

THURSLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting

Tuesday 2nd June 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 Cllr J. Else (WBC) Cllr D. Else (WBC)
Mr D. Marcus (to 7.30pm) Mrs H. Marcus (to 7.30pm)

1.0 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Clerk reported that all Parish Councillors were present so no apologies were necessary.

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mendelssohn declared a personal interest of agenda item 6) ii) WA/2020/0736 as the homeowner of the property to which the planning application applied. It was noted that he would be removed from the meeting at the appropriate time and would not be involved in the discussion item.

No other 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.

3.0 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th May 2020 were approved by the Council and would be signed by the Chairman and provided to the Clerk electronically.

4.0 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

(4.1) Cllr Luff confirmed that the issue of Highways vehicles parked by Warren Park had been resolved and the work completed.

(4.2) Cllr Mendelssohn confirmed that he had spoken to a Village Hall representative to advise that the Parish Council agreed their proposal in principle and that they would comment further once the planning application had been received from WBC.

(4.3) Cllr Swift confirmed that he had provided details of the proposed bin storage unit. It was noted that it was a woven wicker design and was fully enclosed with a back. He confirmed that the Three Horseshoes had agreed to siting the unit. It was noted that volunteers would continue to empty the bins.

(4.4) Cllr Mendelssohn confirmed that Jackie Malton had agreed to be the new Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator and had already been very active in the role following suspicious activity and a burglary of garden furniture shortly after her appointment.

(4.5) Cllr Mendelsohn advised that he had informed the Village Hall Committee about the grant that may be available to them from WBC.

(4.6) Cllr Mendelsohn confirmed that he had included in his report the previous month a request for parishioners to help with clearing footpaths. It was noted that a parishioner had posted a photo of a very well-maintained footpath.

5.0 COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORTS

(5.1) Cllr Harmer provided an overview of the problems experienced in Frensham over the recent bank holiday weekend regarding inappropriate parking of a high number of vehicles visiting the pond area. It was noted that wooden barriers had been erected on the green in front of the school to deter future incidents. He advised that the Frensham and Churt Parish Councils were meeting to consider how to avoid this in the future.

Cllr Mendelsohn highlighted that Thursley experience the same problems with regards parking as there is no infrastructure to support the number of visitors to the area.

It was suggested that maybe the Parish Councils affected work together on this matter.

(5.2) Cllr Mendelsohn advised that although it was his intention to talk about the recent fire at the end of the meeting, he did want to highlight that no communication had been received from SCC regarding the emergency situation although it was a major incident.

(5.3) Cllr Harmer advised that the Community Recycling Centres were accepting a wider range of items from 1st June and that discussion was taking place about when libraries would be able to re-open.

(5.4) Cllr David Else reported that the items on the agenda for the first virtual WBC Full Council meeting for some time are to approve changes to the constitution to allow for arrangements during the current period e.g. Planning Committee changes. It was noted that the first Planning Committee meeting for the area was due to take place on 1st July.

(5.5) Cllr Jenny Else advised that another agenda item for the meeting was the appointment of the Mayor.

(5.6) Cllr Jenny Else advised that residents in Cranleigh and Haslemere were experiencing on-going water supply issues. She highlighted that South East Water had asked that residents be mindful of their water usage at this time due to an extended period of hot weather.

6.0 PLANNING ISSUES AND COMMUNICATIONS

(6.1) WA/2020/0716 – Heath Hall, Bowlhead Green, GU8 6NW
Erection of extensions with alterations to elevations and fenestrations

Following discussion and review of the documents, it was agreed that the Parish Council supported the application.

Mr and Mrs Marcus and Cllr Harmer left the meeting at 7.30 pm.

The Clerk moved Cllr Mendelsohn to the virtual waiting room..

(6.2) WA/2020/0736 – Bears Barn, Dye House Road, GU8 6QD
Alterations to elevations with installation of air source heat pump.

Following discussion and review of the documents, it was agreed that in light of the environmental aspects, the Parish Council supported the application although a comment should be made to WBC that the support was subject to the unit meeting the manufacturers claims regarding noise levels so that there is no disturbance to neighbours.

Cllr Mendelsohn re-joined the meeting.

(6.3) WA/2020/0754 – Hammer Pond, Dye House Road
Construction of a new Attenuating Embankment Structure and Associated Water Control Structures to reinstate Hammer Pond as a Standing Waterbody and Gravity-Fed Flows to three Adjoining Watercourses (this application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement)

Following discussion and review of the documents, it was agreed that the Parish Council supported the application.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was noted that although no members of the public were present, two communications had been received as follows:

- Cllr Mendelsohn advised that following receipt of concerns received from parishioners about low flying aircraft over the village he had communicated with the appropriate MOD department and received a response to advise that training was necessary.
- It was noted that a communication had been received advising that a finger post sign at the bottom of Church Hill was missing. Following discussion Cllr Edwards agreed to investigate and contact Cllr Flavell to provide her with details so that she can make the necessary arrangements for reinstatement. Cllr Flavell advised that SCC were looking at all signage within the area.

7.0 FINANCE

(7.1) Cllr Swift provided an update regarding the funding request from the Thursley Climate and Sustainability group. Following discussion it was agreed that a funding amount of £250 be agreed in principle. Cllr Swift agreed to continue with his negotiations.

(7.2) The following list of payments for June was presented, duly authorised and approved for payment:

June 2020 Payments			
Voucher Reference	Payee		Amount
008/20	Satswana	DPO service	£90.00
009/20	Zurich	Annual insurance renewal	£915.60
010/20	E. Felton	Salary & expenses	£389.78
011/20	HMRC	June Payment	£93.00
	TOTAL		£1,488.38

8.0 HIGHWAYS

(8.1) Cllr Hunter advised that as per Cllr Swift's request, he had attempted to contact Highways England to request that the correct signage be in place for the planned closure of the Hindhead tunnel this weekend but he had been unsuccessful. **He advised that he would attempt to make contact before the weekend.**

(8.2) In response to a question Cllr Luff confirmed that sections of the A3 had recently been closed for white-lining and then resurfacing works had taken place shortly after. **Cllr Mendelssohn asked Cllr Hunter to raise this concern when he is speaking with Highways England.**

(8.3) Cllr Luff reported that following recent replacement of a cycling sign close to Warren Park following it being hit by a vehicle, it had been knocked down again within a few days. He advised that residents from Warren Park walk on the area on which the sign is located and so the matter does need to be looked at as a matter of priority to avoid an accident. **Cllr Hunter agreed to speak to Highways England on this matter.**

9.0 THURSLEY TREE PLANTING SCHEME

Cllr Swift advised that donations had been received into the Parish Council account but that the target amount had not been reached. It was noted that an article in the recent edition of the parish magazine had included a graphic reminder of the fund raising.

Following discussion it was agreed that **Cllr Mendelssohn include reference to the scheme in his monthly report and that Councillors mention it to their friends and neighbours.**

10.0 THURSLEY FOOTBALL CLUB

Cllr Mendelssohn advised that he had been approached by someone living in the village about the possibility of a football club using the recreation ground as their home base. Discussion took place about siting of the pitch and coexistence with the cricket club. It was noted that the cricket club had no objection to sharing the facility at this time but further discussions would be required.

Councillors agreed in principle to support the proposal but it was noted that further discussion was needed if the football team wish to proceed. Discussion took place regarding liability and car parking arrangements. **Cllr Mendelsohn agreed to contact the resident to see if they wish to progress the matter.**

Cllr Harmer re-joined the meeting at 8.00 pm.

11.0 CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS

- Receipt of an article from WBC advising that bin collection days may change from 6th July 2020. It was noted that this is on the news page of the website.
- The Clerk advised that she had received several communications regarding overgrown footpaths and that these had been reported online to SCC.
- Following a communication about the condition of the war memorial, it was noted that the Rector was making arrangements for it be repaired/cleaned but this required approval from the diocese.

11.0 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT NEXT MEETING

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

12.0 FIRE – EMERGENCY AGENDA ITEM

Cllr Mendelsohn provided an overview of the activities that had taken place from Saturday onwards in response to the fire on the common. He advised that it had been a fast-moving period during which he had had to make decisions quickly and although he had contacted some Councillors for advice, to ensure a speedy response it had been necessary for him to act without input on some matters.

It was noted that there had been a high level of activity about the fire on social media. Cllr Mendelsohn advised that he had received a high number of emails, phone calls, messages etc.

Cllr Mendelsohn advised that Ben Alexander the SFRS volunteer, the Police and SFRS had provided excellent support and communication had been good.

He reported that early Sunday afternoon he had been informed that it may be necessary to evacuate some Thursley residents following which eighteen Police cars had arrived with Officers to assist in the process. It was noted that the Church was opened and the Village Hall was made available as the Police command post but that they had been moved to the Cricket Pavilion on Monday morning.

Cllr Mendelsohn reported that apart from those residents who chose to leave, it was not necessary for those remaining parishioners to be evacuated. Discussion took place regarding the evacuation arrangements for vulnerable residents. It was noted that there had been a great number of offers of support for residents and horses etc. in the event of an evacuation.

Cllr Mendelssohn reported that on Monday the worst was over with much of the fire extinguished and the fire breaks had not been breached. It was noted that James and Peter Goble and others had done an excellent job over the weekend creating more fire breaks resulting in an evacuation not being necessary.

Cllr Mendelssohn advised that the common was likely to be re-opened within the next couple of days but that there would be clear guidelines about where visitors could go etc.

Cllr Mendelssohn advised that he was very concerned about the level of support received from WBC in response to the emergency. He advised that he had been in contact with the WBC CEO and that following discussions he had prepared a timeline of events detailing the actions and communications so that this could be discussed with them in order to ensure a better level of support be available in the future should it be necessary.

It was noted that both Ward Councillors, Cllr Jenny Else and Cllr David Else, had worked closely with both Thursley and Elstead Parish Councils throughout the weekend and had provided support as needed. Cllr Mendelssohn thanked Cllrs Jenny and David Else for their support over the weekend.

Cllr Jenny Else reported that thirty seven people from fourteen homes had been evacuated in Elstead on Saturday evening and although the majority had found alternative accommodation, two vulnerable residents had been housed at the pavilion in Elstead until the Police were able to find their friend to take them in late Saturday evening.

Discussion took place about WBC not making a rest centre and professional support officers available until Sunday morning and their response to the initial communications to inform them of the emergency. It was noted that although the Borough Hall had been opened on Sunday morning, Thursley had not been made aware of this arrangement.

Cllr Jenny Else advised that she would be working with WBC and other parties to ensure that the matter be reviewed to ensure an improved response in the event that it is needed for such an emergency in the future.

Discussion took place about why SCC had not alerted WBC to the emergency situation so that they could work with Parish Councils as per the emergency protocol.

Cllr Mendelssohn reported that as a result of emergency situation Thursley and Elstead Parish Council Chairs, Clerks and Ward Councillors had met with James Giles earlier in the day to discuss how best to support Natural England and ensure appropriate actions are taken. It was suggested that a joint approach with both Parish Councils working collaboratively to raise funds was an efficient way forward. Cllr Mendelssohn outlined a number of options which had been discussed regarding the use of fund-raising platforms, banking arrangements, etc.

It was noted that if Councillors agreed a joint working relationship with Elstead Parish Council, a fund-raising launch could take place within the next couple of days with details being available on websites, social media etc.

Councillors agreed that a joint working relationship was the best way to proceed. It was noted that an agreement would be prepared and a committee formed consisting of representatives from both villages to manage the project.

Cllr Mendelsohn advised that although fund-raising would commence immediately there would be a period of time spent considering options on how best to use the funds.

Discussion took place about the need to avoid the common becoming a visitor attraction rather than a nature reserve. Cllr Owen highlighted that there was a recent report online about the best five places to visit in Surrey which had included the common. Cllr Mendelsohn advised that there were a range of ideas and suggestions to be considered as part of the process.

It was noted that it was necessary for progress to be made quickly and there had been little time available to consult. The three steps of an emergency response – cope, manage, move forward were highlighted.

Discussion took place about the level of support received from individuals, SFRS and the Police during the course of the incident. It was acknowledged that Peter and James Goble did an amazing job over the weekend. Cllr Hunter suggested that Cllr Harmer make arrangements for a personal letter of thanks to be sent to them. **Cllr Harmer asked that he be provided with their contact details and details of their support.** It was noted that the SFRS and Police and others also should receive thanks for their support.

Cllr Hunter proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr Mendelsohn who worked extraordinarily over the weekend to ensure the safety of parishioners and to provide regular updates.

Cllr Harmer provided details of the Surrey Local Resilience Forum for which the Chair of the group was on rotation and included Stephen Owen-Hughes (Head of Surrey Community Protection Group (Chief Fire Officer) at Surrey County Council who had been present over the weekend.

Following discussion it was agreed that the concerns raised about the level of support by SCC and WBC needed to be clarified so that it can be clear so that all parties know their role. Cllr Jenny Else advised that she understood a de-briefing meeting would take place with all interested parties.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

The date of the next meeting is **Tuesday 14th July 2020** at 7.00 pm.

Signed

14th July 2020