



THESE MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED AND AGREED AT THE NEXT MEETING

**Minutes of a meeting of Buriton Parish Council held via Zoom, at 7:00pm on Monday
18th May 2020**

Present: Cllr D Jones (Chair), Cllr L Ashcroft, Cllr A Bray, Cllr H Coates, Cllr T Crew, Cllr M Johnston, Cllr M Marriott Cllr S Stevens, County and District Cllr Mocatta and Mrs P Norris (Parish Clerk).

In attendance: 1 member of the public.

Due to the current pandemic and Government legislation preventing public meetings, the meeting was conducted via the Zoom video-conferencing platform. The Agenda had been posted on the community website and on the public noticeboard as normal and provided details for any members of the public wishing to join the meeting. Some protocol guidance had been produced in advance and is attached as the last appendix to these minutes.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr S Rossiter.

2. Declarations of Interest

Declaration of interest from Cllr Jones and Cllr Mocatta– as a Member of the South Downs National Park Authority, the Local Planning Authority for the area, I wish to make it clear that any views which I express today are based on information before me at this meeting and might change in the light of further information and/or debate at National Park meetings. This is to make it clear that I am keeping an open mind on the issues and cannot therefore be found to have predetermined any matter if it should come before me at the National Park for decision. Cllr Jones also declared that he is also a member of the South Downs Local Access Forum: a body which advises Hampshire County Council, SDNPA and others about their decisions in relation to Rights of Way and about making improvements to public access for outdoor recreation and sustainable travel. It is purely advisory and has no decision-making powers.

Cllr Ashcroft declared a pecuniary interest in an element of item 9 on the agenda, she will leave the meeting at this point.

3. To approve minutes from BPC meetings held on 30th March 2020.

The minutes were approved as a correct record, the decisions and actions confirmed and the Chairman will sign a copy for the Council's Minutes Books. **Action:** Chairman to sign

4. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 30th March 2020.

- *Pond Green Bridge* – the water levels have now dropped and the work will be completed soon: **Action:** Cllr Marriott.
- *Road surface outside Village Inn* – This is still outstanding due to coronavirus.
- Work to trees in vicinity of School Meadow has been completed.
- Work to the five ash trees at the top corner of the tennis courts and the elm tree at the top of the recreation ground is scheduled for tomorrow.
- Bank signatories – Cllrs Coates and Stevens will complete this when able to do so.

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- Notice period for Dottie Tots Nursery still needs to be discussed at the Village Hall Committee.
- NJC pay award – no information received but will be backdated to April 2020.
- Monks Walk – location of refuse bins for collection still needs to be agreed with the residents
- Asset Register & Insurance Values – the Finance Committee need to complete this as soon as possible as mentioned in the recent audit.
- Network Rail – the work to clear debris from the track side is still outstanding.
Action: Clerk to chase.
- Details of the fencing for the rear of The Rectory has been received.
- Staging stored in the Village Hall – to be discussed by the Village Hall Committee
- Website – Cllr Stevens has looked at the Public Bodies (Website & Mobile Applications) Regulations and will produce some recommendation and liaise direct with our Web Manager. **Action:** Cllr Stevens
- Proposal from Buriton School for the School Meadow – no further information has been received.
- New trees have been planted on the recreation ground. A 10-year old Copper Beech, to mark VE day, and a copse of 11 Field Maple sapling. The Chairman thanked Cllr Marriott for this.
- Defibrillator – an update from Barbara Muir is still awaited.

5. Coronavirus Update

Cllr Jones presented a report on Buriton's response to the Coronavirus Pandemic, attached to these minutes. Main points included:

- The Council had acted swiftly acting with others to put measures in place to help parishioners
- A post office van is now visiting the village once a week whilst the church remains closed
- Visitors parking – Halls Hill car park is now reopened but due to the number of visitors now visiting the area, particularly with higher vehicles, they are parking on the grass verge in the area potentially causing a danger to other road users. Cllrs also noted that there had been a suggestion that the pond car park should be closed but, after consideration, decided against closing the Parish Council's car parks. It was also agreed to refer both the issues again to the Police
- The idea of considering the establishment of some sort of future funding to help to address any local issues emerging from the pandemic was noted.

County and District Councillor Mocatta joined the meeting at 7.22pm.

- Cllr Mocatta agreed to discuss the matter of the Halls Hill car park with Tim Speller, QECP Manager and other colleagues at Hampshire County Council.

Open Forum

A parishioner spoke about Item 12 the Commemorative Bench:

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“I just want to say a few words about Item 12 on your Agenda where I believe your Vice Chairman, Maggie Johnson, is going to provide an update on the Commemorative Bench project.

But, first of all, I want to thank the Parish Council for finding these innovative ways of ensuring that your meetings can continue to take place - and for making sure that members of the public can observe and take part as normal. You have always been an open and transparent Parish Council and it's good that your Agenda has been posted up in all the usual places (including the website) and that the Minutes from all your meetings are also permanently on-line for all to see.

The Commemorative Bench project is now reaching its climax: contracts totalling £22,000 have now been awarded, initial payments have been made, the bench Portland Stone has been purchased and the stonemasons are working it: shaping it so its curved features will fit perfectly into the setting which was approved by the Parish Council after the ballot of every household showed that this is where the vast majority of respondents want it to go. Pulling out of the contract at this late stage would incur considerable expense. Neither I, nor other members of our group would negotiate such an exit strategy.

Having taken the trouble to meet, on site, with representatives of the War Memorial Trust (who were very positive about the project) and liaised with other organisations such as the British Legion, great care was taken to ensure that the new feature would be designed and located so as to complement the existing War Memorial and be clearly subservient to it.

I understand that one parishioner, Mr Mitford, has written to a small group of friends - some outside the Parish (who he refers to as “The Somme Group” – a term that many will find insensitive and offensive – encouraging them to write to you.

He provided them with all the information they would need for their letters to you – without telling them whether it was factually accurate or misleading.

This is known because at least one of his friends has, inadvertently, forwarded Mr Mitford's diatribe to others in the village.

In Mr Mitford's initial message (the one he wasn't expecting you to see) he has been very defamatory about the Parish Council, attacking your probity and being critical of new members of the Parish Council through dismissive terms such as “largely unelected”.

Such unfounded public statements should not go unchallenged as it is important that parishioners should have confidence in the integrity of their Parish Council, which I do. You have been showcased as exemplars of good practice in very many things that you have done for this community ...

Finally I just want to stress that this new commemorative feature is to pay tribute to generations of people who have seen this community through the dark times of international conflicts, recognising the impacts of war not only on those who fought and died, but also on those who fought and survived (whose lives were often changed forever through physical or mental scars) – and also the impacts on those who remained at home

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in the parish working incredibly hard on the farms to help the war effort or providing other vital support and morale for those who were away. All these people deserve our compassion.

It is noticeable that it is often the descendants of traditional village families who are calling for this new feature to be located near the war memorial (where many of them have names of their relatives inscribed) so that thanks can be given not only to those who gave their lives but also to those that kept this country and village going so that we can all now live the lives that we do.

In contrast, it seems to be a small group of people who have moved into the village in recent decades who are trying to thwart this initiative.

I remain confident that the Parish Council has conducted this overall exercise in an exemplary way (involving the school in ideas for the design and subsequently conducting a ballot of all households in the parish) and I look forward to seeing the new feature as it emerges from the stonemason's workshops and is installed in the next few months."

6. Chairman's Annual Report

As per Government legislation Buriton Parish Council was not able to hold an Annual Parish Meeting. The Chairman produced a report to give details of the work of the council for the year; a copy is attached to these minutes. The main items included:

- It was pleasing to have been able to welcome the new councillors who were co-opted last summer – Cllr Coates, Cllr Marriott, Cllr Rossiter and Cllr Stevens
- The financial situation was worrying at the beginning of the year with the budget reducing reserves to about £12,000 (less than a year's precept) but is now healthier having pursued an unpaid insurance claim from 2015/16, a S106 award from January 2018, a VAT payment and a further S106 grant.
- Unforeseen challenges of unexpected expenditure on ash-die back disease and playground repairs
- The achievement of many other things prior to the coronavirus pandemic – with thanks to volunteers who have helped in various ways
- A swift and thorough response by the council to help the community pull together to help parishioners during the coronavirus lockdown. The council will consider the idea of making funds available for a community programme once the pandemic is over.

7. County and District Councillor's Reports

County and District Councillor Mocatta informed the council of the following:

EHDC:

- As far as Cllr Mocatta is aware no staff from EHDC has been furloughed, most are working from home and many have been moved to a different team in order to provide support for residents. The main office at Penns Place is virtually empty and the reception is not manned.
- Due to self-isolating there have been some issues with waste collection, but EHDC has collected 100% of the bins. Green waste has not been collected as the staff and those from the street sweeping teams have been redeployed to the main bin collection.
- Cutting back verges has not been a high priority.

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- Of the 2172 businesses eligible for grants in East Hampshire of either £10k or £25k, 1966 have received grants, the others have been contacted to find out why the grants have not been made.
- Cllr Mocatta has grants from EHDC available, to be spent on biodiversity or climate change projects including walking and cycling
- EHDC has seen a major drop in revenue streams – parking income is down 95%, planning fees have halved, as have building control and overall fee income. EHDC is looking at a shortfall of about over £500k per month.
- 75% has been collected of the rent on the property investments, almost half of this is made up of Waitrose and Tesco. The bulk of the shortfall is from retail tenants. The current crisis will worsen the situation for our high streets and EHDC will look to be more flexible on how buildings are used.

HCC:

- Petersfield HWRC, the tip, reopened, there were substantial queues but no-one has reported any problems.
- Queen Elizabeth Country Park has reopened and there are charges as per normal.
- HCC has had 6,000 children in schools during the lockdown, including all the children with Education Plans.
- HCC is also suffering from the financial consequences of the lockdown, losing about £20m per month.
- Cllr Mocatta was pleased to have been able to provide a grant to Buriton towards the war memorial project
- HCC is engaging with all the other local transport authorities in Transport South East about how to make the region more cycling and walking friendly.

8. Finance and Accounts

- The accounts for 2019/20 have been completed and presented to the Parish Council by the Parish Clerk. Councillors approved the internal audit for 2019/20.

Annual Return:

- a) Councillors approved Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20
 - b) Councillors approved Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20
- Councillors approved the summary of reserves, noting the categories and amounts.
 - Councillors received and approved the Receipts and Payments for the Parish Council report to 11th May 2020. There were 12 payments totalling £2,842.75 and 7 receipts totalling £38,695.60 (including £20,094 CIL from SDNPA). The Chairman will sign when able to do so. **Action:** Chairman.
 - Councillors received and reviewed the performance against budget.
 - Councillors agreed that donations to the Parish Magazine, Homestart Butser and St Mary's Church be made. **Action:** Clerk
 - Clerk to send out the licence fee to the Tennis Club and the car park fees.
 - Councillors discussed about the possibility that the parish magazine might only be available on line. This raised some concerns that some parishioners would not have access. Cllr Jones agreed to discuss this with the editors to ensure that the

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money donated by the parish council would ensure that the magazine reached every household. Action: Cllr Jones.

- Pension Regulator – correspondence has been received concerning opting in or out of a pension. Both the Clerk and the Village Hall Manager do not wish to opt-in to a pension scheme.
- It was noted that the auditor had pointed out that Council should not have held money for the 'Fun on the Farm' event during 2019/20.

9. Village Hall and Recreation Ground

Playground

There were three separate issues relating to the playground –

- Regular inspections – good practice has been received from Sheet and Steep Parish Councils where playgrounds are inspected every 2 weeks. The benefit of this is that small issues are identified and rectified rather than at the annual inspection. Cllr Marriott volunteered to carry out the inspection on a fortnightly basis. The Clerk to produce a proforma. **Action:** Cllr Marriott and Clerk.
- Annual Inspection – Cllrs agreed to seek a new contractor to carry out an inspection and any required repairs as the RoSPA inspection had left some things uninspected. Cllr Crew has approached contractors to obtain quotes and Cllr Jones would provide him with details from Sheet and Steep. **Action:** Cllr Crew.
- Repairs – Cllr Crew will obtain quotes for the repairs identified from this year's annual inspection. **Action:** Cllr Crew
- In discussion it was suggested that, in future, it may be necessary to allocate larger amounts in the annual budget for inspections, repairs and to build up a suitable ear-marked reserve again for when more significant repairs are required.

Village Hall

Cllr Jones presented a report from the Village Hall Committee, attached to these minutes. The main points included:

- Cllr Jones summarised the financial situation of the Village Hall: due to the pandemic there will be a shortfall income. This is due to the Village Hall not being used.
- The income for this current year will be reduced with currently no hirings and no nursery school. Although there is still some expenditure this is being kept to a minimum
- As per the insurance policy, a series of regular checks are being carried out.
- The tennis club are now back using the courts, however they are unable to use the toilets or changing rooms. It was agreed that a letter would go to the tennis club to reiterate this. **Action:** Cllr Jones / Clerk.
- Replacement windows and doors etc – the Village Hall Manager has obtained quotes for this work. Three quotes have been received, one only recently. The Village Hall Committee and Cllr Marriott will examine the quotes to ensure that they are comparable. Councillors agreed to delegate the decision as to which quote would be taken up to the Village Hall Committee. Councillors agreed to have dark grey windows, doors and cladding. Councillors agreed to proceed with this project providing that the contractor chosen is viable in the current situation. Councillors agreed that the CIL money received from the SDNPA in 2020/21, £20,000, would be used for the project and any excess will be paid from the Village Hall reserves.

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Car Park Enhancements

This work has been on hold due to the current situation but the contractor is now getting his workforce up to strength and hopefully it will start soon. **Action:** Cllr Crew

Proposal to lease, rent or buy part of the recreation ground

Cllr Ashcroft left the meeting for this item.

A parishioner has submitted a proposal and plans to either lease, rent or buy part of the recreation ground. Councillors discussed this proposal, the main comments made were:

- The recreation ground land was given to the Parish Council to look after for future generations and it should not be leased, rented or sold. It will also set a precedent.
- The proposal would create a regular income for the Parish Council. It was noted that as this is a disposal of a capital asset the money would only be able to be used for another capital asset.
- Planning permission may be required to change the land from recreational to private use (and, potentially, back again in the future)
- Questions were asked about what the boundary would be (fences, hedges etc) and the privacy for the school
- It was unsure as to what could be placed on the land e.g. sheds, furniture

Councillors voted for rejecting the proposal to lease, rent or buy part of the recreation ground and to retaining the land for the Parish Council. Five councillors voted to reject the proposal, two councillors voted to agree to the proposal. **Action:** Chairman / Clerk to write to the parishioner.

Cllr Ashcroft re-joined the meeting.

Tree Planting

The Chairman thanked Cllr Marriott for carrying out the planting of the trees on the recreation ground. All the trees are thriving. Councillors agreed to consider other areas for planting further trees in the Autumn. Cllr Mocatta indicated that the Parish Council may wish to apply for a grant for the trees as this fitted with the climate change initiatives.

10. Planning

Cllr Johnston presented a report from the Planning Committee, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Pond Car Park

Cllr Jones presented a report relating to the Pond Car Park, a copy of which is attached to these minutes, and the contents were noted.

11. Rights of Way Report

Cllr Jones presented a report from the Rights of Way Working Group, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Cllrs agreed to spend £250 to replace a broken kissing gate which will be paid for from the S106 money for the car park enhancements as agreed by SDNPA.



12. Commemorative Bench

Cllr Johnston presented a report from the Commemorative Bench Working Group, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

The work on the bench has been delayed due the pandemic, it is hoped that the work will be completed by the 15th August 2020. The contract has been awarded and the orders placed. The War Memorial will be cleaned as soon as possible by the stonemasons.

Cllr Johnston thanked Cllr Mocatta for his grant towards the total costs of the project and noted, as referred to in the Public Forum, that a number emails had recently been received by the Parish Council, both for and against the proposals. All this correspondence appeared to have been prompted by a message from Mr Tim Mitford. Cllr Johnston's report included, as an Appendix, the report considered by the Parish Council in 2017 which contained full background and showed the preference in the village for the bench in the location being pursued. She felt strongly that throughout the project the Parish Council has dealt with it with complete integrity.

Cllr Bray commented that although he abstained in the vote in 2017 he fully respects the democratic decisions of the village and felt that the project should proceed as planned.

Cllrs Stevens and Coates both said that they had read the 2017 report and fully agreed with the decisions taken then and could see no reason to change anything now. It was sad that this matter was now being raised in this way.

Cllr Marriott agreed with these comments, explaining that he had been approached by someone to influence his opinion but said that he was not someone to be intimidated.

Cllrs Ashcroft and Crew also both said that the project should continue as planned.

It was helpful to have been reminded about the views of the War Memorials Trust and it was noted that the 'compromise' being sought by the, perhaps insensitively named, Somme Group was actually the alternative location that had received 30 votes compared to 137 for the preferred location.

The Chairman explained that, although the item on the Agenda was only technically an update progress report, it was correct that all emails recently received should be studied and taken into account. In addition to Mr Mitford's emails, seven similar messages had been received from within the parish (and one from outside). Eleven parishioners had written in support of the Parish Council's plans, the majority of them being long-standing village families, some of them Service families and some who had names represented on the war memorial.

The Chairman mentioned that some of the emails received from 'The Somme Group' mentioned the hedge and asked for clarification. Cllr Johnston clarified that the hedge will be trimmed back but none will be removed. The bench will be set into the hedge. There should not be any loss of privacy.



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The Chairman also said that a couple of the emails received had asked about spending public money on the commemorative bench. It was confirmed that the Parish Council has paid £3,500 towards the project: a large proportion of this is for the cleaning of the War Memorial and the repainting of the names. The remainder of the money (over £17,000) has come from donations and grants awarded for the specific project.

Councillors agreed that the project has been handled correctly and properly throughout. They all agreed that all correspondence received had been read and that the project, which was already well underway, should progress as planned. The Chairman thanked all members of the working group for continuing to work so hard on this matter amidst the coronavirus situation.

Councillors were concerned about some of the remarks made in one of the recent messages and completely refute them, reserving the right to seek legal action.

Action: Chairman / Clerk to prepare a reply to the emails and letters.

13. VE Day Update

Cllr Jones presented a report from the parish council's VE Day Working Group, a copy of which is attached to the minutes.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Marriott for planting the Copper Beech as a memorial.

14. Work for the Lengthsman

The Lengthsman continues with the regular identified work.

It was noted that two of the benches at the pond / South Lane are damaged. Action: Cllr Jones to contact EHDC as the benches may be theirs. Action: Cllr Jones

15. Correspondence

- Monks Walk bins – covered on the agenda
- Visitors parking – covered in the agenda
- Commemorative Bench – covered in the agenda
- Insurance Village Hall – covered in the agenda
- Purchase of land – covered in the agenda
- Complaints to Network Rail – details attached
- Parish Pollinator Project (attached) – Councillors agreed to be part of this project.
- HCC Cutting list – the Rights of Way Committee will respond.

16. Date of next meeting

- The next meeting of Buriton Parish Council is at 7:00pm on Monday 27th July 2020 at Buriton Village Hall if restrictions are lifted, otherwise via Zoom.

At the conclusion of business the meeting ended at 9.35pm.

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COVID-19 OUTBREAK: UPDATE REPORT TO PARISH COUNCIL

The arrangements initiated with Neighbourcare Buriton and St Mary's Church (described in the report to the March Meeting of the Parish Council) continue to work well.

The three parts of the new 'COVID-19 VIRUS' section of the Community Website are regularly updated: (a) Buriton information; (b) links to authoritative national / county / district sites (embracing a wide range of topics including stress and mental health issues); and (c) information and ideas to help people to pass time when self-isolating and for families with children at home (including links to educational and interesting websites for all ages).

Regular, special update emails continue to be circulated to as many parishioners as possible with extra names being added to the circulation list upon request. Messages of thanks and appreciation continue to be received for these messages.

The village hall and playground remain closed. The recreation ground remains open and people have generally respected the pleas that it must not become a place for groups of people to congregate or play. At the time of writing the Tennis Courts are still closed but this may be reconsidered by the Club. More details about the hall (and the insurance situation) appear elsewhere on the agenda.

After Post Office officials contacted the Parish Council to see if it may be possible for one of their vans to make a weekly visit to Buriton whilst the church remains closed, new arrangements have been established. With kind agreement from the owners of the Village Inn, a van will visit every Friday, from 12.30-2pm in the Inn's car park. It is possible that the timing of the visit may be adjusted in the weeks ahead (depending on arrangements in other villages) and the Post Office officials ask that social distancing measures are adhered to by all – or else they may be forced to remove this new service from Buriton.

Apart from an occasional instance of fly-tipping in the parish and damage to the Chalk Pits Nature Reserve by an influx of cyclists, the main issue affecting the community appears to be the numbers of visitors on fine, warm days and locations of car parking. In the Halls Hill area, due to the County Council's closure of the Country Park car parks, there has been parking on the lanes on some days which could represent a safety hazard to road users. This has been reported to the Police who have been asked to add this area into their regular patrols (which already cover other parts of the parish).

After the Petersfield Post published a walk to/from Buriton in April, visitor numbers appeared to increase for a period and a parishioner asked the Parish Council to consider closing the car park at the pond / church. The Police were already making regular visits to this location and have subsequently been contacted again to encourage them to keep doing this for the foreseeable future and to ask for any advice about the car park. No advice has yet been received and, in general terms, the car park appears to operate safely and acceptably. Many people in the community are conscious that they are fortunate in Buriton, with most homes having gardens (and with a range of local walks to choose from), and feel that it is good that this parish is able to offer fresh air and exercise for those less fortunate living nearby – subject to the social-distancing criteria being observed. With

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HCC's closure of the Kiln Lane car park bringing some unforeseen consequences (potentially dangerous on-street parking) and with access through the pond car park needing to be maintained for a number of households, it has not yet been decided that the pond car park should be closed. Further views from Parish Councillors are welcomed on this matter which can be kept under review. Following the Government's most recent changes to the COVID guidance, the Chairman contacted QECP and HCC to see if they may be considering re-opening the Country Park car parks - including at Halls Hill.

The Chairman had received one other complaint about a car which appeared to be "permanently parked opposite the War Memorial", just outside the pond car park, which "does nothing for the view of the Church from the High Street, and blocks the view of the Memorial from South Lane." Mr Mitford was asking the Parish Council to invite the owner to move it into the adjacent car park. The Chairman replied, explaining that it was unlikely that the Parish Council would have any authority to do anything about it as the vehicle did not seem to be committing any sort of legal offence as it was not on the public highway and that, given the critical situation regarding the Coronavirus Pandemic, he was reluctant to consult the whole of the Parish Council about this relatively small matter at a time when there were bigger issues upon which everyone was focussed. There had been no other complaints about this car from anyone and so Mr Mitford was advised that, if he felt strongly about it, he may wish to consider writing a polite personal note and placing it under the windscreen wiper, being courteous to provide his phone number etc for any follow-up.

Finally, whilst it is pleasing to note that the Parish Council has been able to continue with many aspects of normal business (including, in particular, fulfilling our aim of planting a commemorative tree to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day and a small new copse of Field Maples) we may also wish to start to turn our minds and priorities towards the future, with the challenges of climate change and the global ecological crisis as well as more local challenges for the community which may emerge from the COVID19 pandemic. We may wish to consider establishing some sort of funding programme within future budgets so as to enable new initiatives for the community.

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Chairman's Annual Report to Buriton Parish Council: May 2020

I'm tempted to begin by saying: "what a year to have taken on the responsibilities of being Chairman of the Parish Council" – something which, as all colleagues are aware, is not something which I had ever really wanted to do. But, nor did anyone else ...

We had begun the 2019/20 year with only six councillors as no new candidates had stood in the election last May, and a number of our experienced councillors had retired. We were therefore faced with having to re-advertise the vacancies and, on this occasion, were rewarded with an excess of suitable talent and were able to welcome Heidi Coates, Matt Marriott, Samantha Rossiter and Sarah Stevens as new councillors.

But I was nervous, at the beginning of the Financial Year, about our financial situation. Whereas in previous years the Parish Council had always held very healthy levels of financial reserves (which could be drawn upon for any unforeseen circumstances) I had inherited a situation where the provision of the new playground had used about £20,000 of these reserves and the previous Chairman's report to the Council in January 2019 illustrated that the budget for 2019/20 would be running down our reserves further to leave, at the end of the financial year, £12,000 in reserve (with some reliance on finding a new Nursery School). Auditors advise Councils to always hold at least one year's precept in their general (unallocated) reserves: in our case, at least £19,000.

I have, therefore, tried to advise a prudent approach to our work during 2019/20, postponing major items of expenditure until it was clear that we could afford them and seeking alternative sources of funding wherever possible. As part of this approach we have also scoured the Council's transactions in recent years and have achieved the following:

- obtained £5,600 for an unpaid insurance claim from 2015/16
- successfully pursued the payment of a S106 award for £2,600 that had been promised in January 2018
- obtained over £11,200 via a VAT reclaim
- sought and received a contribution of over £1,000 from S106 funds towards the Commemorative Bench project.

In addition we have also pursued other funding sources (including ensuring CIL contributions for the developments at Monks Walk) which should bring in over £29,000 during 2020/21: most of it ear-marked to pay for specific projects.

We have also tried to help the new Nursery School (Dottie Tots) become established, recognising that this facility can make a valuable contribution towards village hall income as well as being invaluable for the community.

I now feel that the Council is in a much healthier financial position for the future – and more able to cope with unexpected circumstances. Which brings me to the next part of my report:



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An early challenge for the new Parish Council was a vigorous disease which was spreading swiftly across the country with significant implications for this parish. It was estimated that ash dieback could kill up to 95% of ash trees across the UK. The Parish Council obtained a professional examination of trees on or near Council-owned land and, although none appeared to represent any imminent danger, decided that it was sensible to do some work during the current financial year and some thereafter. This was completely unexpected expenditure but, with ash die-back, the costs of getting the necessary work done would become much more expensive in the future as the whole of each tree can become brittle and dangerous. We also drew the attention of parishioners to this serious disease as many trees affected will be on private land and will be the responsibility of landowners and residents. We provided contact details for sources of help and advice but pointed out that not all trees will necessarily be infected and it could be a shame if resistant trees were felled unnecessarily. And we also drew the attention of the County Council, Network Rail and the local Electricity Company to diseased trees on their land in the village, encouraging them to take all appropriate actions.

We were also faced, early in the financial year, with a relatively large amount of unexpected expenditure for repairs / maintenance in our playground (not covered by any warranties). There does not seem to have been any provision for an annual allowance for repairs or maintenance as part of the recent playground project and so this is something for which we will need to make provision in the future, perhaps through an annual inspection and service maintenance agreement, backed up by trying to build up a suitable ear-marked reserve again for when more significant repairs are required. Our existing reserve is likely to be all used relatively quickly.

We were achieving many other things as the year progressed – and I list many of them in an annex to this report – and then, in March, we were faced with another completely unforeseen event: the onset of the COVID19 pandemic. This will, inevitably, have some effects on our financial position (particularly the loss of income from the village hall) and this highlights to me, once again, exactly what Reserves are for and why it is so important that we should always have them: they are for unforeseen events and circumstances ...

I feel that we moved very swiftly and thoroughly to respond to the Coronavirus situation by initiating a coordinated approach early in March when we arranged a meeting with representatives of Neighbourcare Buriton and St Mary's Church. This coordination enabled us to have plans in place prior to the Prime Minister's statement on 16 March and, within hours, parish councillors delivered two leaflets to every household in the parish: one requesting new volunteers to join the small but invaluable Neighbourcare team and the other offering help to anyone needing shopping / chemists / urgent supplies or posting mail etc. There was a swift response with about fifty new volunteers enrolling – and all requests for shopping and prescription runs have subsequently been handled successfully. Sincere thanks are due to all the volunteers but most particularly to Peter Nixon and J-M for coordinating all the requests for the service.

We have also created a special COVID-19 part of the community website with three separate sections providing: Buriton information; national, county and district information; and, thirdly, links to ideas to help people pass time if they are self-isolating or have children at home. And we have been able to use the website and email circulations to alert parishioners to a range of scams which fraudsters have been promoting, as well as

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promoting appeals for the Petersfield Foodbank and for equipment being sought for NHS workers.

Following the Prime Minister's announcement the playground was immediately locked and we have had to adopt alternative ways of working in order to continue with Parish Council business whilst upholding democratic principles and compliance with public health guidance. Thus far, these new arrangements also appear to be working well.

I'm particularly pleased that, in spite of the virus pandemic, we were able to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day in an appropriate manner. Such things should not be overlooked or forgotten.

I want to say a big 'thank you' to everyone involved with the Parish Council for all their help throughout the year: to all Parish Councillors (in particular to Maggie Johnston who is a very supportive Vice-Chair); to our Parish Clerk (Petra Norris) who has grasped so many challenges in such a short period of time and helped to return us to a sound operating basis; and also to our Hall Manager (Steve Franks) and Hall Cleaner (Darren Francis) for all their hard work during these unprecedented times. And also to all the parishioners who help make the community what it is.

Whilst it is pleasing to note that the Parish Council has been able to continue with many aspects of normal business during the virus outbreak, we may also wish to start to turn our minds towards other priorities for the future alongside the challenges of climate change and the global ecological crisis if local issues emerge from the pandemic. We may wish to consider establishing some sort of funding programme within future budgets so as to enable new initiatives for the community.

Doug Jones
Chairman, Buriton Parish Council
May 2020

In addition, during the year 2019/20 the Parish Council has:

- Studied all planning applications in the parish and submitted comments to the planning authorities, drawing upon the Buriton Village Design Statement, which continues to help to deter out-of-character development proposals
- Continued to try to protect the Dark Night Skies via representations on planning applications
- Welcomed the adoption of the new South Downs Local Plan, replacing all the policies in the East Hampshire District Plan and the Joint Core Strategy
- Ensured that the Buriton Village Design Statement was swiftly re-adopted by the South Downs National Park Authority as being in conformity with its new Local Plan
- Provided help to other Parish Councils, most recently Upham PC, with the production of Village Design Statements
- Obtained support and assistance from Conservation Officers at the South Downs National Park Authority and from the Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust to make a submission for Listed Building status for the historic lime kilns in the Butser Hill Lime Works so as to try to ensure longer term protection of the features with a view to them becoming part of an educational resource when the site is restored

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- Reported a number of instances of unauthorised work at Monks Walk prior to Planning Conditions being discharged, leading to action from the Planning Authority's Enforcement Officers: issues had included drainage, landscaping, access, external lighting, low transmittance glass, ecological and archaeological issues and failure to adhere to the construction management plan
- Met with Southern Water (and liaised with EHDC Drainage officers) to discuss concerns about the adequacy of the foul water sewerage arrangements for Monks Walk, Old Spot Cottage, the church and other nearby properties
- Continued to point out the unsatisfactory outcome of the planning situation at Monks Walk where it was felt that the Planning Authority was putting the onus to resolve a number of difficult issues onto the Parish Council. Parishioners feel that, whilst admitting that the presence of rows of refuse bins waiting to be collected will have visual impacts on the Conservation Area (and the setting of nearby Listed Buildings), the National Park Authority has left the Parish Council to take the blame for this blight in this very sensitive setting
- Attempted to get the estate agents, Wilson Hill, to draw some important planning matters to the attention of any prospective purchasers of the Monks Walk properties but were informed that their "client had always said they will communicate the information directly with the purchasers, so all we have done is simply pass the letters on to the client and left them to deal with them"
- Moved swiftly to try to help new residents in Monks Walk (including medics dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic) obtain adequate phone coverage: including meetings with BT to agree suitable routes for underground cabling which had been left unresolved by the previous owner
- Discussed improvements to the Pond Car Park with residents at Old Spot Cottage and Monks Walk with a view to obtaining small annual financial contributions to provide for an adequate 'sinking fund' for maintenance repairs
- Asked the National Park's Planning Department if the parish could be considered as a pilot area to use Article 4 Directions to help control light pollution in the International Dark Skies Reserve and were disappointed when the Park Authority dismissed the suggestion
- Contacted Forestry England (and Planning Enforcement Officers) about unsightly engineering operations supporting widespread tree felling in parts of the parish asking whether Planning Permissions should have been sought, requesting that hillsides should be graded back after completion of the operations and seeking information about re-planting plans
- Noted continuing interest in Buriton's innovative traffic calming and de-cluttering work (undertaken over ten years ago) with visits to the village by other communities and the publication of a summary of the scheme as a 'Good Practice Case Study' by the South Downs National Park Authority
- Continued to liaise with Hampshire County Highways and the Queen Elizabeth Country Park about occasional parking problems outside the Halls Hill car park, including measures to help protect the green triangle
- Pressed Highways England to cut back vegetation to improve sight-lines on the northbound slip-road onto the A3, reminding them that this needs to be done every year
- Drawn the attention of the County Council to the overgrown state of the Greenway Lane roundabout, resulting in it being cut and tidied

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- Taken actions to alleviate occasional instances of parking problems in the High Street which have been due to events in the village hall, school or church – obtaining agreement from each organisation
- Arranged for HCC's Highways Department to re-paint the H-bar road markings and the school's Keep-Clear road markings in the High Street to reinforce these parking prohibition measures
- Welcomed the new signage on Kiln Lane, requested by the Parish Council to try to deter speeding traffic down the hill including cyclists
- Continued to employ the services of the parish lengthman (in conjunction with other Parish Councils), carrying out a programme of minor works on highways and footpaths
- Worked closely with residents in Weston about highways and Rights of Way matters
- Reported problems on Rights of Way via the County Council's online reporting system, resolved minor issues with landowners and submitted cutting priorities to HCC
- Arranged for a team of HCC's Rights of Way volunteers to spend a day in October re-establishing the route of the Public Footpath along The Links, with a follow-up visit scheduled for May 2020
- Requested a landowner in Weston to consider replacing the one remaining stile on Footpath 34 with a kissing gate so as to make things easier for elderly people, those with mobility problems and young families (with the Parish Council willing to cover all the costs) – being disappointed when the landowner refused, explaining that he had erected a pole by the stile to help
- Pursued an appeal with the Planning Inspectorate about the County Council's decisions about BOATs 19 and 47 (trying to get HCC to alter their status to bridleways, citing grounds of public safety, public expenditure and environmental damage) but were ultimately unsuccessful in this attempt to get motorised vehicles removed from these popular Rights of Way
- Organised another successful 'community litter-picking' event with thanks to Adam and Hannah Griffiths for coordination
- Continued our campaign to try to reduce dog-fouling around the parish by asking children at Buriton School to draw posters for widespread display and by circulating details of fines / penalties provided by the District Council's Animal Welfare Team. But we were disappointed that there was no follow-up from McDonalds after a request for help with a litter pick and for them to use the children's litter posters at their premises
- Reported occasional incidents of fly-tipping to the District Council and arranged for them to take action to remove a number of abandoned cars in the parish
- Alerted parishioners to reports of minor crimes and suspicious vehicles in nearby parishes – and encouraged parishioners to make reports to the Police
- Obtained agreement from the Village Inn that it would be willing to host the provision of a defibrillator and, with help from Councillor Mocatta, explored potential funding sources
- Begun to explore the possibility of being a pilot area, with the County Council, for an innovative Pollinator Project: to explore low cost actions to improve conditions so as to retain the vital roles that they play in helping farmers produce crops
- Arranged for the memorial seat adjacent to the Chalk Pits pond to be repainted

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- Coordinated arrangements for activities to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of WW2 (both VE Day and VE Day), including employing contractors to clean the war memorial
- Noted that the fund-raising target for the commemorative bench (to recognise the contributions made by a wide range of parishioners during international conflicts) had been reached and commissioned stonemasons to produce the agreed design
- Entered into discussions with Post Office officials to see if it may be possible for one of their vans to make a weekly visit to Buriton whilst the church remains closed during the virus pandemic
- Complained to Network Rail about large-scale, noisy works undertaken during the Easter holiday period without any prior notification which: had adverse effects on wildlife during the bird nesting season; disturbed many villagers for a long period of time whilst families were locked down and working from home; and which saw vehicles, trailers and a block of portable toilets / canteen / shower room occupying our car park without any permissions being sought
- Continued a wide-ranging programme of maintenance and testing of equipment and facilities in the village hall including health and safety assessments
- Purchased enhancements to the sound system, new fire alarm call points, replacement external lighting in the car park and a new thermometer for the water tank
- Undertook a precautionary full inspection and cleaning of the water system (including cleaning and disinfection of tanks) to minimise risks of legionella, in addition to continuing to record monthly readings of water temperatures
- Noted the significant improvements (including cost reductions) brought about by the new boiler installed in the village hall
- Welcomed the opening of the new Dottie Tots nursery on 7 May and worked closely with the new team to try to help interest and support
- Initiated a review of insurance values for Parish Council buildings, to include coordination with the Asset Register, as this has not been done for some years
- Undertaken inspections, repairs and maintenance of the new playground facilities
- Renegotiated the cutting contract for the Recreation Ground
- Pressed Network Rail to address trees on their land which were damaging (and lowering) the fence along the edge of the recreation ground
- Pressed Network Rail to improve the condition of the fencing along the edge of the recreation ground after they had claimed that there were no issues needing attention; and ensured that they subsequently cleared vegetation away from the fence and improved the standard of previous temporary repairs
- Planted a number of new trees on the Recreation Ground with a Copper Beech dedicated as a commemorative tree for VE day and the creation of a new copse of Field Maples which should, in time, provide a new visual feature, a home for wildlife and, by absorbing and storing carbon dioxide, a small contribution towards tackling climate change
- Responded to a number of consultations, including an EHDC consultation about dog fouling
- Studied new Government Regulations for Public Bodies' websites with a view to making any changes required in time for the September 2020 deadline
- Enabled councillors to attend a training course about financial responsibilities for parish councils

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- Renegotiated our Insurance Policy, with advice from specialist Insurance Brokers, obtaining improved value for money
- Nominated Doug Jones for re-election to the South Downs National Park Authority for another four years and welcomed his appointment after a ballot in the District
- Pressed our bank to resolve long-standing problems with our arrangements
- Continued to provide small grants to St Mary's Church and to the Parish Magazine
- Thanked all the teams of volunteers who assist with community projects, including: those who work regularly in Local Nature Reserves; those who have recently volunteered to help obtain a defibrillator and those who planned all the activities to commemorate VE Day; the team who are coordinating the commemorative bench project; the parishioners who took part in the annual litter picking event; and, of particular importance at this time, everyone who is helping with shopping, prescription collections and other tasks for households who are vulnerable and self-isolating during the Coronavirus pandemic
- Included a number of new initiatives in our financial plans for 2020-21, with an emphasis on the environment and our community: some more ash trees will need to be felled but new trees will be planted and work is planned to further improve the energy efficiency of the village hall. There are also plans to enhance the adjacent car park with a permeable surface, tree protection measures and spaces for cycle parking – and the Annual Parish Meeting was due to focus on the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss (potentially with the involvement of the school). Unfortunately, due to the Government Restrictions on Public Meetings, this has not been possible and ideas for local actions will need to be discussed in due course
- Finally, whilst it is pleasing to note that the Parish Council has been able to continue with many aspects of normal business during the Coronavirus outbreak, we may also wish to start to turn our minds towards other priorities for the future alongside the challenges of climate change and the global ecological crisis if local issues should emerge from the pandemic. We may wish to consider establishing some sort of funding programme within future budgets so as to enable new initiatives for the community.

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ITEM 10: REPORT TO BURITON PARISH COUNCIL 30 MARCH 2020 BURITON VILLAGE HALL

Situation at the end of the financial year (2019/20)

The year-end figures for the Village Hall (as included in the Parish Council's accounts) show a total income of £18,801 and outgoings of £11,031 indicating net receipts over payments of £7,770. However, there is an additional expenditure figure of £3,046 for village hall maintenance elsewhere in the accounts suggesting that the actual 'surplus' may only have been £4,724. As usual, any 'surplus' of income over expenditure is transferred to the ear-marked reserve for the village hall: to contribute towards significant costs in the future.

It is worth noting that an income of £28,305 had been anticipated in the budget for 2019/20 meaning that the actual income was £9,504 less than had been forecast. The main source of this income shortfall was the Nursery School which had been anticipated to pay £11,700 but yielded significantly less. There was also less income than anticipated from a number of other regular users. For all other 'external hirings' (all the one-off bookings etc) the net figure, after return of deposits, was £6,663 compared with a budget of £8,134.

Some income which had been due to be paid prior to 31 March has subsequently been received, including the payment requested from the Dottie Tots Nursery School (£884) and payments from other regular users (Aeromodellers, Bowls Club, Judo, Pickleball, Tai Chi and Waggytails Dog Training). Some £886 is currently owed to us and our Hall Manager is chasing payments from EHDC, Tai Chi and the school.

Situation for 2020/21

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak there has been no income for the Hall during April or May whilst costs continue to be incurred. The last use of the hall was on 18 March.

For 2020/21, the Village Hall part of the Council's budget assumes income of £22,750 and expenditure of £15,595 with any surplus to be added into the ear-marked Reserve for the Village Hall. In the past we had always envisaged that the Village Hall Reserve would be there to cover major cost items (internal and external) in the years ahead: a big loss of income had, perhaps, never been foreseen.

At the time of writing it is very unclear as to when any uses of the village hall might resume and it is quite possible that we could lose half of our income.

It is unclear whether the Nursery School (our biggest contributor: budgeted income of £10,000) will return before September – and, when they do return, they are unlikely to be paying the hourly rate assumed when the budget had been set as the Council agreed in March that the rate of £6.50 / hour should be continued for the foreseeable future. Buriton School is the next biggest payer (£2,500) and, again, it is unclear whether they will want the Hall much before September. And we have forecast £5,000 from ad hoc bookings – which have all currently dropped away and may take time to build back up ... We could lose most of our income for April, May, June, July and August (five months of the financial year).

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If we were to lose half our income that would leave us with £11,375 – compared with expenditure of £15,595. A ‘loss’ of £4,220. There are limits to the extent of costs that can be saved. Budgeted staff costs (Hall Manager and Cleaner) total to £8,320 and, following discussions with both, it is hoped that this expenditure may be halved during the period when the hall is completely out of use. The other main items are Gas/Electricity/Water (totalling to £3,313) but, in these warmer months (and allowing for the Standing Charge elements etc), there is unlikely to be a significant reduction on this. Servicing costs are budgeted at £2,640 but these will probably all still need to be done. The other £1,300 is made up of expenses, ad hoc maintenance allowance etc.

Insurance cover

We have explored insurance cover for ‘loss of income’ but, as others are discovering all over the country, insurance companies are refusing to pay out because policies are based on a “specified disease basis” and not a “notifiable disease basis” (people can only claim for diseases that were explicitly listed in the policy; any ‘unknown’ diseases (such as COVID-19) are not covered). But, we have been informed that we will not be charged any extra during periods of temporary closure (which, they suggest, might bring extra risks). There will not be any increase in the premium, there will not be any increase in excesses and there will not be any reduction in the level of policy cover.

The ‘smaller print’ of the insurance policy guidance points out that the insured organisation should comply with a number of risk management practices (as far as is possible) and we have taken steps to address these with weekly inspections by our cleaner, Darren Francis, to include the following:

- Visit at least once every 7 days to inspect internally and externally – and to help keep aired, in good condition and with no obvious signs that things are unused or closed down
- Check the locks and security (including windows and doors) on every visit – and report any illegal entries immediately
- Check that the boiler is working and report if the temperature is ever below 7 degrees C
- Keep a written record of the dates and times of these inspections
- Report any defects to the Parish Council as soon as possible so that remedial action can be considered
- Remove all internal and external waste; and move the external bins 5 metres away from the hall
- Let us know in good time if he is ever unable to carry out these responsibilities so that someone else could do them
- In due course, when notified, be ready to conduct a thorough re-cleaning ready for reopening.

Our Hall Manager, Steve Franks, is also continuing to conduct the monthly water temperature tests (re Legionella etc) and, in addition, Darren Francis will run some water on each of his weekly visits (hot / cold taps, flush toilets etc) whilst he is checking other things to help ensure that water does not become stagnant.

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It may also be possible for Darren to do a range of small jobs in the area around the hall, such as: cleaning the build-up of debris and grass against the edge of the buildings and the Tarmac parking area; inspect the drain opposite the entrance door; other jobs as / when required.

Other actions since March

In spite of the COVID lockdown conditions it has been possible to complete the purchase and installation of a number of small improvements (replacement fridge-freezer, improved sound system and enhanced microphone options) and faults with the external guttering have been rectified.

With the prospect of the Tennis Club re-opening its courts for limited play, there is the issue of the Referee's Toilet to consider as the Tennis Club holds a number of keys so that players (and the coach) can access the toilet at any time. As no cleaning will be taking place (and as the insurance situation is that the buildings are currently closed) it may be advisable for the Clerk to write to the Tennis Club to prohibit any use of any of our toilets (toilets in the village hall and the referee's toilet). Councillors are asked to consider this matter.

Consideration of replacement doors and windows

As reported in the past, the Hall Manager has been obtaining quotes for replacement windows, doors, soffits etc so that work could potentially take place during 2020/21.

This report provides an update so that the Council can consider:

- a. The details of the work envisaged
- b. If it is possible to select a 'preferred supplier'
- c. If it is possible to agree a preferred colour for new materials
- d. If it is appropriate to continue with this exercise at this time – or to delay again
- e. The financial situation for this project.

Quotes had initially been sought in November 2018 but Councillors will recall that we decided not to get any work done at that time as we had eaten into our reserves quite significantly (with the costs of the playground) and the income from the Nursery School had ceased (prior to the arrival of Dottie Tots).

In March 2020, with the prospect of the CIL income from Monks Walk on the horizon, Steve Franks has sought quotes from the same three companies: Surefix, Executive Windows and Leydene Glass.

The quotes are seeking replacement of all windows, doors, soffits, fascias and cladding. It should be noted that the quotes being sought do not include any works to the changing rooms (or ref's toilet) but do include the bricking-up of the lower part of the floor-to-ceiling window in the southwest corner of the building (where some flood water entered in January 2013). Although the French Drain has been improved since then, this is felt to be a prudent measure and agreement from the Council is sought.

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At the time of writing, two quotes have been received and the third has been chased a number of times. The two quotes received to date are £17,900, plus vat (Company A) and £34,310, plus vat (Company B). When quotations were initially sought in 2018 the third company (Company C) quoted a similar amount to Company A, with Company C again being significantly more expensive. Full copies of the quotations received are available upon request.

Company A has been asked to provide details of other installations and they have replied and explained that they have done windows and doors at Steep village hall, Froxfield village hall, the Maltings in Petersfield, St Peters Vets (Petersfield and Liss) “to name just a few” ... Emails have been sent to both Steep and Froxfield to ask for any feedback or comments. This company has also advised that they would normally take 50% deposit (as the products are made to measure), then 30% on day 1 of installation plus all materials on site, then 20% on completion. They are part of Fensa and Homepro so there would be an insurance backed guarantee and it also covers the guarantee they supply if they were to cease trading. The windows and doors are made in their own factory in Farlington. Lead times at present may only be about 2-3 weeks.

With regard to colours, members of the Village Hall Committee are suggesting either grey or rosewood from the range offered in the top selection here: <https://www.linjar.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Colours-750x1061.jpg> NB the top ones are stock items; other colours are available but at dearer costs. The Hall Committee has a slight preference for the grey colour but all Councillors are asked to consider this matter.

The Hall Committee has also been considering the pros and cons of continuing with this matter in the current Coronavirus circumstances. On the one hand it could be advantageous to get the work done whilst the Hall is out of use (so that we don't have to close it again once use has resumed and don't lose any more money than is necessary). On the other hand there could be a risk of commissioning a company to undertake the work (and paying a deposit) only for them to go out of business due to the current economic situation. On balance the Hall Committee feels that with it may be best to wait a while (with the uncertainty of many businesses at the moment) but all Councillors are asked to consider this matter.

With regard to funding for this project, it is felt that all the necessary funds are now in place and available. It has been confirmed in writing by SDNPA that “the CIL money Buriton Parish has received can be spent on replacing the windows etc at the Village Hall.” There are restrictions on what else this CIL funding could be spent on (and reporting requirements) and this project would appear to be a very suitable candidate. If Councillors are in agreement with this proposition then it would leave all other Parish Council funds in place for other priorities.

Update on Village Hall car park

This project has also been delayed due to the Coronavirus situation but it is anticipated that the contractors will undertake the work (initially scheduled for May) as soon as they are able. It may be possible to provide an update at the meeting.

Village Hall Committee

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Planning Report 18th May 2020

To be read in conjunction with the minutes of the meeting on the 30th March 2020.

Update on current planning matters

SDNP/18/03797/DCND: Butser Hill Lime Works Ltd, Butser Hill, Buriton, GU31 5SP. Ongoing correspondence between SDNPA and English Heritage. It was agreed to contact Mr Scammell at SDNPA to enquire about any progress.

SDNP/20/00276/FUL & SDNP/20/00277/LIS – Haven Barn, Monks Walk: Change of use from agricultural to residential; alteration of existing cart lodge and stables into a single dwelling. Application in Progress.

It was agreed to contact the case officer to ask for details of the extra parking space now being provided: was the space identified actually large enough for two cars; was the land in the ownership of the applicant; and were the new owners of Monks Walk North (against whose dwelling the cars would be parked) aware of the revised proposals? A reply is awaited.

SDNP/20/00911/HOUS - Side extension at 9 Sumner Road. Application Approved

SDNP/20/00974/FUL - Field access in New Barn Lane. Application Approved

SDNP/20/00994/REM - New House at Cobwebs, North Lane. Application in Progress

SDNP/20/00980/HOUS & SDNP/20/00981/LIS - Replace existing shed:Rock Cottage, Bones Lane. Application in Progress

SDNP/20/01226/TPO - Reduce height of fir tree at Mille Failte, Bones Lane. Decision Pending

SDNP/20/00850/FUL - Change of use from agricultural Barn to dwelling for farm staff at Stanbridge Farm, Sussex Road. Application in Progress Currently there are no new applications for consideration.

Maggie Johnston



Report to Buriton Parish Council: 18 May 2020

Item 10b: Update on Pond Car Park

There are two separate matters to be reported under this part of the Agenda:

- Request for repairs to the car park
- Request for BT Openreach to install a phone line through the car park to Monks Walk

Request for repairs to the car park

As a result of the consideration of this matter in March, a letter was sent to the residents of Old Spot Cottage making the following points:

- The Parish Council has always been keen to ensure that all traffic driving through the car park (including delivery vehicles etc) travels at appropriate speeds – because of safety of children and others near the pond etc
- Advice received in the past, from the County Council Highway Officer, was to leave some potholes to encourage low speeds
- The use of this route (through the car park and along the track) has increased over the last couple of years and regular repairs are not something which the Council has ever had to budget for in the past. Until relatively recently the access to Monks Walk was through the courtyard of the Manor House
- The main way that the Council can raise money is by increasing the tax on all parishioners, whether they use this area or not – but Councillors do not feel that this will be perceived as ‘fair’ by many of the less affluent and elderly households elsewhere in the parish
- This situation was always anticipated whenever the Parish Council raised objections to the numerous planning applications to develop the site behind the church: planning conditions (to require financial contributions from the new development to pay for this specific ongoing maintenance matter) were always sought, but were never forthcoming
- The planning system has left the Parish Council with the choice of raising the annual precept for all households or negotiating contributions from the five properties directly affected (or a combination of both)
- An inspection of the car park (and of the track continuing round the corner to the entrance to the Monks Walk site) has been conducted, identifying one large pot-hole in the main part of the public car park with the remainder being on the track which is used solely for access to the private properties served
- It is felt that retaining some potholes (as advised by the Highways Authority at the outset) would be advisable but that some of the worst parts of unevenness could be removed – perhaps at the same time as work in undertaken in the Village Hall car park
- In the longer term it is likely that it will be necessary to obtain income to maintain the route to the five properties and Councillors would like to explore the idea of obtaining a suitable annual financial contribution from each of the properties to provide for an adequate ‘sinking fund’ which could be drawn upon, with inputs from the Parish Council’s Precept income if / as required, so as to enable a degree of maintenance, perhaps every three years

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- Parish Councillors feel that, at the end of the day, the majority of use that the route gets will be from those residents, their family/ friends visiting and delivery vehicles to their homes etc and so this suggestion is felt to be fair and equitable
- The Parish Council understands that there is due to be a 'Management Company' for the Monks Walk properties and this might offer a way of securing an appropriate agreement.

A reply was received on 7 April which, in summary, said:

- Thank you for your reply and letter. I certainly do not want to create a financial burden on the Parish Council or any residents. The proposals that you are making seem very reasonable.
- A Management Company is in the process of being set up but is not yet completed. Once it is established, I will be very happy to promote the approach you have suggested to the other members of the company: to set up a "sinking fund".
- If you are able to have the largest of holes filled when Village Hall car park work is completed, then this would be very much appreciated. It might also be an idea for me to speak to the company doing the work, to give a quotation to take the repairs further around the corner in Monks Walk.

It should also be noted that it is still hoped that this Management Company (in particular, the occupants of Monks Walk and the Cartshed Garages) will agree to pay £125pa/property for the use of Parish Council land for refuse bins on collection day. These discussions are 'on hold' during the Coronavirus situation.

Request for BT Openreach to install a phone line through the car park to Monks Walk

Councillors will recall that the Parish Council was first aware of this matter when it received a vague inquiry from BT in November 2019 but the Council's requests for more information from BT in December and February were unanswered. At the request of Councillors, the Clerk chased BT again on 3 February and the Council subsequently received a reply, one month later, on 4 March with information about the proposed route of the phone line. Even this information from BT was insufficient for Councillors to consider the matter properly as it simply showed the line of a route – without giving any details of the processes involved (eg. digging a trench or using a 'mole' underneath etc) or of any effects that this might have.

In the circumstances, with the on-set of the Coronavirus and social distancing requirements, the Council moved as swiftly as possible so as to try to help the new residents in Monks Walk obtain phone coverage and we arranged a meeting with BT, on site, on Monday 16 March. We also invited representatives of St Mary's PCC to attend the meeting because of the proximity to the church. The proposal was to dig a trench alongside the ancient churchyard wall, through the middle of the community car park and across the tarmac approach to St Mary's church to join an underground supply point in North Lane. The request from BT was asking the Council if the route was acceptable or whether any changes were required. The meeting was very productive and an alternative route for the trench was identified which would avoid all concerns. From the Monks Walk end it was to stay the south side of the track and the west side of the car park to reach the High Street where it will turn left (along the edge of the pond) and join an existing BT line

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in South Lane. The Parish Council reminded BT that the new residents of Monks Walk are both medics needing phone access as soon as possible in the current coronavirus crisis.

Since consideration of this matter in March there are the following updates to report:

- BT produced a wayleave for the Parish Council (as the proposed duct goes through our land for about 30 metres) and this was signed and returned to BT on 31 March
- The Parish Council has subsequently received a small one-off payment of £129.30 for this and it is suggested that this is added into the Car Parks Reserve
- On 22 April the Parish Council learnt, from a parishioner, that BT was now exploring an alternative route which would take the phone supply route 'overground' which would require a number of poles and overhead wires to be installed along the back of the village pond
- We contacted County and District Councillor Mocatta about this matter as it became apparent that either the County or the District had objected to the route established on 16 March
- Another meeting was arranged, on site, on Monday 27 April – with representatives of BT and EHDC in attendance (Cllrs Costigan and Mocatta) – along with representatives from Monks Walk and Old Spot Cottage
- It was agreed to revert to the proposals which had been agreed with the Parish Council on 16 March with BT taking great care when excavating anywhere near the pond.

Councillors are asked to note these updates.

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**Rights of Way report for PC Meeting:
18th May 2020**

There is not much to report since the last meeting of the Parish Council:

Fittings removed from kissing gates (to minimise hand contacts during the Coronavirus crisis) will be retained safely and replaced when safe to do so.

The volunteers' cutting day which had been agreed with the County Council for the 11th May (to tackle vegetation growth along Footpath 15 along the Links) has been postponed due to Coronavirus

A broken kissing gate has been reported near the western end of Footpath 14 (near to Petersfield Road), causing problems as cyclists are now using the public footpath. The main fault is that the V shaped 'enclosure' has rotted and collapsed. The top bar of the gate has also started to rot but should be ok for a few more years. Technically, a replacement should be the responsibility of the landowner – but the Council has been reminded that we brought about the installation of the kissing gates (in March 2009) when we adjusted the fence-line of the field and removed about five stiles. A quote "to supply three new posts with rails in concrete foundations to form a V shape" for £250(no vat) has been received from Petersfield Fencing Services.

It is recommended that this work is undertaken without delay as this is a popular path during the current lockdown period and cyclists should not be encouraged to use the route. It has been stipulated that any spare funds from the S106 money from SDNPA (£7,490 for the enhancements to the village hall car park) should be spent on Rights of Way improvements and this could be a suitable project.

Gill Welsman, Planning Project Management Officer at the South Downs National Park Authority has confirmed in writing that "As our award letter states that excess funds could be used on PROW in the parish, given the current circumstances and assurance from the Parish that the spend would not impact the car park project I am happy for you to proceed."



Commemorative Bench Project: update since last meeting

18 May 2020

The 'lockdown' imposed due to Coronavirus outbreak has prevented the stonemasons (Shepherd & Grantham) working on site – but it is anticipated that they might be able to visit in early June to clean the war memorial (which had been scheduled to be done prior to VE Day).

The stone has already been delivered to the stonemasons and it is hoped that they will be able to continue with their work soon. The groundwork is also 'on hold' until there are suitable relaxations of the lockdown situation and safe working practices.

The original schedule was that, soon after VE Day we were planning to start installing the bench with seat back design, the rear wall, paving and poppy roundel. It was intended that this would have been completed by 22 June, the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the War Memorial.

In addition to these works, it is also planned to repaint all the names on the War Memorial and this will require dry, warm weather later in the year. There has been a successful grant application to Councillor Mocatta who has kindly agreed to award £650 towards these costs.

In summary, after a competitive tendering process, contracts totalling to some £22,000 have been awarded, initial payments have been made and the supply of Portland Stone is now being worked upon by our stonemasons. The Commemorative Bench is being made-to-measure and will sit on a stone base set into the yew hedge in the specific site agreed with EHDC in 2017.

A parishioner has queried the planning situation with Cllr Mocatta who has passed the enquiry on to the Head of Planning at the South Downs National Park Authority. The Parish Council has been able to confirm to him that the written views of the Planning Authority were obtained at an early stage of the project (October 2017) once detailed plans had been prepared and submitted. It was pointed out to SDNPA that it is upon the written response from EHDC received at that time that all the Parish Council's subsequent work has been based. The response from EHDC was very clear, stating that no form of planning permission was required.

As well as the support for the project in the public consultation exercise, over £16,000 has been raised by donations/pledges from parishioners (approximately 73% of the total) – ranging from sums of £5 to significantly larger amounts. SDNPA has also kindly provided over £1,000 from appropriate S.106 funds for this project. As noted in the report to the Parish Council in March, the working group confirms that sufficient funding is available.

In the light of the recent correspondence I have attached the report on the bench presented to the Parish Council in November 2017. This gives a very clear review of all the actions and decisions that lead up to siting of the bench and the final design. (Appendix 1)



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One final point: Throughout this entire process the Parish Council has conducted itself with the utmost integrity and I do not recognise the comments inferred against it in Mr Mitford's initial letter.

Maggie Johnston

The committee members are Jonathan Jones, Chris Gaylard, Jenny Gaylard, Karen White, Tony Carter, Andy Cheese, Lynette Watson and Maggie Johnston.

Appendix 1

Commemorative Seat Report November 2017

As a result of discussions at the Parish Council meeting in March 2016, the idea of a commemorative tribute to mark the centenary of the Armistice of the First World War was first aired at a consultation workshop in the Village Hall in April 2016. This led to the arranging of a competition to enable parishioners to contribute towards an appropriate design.

The idea is to demonstrate this generation's gratitude that, as a community, we will never forget not only those who gave their lives (some of whom are not named on the Memorial), but also those who had the rest of their lives affected or shortened by physical injury or mental suffering.

The tribute would also mark the harsh effects on this Parish of the pain and grief experienced by the mothers, fathers and families of this small community, particularly as a staggering number of young men from our village went to fight in the First World War (the largest contribution per capita made by one community within the area), leaving behind women and children, nursing the injured and filling their roles by working the land which was made especially difficult when horses were also dispatched to the front line. This project will also allow for similar Commemoration of the Second World War and subsequent conflicts.

The competition was open to all and, after it closed, the entries were put on display at the Christmas Fair, the Five Bells public house and at film nights in the Village Hall and people were asked to vote for their favourite design.

A working group was established and comprised residents born and bred in the parish along with some who have moved here more recently (with invitations extended to people known to have concerns about the idea). The Working Group reviewed the results of the vote and came up with a final design idea, which was based on the two most popular adult entries also an element from one of the junior entries.

The two adult competition winners worked together to produce an overall design. In September 2017 a voting pack was delivered to every household in the parish. This pack consisted of a drawing of the proposed bench behind the War Memorial. There has been some criticism that this approach gave undue emphasis to the War Memorial site, but a decision was made to present the material in this way because this gave an indication of

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what the tribute would look like in the most sensitive area proposed. It was thought that those who wished it placed on the alternative site, Pond Green, would be able to readily visualise it as a replacement for the bench already in place there.

A total of 338 voting packs were delivered in the parish, resulting in a total distribution of 676 voting slips (two per household).

The return for the ballot was high: 31% (which is better than most local and general elections) and the results were found to be:

Total number of votes returned: 212.

Votes for the bench on a site behind the War Memorial: 137.

Votes for the bench but sited on Pond Green: 30.

Votes against the bench: 42.

Votes not fitting into any of the categories offered: 3.

Hence the following results can be determined:

79% in favour of a bench

65% in favour of it being placed behind the War Memorial

14% in favour of it being placed on Pond Green

20% against any idea of a bench

34% either didn't want a bench or preferred it sited on Pond Green

As can be seen, the majority of those who voted would like the bench positioned behind the War Memorial.

A meeting was held on site with a representative of the War Memorial Trust, who was very positive about the project and who has subsequently written to the Parish Council confirming that he has no objections. The letter stated that "the key thing from our perspective is that the war memorial retains its prominence in its current location and that its setting is not interfered with too greatly. Any proposed bench will need to reflect this focus through sensitive design, focusing in particular on its siting, materials and size."

Although there has been a suggestion in a parishioner's letter that the British Legion opposed the project, this is not the case and the British Legion has confirmed that it has not got a view on the matter as it is on the fringes of the branch's geographical area and is also largely outside the area of interest proscribed by its Royal Charter.

The Working Group has, however, received written support for the project from Michael Morpurgo, (author of 'War Horse') once a resident of Buriton, who lived very close to the War Memorial.

The stone used on the bench would be Portland stone and would have the winning design carved in to the back of the stone bench, or cut from metal and fixed to the back of the bench. The final decision on whether to have the design carved onto the stone back of the bench, or to have the design laser-cut onto metal which is then fixed to the back of the bench, will rest with the Parish Council.

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The working group however would like to recommend that the design is cut out in metal; it is felt that greater detail can be achieved, and metal is more hardwearing. The metal back to the bench would also reduce the cost of the project.

On the ground just in front of the bench there will be a stone roundel depicting a poppy, which was the winning junior design.

It has been confirmed that no planning permission is required as the project is considered as Permitted Development within the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. The working group is now seeking some financial support from Buriton Parish Council in order to be able to proceed with applying for grants and other fundraising.

At the Parish Council meeting on 27th November, the working group are to ask that the Parish Council approve the following:

- the bench in a position behind the War Memorial
- a £3, 000 contribution to the project and make a decision on whether the bench back design is to be in metal or carved on the bench back.
- Whether the bench should have a solid base or supported on legs similar to

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VE Day and VJ Day 2020 – and tree planting Report to Buriton Parish Council: 18 May 2020

Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, none of the activities and events planned to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day on Saturday 9 May could take place.

If it is permitted, it may be possible to rearrange some activities for VJ Day on Saturday 15 August. Arrangements were already being made with St Mary's church for a commemoration of VJ Day but these are currently 'on hold', to be reviewed at an appropriate time in the future.

Given the context of the international pandemic, it was pleasing that the Parish Council, determined not to overlook the future or the past in these unprecedented times, managed to fulfil its aim of planting a special new tree to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day. A new Copper Beech has been planted on the Recreation Ground (between the tennis courts and the playground) and will be marked with a plaque as / when this is possible. The tree is already about ten years old, it is fenced to keep it safe for a while and it will be tended carefully over the months ahead. It is hoped that it will be a significant symbol for many years to come – and that it will still be in good health for the 100th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

The Council also planted a small new copse of Field Maples on the Recreation Ground (near the top corner: Kiln Lane / rail line) at the same time: with sincere thanks to Parish Councillor Matt Marriott and family. It may be of interest in years to come for people to look at the copse and reflect that it was planted during the pandemic virus situation. The trees which will form the new copse are very young but will, in time, provide a new visual feature, a home for wildlife and, by absorbing and storing carbon dioxide, a small contribution towards tackling climate change. Field Maples have a strong local connection with the parish going back to the Domesday Book where this area was referred to as Mapledurham: "homestead by the Maple tree".

Notwithstanding the challenges posed by the 'lockdown' period, in place because of the pandemic, there were some very appropriate commemorations of VE Day across various parts of the parish. In addition, the Parish Council Chairman and Parish Priest both attended the War Memorial at 9.30am to say a few words and prayers – standing well apart, one each side of the Memorial. Tributes were paid to everyone, from all walks of life, who had shown great determination and courage through almost six years of conflict – and it was emphasised that the commemorations were about celebrating peace and focusing on friendship for the future ...

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Report to Buriton Parish Council: 18 May 2020

Item 15: Correspondence

This report summarises two exchanges of correspondence that have taken place since the last meeting of the Parish Council:

- Complaints made to Network Rail
- Correspondence with Hampshire County Council about a Parish Pollinator Project

Formal agreement to take part in the proposed Parish Pollinator Project is sought from Councillors.

Complaints made to Network Rail

Network Rail contractors spent a lot of time felling scores of trees and branches close to the village during the Easter holiday period: from 7am on Palm Sunday (5 April) to Tuesday 14 April. Complaints were received from parishioners and the Parish Council made representations to Network Rail.

The Parish Council made 3 separate complaints:

- about effects on wildlife and nature during the bird nesting season;
- about the vehicles, trailers and large block of portable toilets (with canteen and shower room) which were parked in our car park (alongside the village pond) for the duration of the work without any notification or seeking of permission; and
- about the noise disturbance to residents over a long period – again, without any prior warning.

The Parish Council recognised that during the Coronavirus crisis Network Rail may have had to re-prioritise and re-allocate work teams but, quite clearly, this was a large piece of pre-programmed work (not an emergency job) which should have been undertaken many weeks earlier to avoid the bird-nesting season in an area where buzzards had been seen nesting.

We also recognised that it is important to keep the railway line safe, but felt that the Network Rail workforce needs to be reminded that they cannot just park anywhere that they like and that it is courteous (and sensible) to alert the Parish Council in advance whenever work is planned – as is common practice amongst other statutory undertakers.

We also pointed out that the incessant noise from chainsaws and tree moving machinery when people were working from home or self-isolating nearby in the stressful times made an already challenging time much harder. East Hampshire District Council had issued instructions to everyone in the district early in the Coronavirus outbreak: *“Don’t be a nuisance – with so many people staying at home it is even more important to be respectful and considerate towards people living nearby. Do not light bonfires and keep noise to a*

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minimum. Many people who would normally be out at work or school during the day are now confined to their homes either through sickness, self-isolation or from government requirements to work at home. That's why we're asking everyone to be particularly considerate. Please think about your behaviour and how it might affect others at this difficult time. That might mean turning the music down or limiting those noisy DIY jobs."

The Parish Council had drawn the attention of all residents to these instructions so as to minimise stress in the community. But Network Rail seemed to have ignored this plea from the District Council.

The Parish Council received an apologetic reply from Network Rail stating, amongst other things:

- Our policy is not to remove healthy trees, but this work was necessary to address a number of dead, dying or diseased trees that were present. These trees posed a significant risk to the operational railway, so could not be left once they had been identified. It is open to Network Rail to fell dangerous trees during nesting season, but only after a visual inspection has confirmed that no nests are present on the trees to be felled, as was the case here.
- The project team are very sorry for using your car park without prior notification, and they understand that permission should have been gained before it was used in this way. We ask our staff and contractors, where it is possible, to send notifications to nearby residents with details of the nature and duration of work being undertaken for night time work, but we agree that we should have kept you informed about this day-time project, especially due to the nature of the work and during these current difficult times.
- We recognise that this work caused inconvenience for residents due to the Easter bank holidays on which they took place. We realise that we have fallen short on this occasion and we are very keen to maintain a good relationship with Buriton Parish Council and our lineside neighbours. On this occasion, Network Rail have discussed this with our contractor Coombes, who are willing to offer a compensatory payment of £250. This is offered ex gratia and is not intended to set any form of precedent for any future work in this location or any other. Coombes have your contact details and will contact you directly to arrange payment to Buriton Parish Council.

It is suggested that consideration be given to allocating this small amount of funding, once received, towards an appropriate project.

Parish Pollinator Project

The Parish Council has been in contact with Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service Department about an important Pollinator Project and we have been offered an opportunity to become one of a handful of pilot areas to explore low cost / maximum benefit actions to improve the local environment for pollinating species alongside increasing general awareness of pollinator issues and the fact that people can take action locally to make a difference.

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This initiative is set against the background of the Government's 2013 'State of Nature Report' that highlighted a loss of more than 50% of bees, butterflies and moths studied over the last 50 years. This loss has an impact beyond just creating a biodiversity deficit. It is estimated that pollinating insects are worth between £430 million to £690 million annually to the UK economy with the viability and profitability of a range of crops potentially at risk.

In 2014 DEFRA launched 'The National Pollinator Strategy for England' with the vision 'To see pollinators thrive, so they can carry out their essential service to people of pollinating flowers and crops, while providing other benefits for our native plants, the wider environment, food production and us all'. Ultimately, human health and wellbeing is dependent upon there being a viable and diverse environment for everyone to live in.

Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service Department is taking some significant steps in the creation and implementation of a Pollinator Strategy, including the consideration of how it manages over 3,500 hectares of its own land and 4,600km of Rights of Way.

In addition, a pilot scheme with parish councils is being developed to encourage local communities to take an active part in actions that enhance the local environment for (and encourages the awareness and importance of) pollinators. It is hoped that the scheme will help to improve and connect local green spaces across Hampshire for pollinators such as bees, butterflies, wasps, flies and beetles.

The Corona Virus outbreak and subsequent lock down has inevitably had impacts on the work of HCC's Countryside Service, especially their community based activities, and so the timescale for this initiative is subject to change. The current proposals (subject to funding being approved in July) are, however, as follows:

- initial scoping meetings would be held with parishes in September / October after which participants would be asked to undertake a simple survey of their local green spaces
- following the surveys, representatives from each parish would be invited to a workshop run by staff from HCC's Countryside Service supported by pollinator experts to discuss and create local Pollinator Action Plans
- thereafter it would then be up to the local community to implement their Pollinator Action Plan.

The County Council's Project will provide a small amount of financial support to help implement some key aspects of the local pollinator plans such as providing wildflower seed and plants, building bug hotels, citizen science projects or running identification training workshops. However, it is envisaged that many of the improvements will be low impact and low cost changes to local green space management, such as reduced grass mowing or encouraging local wildlife gardening.

Initial reactions from Councillors to the County Council's invitation that Buriton should be selected as a pilot for this initiative have been positive and Councillors are now invited to formally agree to participate in the project.

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Some ‘Protocol’ Guidance for holding our Parish Council Meetings via Zoom

Buriton Parish Council, May 2020

Due to the current Government Restrictions on Public Meetings during the Coronavirus outbreak, we are having to adopt alternative ways of working in order to continue with business whilst upholding democratic principles and compliance with the public health guidance.

The Meeting of our Planning Committee on 23 April 2020 provided an opportunity to test the use of Zoom – and the meeting was conducted successfully (including participation of the public at the appropriate stage).

Drawing upon that experience and advice published by NALC on 14 May, the following guidance may be useful:

1. In general we should try and keep to our usual approach to meetings and standing orders as much as we can. We should remember that this is a usual council meeting
2. The Chairman of the Council should still chair the meeting – but different techniques may be used to manage input from participants and to keep the meeting to time:
3. **It can be very helpful if everyone “mutes” themselves** when not speaking: this helps keep background noise to a minimum which will improve everyone’s ability to hear the discussions. If you do not mute your microphone it can be muted by the administrator
4. With everyone able to join by video, **please raise a hand when you wish to speak**. If necessary the Chair can read from a list of councillor’s names and ask them in turn if there is anything they wish to say or ask – but this may take more time ...
5. We will try to keep track of who is ‘present’ at all times – in case any individuals have technical issues with internet connections etc. If your internet connection is slow or if it is likely that other members of your household will be undertaking bandwidth-heavy activities at the same time as the meeting (such as online gaming or multiple watchers of video streaming services) it could be helpful if you could reduce the demand during the meeting by, as needed, limiting the amount of other users of your internet connection
6. There is no ‘right way’ to conduct voting in a remote meeting. Every Council is expected to find an approach that works best for them. If everyone is attending by video then raising hands to vote (as in a normal physical meeting) should work. If it is not possible to see everybody then a roll call of councillors names (asking them to state their vote) may be necessary. As usual we will make sure that any votes taken are clear and unambiguous
7. Please try to avoid unnecessarily moving around during the meeting. Expectations of behaviour at virtual meetings are the same as physical meetings, however, it is appreciated that allowances need to be made for the current exceptional circumstances
8. Guidance reminds us that the required standards of behaviour and discussion are the same whether in remote or face-to-face meetings. It acknowledges that these are difficult times and people may be worried about their health or family members, they may be frustrated being isolated at home, and there may be challenges with using new technology particularly if there are technical difficulties. But everyone in the meeting will

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need to be respectful and compassionate towards one another, emotions may be higher than usual but that only makes it more important that everyone approaches the meeting with respect and in the spirit of the council's codes

9. We will need to consider how we will manage the situation should any councillor 'leave' a meeting if they have an interest and do not wish to be part of the meeting, particularly if they consider there will be negative public perception if they remain. It may be that the councillor with an interest, leave the meeting but agree a particular time to return. Should the council need further time on a matter, another agreed time frame can be given
10. Our Council Meeting has been advertised as normal (on the Noticeboard and on the website) with guidance for anyone wishing to join the meeting. As usual, the public have a right to observe and, because we normally adopt an approach which includes a Public Forum session, we have scheduled for that opportunity to be retained
11. If there are ever any parts of the agenda that are confidential then we would need to ask the public observers to leave as we normally would. The Guidance suggests that if it is feared that anyone might accidentally join the confidential item then we might consider setting up a different meeting ID/log in that is not shared with the public for that item
12. If there are members of the public attending then the Chairman could usefully take some time at the beginning of the meeting to explain how the meeting will run and how and when they can speak, so as to help manage their expectations
13. Minutes should be taken as usual with the clerk seeking clarity at any point, should it be needed. The minutes should be agreed at the next meeting and can always be retrospectively signed at the next face-to-face meeting
14. Once we have held our first remote council meeting it is probably worth reflecting on how it went and what we might wish to change or improve for the future.

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