**21LHPC04b Little Horkesley Parish Council**

**MINUTES**

of meeting held via Microsoft Teams on Monday 26th April 2021

Present: Maria Oats (Chair)

Chris Exley (Vice Chair)

Hannah Taylor

Chris Jacobs

Susie Goldring

Jo Petersen (Clerk)

Cllr Nigel Chapman (CBC Rural North)

Dwayne Batchelor (County Broadband)

# Apologies

No apologies

**1. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held 15th March were agreed as an accurate record.

**2. County Broadband**

1. The Parish Council were joined by Dwayne Batchelor from County Broadband. It was agreed that as Maria Oats and Jonathan Goldring (Little Horkesley Broadband Champion) had already seen the presentation, it was not necessary to view this again.

Dwayne therefore updated the council on the progress so far. He confirmed that the pre-order target of 25% had been met with 27% of households in Little Horkesley signing up with County Broadband ahead of its rollout.

He reiterated that the benefit of pre-ordering with County Broadband is free connection and a free router. He is keen to ensure that as many people as possible place a pre-order to ensure they take advantage of these benefits. This offer is likely to be withdrawn quite soon as the target has been met. He will therefore be present in the village for the next week or so to ensure people are aware of the benefits.

Dwayne Batchelor will be dropping leaflets in the next few days and speaking with remaining households soon.

Chris Exley expressed concern that as a dispersed settlement, a few households are not in the centre of the village. Would these households in the outer areas be able to sign up even if they were the only ones to do so? DB confirmed that everywhere in Little Horkesley would have the possibility to sign up as County Broadband are laying cables through the whole village.

County Broadband is also working with Wormingford and has already spoken with the Broadband Champions there and will be speaking with households soon.

Fordham and Eight Ash Green are already using County Broadband.

Dwayne confirmed that County Broadband will hold a webinar shortly, so that any questions from residents can be addressed.

**3. Playground**

1. Councillors discussed two quotes for installation of the new bench and picnic bench from Mortimer Contracts and Get It Done. The clerk will circulate these quotes to all councillors and as both quotes were similar in cost, a decision will be made based on who is able to install them sooner.
2. The clerk has not had any news on the lease of the Playing Field. Nigel Chapman offered to chase for the Parish Council and so the clerk will send details to him.
3. The number of dog walkers has increased in the village and currently dog poo bags are disposed of in the litter bin next to the bus stop. The possibility of providing a designated dog poo bin was discussed. Nigel Chapman informed the council that Colchester Borough Council are not installing any new bins at the present time. It would be a large expense for the Parish Council to provide a bin and maintain it effectively.

It was therefore agreed that the Parish Council will not purchase a dog poo bin, and will instead ensure that the litter bin is emptied regularly.

1. At his latest inspection of the play equipment, Adrian Jacobs noted that there is some movement on the frame of the large swing. He also noted that some couplings on the seat chains are a little more corroded. He concluded that this was due to the dry weather and lack of use due to the coronavirus lockdown.

The ROSPA inspection of the play equipment is booked for May, so the Parish Council agreed to wait until their report before deciding what action needs to be taken.

**4. Road & Verges**

1. One pothole was reported in the parish by Joy Pallent

* Fishponds Hill (ref 2708970)

This has been completed.

1. An issue with sewage at the top of Water Lane has been brought to the attention of the Parish Council. Residents are in communication with Anglian Water and the Parish Council has agreed to support them if further problems arise.
2. An issue with parked cars inhibiting access for large agricultural machinery at the top of Water Lane has been brought to the attention of the Parish Council. Maria Oats has spoken with the residents and Colchester Borough Homes are working with them to provide off street parking at the property. Nigel Chapman offered to investigate when this work would be carried out.
3. The Parish Council discussed the “Keep Britain Tidy” Great British Spring Clean. It was agreed that the council would support this initiative with promotion on the website, the Facebook page and the village notice board in the bus shelter. Susie Goldring informed the council that purple bags are available for litter picking from the CBC Zone Team. Nigel Chapman will find a contact to help obtain these bags.

**5. War Memorial**

1. A proposal from the clerk to purchase a Royal British Legion “Tommy” figure was discussed. Maria Oats suggested that the triangle at the war memorial is very small and so a statue may look disproportionate. Chris Exley advised that the war memorial is a listed building and so the statue would not be permitted without planning approval. He also noted concerns that it may overshadow the war memorial.

It was agreed that the council would not pursue the purchase of a statue.

Hannah Taylor noted that in Kelvedon / Feering, small Tommy figures were purchased and placed in the gardens of properties of veterans named on the war memorial. This may be something the parish council could consider after consultation with the village.

**6. Bus Shelter**

1. The clerk is yet to commence renovation of the noticeboard.

**7. Website / Social Media**

1. The clerk is attending a webinar provided by Cloudy IT on Friday 30th April on web accessibility. She hopes to receive guidance on how to write the Accessibility Statement.
2. It was agreed, after discussion with the EALC, that the Parish Council would retire the Parish Council laptop as it is outdated and costly. The clerk will liaise with other clerks to determine the best way to store Parish Council documents in the cloud (eg Dropbox). In the meantime, documents will continue to be backed up to the external hard drive.

**8. Planning Applications**

1. The Parish Council’s comment on Planning Application No 210741 was noted.

“Little Horkesley Parish Council request that the decision ensures that the amenity of neighbouring properties are not adversely affected by the proposal, taking into account noise, smell and vehicle movements etc.”

**9. Affordable Housing**

1. There was nothing to report.

**10. Parish Council Meetings**

1. The ability to hold Local Authority meetings remotely (Zoom etc) is subject to a High Court hearing which began on 21st April. The court case seeks a ruling that notwithstanding the fact that the Coronavirus Act didn’t extend Parish Council’s present arrangements, that actually it is still lawful for Parish Councils to meet remotely under existing legislation since this doesn’t actually ban such meetings anyway.

As it currently stands, the Parish Council will be required to hold in person meetings from May 2021.

The clerk has spoken with Julia Orme and she is happy for meetings to be held in the Village Hall.

The Chair and Clerk will review and update the previous risk assessment for in person meetings.

All councillors were happy to resume in person meetings from May 2021.

1. NALC have confirmed that Annual Parish Meetings can be held virtually this year, although there is no requirement to hold an Annual Parish Meeting during the period of current regulations. It was agreed that the Parish Council will not hold an APM this year, but will instead publish an Annual Report on the website.

**11. Finance**

1. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) documents for 2020/21 were circulated to all councillors prior to this meeting and reviewed at the meeting.

APPROVED: Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Report – to be signed by the Chair and the Parish Clerk

APPROVED: Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Report – to be signed by the Chair and the Parish Clerk

APPROVED: Exemption Certificate.

1. It was agreed that the Asset Register would be updated to reflect an increase of 4% due to inflation as confirmed by the Came & Co insurance quote for 2021/22

***Invoice Approval***

To note expenditure approved by the Chair and the Clerk

* Little Horkesley PCC (Magazine) £100.00
* Maria Oats (RBL Wreath) £17.00

(reprocessing previous payment attempt)

* J Petersen (March Salary) £174.00

To approve expenditure

* Adrian Jacobs (Playground inspection) £200.00
* EALC 2021/22 Affiliation Fees £70.05

**12. Correspondence**

CPRE “Countryside Voices” publication (to be circulated)

**13. Items for the Next Agenda**

* Review of the Risk Register
* Election of Officers

**…………………………………………………………………………….. (Maria Oats - Chair)**

# ……………………………………………………………………………… (Date)

**Date of the next Parish Council Meeting Monday 17th May 2021 (Little Horkesley Village Hall)**