

**THURSLEY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of Meeting**

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020 at 7.00 pm**  
**Remote meeting via Zoom Video Conferencing**

**Attendees:** Cllr J. Mendelssohn (Chair)      Cllr S. Edwards      Cllr H. Flavell  
Cllr P. Hunter      Cllr J. Luff      Cllr R. Owen  
Cllr J. Swift      Mrs E. Felton (Clerk)

**Also attending were:** Cllr D. Harmer SCC (to 7.30 pm)

**1.0 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Cllr Mendelssohn welcomed everyone to the first video conferencing meeting. No apologies had been received.

**2.0 ADOPTION OF VIRTUAL MEETING PROTOCOL**

Councillors passed a resolution to adopt the Virtual Meeting Protocol which had been available to them in advance of the meeting. It was noted that this would apply in exceptional circumstances only when face to face meetings were not possible.

**3.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No members disclosed any (a) Personal, (b) Prejudicial interests which they are required to disclose by section 94(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Parish Council (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007.

**4.0 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 were approved by the Council and would be signed by the Chairman and provided to the Clerk electronically.

**5.0 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

(5.1) Cllr Mendelssohn advised that following cancellation of the meeting that had been arranged with Mr Zac Ellwood (WBC) and Cllr Flavell, it had been re-arranged to take place via Skype later in the month. **He agreed to send details of the rescheduled meeting to Cllr Flavell.**

(5.2) **The Clerk was asked to check with Cllr David Else to see if he had checked to see if the Planning Inspector was provided with details of the Committee meeting at which the refusal decision for an application in Bowlhead Green had been made.**

(5.3) It was noted that Cllr Edwards have provided Cllr Luff with the pictures of the Clump earlier in the day. It was agreed that these would be taken into account when considering what should be done with the Clump in the future.

(5.4) **Cllr Hunter agreed to provide Cllr Flavell with details of the arrangements for the power supply for the defibrillators so that she could complete the draft licences.**

(5.5) It was noted that the Clerk had invited the Leader and Deputy Leader of WBC to meet with Councillors but that this was currently on hold.

(5.6) Cllr Owen advised that he had been looking at signage options for the zip wire. It was noted that the play area is currently closed. Cllr Owen highlighted the cost of an engineer undertaking the repair works. Discussion took place regarding safety and liability considerations.

(5.7) Cllr Edwards reported that another lorry had already driven over the grass verge in Highfield Lane that had been previously damaged.

(5.8) It was noted that VAS arrangements were on hold at present following the reallocation of staff to support key services at this time.

## **6.0 COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

(6.1) Cllr Harmer advised that only urgent and emergency decisions were being taken by SCC at this time so he had nothing to report. He advised that he was available to answer any questions or respond to concerns that people may have.

(6.2) Cllr Mendelsohn raised the subject of potholes. Cllr Harmer advised that all potholes should be reported and people should not rely on others to report on their behalf as it is important that the level of concern/complaints are understood by SCC so that they can take appropriate action.

## **7.0 PLANNING ISSUES AND COMMUNICATIONS**

(7.1) WA/2020/0371 – Bedford Farm, Bedford Lane, Thursley  
Conversion of ancillary outbuilding to form independent dwelling together with change of use of land to residential garden, creation of access road and associated works.

Following discussion and review of the documents, it was agreed that the Parish Council had no comment regarding the application

(7.2) Cllr Mendelsohn reported that he had been contacted by a lawyer appointed by the Architects Registration Board to request a statement from the Parish Council regarding possible inaccurate information supporting a historical planning application in the village. It was noted that Mr Zac Ellwood was aware of the case being investigated.

## **8.0 HIGHWAYS**

(8.1) Cllr Luff advised that he had serious concerns regarding the parking of vehicles on the A3 by Warren Park during the night-time works taking place. It was noted that the contractors appear to be allowed to park on the A3 whilst others are asked to consider the restrictions that exist. It was noted that there are other less dangerous places that they could park.

Following discussion it was agreed that **Cllr Luff should contact Mr Jeremy Hunt MP with a copy to Cllr Harmer, to raise his concerns.**

*Cllr Harmer left the virtual meeting at 7.30 pm.*

## 9.0 FINANCE

(9.1) The following list of payments for April were presented, duly authorised and approved for payment:

Voucher Reference	Payee		Amount
001/20	Surrey ALC Ltd	Annual Subscription	216.03
002/20	E. Felton	Salary & expenses	£380.47
003/20	HMRC	April Payment	£93.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£689.50</b>

(9.2) It was noted that additional payments for March had been approved as follows:

00056	Richard Knight	Repair works	£32.00
00057	Richard Bates	Grass cutting insurance	£135.87
00058	Eibe	Play area repairs	£625.51
00059	E. Felton	Expenses	£190.50
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£983.88</b>

(9.3) It was noted that the Precept had been received and the Armed Forces Covenant grant was due to be received in April.

(9.4) Discussion took place regarding the budget review document showing actual costs to end March 2020 which had been available to Councillors in advance of the meeting.

It was noted that the VAT claim amount for 2019-20 and the Parish Field rent had both been received into the bank account in March 2020.

The Clerk highlighted that the actual expenditure for salary and Clerk expenses totalled the budget amount although the split between the two categories was different.

The Clerk advised that although the 'Playground Furniture and Maintenance' expenditure amount was slightly higher than the budget, it should be noted that there was a grant amount received from SCC to cover the majority of the difference.

It was noted that the closing balance was approx. £2,000 more than the opening amount but that this was largely due to the VAT and Parish Field rent being received early.

(9.5) The Clerk explained the usual timescale for the Annual Audit process and advised that the timetable had been extended by two months due to the current situation.

(9.6) Following an explanation from the Clerk regarding the AGAR process, it was noted that the Parish Council could apply for a Certificate of Exemption for the 2019-20 period as the income and expenditure amounts are under the £25k limit.

Following discussion and consideration of the criteria statements for exception, it was agreed that the Certificate of Exemption Certificate be completed so that a limited assurance review is not undertaken. It was noted that all financial information would still be prepared, publicised and available for public scrutiny as usual.

## **10.0 THURSLEY CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTION GROUP**

Cllr Mendelsohn thanked Cllr Swift for circulating a document to Councillors in advance of the meeting providing an update on the work of the action group.

Cllr Swift advised that there was some frustration that the work of the group could not now be launched at the Annual Assembly meeting due to its cancellation but there had been a lot of work started and some good ideas put forward for the future.

He proposed that the action group be established as a sub-committee of the Parish Council and that the Council take responsibility for the financial transactions. Cllr Flavell raised a question about whether there were possible implications of the Parish Council holding funds for such activity. It was noted that the Fire Fund arrangements in place were similar to what was being proposed in that the work of the action group was a benefit to the community.

Councillors approved the appointment of the action group as a sub-committee of the Parish Council. It was noted that several Councillors were members of the committee along with parishioners and that Cllr Swift would act as Chair.

## **11.0 THURSLEY TREE PLANTING SCHEME**

Cllr Swift made reference to the report which he had circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the proposal was that the arrangements be similar to the Thursley Climate and Sustainability Action Group in that a sub-committee be formed and the financial aspects for donations be controlled through the Parish Council account.

In the context of the group seeking donations to allow the purchase of trees, Councillor Flavell raised the question of compliance with relevant fund-raising rules that have recently been introduced for charities.

**Following discussion, Cllr Swift agreed to investigate to ensure that the arrangement complied with legislation.** It was agreed that the financial aspect be discussed at the next meeting once the situation has been clarified. It was noted that a donation already received would be returned to the parishioner.

## **12.0 BOWLHEAD GREEN BROADBAND ISSUE**

Cllr Mendelssohn provided an overview of the problems experienced in Bowlhead Green due to the non-availability of broadband for approx. thirty households for a period of 6-7 weeks due to a tree taking down the overhead fibre cables. It was noted that residents had taken actions to resolve and highlight the problem which had raised the profile of the issue with Open Reach.

Cllr Mendelssohn advised that he had managed to speak to interested parties including the landowner and a senior person within Open Reach. He explained that as a long-term resolution the landowner had given permission for the cables to be laid underground across his property and that in the medium term the three existing cables causing the problem would be replaced with one more robust cable.

He advised that the immediate challenge to be overcome was that forestry work was required to ensure that the overhead cables are not restricted due to branches, etc. It was noted that the landowner was keen to support this work and that a meeting had been arranged (with social distancing in place) with interested parties, including the landowner's tree surgeon, to meet the following week to identify the priority areas requiring immediate work. However, due to the current situation not all were now available to attend.

Cllr Mendelssohn advised that the meeting was still to take place with a different tree surgeon and Mr Robert Ranson in attendance. He agreed to provide an update at the next meeting.

## **13.0 VE COMMEMORATION**

Cllr Swift reported that although work continues to prepare the display boards etc. for the planned commemoration, the event was unlikely to take place. It was noted that the commemoration events may be re-arranged to take place later in the year.

Following discussion it was agreed that the purchase and installation of a bench on the recreation ground should also be delayed.

**Cllr Swift agreed to communicate with the Armed Forces Covenant who had provided a grant for the commemorative events to take place, to highlight the delays.**

## **14.0 CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS**

(14.1) The Clerk reported that the following communications had been received:

- Confirmation that all polls had been postponed and would not take place until after 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- The parish did not have any CIL funds to consider

(14.2) It was noted that the deadline for receipt of articles for the May parish magazine was 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020. Cllr Mendelssohn advised that he would be including his annual report in the magazine following the cancellation of the Annual Assembly meeting.

(14.3) It was noted that communications had been received from parishioners for and against the closure of the recreation ground park and the support being offered by Help in Thursley at the current time.

Discussion took place regarding the Government guidance regarding people staying at home and not driving to exercise due to the current situation. It was noted that there had been recent further Government guidance advising that you could drive for five minutes to take your daily exercise.

Discussion took place regarding whether the recreation ground car park should be re-opened or remain closed. It was suggested that some parishioners do need to drive to exercise but it was recognised that as the recreation ground car park allows good access to the common, it was also likely to attract a large number of people as was evidenced the weekend following the lockdown. It was recognised that parishioners are fortunate in that they have access to the common which many people do not.

It was noted that the decision to close the car park had been taken following advice from the Police and that many local car parks remain closed. Cllr Owen stressed that the guidance was clear that people should stay at home. Cllr Mendelssohn agreed that he was supportive of the need for the car park to remain closed.

**It was agreed that Cllr Mendelssohn should speak again with Inspector Gary Smith from Surrey Police to get his view on the matter** but in the meantime, the car park remain closed.

(14.4) Cllr Owen highlighted the problem with motorised vehicles continuing to drive on the BOAT's during the current lockdown. Cllr Flavell advised that it was important for all such activities at any time, not just in the current time, to be reported to Surrey Police so that they can monitor and take action.

(14.5) Cllr Luff asked if any further communication had been received from Natural England regarding the Hammer Pond restoration works. Cllr Mendelssohn advised that he had mentioned the need for WBC to prioritise the planning application due to the tight timescale to get the works completed but it had not yet appeared on the planning portal website. It was noted that there were likely to be delays of approx. three months to planning applications. **Cllr Mendelssohn agreed to ask Mr Zac Ellwood for an update.**

## **15.0 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT NEXT MEETING**

- Items carried forward from above
- Clerks Remuneration 2020-21 (if available)

It was noted that the virtual meeting arrangements had worked well but were only to be used in exceptional circumstances and will not replace face to face meetings in the future once restrictions are lifted. It was agreed that the circulation of reports in advance of the meeting worked well. Cllr Mendelssohn thanked Councillors for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00 pm.

Signed .....

**5<sup>th</sup> May 2020**