

DRAFT

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Jim MacDonald

CLERK: Jenny Hollington

Minutes of an on-line Parish Council Teams Meeting held on Monday, 7th September 2020 at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall

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

In Attendance: Russell Oppenheimer, County Councillor
Nick Drew, District Councillor
Jenny Hollington, Clerk

There were 3 members of the public present at the meeting

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Parish Council at Steep Village Hall since March due to the coronavirus pandemic. He explained that Cllr. Ashfield would be joining the meeting via Teams as she is currently taking extra precautions during the late stages of pregnancy – this was unanimously supported.

Minute	Item	Action
20/101	<u>APOLOGIES</u> – None received	
20/102	<u>MINUTES</u> – The Minutes of the on-line Teams Meeting held on Monday 6 th July were approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting.	
20/103	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare an interest in any matter on the Agenda –none declared.	
20/104	<u>RESIGNATION OF A PARISH COUNCILLOR</u> – The Chairman said that he had been saddened to speak to Simon Bridger in July and learn of his intention to resign from the Parish Council in order to concentrate on the farm business during these very difficult times.. He felt that Simon’s practical help and considered thoughts will be badly missed by the Parish Council and these sentiments were endorsed by all. The Chairman said he would write to thank Simon for his many years of service to the community.	Chair
	The Clerk confirmed that the notice of vacancy had been advertised on the noticeboards and the Parish Council website over August and EHDC have confirmed that there has been no request for an election and that the Parish Council can co-opt. This being the case, a further advert will be drafted for the October newsletter asking for expressions of interest by 26 th October. Anyone interested will be asked to write a few paragraphs outlining why they want to be a parish councillor and highlighting any relevant experience.	Clerk
20/105	<u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u> – <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A member of the public asked whether the Parish Council would be discussing the request for a mobile café site in the centre of the Village? The Chairman confirmed this was to be discussed under correspondence towards the end of the meeting.• A resident commented on the good condition of the parish footpath network in comparison to other villages but pointed out that the footpath map at the front of the Village Hall has become water damaged and needs replacing – the Clerk was asked to obtain a new map for	

the mapboard. It was noted that there is now a map of the parish footpaths on the Village website.

Clerk

- A resident congratulated the Parish Council on the quality of the Teams meetings during the coronavirus pandemic – he felt this was the way forward! He queried whether there had been any response from the Head of Planning at SDNPA in respect of Burryer’s Farm (Item 15a on the Agenda) and the Chairman confirmed that no response has yet been received. In respect of Item 15b on the Agenda, he asked whether the P.C. could write to the owner of the Brickyards asking for consideration of Steep Marsh residents? In respect of item 7 – the public consultation on 20% Open Space in Church Road, he said it had been difficult to comment without knowing the context of the whole site. Cllr. Cruttenden confirmed that SDNPA have stipulated that the 20% Open Space must be accessible from the Village Hall car park and also that there would be further opportunities for comment.

20/106 CORONAVIRUS – UPDATE FROM THE STEEP VOLUNTEER GROUP – The Chairman confirmed that there have been no requests for support in the last month and said that he would now write to all the volunteers to thank them for their efforts – the response had been fantastic. However, he felt it would be wrong to stand the volunteers down now, just as we approach the Winter months and a potential spike in coronavirus, so things will simply be put on ice for the time being. The District Councillor requested volunteer details be shared with EHDC and the Chairman said we would seek relevant permission in respect of GDPR. In respect of the £500 donation towards volunteer costs, it was agreed to write to the donor to ask what they would like the P.C. to do with any surplus.

Chair
Clerk

20/107 LAND AT CHURCH ROAD – The public consultation documentation on the 20% Open Space has been sent out to every household in the parish. Many of the envelopes were delivered by hand to keep costs down and the exercise has been very much a home-grown effort - a big thank you is due to Cllr. Ashfield for her input on the artwork. The closing date for responses to the consultation is 14th September and the P.C. will then capture the results and feed back to the community.

20/108 ELECTORAL ROLL – It had been noted during the public consultation exercise above that the electoral roll is not as clear and tidy as one might hope – many of the properties are listed by house name and Steep only. It was pointed out that a list of residences can be obtained from the Post Office and this may be more a more appropriate method of contacting each household in the future. It was agreed that, whilst not top priority, the Clerk would check with EHDC the best way for improvements to the Electoral Roll to be taken forward and in the meantime the Chairman will ask Jacqui Evans what method EHDC used when contacting all households in parishes during lockdown

Clerk
Chair

20/109 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Cllr. Oppenheimer’s report had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The following items were highlighted:

- **Green Recovery boost from Active Travel measures**
- **Back to School Safely Campaign**
- **GCSE and A Level results**
- **Careers Guidance for Young People**
- **Conclusion of Libraries consultation**
- **Financial position of HCC**

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

20/110 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – Cllr. Drew said it was good to be meeting in public once again and explained that because of poor internet connection he had not always been able to connect to Teams Meetings. EHDC Officers are still mainly working from home, but day to day

business continues! In particular - bin collections, business grant allocations and planning services have all been running efficiently. Items of particular interest to Steep P.C. were discussed as follows:

- Speed reduction on Stoner Hill – Cllr. Drew has given his support
- Enforcement at Brickyards – Cllr. Drew has followed up on residents’ concerns with EHDC Officers – however, he did not feel the response (copied to the Parish Council and circulated prior to the meeting) was satisfactory – he suggested that Steep P.C. might like to respond direct.
- Public consultation on Church Road – EHDC are willing to work with Parish Councils on the affordable homes’ element of any development – Cllr. Cruttenden confirmed that Steep P.C. would like to take up this offer of help.
- Motorbike noise – A Zoom meeting with Damien Hinds on this issue is to take place on Friday, 2nd October – Cllr. Laycock confirmed he could attend on behalf of Steep P.C.
- Food Bank – During the recent pandemic, there had been a far greater demand on the local food bank – Cllr. Drew donated £400 from his Councillor grant fund to assist.
- Green Initiatives – 1000 trees have been planted on the boundary of the Steep on land at Adhurst Allotments.

CL

20/111

FINANCE

- (a) Bank Reconciliation – The July and August bank reconciliations had been circulated prior to the meeting and were approved
- (b) Cheques – In the absence of a Parish Council meeting during August, the following cheques had been approved by cheque signatories:

Chq No.		Payee	Service
100334	£21.00	Petersfield Town Council	Dog bin - Steep Common - June
100335	£63.84	Nick Adams	Annual Play inspection
100336	£75.00	Thomas Morgan	Website Management
100337	£212.50	Bill Robinson	Lengthsman work - July
100338	£888.00	Chris Budd	F/P 13 re-surfacing
100339	£1.87	HMRC	Tax, N.I. and Employer's cont
100340	£737.57	J. Hollington	Clerk
100341	£315.04	HMRC	Arrears due 19-20
Total :	£2,314.82		

- (c) Cheques – The following cheques for September payment were approved:

Chq No.		Payee	Service
100342	£60.00	Mythic Beasts	Website hosting
100343	£174.00	Traffic Technology	Repair of speedwatch kit
100344	£144.50	PetaPrint	Brochure and posters - consultation
100345	£762.50	Bill Robinson	Lengthsman work - August
100347	£260.00	K. Ashfield	400 x 2nd class stamps - consultation

100348	£40.00	ICO	Data Protection
100349	£1.67	HMRC	Tax & NI, Clerk
100350	£743.43	J.Hollington	Clerk
100351	£2,124.42	Steep V. Hall	VAT refund - V. Hall
100352	£16.27	K. Ashfield	Envelopes - public consultation
Total :	£4,326.79		

- 20/112 STEEP WAR MEMORIAL – The War Memorial has been looking superb throughout lockdown, and especially for the commemorations of V.E. and V.J. Day in May and August. The Clerk was asked to write to Tony and Suzanne Knights who are doing a wonderful job of caring for the planting and decorating the Memorial appropriately, expressing appreciation on behalf of the Parish Council and the community. Clerk
- 20/113 LUTCOMBE POND – Concerns have been raised by members of the public about the low water level over the summer and the Chairman expressed concern that the project to repair the leak appears to have stalled at HCC. Cllr. Oppenheimer said he believed that the project has been delayed due to Covid-19 and undertook to check the status of the project with Pete Durnell and provide feedback to the parish asap.
- 20/114 STEEP COMMON
- (a) Ash Die-back – Three quotes have now been received for priority work to fell affected Ash at Steep Common including trees adjacent to Church Road, on the boundary of Steep School and close to the footpath. Details of the work to be undertaken and costs had been circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting. Following discussion of the quotes received, it was agreed to accept the quote from Sequoia in the sum of £3,500. Enquiries will be made of local log sellers to see if they are interested in taking the wood in return for a donation. Cllr. Graham was thanked for reporting on this item. JG/
Clerk
Chair/
JG/TC
- (b) Annual Play Inspection – The Common Sub-Committee will look at the report in greater depth and bring recommendations to the next meeting Clerk
- 20/115 PLANNING/ENFORCEMENT ISSUES
- (a) Land S.E. of Gardner’s Farm – No response has been received from SDNPA on this issue – the Clerk was asked to chase this item.
- (b) Brickyards – Residents concerns about out of hours use of the Brickyards has been raised with Enforcement Officers by Cllr. Drew. However, Officers have been unable to establish a breach of planning control. It was agreed that Cllr. Hurst in his capacity of Chairman of the Planning Committee would respond to EHDC on this issue. In the meantime, the Clerk was asked to write to Marcus Neale about residents’ concerns. NH
Clerk
- 20/116 SPEEDWATCH – The Speedwatch Team have now been up and running for approximately 2-weeks following the break for coronavirus. There is evidence that speeds have shot up in their absence which shows how much they are needed! Because of social distancing regulations, it will be necessary to purchase more hi viz jackets to ensure each volunteer has their own – cost approx. £50 – Cllr. Graham will organise the purchase and charge back to the P.C. JG
- 20/117 ROADS AND TRAFFIC –
- (a) Phase 2 Traffic Management Scheme – The Chairman confirmed that £2,500 has been received from EHDC S.106 funding towards Village Gates. It was noted that SDNPA are

working towards a standardised design for Village Gates across the National Park and it is hoped that details will be available soon. However, it is crucial that the design of the gates is reviewed by the Parish Council before any commitments are made and this may be appropriate for wider community consultation. The Engineer responsible for the project will be chased for the detailed plans.

Chair/
Clerk

- (b) E-mail correspondence about the possibility of a pinch point on Stoner Hill had been received and was discussed. Steep P.C. do not dispute that a pinch point would have a direct impact on slowing traffic - however, it is not something that HCC will consider because the road is not of high enough priority. It is hoped that the planned Phase 2 Traffic Management modifications will encourage more considerate driving through the village and make it safer for all users (including pedestrians and cyclists). The impact of the improvements will be monitored carefully.
- (c) Repairs to Ridge Common Lane – The subsidence has been repaired at long last and appears to have made a difference. The potholes further down the lane are to be addressed separately by HCC.
- (d) Damaged drain in Ashford Lane – The large refuse lorry is causing damage to the drain in Ashford Lane. It was suggested that the smaller refuse lorry which collects the rubbish at Bushy Hill should be sent to collect refuse in Ashford Lane to avoid this issue in future. The Clerk was asked to write to Nick Drew on this matter.
- (e) Overgrown hedges – The Clerk was asked to write to landowners whose hedges are obscuring sight lines and/or pavements reminding them of their responsibilities.
- (f) Motorcycle Noise – As noted previously, Cllr. Laycock will represent Steep P.C. at the Zoom meeting with Damien Hinds on Friday, 2nd October which will address this subject. On the question of the possible closure of the Coach Road to motorcycles, it was agreed to liaise with Russell on the status of his campaign (Russell had left the meeting prior to this discussion)
- (g) Old A3 Cycle Lane – Correspondence received from residents living on the Old A3 about the potential for creating a cycle lane from Hill Head through to Sheet was discussed. Current initiatives for safer walking and cycling may make funding for the project a possibility, but it will need a lot more thought and discussion with Hampshire County Council/SDNPA representatives. To be discussed with Cllr. Oppenheimer and considered further.

Clerk

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Clerk

20/118 FOOTPATHS – The grant application towards tools for the Hampshire Monday Group volunteers is progressing and it was agreed that they would be asked to cut back hedges alongside the A3 and, if possible, to create a barrier on Footpath 3 to stop motorcycles accessing the path

20/119 STEEP MARSH NOTICEBOARD – A new location is to be sought for the board to be installed. Cllr. Hurst will look for somewhere suitable.

NH

20/120 CORRESPONDENCE

- Wildflower verges – A resident brought this HCC initiative to the Parish Council’s attention and all agreed it was a great idea and should be considered further.
- Mobile Café – The Parish Council had been copied into correspondence from a parish resident to SIN Trustees about the possibility of a mobile café being able to access and use

Clerk

the land next to the Village Hall to provide coffee/lunch facilities for local residents. SIN/PC
Whilst the SIN Trustee response to this enquiry is not known, other options for the café V Hall
were considered (Village Hall, Steep Common). For this project to work for the village,
the right location will be essential, and needs careful consideration – to be discussed
further.

20/121 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, 5th October – details to follow

The meeting closed at 10.00 p.m.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2020**

1. Green Recovery boost from “Active Travel” measures

Over 40 new temporary footpath and cycleway measures have been installed in Hampshire since June, providing people with the space to travel by bike or by foot. As well as helping people to keep their social distance, these schemes are also helping to tackle the climate emergency and the obesity crisis. At HCC we are planning an online Active Travel Summit in October to which many Town and Parish Council representatives will be invited. Please let me know if you have a particular interest in attending (virtually).

The temporary “pop-up” scheme in Petersfield received a mixed response and the barriers in Lavant St and Chapel St were consequently removed. The temporary barriers on the High St will be replaced by planters later this year which will look a lot better.

A bid to HM Government for a further £3.45 million has been submitted by Hampshire County Council to deliver a range of schemes to help redesign roads and high streets to support social distancing, assist economic recovery and support people who want to continue walking and cycling more. The outcome of this bid is expected in the Autumn.

2. Back to School Safely campaign

Hampshire’s schools are preparing to welcome all children back this month, with support from the HCC team. On 17 August the Government launched its #backtoschoolsafely campaign, which aims to reassure parents and students that schools and colleges are ready for their return in September. The campaign, which forms part of the Government’s wider Stay Alert campaign, will show teachers welcoming students back into school in a range of newspaper, digital, radio and billboard adverts.

3. GCSE and A Level results

At this time of year I have always mentioned the exam results of Hampshire pupils and congratulated both schools and pupils for their strong performance. This year I would like to do the same.

Although exams did not take place this year, there were plenty of other sources of stress for pupils, not least the uncertainty over the results process. I feel that pupils fully deserve their grades and I would therefore like to congratulate them and their teachers for their hard work and strong performance.

4. Careers guidance for young people

Hampshire Futures and the Hampshire Careers Partnership have launched a new website called “Flying Start Hampshire” to support the county’s young people, especially Year 11 students as they prepare to move on from secondary education to further and higher education, training or employment, having secured their GCSE results.

Flying Start contains links to resources that will help when considering a course at sixth form, college, apprenticeship or future employment options, and helps young people explore their options and achieve success. Young people who may be feeling anxious either due to the pandemic or any other reason can find, on the website, a section dedicated to improving mental health and wellbeing. The website can be accessed at this link:

<https://www.sunoutreach.org/resource-category/flying-start-hampshire/>

5. Libraries consultation concludes

Parish Councils will recall that HCC launched a consultation on the future of the Library Service in January 2020. Over 21,200 people and organisations responded which makes it one of the most successful consultations in Hampshire in recent years. As a result of feedback received, the decision has been taken to close 8 libraries (rather than 10 originally proposed) and reduce opening hours by an average of 20% in all libraries (rather than the 15% originally proposed). The 8 libraries set to close are: Blackfield, Elson, Fair Oak, Horndean, Lee-on-the-Solent, Lyndhurst, Odiham and South Ham. Uptake of HCC’s digital library offering has continued to increase in 2020 which supports the Library Transformation process. Residents can borrow books and audiobooks via the BorrowBox app.

6. Financial position of HCC

There has been a lot of comment in the media about the financial difficulties facing local government, so I wanted to say a few words about this.

Hampshire County Council is facing exceptional costs from the Covid-19 crisis due to the extra care costs involved in looking after the elderly and the lost income during the lockdown (e.g. at the Country Parks, which were all closed). These costs are still being counted but will certainly run to over £100m. A key question for us now is how much of these losses will be compensated by Government. So far, HCC has received three tranches of emergency payments from central government, totalling £61.5m. We are hoping for further compensation.

The crisis has understandably delayed implementation of our Transformation to 2021 programme under which HCC was identifying needed annual savings of £80m. The Hampshire Cabinet and officers are working hard to get back on track.

Hampshire is not in imminent danger of going bust, as Northamptonshire County Council did last year. We are one of the best-run County Councils in the country with services that are rated good or outstanding across the Board and strong reserves which enable us to invest in new schools and infrastructure.

Nevertheless, the future funding of social care clearly needs to be resolved in order for HCC to maintain its strong financial position. There are signs that the Government intends to put forward a new plan for social care in the Autumn. The Comprehensive Spending Review launched in July is another opportunity to put local government onto a sustainable financial footing, as is the Devolution White Paper (also promised for the Autumn). I am therefore optimistic that our County Council will get through this challenging period in relatively good shape.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers