

DRAFT

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Jim MacDonald

CLERK: Jenny Hollington

Minutes of an on-line Parish Council Teams Meeting held on Monday, 6th July 2020 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Jim MacDonald (in the Chair) Kate Ashfield Simon Bridger
Terry Cook Peter Cruttenden Chris Laycock
Jeff Graham Nick Hurst Jenny Martin

Clerk: Jenny Hollington

There were 3 members of the public present on-line for the meeting

Minute	Item	Action
20/84	<u>APOLOGIES</u> – None received	
20/85	<u>MINUTES</u> – The Minutes of the on-line Teams Meeting held on Monday 1 st June were approved as a correct record of the meeting. The Clerk was asked to initial and sign the Minutes on this occasion due to Covid-19 restrictions.	Clerk
20/86	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare an interest in any matter on the Agenda – Cllr. Bridger declared an interest in the first item on the agenda (20/87) as he is the applicant.	
20/87	<u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u> – Land S.E. of Gardner’s Farm (SDNP/200823?CND) - At the June on-line Parish Council Teams Meeting, a member of the public asked for the reaction of the Parish Council to EHDC’s decision to approve the application to allow continued use of the barn at Burryer’s Farm as B2 permanently, despite their objection. The Case Officer’s report has since been re-circulated to Councillors to enable them to consider the report in detail. It was agreed that the Chairman should write to Tim Slaney, Director of Planning at SDNPA, outlining the Parish Council’s concern over the growing trend towards industrial use both in Steep Marsh and across the South Downs National Park in general and over the fact that the Parish Council’s concerns and objection appear to have been glossed over by the Case Officer in this instance.	Chair
20/88	<u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u> – <ul style="list-style-type: none">Land S.E. of Gardner’s Farm – A close neighbour of Burryer’s Common Farm said he felt it should have been possible to ensure that the permanent permission was allowed for the current business only and that a condition should be applied to ensure the barn is sound proofed. The Chairman said that it is his belief that permission had been granted for the preparation of rally cars only and that the barn could not be used for any other B2 industrial use.	
20/89	<u>CORONAVIRUS – UPDATE FROM THE STEEP VOLUNTEER GROUP</u> – Life within the parish is gradually returning to normal. Matt Potts, Catering Manager at Bedales, is now only delivering to a few vulnerable residents and will stop on 27 th July to take a well-earned break before the start of the School term in September. He will ensure that his customers are made aware of this.	

The Chairman continues to attend the now bi-weekly Teams Meeting led by Jacqui Evans, EHDC Community Manager. Towns and villages across the District are being urged to keep their volunteer groups at the ready in case of a second wave of Covid-19 in the Autumn. All residents

should remain alert.

20/90 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Cllr. Oppenheimer’s report had been circulated ahead of the meeting and the main items were noted as follows:

- **Hampshire Waste & Recycling Centres** – A new booking system has been introduced and the number of slots available each day increased to cope with demand. To book a slot please visit - www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/recyclingcentres/book-appointment
- **Highways** – Whilst the roads have been quieter the Highways teams have been kept busy carrying out maintenance work across the County. They are now installing pop up measures for sharing road space, allowing people to safely carry on walking and cycling across Hampshire.
- **Libraries** – Restrictions are being eased to make it easier to visit and borrow books from the Library
- **SDNPA** – Margaret Paren has come to the end of her term as Secretary of State Member of SDNPA and been thanked for her outstanding service and achievements. A new Chairman, Ian Philips, will be formally elected at a meeting on 7th July.

The County Councillor’s full report is appended to the Minutes and will be made available via the newsletter and P.C. website.

20/91 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – Cllr. Drew’s monthly report had been circulated prior to the meeting and the following items noted:

- **Grants** – Details of grants available from EHDC have been circulated to the Parish Council and local groups.
- **Motorbike Noise** – Cllr. Drew continues to work with parishes within the Ward on this issue and will be raising it with Damien Hinds.
- **Support Group Volunteers** – Cllr. Drew extended thanks to all those who have volunteered to help support elderly and vulnerable residents across the Ward during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- **Froxfield Post Office and Shop** – The lease has been extended for 5 years and Cllr. Drew hoped that Steep and Steep Marsh residents would continue to use this facility for many years to come.

20/92 FINANCE

- (a) Grant Application for Victim Support – Councillors agreed that more evidence of service provision within the parish is required to enable an application for funding to be considered – therefore on this occasion the request was turned down. It was pointed out that the knowledge gained by the Steep Support Group could be of use in supporting vulnerable residents ourselves (for further discussion in September). Clerk
- (b) Bank Reconciliation – The June bank reconciliation had been circulated prior to the meeting and was approved
- (c) Cheques – The following cheques for July payment were approved:

Chq No.		Payee	Service
100327	£130.00	Deborah Ashfield	Replacement cheque (admin f.o.i.)
100328	£40.00	PetaPrint Ltd.	Leaflet - Steep Volunteer Group
100329	£16.80	Petersfield Town Council	Dog Bin - Steep Common - May
100330	£987.50	Bill Robinson	Lengthsman work - June
100331	£150.00	Traffic Technology	Pre-Inspection Service
100332	£60.00	T. Morgan	Website accessibility widget
100333	£762.23	J. Hollington	Clerk + expenses (postage stamps)
Total :	£2,146.53		

As there is no Parish Council Meeting in August, a list of cheques for payment will be circulated to Councillors by the Clerk, to be approved by the Finance Sub Committee and cheque signatories.

Clerk

20/93 LAND AT CHURCH ROAD - As previously documented, the two public meetings planned for March and April to discuss the open space element of any development at Church Road, had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Parish Council remains keen to engage with residents on this important element of development to keep the project moving. Councillors discussed options for public consultation within the current restrictions – e.g. manned gazebo at the Village Hall/Steep Common, letter inviting comments to be sent to all residents (approximate cost of postage £500), and/or a combination of both of these ideas with back-up from the website and newsletter (note – there is no newsletter during August). It was agreed that the sub committee should meet to discuss possible forms of public consultation in more detail - a sum of up to £500 was approved for expenditure if necessary. The Parish Council will aim for public participation to be concluded by the third week of September.

Sub-
Com

20/94 SDNPA S.106 MONIES – It was noted that SDNPA have allocated the sum of just over £600 from S.106 monies to the Parish Council towards general maintenance of public open spaces.

20/95 LUTCOMBE POND – The plan to repair the leak at Lutcombe Pond appears to have stalled because of HCC regulations which require 3 quotations for work (even though very specialised). Pete Durnell has been asked to look at alternative options, but nothing further has been heard. The situation is particularly frustrating as water levels are currently very low and would have been ideal for repairs to be carried out. It was agreed that the Chairman should chase the situation via Cllr. Oppenheimer.

Chair

20/96 ROADS AND TRAFFIC –

(a) Motorcycle Noise – The Chairman has not yet had a response to his letter to the Chief Constable on this issue. In the meantime, he will liaise with Russell Oppenheimer about the possibility of closing BOATs to motorcycle traffic.

Chair

(b) Phase 2 Traffic Management Scheme – Stoner Hill/Bell Hill – An application has been submitted to EHDC for £4,250 towards Village Gates from S.106 funds. Nothing further has been heard from Joe Folland at Hampshire who is hoping the project will be allocated central funding from SDNPA.

20/97 STEEP COMMON

(a) Play equipment – The Government has given the green light for play equipment to be re-opened to the public providing a risk assessment is carried out and various procedures put in place to ensure safety. EHDC have issued simple guidance for smaller parishes to enable them to show due diligence in this respect. In addition, Community First have offered to arrange

training in carrying out risk assessments focussed on this area.

- (b) Ash Die-back – This is becoming a serious issue and a priority list is required for the Common. It was agreed that Cllrs. Cook, Graham and MacDonald should meet to take a closer look and bring a proposal to the Parish Council for consideration in September in order that the work can take place in the Autumn.

TC/JG/
Chair

20/98 FOOTPATHS

- (a) Footpaths 13 and 22a – Chris Budd has done an extremely good job of repairing the surface of Footpath 13. Cllr. Bridger was thanked for his help in clearing overgrowth along Footpath 22a.
- (b) Grant Application towards tools for Volunteer Group – The proposal to apply for grant funding from HCC towards a brush cutter for the Hampshire Monday Group was considered very appropriate. The Hampshire Monday Group are a well established and trained group who have already carried out various works within the parish. They have also indicated a willingness to get involved with and support repairs at Lutcombe Pond as well as improvements to surfacing of Footpath 20 (Hangers Way).

Clerk

20/99 CORRESPONDENCE

- **NALC Consultation on new model code of Code of Conduct** – There were no specific comments. The P.C. will look at incorporating recommendations into their Code of Conduct in due course.
- **Neighbourhood Watch** – Information for a local co-ordinator has been displayed on noticeboards and sent to the newsletter team.
- **Steep Flower Show** – At this stage, the Flower Show Committee are unsure whether they will be able to organise an event this year due to social distancing restrictions. Steep Parish Council confirmed they remain committed to supporting the Flower Show Committee if it is decided at the last minute to arrange a small-scale event on Steep Common that fits with Government guidance.
- **Footpath 13** – The Parish Council has been made aware of an unofficial 2-week closure of this popular footpath during work to improve access to neighbouring properties/garages. The company concerned has been advised of correct procedure but appear to be pressing on regardless. It was agreed that the Chairman should write expressing disappointment over their handling of the situation.

Chair

20/100 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – It is hoped that the next meeting of Steep Parish Council can be held at Steep Village Hall in September – details to be confirmed.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS
1 JULY 2020**

1. HWRCs

Early in June it became necessary to implement a booking system at HWRCs due to problems with queueing. The queues were disrupting local businesses at a time when many were trying to reopen. This was an unacceptable situation.

The booking system successfully reduced the queues but has had teething problems. I am aware that many residents have been frustrated that they cannot always book when they want to, with slots only released 48 hours in advance. I have been passing on all feedback I have received, which has been taken on board.

I am pleased to report that HCC is poised to increase the number of slots each day to 5,000 in total across Hampshire's network of 24 sites. This will be done by allowing more people to book in during each half hour slot. We are also increasing advance booking slot availability to allow people to book up to seven days in advance. These changes take effect next week.

We would continue to urge people to think about how they might waste less such as by composting food and garden waste, or upcycling or donating unwanted items.

Bookings for HWRCs can be made online at:

www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/recyclingcentres/book-appointment

2. Children's social care

I wanted to make Parishes aware of recent pressures on children's social care services which have the potential to impact communities, schools and the Council.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, Children's Services has continued to support children, young people and their families. The service has responded to all contacts about vulnerable or at-risk children, through the 'front door' (the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and the Out of Hours Service). During the first few weeks of lockdown the number of referrals was lower, but by May referrals were back to normal levels for the time of the year. In June, there has been a significant rise over and above what would normally be expected, and there is no evidence yet to suggest this is reducing. Between 1-8 June, there was an increase in referrals of around 30%.

For the 14 months prior to lockdown there had been a slow but sustained reduction in the numbers of looked after children, due to Children's Services' well-regarded transformation programme. However, the number of children in care has increased since April. This is primarily due to the lockdown measures which have been in place and the pressure that this has placed upon vulnerable families. Children's Services reasonably expects the number of children in care to increase as more return to school and nursery and become more visible to professionals. The complexity and severity of the cases has increased significantly in the last two months – and it is anticipated that more children will require urgent help and protection and to need to come into care for their own protection.

3. Hampshire Highways uses lockdown to ramp up repairs

The Hampshire Highways teams have used the time well over the past three months, carrying out maintenance work across the county, and changing schedules so that planned work near schools and businesses was completed when there was less traffic on the roads, thereby keeping disruption to a minimum. Our teams have also been working closely with utility companies to reschedule works that could otherwise have caused significant disruption during busier times.

Between March and May 2020, Hampshire Highways completed:

- ▲ 17,000 defect repairs
- ▲ The clearance of 55,000 gullies, catch-pits, weir kerbs and grips
- ▲ 280,000 sqm of surface treatment
- ▲ Repainting 232,000 metres of lines

▲ Cleaning 30,000 signs

As well as highways maintenance, highways teams have been supporting Hampshire through Covid-19 in a number of ways, including helping set up a warehouse used for the distribution of PPE and other essential equipment. Once we started to move into the stabilisation phase of recovery, after the initial lockdown, Highways teams have been helping manage the traffic demand at HWRC sites and also installing ‘pop-up’ measures for sharing road space, allowing people to safely carry on with the walking and cycling habits they had developed over the past three months.

4. Lockdown restrictions to ease for libraries

As the lockdown eases we will be putting in place the necessary measures at libraries to ensure staff and public safety – similar to those in shops now. All libraries will be Covid-secure, with hand sanitiser available and distancing measures in place. We would ask people to use the self-service kiosks as far as possible and expect to wait sometimes, as there will be reduced capacity in the buildings due to social distancing.

Changes in Hampshire libraries from 6 July include:

Ready Reads: We Select You Collect

Library staff will handpick a selection of books for customers who complete an online form or call 01962 454747. These can be collected without queuing.

Book Lending and Short Visits

To reduce wait times and allow as many people as possible to visit our libraries, people are asked to limit their visits to a maximum of 30 minutes and to keep browsing to an absolute minimum. Reserved items can also be collected at this time. Newspapers and magazines won't be available for the time being.

Self-service including new library app

Customers are asked to use self-service machines to borrow or return items where possible or download the new Spydus Mobile app to check out books by mobile phone.

Finally it is worth mentioning that we have seen an enormous increase in our digital services during lockdown, which is a small positive. As I have reported previously, the BorrowBox app contains books and audiobooks available for free to all Hampshire Library card holders.

5. South Downs Chairman Margaret Paren stands down after 10 years

Many Parishes will be aware that Margaret Paren led the successful campaign to establish the South Downs National Park, and subsequently has led the National Park Authority as Chairman since its formation in 2011. Margaret has now come to the end of her term as a Secretary of State Member and stood down yesterday during an emotional Zoom call with all Staff and Members. Margaret has been thanked for her outstanding service and achievements and was presented with a glass display ornament representing the curves and colours of the South Downs.

The National Park Authority will formally elect its new Chairman Ian Philips at a meeting on 7 July.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers