report Matters Arising from the Minutes** for information only

- 5.1 Harberton Devon Air Ambulance clearance area sign Ongoing. Cllrs Bowley and Williams agreed to look at the images provided that should indicate whether a sign could be erected on the lighting column.
- 5.2 Ash trees at Palmers Dam It was reported that the Environment Agency Field Operations Team will be removing a couple of trees very soon to protect the BT communications cable.
- 5.3 Highways Issues The proposed circulating a summary of highways issues to councillors rather than read in full. It was noted that requests to Highways relating to road safety and traffic speeds are only considered if a relevant casualty accident record exists, data for which is provided by the Police. Whilst members of the community may think this a blunt instrument when applied to specific sites, Devon County Council (DCC) have to justify and evidence decisions using verified data. The Chair asked if Highways had responded to queries about flooding on Screw Lane. It was agreed to remind Highways that they had been informed that prior to the build-up of levels that prevented water flowing downstream, an attenuation pond within the field acted as a break point.
- 5.4 Overhanging branch at Harberton Playing Field No update.

6. Planning

- 6.1 Consideration of planning applications:
 - 6.1.1 0079/21/CLE Certificate of Lawfulness for existing use of The Studio as a single dwellinghouse, separate and independent to Wilma at The Studio, Woodcourt Road, Harbertonford The Parish Council had no evidence to support or refute claim that the land/building has been used for the purpose described in excess of the last four years.
- 6.2 Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions The following planning authority decisions were reported:
 - 6.2.1 3707/20/PDM Application to determine if prior approval is required for proposed change of use of agricultural building to dwellinghouse(Class C3) and for associated operational development (Class Q(a+b)) at Moore Farm, Harberton PRIOR APPROVAL GIVEN
 - 6.2.2 3708/20/VAR Application for variation of conditions 2 and 3 for Planning Application 2790/15/FUL at Orchard View Harberton CONDITIONAL APPROVAL
- 6.3 Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only). Cllrs were given details of two enforcement cases that had been closed having found no breach.

7. Monthly reports

- 7.1 Finance Committee update No update.
- 7.2 Neighbourhood Plan update No update.
- 7.3 Community Land Trust update (CLT) It was reported that the CLT is responding to some queries with the land owner's solicitor. There is a deadline at the end of the month for the sale agreement. The CLT is applying for a second grant to develop the electrical system and the electric car point. When asked if the site would include allotments for the CLT, it was confirmed that this was no longer part of the plans.
- 7.4 Clerk's update The Chair had noted that there had been an email enquiry about plastic bales to which the County and District Councillor had been copied. The Clerk would follow this up.

8. Harberton Parish Parks and Playing Fields

- 8.1 Harberton Playing Field Association (HPFA) A piece was included in the Harberton Email Circular asking for others to step forward to form a new committee and a meeting was held with a number of people willing to step forward, including someone who has served on the Parish Council in the past. The committee is therefore looking to manage a transfer of membership by May this year. It was suggested the Clerk offer support to the committee as they establish roles and means of communication with the Parish Council. The Parish Council had received an update that the current committee had: removed an unsightly rusty sign near the pedestrian gate to the playground has been removed; cleared leaves on the pedestrian path in response to the inspection report mentioning this being slippery, fitting timber edges to the safety matting is in hand. Working on fixing the remaining safety tiles in place is not feasible in cold, damp conditions and will be attended to in better weather. The basketball hoop and board will also be fixed. A member of the committee will remove the 2 fruit trees along the border of the top carpark and field as requested by the Parish Council. The committee is looking to source smaller pear trees to replace. Clearing leaves/weeds from the basketball area and de-lichening the 2 wooden benches is yet to be done. A local resident continues to look after ongoing maintenance, cutting back and grass-mowing in the playground as weather permits.
- 8.1 Harbertonford Play Park
 - 8.1.1 Consider January 2021 inspection report This was discussed. It was agreed to request further information from SHDC on what rationale the Localities Officer uses when undertaking monthly inspections as currently there is no guidance on the reports as to whether an issue is being flagged as being advisory in nature or an unacceptable risk.
 - 8.1.2 Update on long terms plans for the park A meeting has been schedule at 8pm on 16th February with interested parties to consider an approach to moving forward.

- 9. **Nominations for Chair** Cllr Davidson confirmed that she would be resigning her position as a Parish Councillor for the Harberton ward at the end of the meeting and that the matter of voting for a new Chair of the Parish Council would be necessary. **It was RESOLVED** that the Vice Chair would take the chair for the March and April meetings, and that a Chair be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May.

10. **Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement Project** After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to make a £500 donation to TRAYE as the allocated amount in the Parish Council's 2020/21 budget, requesting to see the most recent accounts before making that donation. It was agreed to forward information about the Parish Community Benefit Fund to TRAYE encourage an application from the young people who use TRAYE in Harberton Parish. Should those young people wish to make an application, the Parish Council would like to see some more information about the numbers of young people in the Parish who engage with TRAYE to support that application. It was also commented that the Harberton Parish covers both villages of Harberton and Harbertonford it would be interesting to hear ideas as to how young people from both villages could be supported to engage.
11. **Harbertonford Flooding** Cllrs were informed that a full two-day programme of culvert camera surveys completed earlier in the month, with results going to the Environment Agency. It was reported that the Flood Warden had been asked whether the Parish Council is in a position to help financially with the fitting of some flood prevention measures (door floodboards etc) to a couple of the Harbourne terrace properties in Morleigh Road. After discussion it was agreed that whilst sympathetic to residents affected by flooding, the Parish Council is restricted in how it spends the public funds available and is not able to provide funding to individuals for flood defence in their own properties as this is a private matter. Rather, the Parish Council is doing what it can through its flood wardens to put pressure on the statutory authorities who have responsibility and hold them to account. It was also noted that the Parish had been successful in obtaining some funding for aquasacs that are still available as a resource to anyone in the Parish who needed them.
12. **Meeting arrangements after 7th May 2021** Cllrs were informed that the legislation permitting councils to meet remotely will come to an end of 6th May 2021. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and its Devon branch (DALC) are lobbying the government to extend this legislation, but as it currently stands all council meetings held on or after the 7th May will have to return to a face to face format.

The Clerk had circulated advice received from DALC to help Parish Councils prepare. There was discussion in which some councillors commented that they would not feel comfortable attending face to face meetings until all members and staff had received the vaccine and some indicated that they would not attend. It was noted that there may be some issues in booking suitable meeting venues that enable social distancing. There is therefore a risk that meetings after 6th May could not be quorate. **It was RESOLVED** to hold the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 4th May by Zoom to guarantee that it can go ahead. **It was RESOLVED** that the Clerk make enquiries with the Parish Hall, school and Village Hall on meeting room availability to report to the next meeting. **It was RESOLVED** the Clerk undertake some research on an update to the Parish Council's Covid Policy which delegates responsibilities to the Clerk should meetings not be quorate. **It was RESOLVED** to write to the local MP to ask him to give support to the requests to extend legislation.

13. Correspondence

- 13.1 DALC Newsletter #02 2021 Cllrs were informed that the newsletter included encouragement to attend DALC training, and links to new 'Good Councillor' guide publications available, including guides to: Finance and Transparency; Being a Good Employer; Transport Planning; Community Business; Neighbourhood Planning. The Clerk has downloaded these should any councillors wish to request a copy to read.
- 13.2 20210111 DALC Newsletter #03 2021 Cllrs were informed that this issue advises of the reopening of the COVID-19 fund to support groups responding to the pandemic. Grants of £300 - £700 are available. The deadline for submission is 5th March.
- 13.3 Temporary Traffic Notice - Edeswell Farm to Shorter Cross, Harberton Cllrs were informed that the road would be closed for drainage works between 8th – 12th February, with an alternative signed route in place.
- 13.4 Local Bus and Community Transport Services Cllrs were informed that despite the Government's letter outlining the principle of reducing services to reflect the fall in passenger numbers DCC will not be implementing reductions to County-supported services for as long as sufficient Government funding remains in place. This is because many Devon services are infrequent and cannot be realistically reduced without undermining the requirement to continue to cater for essential travel, and maintain social distancing. Some duplicate school services and commercial routes have been reduced. The community transport sector is largely continuing its range of services and voluntary care schemes are helping patients attend medical appointments.
- 13.5 DALC Newsletter 05 2021 Cllrs were informed that this issue focuses on the latest COVID news, commenting that cases in Devon are the highest they've been since the start of the pandemic and everyone is encouraged to think twice before leaving home. All main hospitals are now vaccinating priority patients, GPs are working together across 20 vaccination centres, 2 mass vaccinations in Plymouth and Exeter will be on stream at the end of the month, GP-led vaccinations in care homes have begun and a pharmacy programme is being developed. Community testing in universities, schools and some large employers is being introduced.
- 13.6 Business Grants Get Easier - Apply Now Cllrs were informed that businesses in need of financial grants are being encouraged to come forward and apply through a much simpler process with 11 different Government grant schemes available.
- 13.7 Public Consultation on Rural Transport (closes 16.02.21) Cllrs were informed that the Department for Transport is seeking views and evidence from all those with an interest in rural transport on what could be

incorporated into a Future of Transport Rural Strategy. The consultation is open until 16/02/21
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-transport-rural-strategy-call-for-evidence>

- 13.8 You Count – Sign Up For Election Roles Now Cllrs were informed that planning for elections on 6th May is underway and are inviting local people to sign up to fill paid Poll Clerk roles. Elections are currently due to take place with COVID social distancing measures in place.
- 13.9 Kingsbridge Gymnastics Club funding request town and parish council Cllrs were informed of a request for a grant to support the club. It was agreed that a grant would not be offered.
- 13.10 Parking Proposals – Have Your Say Cllrs were informed that a public consultation on a 4% increase to car parking charges in SHDC owned car parks and other proposals is open until 25th February. To view and comment on the proposals follow this link: www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/carparkingconsultation

14. Finance

- 14.1 Notice of income and expenditure since last meeting.
- 14.1.1 25/01/21 Deposit £500: Annual rent from Harbertonford Allotment Society
- 14.1.2 12/01/21 Payment 2101_3 Harbertonford Christmas Tree Community Benefit Fund Grant = £400 no VAT
- 14.1.3 12/01/21 Payment 2101_4 Citizens Advice South Hams Community Benefit Fund Grant = £200 no VAT

14.2 To consider payments as per the February 2021 payment schedule

- 14.2.1 Payment 2102_1 to Cat Radford, payslip dated 22nd February 2021 includes Clerk February salary at £441.31 and Neighbourhood Plan February salary at £50.92 = £492.23 no VAT
- 14.2.2 Payment 2102_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk expenses claim dated 3rd February 2021 includes mileage at £2.34, Zoom subscription reimbursement at £14.39, Mobile phone credit at £5.00, Broadband costs at £7.50, plus Quarter 3 overtime payment 2 of 3 noted on payslip at £145.12 = £174.35 no VAT
- 14.2.3 Payment 2102_3 to Mat Electrics invoices 41086 & 41087 for Maintenance Service Visits to Harberton and Harbertonford Lighting Columns at £179.90 plus £35.98 VAT = £215.88
- 14.2.4 Payment 2102_4 to Veaseys for 350 x A5 Double Sided 'Harberton Helps' Colour Flyers = £35 no VAT
- 14.2.5 Payment 2102_5 to St Andrew's PCC for graveyard maintenance = £450 no VAT
- 14.2.6 Payment 2102_6 to Colin Finch for Allotments = £500 no VAT

15. **E-Circulars** Cllrs were informed that the following circulars were received: Citizens Advice South Hams, Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency, Devon Communities Together, Devon County Council Community News Round-up, Devon Home Choice, Emergency Planning newsletter, Harberton Village Email, Healthwatch Devon, Information Commissioners Office, Public Sector Executive, Rural Services Network, SLCC Membership, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust.

16. Matters at the discretion of the Chairman: Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

- 16.1 Pot holes past Dundridge It was noted that these had been reported.
- 16.2 Marquee in Harberton Square The Chair had received some complaints that parking and access through Harberton Square is difficult due to the marquee and seating outside the pub. It was agreed that the pub needs support of the community, but the Chair agreed to speak with the landlord to raise the concerns.
- 16.3 Thank you to Cllr Davidson Cllr Davidson was thanked for her service to the Parish Council over the years, thanked for her chairing of the Parish Council and her service to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. She will be sadly missed. It was agreed that the Parish owes her a gratitude for all that she has done. Cllr Davidson responded that it has been a pleasure and an honour to work with everyone, it has been fun and she will be sad to go.

17. **Date of next ordinary meeting** Tuesday 9th March 2021