



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 28th September 2020**

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

In attendance: There were no members of the public in attendance.

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 as per the May meeting of the Council.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr S Rossiter.

2. Declarations of Interest

Declaration of interest from both 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 Marriott stated: As a qualified tree surgeon I wish to make it clear that any views which I express today are based on information before me at this meeting. If there is ever a potential personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interest I would declare it and would leave the meeting as appropriate whilst the matters are discussed.

Cllr Marriott announced that unfortunately he was going to have to resign from the Parish Council due to other commitments but wished to continue as the tree warden and advisor, and to be part of the pollinator project. The Chair thanked Cllr Marriott for his contribution to the Parish Council.

A notice informing parishioners of the vacancy will be placed on the website and noticeboard on 29th September 2020. Ten electors have to contact East Hampshire District Council within fourteen working days to call an election, if this was to happen the election would be postponed until May 2021 due to the current legislation relating to Covid19. If there has been no contact within 14 working days the Parish Council can commence the co-opting process.

3. To approve minutes from BPC meetings held on 27th July 2020.

The minutes were approved as a correct record 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 27th July 2020.

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- Pond Green Bridge – the treads have been replaced on the bridge. Cllr Marriott is obtaining materials for work on the struts.
- Bank signatories: Cllrs Coates and Stevens yet to be added
- Monks Walk: location of refuse bins for collection. Not yet agreed with residents
- Phone line to Monks Walk: report elsewhere on this Agenda
- NJC Pay Award: on the agenda
- The insurance values for Parish Council buildings and the link to the Asset Register will be carried out in 2021 as this will be carried out by the insurance company when the insurance is renewed.
- Network Rail fencing: reply received from Network Rail: work delayed due to Coronavirus
- Staging stored in the village hall: not yet considered by the Hall Committee
- Website: implications of the Public Bodies (Website & Mobile Applications) Regulations – covered in the agenda
- Proposals from Buriton School for School Meadow – no details have been received
- Defibrillator: update received yesterday, the defibrillator is to be located near the telephone box with Mr & Mrs Goswell possibly supplying the electricity. East Hampshire District Council is exploring moving a litter bin but it is hoped that this will not be necessary. Councillors agreed that if the bin was to be moved by the school that this would not be acceptable, it could be moved to the other side of the phone box. Clerk to feedback to Barbara Muir. **Action:** Clerk
- VJ Day was marked quietly, after the cleaning of the War Memorial, and reported on the website.
- Letters have been sent to traders who had asked if they could sell things at the pond car park
- Halls Hill Car Park: since Hampshire County Council and Queen Elizabeth Country Park had positioned logs no illegal or dangerous parking has been reported, however it was suggested that the logs needed reflective markings on them. It was agreed that the Halls Hill Car Park should remain open. **Action:** Cllr Mocatta to arrange reflective markings.
- The purchase of a new laptop is in hand.
- Cllr Crew is contacting contractors for annual playground inspections. **Action:** Cllr Crew.
- The car park at the Village Hall has been enhanced, the cycle parking and the filling in of the remaining potholes are outstanding. Cllr Marriott will order the cycle parking and Cllr Crew will arrange the pothole work. **Action:** Cllr Marriott and Cllr Crew.
- Hampshire County Council will inspect the Greenway Lane roundabout in October.

5. Coronavirus and Chairman's Update

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

- Covid-19 updates continue to be provided via the community website although it is still proving difficult to keep informed and up to date with changes from Government
- The weekly Post Office is returning to the church so the temporary van arranged by the Parish Council is ceasing
- Due to actions initiated by the Parish Council problems with litter bins, dangerous parking and anti-social behaviour have decreased significantly
- Issues of an abandoned vehicle, fly-tipping and a water leak in Greenway Lane have also been resolved
- The outdoor classroom area at the Chalk Pits has been reinstated and vegetation around the wooden sculptures cut back
- The water level of the pond has been reported to East Hampshire District Council
- The bins to some properties in South Lane had not been emptied but this has now been resolved
- Meetings of the Parish Council will continue via Zoom, following national advice.

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6. County and District Councillor's Reports

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

East Hampshire District Council:

- Bin collections – residents need to be encouraged to report any issues on the website and or they can email Cllr Mocatta.
- East Hampshire District Council will start sharing a work force with Havant Borough Council, senior managers and the bin collection are already shared.
- Penns Place is virtually empty as staff are still home working.

Hampshire County Council:

- The booking system is working very well at Petersfield Recycling Centre. Staff, however, are not allowed to assist users due to the current situation.
- The Climate Change Strategy has been approved.

7. Finance and Accounts

- Councillors received and approved the Receipts & Payments for the Parish Council report to 28th September 2020. The Chairman will sign when able to do so. There were ten receipts totalling £7,892.66 and twenty two payments totalling £27,275.95 for the Parish Council Account. **Action:** Chairman.
- Changes to the Reserves were noted and would be updated by the Clerk. **Action:** Clerk
- Councillors received and reviewed the performance against budget. It was noted that income was considerably lower due to the restrictions of Covid 19 with village hall income standing at about 16%.
- Councillors agreed to the insurance renewal commencing 1st October 2020, with the Commemorative Bench included. **Action:** Clerk to contact Came & Company.
- Councillors agreed the pay award for the Clerk and the Village Hall Manager to Scale Point 17 within the NJC to £12.69 per hours, backdated until 1st April 2020. Chairman to confirm to payroll providers. **Action:** Chairman

There was no Public Forum as no members of the public were present at the meeting.

8. Village Hall and Recreation Report

Councillor Jones presented a report which is attached to these minutes. Main points included:

Village Hall

- There are no bad debtors.
- Maintenance and PAT testing are up-to-date.
- The dishwasher is not working but the Village Hall Committee felt that as the kitchen is currently closed due to Covid19 that it would not be replaced at present. This was agreed by the Councillors.
- The current film screen is broken. It has been suggested that it be replaced with a pull down screen, possibly larger, rather than an electronic one. The Film Group are willing to contribute towards the cost. Councillors agreed to £300 for the screen. Councillor Jones will obtain quotes. **Action:** Councillor Jones.
- Quotes are being obtained for the replacement windows and doors, further discussions will be held once these have been received.
- All current bookings were understood to be following Covid guidelines and the Parish Council's risk assessments and compliance are still felt to be appropriate. A QR code has been obtained to meet new guidelines coming into force from 18 September.

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Garage on recreation ground

The cricket club has disbanded and will donate any remaining funds to the Parish Council for an appropriate community project. They have offered to dispose of the items in the garage and the garage or to donate them to the Parish Council. The Firework Committee has expressed an interest in using some storage space. Following a discussion it was agreed that as the garage is in a poor repair condition that it would be desirable for the cricket club to arrange for its removal and the disposal of its contents. The Parish Council will then work with the cricket club to put an appropriate memorial on the remaining hard standing using the remaining funds. It was also suggested to clear out the garage attached to the village hall, consider more shelving and allow the Firework Committee to store some items in there.

Ducklings Child Minding Facility

Jade Styles is hoping to provide a child minding facility in the upper hall when Ofsted approval is granted, there is currently a delay due to non-visits by them. Councillors agreed to charging £4.50 per hour at the beginning, rising to £6.50, then £8.50 and ultimately £9 (per hours subject to any general changes in hiring charges. This is the same agreement with Dottie Tots. A written agreement will be required and should include a clause about leaving the facility in good condition if / when the bookings are terminated.

It is understood that Ducklings may use CCTV to cover their outside area which is currently being vandalised. This was agreed subject to the correct signage being used.

Councillors approved the sole use of the ref's toilet for Ducklings. This would mean that the Tennis Club would no longer be able to use it. However, the Tennis Club will be playing some matches, it was agreed that they could use one toilet in the changing rooms for the three hours and they must thoroughly clean it after use, and there would be a small charge for the use. **Action:** Chairman to inform the Tennis Club.

Playground

Councillors agreed that the playground should stay open. Councillor Marriott has been carrying out fortnightly inspections. Consideration had been given to securing the log, but Sawscape did not raise this as an issue.

Pond Car Park

The trench for Monks Walk has been dug by Open Reach and the conduits installed but the phone line is still not connected. The trench to the Church is still outstanding but there has been no contact by Open Reach. A new wayleave is expected for this.

9. Planning

Councillor Johnston presented a report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

- Comments have been submitted on the Butser Quarry application.
- Prior approval of the phone mast on the Causeway has been refused.
- Five Bells – this is now successfully re-confirmed as an Asset of Community Value.
- Village Inn – Cllr Mocatta felt that the complaint had been resolved and that neither the Parish Council nor any Councillors had done anything wrong. Two people had contacted councillors about purchasing the Inn with another looking at possible community uses.

Government Consultation

Councillor Jones presented a report on the current Government consultation on the planning system, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Councillors agreed to delegate the Planning Committee to respond. One item needs to be responded to by 29th September 2020 and it was agreed that neither the proposed loss of affordable homes nor the proposed method for calculating housing numbers would be appropriate in this area. **Action:** Clerk

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10. Trees, Pollinators and Biodiversity

Councillor Jones presented a report, attached to these minutes. Councillor Marriott said that he would like to remain part of the Pollinator Project. It was agreed that the wider community should be involved once the County Council was ready to start the project. It was felt that the recreation ground could be mowed less frequently and that the area by the tennis courts and playground could be left to grow wild. This will be considered when the grounds maintenance contract is renewed. This would also be a cost saving. **Action:** Councillor Crew

Councillors agreed to the planting of more trees on the recreation ground. **Action:** Councillor Marriott.

11. Rights of Way Report

Councillor Jones presented a report a copy of which is attached to these minutes:

- It is hoped that Hampshire County Council will cut back on the Hangars Way and FP14.
- The Chairman thanked Dave Grant for his work on the village hall finger post.

12. Public Bodies (Website & Mobile Applications) Regulations

Councillor Stevens presented a report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Work relating to this matter, to improve accessibility, was carried out before the Government deadline.

An audit of the website had been carried out and areas for improvement addressed using a downloaded widget. Issues relating to colour contrasts can be addressed as part of normal website maintenance budget. The required 'Accessibility Statement' has been produced which gives details on how users can report any issue that they may experience with the website. Councillors approved the statement, subject to any comments in the future, which will now go onto the website. Councillors also approved £40 to be spent on an annual licence for website security. A General Data Protection Regulation statement is also needed on the website, Councillor Stevens will contact the Web Manager. **Action:** Councillor Stevens.

13. Commemorative Bench

Councillor Johnston presented a report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. The bench is now in place, the poppy roundel should be completed by the weekend. The company supplying the laser cut seat back has been contacted about the invoice but to date there has been no reply. **Action:** Clerk.

14. Dog Fouling

Councillor Jones presented a report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. There has been an increase in reports of owners failing to clean up after their dogs. Actions already taken were noted and Councillor Mocatta agreed to ask officers at East Hampshire District Council to carry out regular patrols. **Action:** Councillor Mocatta.

Councillors approved the positioning of a bag dispenser for dog owners by the gate to the recreation ground at Kiln Lane. This is being funded from the Community Produce Stall.

It was highlighted that the bins around the pond do have dual stickers on them, Councillor Mocatta agreed to ask about whether they could be added. **Action:** Councillor Mocatta.

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15. Work for the Lengthsman

The Lengthsman continues with the regular identified work. The Clerk would check recent activity and remind the lengthsman to attend to the planted area at the corner of South Lane and the High Street which use to be tidied and weeded by a local resident. **Action:** Clerk.

16. Correspondence

All items of correspondence were covered on the agenda.

17. Date of next meeting

- The next meeting of Buriton Parish Council is at 7:00pm on Monday 30th November 2020 – probably via Zoom unless national advice changes.

At the conclusion of business the meeting ended at 9.30pm.

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Coronavirus – Chairman’s Update Report (September 2020)

The arrangements initiated with Neighbourcare Buriton and St Mary’s Church (referred to in reports to the March, May and July meetings of the Parish Council) continued to work well, helping anyone needing shopping/chemists/urgent supplies or transport for medical appointments etc. These arrangements were suspended from 1st August as demand had fallen significantly, following the relaxation of restrictions, but the usual Neighbourcare service remains and the additional arrangements can be reinstated should the need arise.

Up-to-date information continues to be posted on the ‘COVID-19 VIRUS’ section of the Community Website and regular update emails are still circulated to as many parishioners as possible (with extra names being added to the circulation list upon request).

As reported elsewhere on this Agenda, some activities in the village hall recommenced in August and the playground has also been open with special COVID-19 guidance in place for all users in line with risk assessments.

It should be noted that it is still proving difficult to keep up to date with changes in Government regulations and guidance relating to Covid-19. Parish Councils do not seem to receive any direct communications from Government and have to rely on information being passed on by other organisations. Relevant pages on Government websites are updated from time to time but maintaining a constant watch to see if anything relevant has changed is impractical and, in any case, the updates or changes rarely seem to be highlighted or identified (the date at the top of the page is simply changed) and so finding the words that have changed requires the whole of the website pages to be re-read alongside a previous version. These shortcomings were drawn to the attention of our MP, Damian Hinds, early in July.

The temporary Post Office service, arranged by the Parish Council, has continued to operate on Fridays during August and September (in the Village Inn car park) whilst it was not possible to use the Seward Room at the church. The church authorities have, however, now made arrangements for the weekly service from Midhurst to recommence (from Friday 2nd October) and so the Post Office has withdrawn the mobile van service. They have explained that, to ensure the van is fully utilised, it may not always have capacity to serve Buriton again in the future and so it is hoped that the church will be able to remain open.

Due to action initiated by the Parish Council a number of problems reported at previous meetings appear to have receded: litter bins are now emptied more regularly by the EHDC contractors, dangerous parking in the Halls Hill area has been eliminated thanks to work by QECP / HCC and reports of anti-social behaviour by youths (including damage in the Chalk Pits Nature Reserve) have ceased since descriptions of offenders were given to the Police.

As reported elsewhere on this agenda, however, problems with dog-fouling remain and it has not yet been possible for Hampshire County Council to cut vegetation on the priority Rights of Way in the parish. Conflicts between walkers and cyclists have continued on some Rights of Way and cyclists continue to use some paths that are not bridleways on the fringes of QECP. Problems have been reported to HCC.

In spite of ongoing restrictions during the pandemic it has been pleasing to note that the Parish Council has been able to continue with many wide-ranging aspects of business. In addition to all the matters reported elsewhere on this agenda, the following can also be noted:

- Following repairs to two damaged benches at the village pond, a third seat (on the South Lane side of the pond) has now been replaced with thanks for financial support from a kind donor

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- An abandoned vehicle in the High Street, reported to EHDC, has been removed
- Fly-tipping along Greenway Lane has been reported to EHDC and removed swiftly
- A water leak along Greenway Lane (near to the railway bridge) was reported to County Highways and appears to have been resolved
- A volunteer working party has re-created the outdoor classroom area in the Chalk Pits Nature Reserve so as to provide opportunities for Buriton Primary School and other potential users
- Refurbishment of the small fingerpost in the High Street, indicating access to the Village Hall, has been arranged
- The low water levels in the village pond (and risks to fish) have been reported to EHDC who have visited to inspect and will monitor the situation
- Plans to repair the small pond at the top of the Chalk Pits site have been drawn up by QECP
- In recent weeks refuse and recycling bins in South Lane and at Binden have not always been emptied by the EHDC contractors. The problems have been reported to EHDC but, at the time of writing, are yet to be resolved
- The village was chosen to be featured as part of a 100km fund-raising walk for 'ABF, the Soldiers' Charity' in recognition of roles played during WW1 and WW2
- The website has been able to promote the 'virtual' Village Show and publish the results, encourage donations towards a defibrillator for the village and promote on-line editions of the Parish Magazine.

The National Association of Local Councils continues to advise local councils to continue to meet remotely, without face to face contact. They point out that local councils have the powers to hold public meetings remotely by using video or telephone conferencing technology until May 2021 and so most councils should have no need to meet in person. They point out that local councils have a duty to allow the public to observe council meetings without placing restrictions on the number attending, which many council meeting venues will not be able to accommodate in a safe way at this time. In these circumstances it seems sensible to continue to hold our meetings on Zoom for the foreseeable future and we have now held a number of successful meetings in this way. The other emergency measures that were also agreed by the Parish Council on 30th March continue in place.

Doug Jones
September 2020

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Village Hall and Recreation Report for PC Meeting: 28 September 2020

This report provides updates on each of the following subjects with views of Parish Councillors being sought and decisions required on some issues:

- The Village Hall
- Buriton Ducklings child-minding facility
- The Village Hall car park
- The playground
- Garage on the Recreation Ground
- The pond / church car park (including BT supply to Monks Walk)

The Village Hall

A Village Hall Committee Meeting was held (by Zoom) on 17 September and topics covered included the following:

- Current regular bookings: School (Tues, Weds and Thurs afternoons); Pickleball (Tuesday evenings); Karate (Weds 5-6); Martial Arts (Weds 6.30—8.30); Waggytails (Thursday evenings)
- Forthcoming users: History Classes (Thursday mornings from October); Tai Chi Classes (Thursdays); potential child-minding facility [see below]
- If these bookings continue, the Hall Manager estimates that it may be possible for the hall to break even in each remaining month of the financial year. The current balances (including the £10,000 grant) are, however, slightly below those at 1st April and so a loss for the financial year is anticipated. Our budget assumed income of £22,750 and expenditure of £15,595 so that a surplus of £7,155 could go into our 'sinking fund' (Reserve) for future village hall repairs or improvements
- There are no bad debtors
- All regular maintenance and PAT testing is up to date
- The dishwasher is defective but it is felt that, whilst it should be repaired in the future, there is no need to spend money on it immediately (whilst the kitchen is not being used)
- The electronic projector screen is broken and could cost almost £1,000 to replace. A contribution may be obtained from the Film Group. One further attempt will be made to see if a repair is possible and further estimates for a replacement will be obtained. A screen is required for the Art History classes
- The gas and electric contract with British Gas expires in November and the Hall Manager is obtaining quotations to recommend the best way forward
- Revised Covid guidance came into effect from 9 Sept with the following text on Government websites:
 - From "what has changed" (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-what-has-changed-9-september>): "There will be a limited number of exemptions. COVID-19 Secure venues, such as places of worship, restaurants and hospitality venues, can still host larger numbers in total but groups of up to 6 must not mix or form larger groups. This rule will not apply to individual households or support bubbles of more than 6 who will still be able to gather together. Education and work settings are unaffected, and organised team sports will still be able to proceed, as will weddings and funerals up to 30. From Monday, this limit will be enforceable in law."
 - From guidance about community buildings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities>: "From 14 September, whether indoors or outdoors people from different households must not meet in groups of more than 6. This limit does not apply to

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meetings of a single household group or support bubble which is more than 6 people. Community facilities following COVID-19 secure guidelines can host more than 6 people in total, but no one should visit or socialise in a group of greater than 6. Further information on social contact rules, social distancing and the exemptions that exist can be found on the guidance on meeting with others safely. These rules will not apply to workplaces or education settings, alongside other exemptions.”

- All current bookings were understood to be following Covid guidelines and the Parish Council’s risk assessments were still felt to be appropriate.

Since the meeting of the Hall Committee, the Council has learnt that some new regulations came into force on Friday 18 September making it a legal requirement for local council buildings that allow public access or bookings to: (a) register for an official NHS QR code and display the official NHS QR poster from 24 Sept and (b) have a system in place to request and record contact details of their customers, visitors and staff. The Parish Clerk immediately registered the Council for a QR code and copies of the official poster were then printed and displayed on the entrance doors to the hall on Tuesday 22 September. The Hall Manager is contacting all users of the hall to request that they record all the contact details required.

It should be noted that it is still proving very difficult to keep up to date with changes in Government regulations and guidance relating to Covid-19. Parish Councils do not seem to receive any direct communications from Government and have to rely on information being passed on by other organisations. Relevant pages on Government websites are updated from time to time but maintaining a constant watch to see if anything has changed is impractical and, in any case, the updates or changes rarely seem to be highlighted or identified (the date at the top of the page is simply changed) and so finding the words that have changed requires the whole of the website pages to be re-read alongside a previous version. These shortcomings were drawn to the attention of our MP, Damian Hinds, early in July.

The Covid pandemic has delayed our assessment and decision about our project to replace windows, doors, soffits etc but assistance from Andy van den Broeke continues and an update report will be circulated separately.

Councillors are asked to consider all the above matters and to authorise any expenditure agreed.

Buriton Ducklings child minding facility

- Jade Styles hopes to begin the ‘Buriton Ducklings’ child-minding facility in the Upper Hall during October (if the Ofsted visit has taken place by then) and the Parish Council needs to agree the hourly rate to be charged. It was also felt that we should include a clause in any agreement that if / when the booking is terminated, the room should be left in the good condition that it was in when the child-minding facility commenced
- Buriton Ducklings have arranged insurance and conducted Risk Assessments etc which the Parish Council / Hall Manager will wish to see
- Hours of usage (and days of the week) are not yet clear and they would just like to pay for the hours that they use
- They understand that if we get any other bookings for the Upper Hall, they would need to work around those times ...
- If no-one else is using the Upper Hall, they are happy to clean it themselves. If other users use it, they would expect to find it as they had left it
- They have got quite a bit of sponsorship and assistance – and they are gathering quite a lot of equipment in the shed near the changing rooms

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- They would like to keep a small (locked) filing cabinet at the top of the stairs as Dottie Tots had done
- They would like to be able to use the small chairs and tables that have been used by the previous nursery schools which may currently be stored in one of the store rooms
- They have done a lot of work in the nursery's garden area and are planning to replace the fencing around it with a similar style picket fence (but using new wood and painted white)
- They will require exclusive use of the Referee's Toilet and this will be even more important during the Coronavirus pandemic. The Parish Council will need to explain this requirement to the Tennis Club who could be allowed to use the changing rooms instead (as well as returning all keys to the Ref's Toilet)
- In terms of the hourly rates to be charged, the Hall Committee felt that the same, staged approach that had been used with Dottie Tots may be appropriate: £4.50 per hour at the outset, rising to £6.50, then £8.50 and ultimately £9/hr (all rates subject to any general changes in hiring charges)

Councillors are asked to consider all the above arrangements and agree on the way forward.

The Village Hall car park

The invoice from the main contractors for the first phase of the improvements has been received and the Clerk is arranging payment. The cycle parking facilities have yet to be installed and some repairs to remaining pot-holes also remain to be addressed.

The Playground

Observations suggest that usage since re-opening on Saturday 18 July continues satisfactorily with the new Covid guidelines being displayed on site on posters as well as on the Community Website, Facebook and email. The Hall Committee considers that the risk assessments are still up-to-date and appropriate.

The Parish Council has received one query from a parishioner wondering whether "in light of upcoming tightening of the lockdown restrictions, do you think it might be time to close the playground again?" The Hall Committee also considered this matter at its meeting on 17 September but noted that Government Guidance regarding playgrounds was unchanged, emphasising that "Playgrounds are a valuable community asset that provide children with a stimulating and tactile experience to exercise and learn through play. Making them available provides important physical, social, emotional and cognitive development opportunities for children." It was also noted that families can make their own risk assessments and decisions about whether to visit the playground or not and so, at present, the playground remains open.

The regular fortnightly inspections continue to be made and arrangements are being explored with Sawscapes about conducting the annual inspection and repairs.

Councillors are asked to consider all the above matters.

Garage on the Recreation Ground

As Councillors are already aware, the Council has been contacted by a representative of the Cricket Club explaining that he and colleagues responsible for the Cricket Club over recent years, feel that the club is now defunct – with no prospect of being resurrected.

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The club has some possessions (including some cricket equipment, a roller and (broken) lawnmowers) and a small amount of cash. The possessions are inside the garage on the Recreation Ground – and they think that they might also own the garage (although it is acknowledged that the garage appears on the Parish Council’s Asset Register and is covered by PC insurance). The club has had an offer from someone to take away all the contents – and to take the garage away – for no charge and they are quite tempted by this (the garage is not in perfect condition).

The club is checking with the Parish Council whether we might want any of the possessions and whether we might want to keep the garage – or whether we would be content for it to be removed.

In addition, the Club is considering donating its remaining cash to the Parish Council on the condition that it be used for a specific purpose – perhaps another bench on the Recreation Ground and / or a tree to mark the long-standing tradition of cricket in this village. The figure available may be of the order of £600 and the garage area (with its concrete base) could be a potential location for a bench and a plaque.

Contact has recently been made with the Fireworks Committee to check whether any of the contents in the garage might be theirs. They are not, but the group has explained that they have many possessions to store (tents, gazebo, bbqs, dustbins, buckets, banners etc) which they are currently struggling to store elsewhere. They would be interested in being able to use the garage as long as it is weatherproof.

Councillors are asked to consider the above and agree a way forward.

The pond / church car park

The long-running request for BT Openreach to install a phone line through the car park to Monks Walk continues: following the ‘trial dig’ on 12 June work took place on 22-23 September and ducting has now been installed. Openreach have yet to pull the copper wires through and provide connections. St Mary’s church is seeking a branch from this supply, across the Parish Council’s car park. As yet the Council has not been approached by BT and no discussions have taken place with regard to a Wayleave etc.

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Planning Report 28th September 2020

To be read in conjunction with the minutes of the planning meeting of the 10th August 2020.

Update on current planning matters

SDNP/20/00994/REM - New House at Cobwebs, North Lane. Decision Pending

SDNP/20/01535/FUL: The extraction of 343,670 tonnes of chalk (156,214 cubic metres x 2.2 tonnes per cubic metre) and the importation of 1,149,000 tonnes (633,333 cubic metres x 1.8 tonnes per cubic metre) of clean inert waste/soils and clays and the importation of approximately 31,000 tonnes of top soil (21,000 cubic metres x 1.4 tonnes per cubic metre) with the continuation of ancillary recycling operations until 31st December 2028 at Butser Hill Lime Works, GU31 5SP. A series of questions and answers between the Parish Council and the case officer for this application have been exchanged. Our comments and concerns were submitted. Application in Progress

SDNP/20/03034/PA16

Lay By at Junction of Bollinge Hill The Causeway Petersfield Hampshire Prior Approval - Installation of 1no 17.5 monopole with 2no 300mm dishes, 3no equipment cabinets and associated ancillary works thereto. The Parish Council had objected to this proposal. Prior approval required and refused.

Asset of Community Value, the Five Bells: the Parish Council has submitted the relevant information to EHDC, applying for the ACV status to be renewed for a further five years. The Parish Council's application has been successful and The Five Bells will be added back onto the District Council's list of Assets of Community Value.

Correspondence with Mr Cooper with regard to the Village Inn has continued. A reply was sent to the most recent letter from Mr Cooper (31st July 2020) from the Parish Council answering the remarks in respect of the 5 Bells status. Cllr Mocatta has also contacted Mr Cooper with respect to this letter. Mr Cooper has informed the Parish Council that he will reply once he has had a chance to discuss further details with Cllr Mocatta on his return from holiday. The Parish Council also sent a letter regarding aspects of this ongoing correspondence to Tracey Wood at EHDC. Further discussions between Cllr Mocatta and Mr Cooper have resulted in a letter being sent to Mr Cooper from the Parish Council giving more details on the timing of the placement of meeting minutes on the website and posting information on the Parish Council noticeboard.

Government White Paper on Planning.

Thought will be given to a response to this, if needed, over the next month.

Maggie Johnston

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BURITON PARISH COUNCIL

Government Consultations on the Planning System

Some thoughts for the Parish Council

There are currently two significant Government Consultations about the planning system:

One is called: “**Changes to the current planning system**” (deadline Thursday 1st October) which covers four main proposals:

- changes to the standard method for assessing local housing requirements
- securing of First Homes through developer contributions in the short term until a transition to a new system
- temporarily lifting the small sites threshold below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing
- extending the current Permission in Principle to major development.

The other is a White Paper called “**Planning for the future**” (deadline 29th October) which suggests a much wider reform of the planning system.

Most of this note focuses on the White Paper although the following issues in the more imminent document “*Changes to the current planning system*” may be of interest to the parish council:

- The proposal to change the method of calculating housing requirements could have some far-reaching effects. A ‘nationally-determined binding housing requirement’ will be calculated ‘for each local authority to deliver’. This seems to be based on delivering 300,000 homes per year across the country with a number of criteria built into some sort of algorithm which will then decide how many homes are required in each area each year. In the light of the recent Ofqual algorithm, could this produce the correct numbers for the country as a whole – but not necessarily in the most appropriate / suitable places? One of the factors which it appears would be fed into these calculations would be the affordability of homes (“to ensure enough land is released where affordability is worst”). But, house prices often reflect the quality of the local environment, landscapes etc and proposals for build many more houses in such areas could have adverse effects on those characteristics. There does not appear to be any reference to National Parks (or AONBs) in this paper – but surely account must be taken of these nationally protected landscapes? Will they be given housing requirements based on the same formulae as everywhere else in the country? Or, more sensibly, will they be left (as now) to allocate land for housing for themselves, based on local needs, landscape setting etc?
- The proposal to allow developers to provide no affordable housing units in sites of up to 40-50 houses seems to be exactly the wrong thing to do if one of the main aims of revisions to the planning system is to make housing more affordable?

Turning to the more wide-ranging reforms discussed in the White Paper “*Planning for the future*”:

The main premise is that the planning system is ‘the problem’ (not local authorities, not developers, not communities). It holds back growth and housing delivery; it contains too much repetition,

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uncertainty and delay; it has expensive steps and procedures; it can be difficult to understand and community engagement is poor (confined to a few narrow groups)

It still proposes a plan-led system (local planning authorities to produce Local Plans for their areas (with 10 year time horizons) which set out what sort of development may / may not be appropriate in various areas) – but with some significant changes.

Amongst the proposals is one which suggests that Local Plans should identify all land as either: 'Growth' areas (suitable for substantial development and where outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Plan); 'Renewal' areas (suitable for some development); or 'Protected' areas (where development would be restricted). This will probably attract a lot of attention – and there is no mention of whether or not National Parks would automatically be classified as 'Protected' areas (although that should surely be an implication of their current designated status?)

But there are a number of other potentially important issues, including:

- There is a general assertion (from the Foreword onwards) that “what we have now simply does not work.” Is that really true here?
- And another assertion states that the proposals would “give you a greater say over what gets built in your community.” If one of the two main opportunities for people to take part in the planning process is removed (the opportunity to comment on planning applications) would that assertion actually be true?
- The White Paper is virtually silent about climate change – not even offering a question for anyone to respond to. Nor does it seem to be connected to other current Parliamentary Bills about the environment, agriculture etc.
- Does the White Paper really consider the special needs of a planning system to look after the nation's protected landscapes (such as National Parks)? Or is that matter overlooked – as with the omission of National Parks from the penultimate bullet point of para 1.8
- Is it wise to abolish all the current environmental and related assessments (Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Environmental Impact Assessment) replacing them with 'quicker and simpler assessments' (a single 'sustainable development' test)? Will planners really feel “liberated” by having “the shackles of burdensome assessments removed”? Or, is it not the case that these assessments are actually rather important in Protected Landscapes, with all that such designations encompass? And, of course, the definition of any 'sustainable development test' would be absolutely crucial
- With regard to the proposals for the two stages of Plan-Making and Development Management: if there is to be less detailed assessment at the DM stage (particularly in 'growth' or 'renewal' areas) then there ought to be more at the plan-making stage (to check whether areas being allocated for development have any important properties: archaeology, biodiversity, cultural heritage etc). But the White Paper proposes a rigid timetable for each stage of the plan-preparation process and says that plans will be based on “more limited evidence”. A potential risk of 'dumbing down' which could lead to some bad (and irreversible) mistakes?

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- Considerations of environmental protection, climate change etc are needed at both plan-making and DM stages – is there any evidence that this delays development?
- The emphasis on design (which could be ‘binding on decisions’) appears to be encouraging – but raises a number of points: firstly, is it really fair for the White Paper to suggest that ‘planning for beautiful and sustainable places has failed in recent decades’? Is that really true in the National Park?
- And, secondly, in areas like ours each village will have special qualities and can be quite different from the next. So it will be important to ensure input from local level. But there is no mention of Village Design Statements or Local Landscape Character Assessments produced by local communities. These produce good design guidance at local level – and also involve genuine public engagement. Currently this work can be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents by the Local Planning Authority – but there is no mention of SPDs. Are they to be continued – or are they to be swept away?
- With good design often requiring great subtlety and nuances to ensure that new developments ‘fit in’ and ‘look right’, is it really possible for a digitised machine-readable ‘tick box’ approach to replace experienced assessment by local planning authorities?
- With regard to public engagement, the White Paper suggests that the planning system has lost its link to communities. But the proposals appear to reduce opportunities for engagement. Whilst it would be good to try engage more people at an earlier stage (plan-making), they will want engagement at a later stage when specific proposals emerge. An iterative approach at this later (DM) stage can add value and improve outcomes, engagement and acceptability.
- Site notices on lamp-posts etc seem to be ridiculed in the White Paper which appears to want everything to be done digitally. There is certainly lots of potential for greater use of digital means – but there is still probably value in notices being placed at the physical location where development is proposed if people are to be given the best opportunities for engagement in the planning system?
- Is a standard set of ‘national’ DM Policies really appropriate? It may be possible to have standardised wording to cover some issues but in many cases is it not better to tailor policies to local circumstances rather than try to impose a ‘one size fits all’ approach across the whole country? It might be worth scouring through the current DM policies to identify the sort of thing that it would be bad to lose?
- Similarly with the proposal for a standard set of (national) Conditions? It may be possible to have standardised wording to cover some issues but being able to tailor some Conditions to local circumstances is surely necessary?
- Whilst dismissing the current assessments of housing need as ‘too complex’, the proposals are to replace it with a ‘nationally-determined binding housing requirement for each local authority to deliver’. This seems to be based on delivering 300,000 homes per year across the country with a number of criteria built into some sort of algorithm which will then decide how many homes are required in each area each year. In the light of the recent Ofqual algorithm, could this produce the correct numbers for the country as a whole – but not necessarily in the most appropriate / suitable places?

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- One of the factors which it appears would be fed into these calculations would be the affordability of homes (“to ensure enough land is released where affordability is worst”) but special account must surely be taken of National Parks ..?
- There are a number of references to affordable housing in the White Paper – but no attempt at a definition of it (although there are a number of references to people owning a home of their own). Ensuring that LPAs would be able to decide the tenure could be very important.
- There are some (vague) references to ‘permissions being more swiftly turned into homes’ (building out permissions granted) – but no details. It would be important for the industry to play its part in any revision of the planning system; and not just local authorities and communities ...
- With regard to the Infrastructure Levy proposals:
 - Can a flat-rate charge, based on the final value of a development but set nationally really be set at the ‘right’ level for everywhere in the country? Circumstances, including the costs of providing infrastructure and the amount of ‘land value uplift’, will surely vary? This proposal seems to be included because many LPAs haven’t yet adopted their own CILs? Could it be argued that authorities who have taken the time and trouble to identify their own rates (supported by local evidence) should be allowed to keep them if they so wish? The alternative option mentioned in the White paper (allowing the Infrastructure Levy to remain optional, and set by individual local authorities) may be better?
 - However, is the proposal to shift the cash-flow burden of the new Infrastructure Levy onto small communities (as well as onto the Planning Authorities) sensible or practical? Getting infrastructure in place before the development arrives can be important – but the suggested procedures (whereby local authorities would need to borrow against Infrastructure Levy revenues so that they could pay for infrastructure in advance) could be challenging for Parish Councils (and risky for all)? Would it not be better to retain the current CIL arrangements where the charge is set when planning permission is granted and payment is due when development commences?
 - The proposals to extend the scope of the Infrastructure Levy (to cover changes of use which require planning permission (even where there is no additional floorspace) and to cover some permitted development rights) seem sensible and should have been included from the outset of CIL?
 - It will be vital for local communities (through Parish Councils) to continue to receive their share of any Infrastructure Levy
 - Is the White Paper proposing that S.106 agreements would be completely abolished? These agreements are not always just financial contributions: they can be contractual agreements to cover a range of other matters and this should not be lost.

This note probably does not cover everything that may be of interest or concern and it may be worth studying the thoughts of the National Park Authority. These topics are likely to be considered by both the NPA’s Planning Committee (on October 8th) and by the full National Park Authority (on October 15th) with papers appearing on the public website prior to each meeting ...

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Trees, Pollinators and Biodiversity Report to Parish Council meeting (28 September 2020)

Proposals to plant a number of trees in the parish have been discussed at previous Parish Council meetings and a start made with the new planting on the recreation ground during the lockdown.

Also in May, it was reported that the parish has been selected to be a pilot area for a County Council 'Parish Pollinator Project': to explore low cost actions to improve the local environment for pollinating species alongside increasing general awareness about pollinator issues and about the fact that people can take action locally to make a difference.

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

In recent months there have been more reports suggesting that nature is under threat and suggesting that human activity is changing nature at a rate never seen before which could have consequences for everyone: threatening food and water security, exacerbating climate change and even putting us at greater risk of pandemics.

Steve Peach, Land Management Officer in HCC's Countryside Service Department, visited the village on 8th September and discussed ideas for a parish project with Councillors Johnston, Jones and Stevens with two local residents.

A short walk around the village identified some potential opportunity areas including around the village pond, the churchyard, pond green, the recreation ground and green spaces near Glebe Road, Sumner Road and Heatherfield in addition to roadside verges in other places and the Five Bells garden. The group did not visit the Chalk Pits, the Greenway Lane roundabout or Bolinge Hill Lane to the Causeway but potential opportunities were acknowledged.

Ideas to help wildlife included the timing of cutting vegetation back, planting some new trees, mowing parts of grassed areas less frequently and creating corridors for wildlife through the village to connect to the wider countryside (south to north: chalk pits to the Causeway; west to east: Greenway Lane via Heatherfield and The Links to North Lane and the countryside beyond).

The project would offer the potential to involve the village school (and, potentially, Ditcham Park School), St Mary's church, local farmers, roadside verges and residential gardens as well as Parish Council land and the existing Nature Reserves. Each part of the village could perhaps be encouraged to think about how their street could contribute, perhaps creating an overall 'tree trail' that could encourage families to walk around a circuit from time to time (eg. different seasons of the year) and contribute to learning more about nature, taking exercise and community cohesion.

There could be opportunities to extend the initiative beyond pollinators into something to promote greater awareness and understanding of nature more widely (biodiversity loss etc) and to connect with other important issues such as climate change, health & wellbeing and changing other behaviours such as reducing littering, dog fouling etc.

Since his visit to Buriton Steve Peach has confirmed that the funding to support the County's project has now been approved (it had been delayed due to other priorities during the Covid crisis) so it should soon be possible to make a start – but he has also explained that his role has changed and so there might be a further delay whilst it is decided who else will lead this work.

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BURITON PARISH COUNCIL

Rights of Way report for PC Meeting: 28th September 2020

There are three matters to report at this meeting:

- HCC Vegetation Cutting arrangements (update)
- Conflicts on Shared Paths and Bridleways
- Fingerpost in High Street

HCC Vegetation Cutting arrangements

As reported at the last meeting, the Coronavirus pandemic led Hampshire County Council to notify all parishes that it would not be able to cut vegetation on Rights of Way as planned during 2020 because it has not let a contract for the work. HCC hoped to make arrangements for some priority routes but hoped that parishes might be able to make some arrangements for themselves.

The Parish Council responded to HCC in July making the following points:

- We hope that HCC will be able to continue with cutting work on the Hangers Way, particularly where it approaches the village from the north where conditions can get particularly bad
- If it is possible for HCC to do that section of the Hangers Way then please also cut that part of FP14 where it crosses the valley as that is also badly overgrown
- We will try to manage the other parts of FP14 and also FP16, FP17 and BW23 ourselves
- If we have to pay contractors for any of this work, can HCC confirm that funding would be available as we have no allowance for this in our budget for 2020/21?
- We share a lengthman with a number of other parishes and usually overspend (asking him to do more time for us than he can really manage) so that may not be an easy answer.

The Parish Council has been able to arrange for volunteers to address some of the routes (as suggested above) but, at the time of writing, no reply has been received from HCC to the question posed and no cutting appears to have taken place on either the Hangers Way or FP14 where it crosses the valley. Both remain quite badly overgrown. The on-line 'Path Problems and Structures' map states 'Seasonal Cut Planned'.

Conflicts on Shared Paths and Bridleways

As reported at the last meeting, conflicts between cyclists and walkers on the relatively new shared path between the Greenway Lane roundabout and the Queen Elizabeth Country Park were reported to HCC in June and some suggestions were subsequently made for potential improvements. No further response or update has been received from HCC.

Conflicts have also been reported on South Lane where the bridleway (part of the Hangers Way and Shipwrights Way) enters the village. Parishioners have become concerned about cyclists coming down the hill onto South Lane, travelling at fast speeds and putting themselves and other users of the route (including families, dog walkers and horse riders) at risk. Elliott Rowe (Area Countryside Access Manager) is currently investigating the matter and may consider installing signage rather than any barrier or structure.

Fingerpost in High Street

The fingerpost in the High Street that indicates the footpath to the Recreation Ground and also the route to the Village Hall has become darkened with age and weather exposure to the point where it is now hardly legible. In consequence, new visitors to Buriton often have to ask directions, having missed the sign. It is proposed to refurbish the finger locally to make it clearer. This will entail removing the sign for a few days and approval has been obtained from HCC for this initiative.

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BURITON PARISH COUNCIL

September 2020

Buriton Parish Council: Update on compliance to Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulation 2018

This regulation requires public sector websites to be accessible to as many users as possible <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2018/852/part/2/made>

We have reviewed the Gov.uk requirements to comply with this new regulation which came into force for small public bodies from 22 September 2020.

The first step to compliance is to carry out an audit to establish where the website may fall short of meeting the regulation. This, in itself, can be an expensive exercise for a small organisation (Gov.uk cites an estimate of £1500 to get this done). We had received a quote for £500 from our website manager. The audit is required before an organisation can claim 'disproportionate burden' to exempt themselves from making costly changes which might be hard to justify given the organisation's size and resources.

In consultation with Steep and Stroud parish councils we were directed to a provider of free software (Userway) which provides a widget to be placed onto the site adding a layer of accessibility options. This has been installed along with an 'Accessibility Statement' and has allowed the PC to reach a reasonable level of compliance without costing anything. If you go to the www.buriton.info page you will notice a blue button in the top right hand corner which allows you to perform a number of actions to make the page more accessible for any particular need. The Accessibility statement can be found on the black toolbar at the foot of the page.

Userway also provide a free site checker audit which has highlighted the areas where our site will need work – Buriton.info had 58 violations with the majority relating to colour contrast. This can now be addressed and budgeted for as part of our usual website maintenance. In the meantime, we can use this audit as evidence of our claim for disproportionate burden should we need.

This review has also highlighted additional changes to the webpages that are needed including:

- A statement on our GDPR policy
- A cookie policy
- The installation of an SSL certificate which is the security layer that allows data traffic to be encrypted when passing between websites. **I request permission to buy a license at an annual cost of approx. £40 + VAT.**

We will need to put an adequate amount in the next budget to cover work by the web manager.

Councillor Stevens

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BURITON PARISH COUNCIL

Commemorative Bench report for 28th September 2020

As you will have seen, the bench is now installed and looking very smart as I hope you all agree. There are some outstanding activities still to complete.

The poppy roundel is now complete and will be installed in the next few weeks. The laser cut brass seat backs are ordered and will be fitted also in the next few weeks. We are very nearly there and should be finished by the remembrance service in November.

The project is still within the budgeted funds available from all the fund-raising activities and donations.

Our thanks go to all the committee and those who have donated time and money to this village initiative.

Councillor Johnston

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BURITON PARISH COUNCIL

Dog fouling: report for Parish Council meeting (28 September 2020)

Parishioners have reported increased amounts of dog faeces around the village – along the streets, pavements and rights of ways etc as well as on the recreation ground. The perception is that it is currently unusually bad.

The Parish Council has, in the past, worked with Buriton School to get posters and appeals circulated as well as coverage in the Parish Magazine and website.

In relation to the current situation, Parish Councillors have:

- Liaised with concerned residents and arranged for an article to appear in the forthcoming Parish Magazine which will offer help to anyone unable to walk their dogs (in case part of the problem is that some people let their dogs out unattended at night-time etc)
- Reminded residents that: dog waste can be put into any of EHDC's bins as long as it is sealed in a bag; that it is an offence not to clean up after dogs; that Fines and Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued; and that offenders can be reported via ehealth@easthants.gov.uk
- Contacted EHDC and arranged for their enforcement officers to conduct some patrols and engage with dog walkers and other members of the public
- Asked EHDC about progress with new 'dog control' arrangements following its consultation exercise last year (July-August 2019): a proposal about 'Public Space Protection Orders' is still being considered which could, apparently, help deal with offences in the future
- Asked the Tennis Club to remind members that if anyone brings their dog to the courts then they should be supervised at all times, not allowed to roam freely on the Recreation Ground and that any dog poo must be picked up. The Tennis Club has replied saying that they had not seen any members doing this and so they think that they will leave the matter at present and, if they do see someone doing it, then they could put something into a future newsletter
- Confirmed the availability of supplies of dog poo bags and dispensers (as reported to the Parish Council in the past) and passed details to the parishioners who are considering raising funds for some of these – perhaps on the Recreation Ground and at the village pond? Dispensers from JRB Enterprises, recommended by Harting Parish Council, are about £80 each with boxes of 800 bags available for about £30 (plus delivery charge).

Councillors are asked to note this report and consider any further actions or expenditure.

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