

HARTLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF HARTLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 5TH MAY 2020

PRESENT: Cllr. Ingham - Chairman, Cllr. Bateman, Cllr. Mrs Cleaver, Cllr. Mrs Meredith Cllr. Mrs Humphreys, Cllr. Mrs. Atkinson and Cllr. Tranter

ALSO, PRESENT: Locum Clerk Ruth Mullett and 6 members of the public

Before commencement of the meeting the Chairman thanked all councillors for their continued hard work and commitment during these unprecedented times due to Covid and whilst the council were all learning the ropes. He also thanked the Acting and Locum Clerk for their help and guidance.

He sadly also gave the resignation of Cllr. McKenzie-Rowan who had felt the need to resign due to ill health. Cllr. McKenzie was full of praise and admiration for the new parish councillors and would be willing to be of any assistance if needed in the future.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Buck, Cllr. Miss Howard and County Cllr. Tomlinson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Other Disclosable Interest - Cllr. Mrs Meredith – planning application No. 20/00675/OUT

3. DISPENSATIONS

None

4. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING TO HEAR FROM:

The meeting was adjourned to hear questions from members of the public.

County Cllr. Tomlinson

Key Messages

- As with the national picture, our greatest concern continues to be within our adult social care community, as the number of cases in residential care homes increases.
- The West Midlands has moved from 2nd to 4th in terms of the number of COVID-19 cases. We are behind London, the North-West and the South-East.
- Confidential Worcestershire Daily Situational Awareness Briefing (SAB) are being updated to include data from Public Health England.
- The additional £1.6bn funding for Local Authorities announced over the weekend is most welcome but is considered as a “2nd payment on account”.

- PPE remains an issue, although stock levels are improving. We are providing an email - CoronavirusASC@worcestershire.gov.uk and a helpline (01905 768053) for all Providers to contact Commissioners if they have a supply problem or other issues.
- The County Council has now joined the #ComeBackToCare campaign being led by West Midlands ADASS. It's hoped those who have the relevant skills and experience can return to Adult Social Care and help us deal with the impact of this virus. To find out more go to the #ComeBackToCare website: <https://comebacktocare.org.uk/>
- There are over 750 beds available across the acute, community hospitals and hospice in Worcestershire and therefore this is not a concern.

Key Service Areas

Adult Services

- The "Drive though" testing site at the Worcester Warriors is now live although usage is fairly low. Take up will increase now that the government have expanded the use to include all key workers.
- Social care staff unable to travel to testing stations will be provided with home testing kits.
- The need to work at pace to ensure Care Home testing is increased and sustainable is a priority.
- Given the current spare bed capacity available across the health sector we are scaling back the need to use additional capacity secured at local hotels.

Children's Services

- Approximately two thirds of Social Care workers are in work, with the remainder self-isolating.
- Significant concern remains around the number of pupils attending school who are either children of key workers or vulnerable children. Currently we estimate only 20% of children in these categories are attending school. We are working proactively with schools and families to encourage vulnerable children to attend
- Over 300 visits per week taking place to children at home and in care who are assessed as being at high risk.

Economy & Infrastructure

- Reviewing opportunities to re-open major infrastructure sites where possible. Awaiting additional guidance from the DfT for a phased return to opening.
- All Household Waste & Recycling Centres remain closed but working with Government to assess what steps need to be taken to open some centres.

Workforce and Training

- Daily communication update issued to staff and staff briefing delivered 23/4/20
- Testing is being prioritised for social care staff and those classed as key workers using the Government guidelines.

Communications

- Regular bulletins on local media to promote the here2help programme.
- Following on from the successful newspaper “wrap around” we are looking at a further campaign in a couple of weeks’ time.
- Developing an information campaign to remind the public that surgeries/A&E are open to non COVID-19 cases.

Finance

- Whilst the additional funding announced over the weekend is most welcome, we are looking at this as a “2nd payment on account” and will continue to provide evidence of additional expenditure to Government.

PPE Sources and Local Manufacturers

Andy Moran, our Commercial Consultant, has put together this helpful and informative note regarding the procurement challenges around PPE. Apologies for length of this but with all the news about PPE and manufacturing locally he thought it would be helpful to give our understanding of the situation and why it may not be as simple as being portrayed in the media.

Whatever the type of product, it must be manufactured in compliance with the relevant British/ EU standards to be compliant with the PPE legislation and, most importantly, to ensure that it does the job of protecting either the wearer or the person the wearer is dealing with. **This is much more than a question of addressing red tape, it is about ensuring that the products meet their fundamental purpose.**

The PPE products that are needed can be divided into two types by whether they can be manufactured relatively easily locally/in the UK by converting existing facilities and processes or products that at least in the short term cannot be and will need to be continue to be sourced from overseas, mainly China.

Key products in short supply are masks, gowns and medical gloves.

Masks and Gowns

Masks and gowns are primarily made in China with some manufacturing in other countries. Export restrictions have been imposed on the export of PPE in all countries except for China which is still exporting but under a more rigorous process.

Materials - Both masks and gowns are made from a material called non-woven polypropylene. The vast majority, if not all, of this material is made in China. There is no obvious alternative material as it has to meet specific criteria for medical uses. This material is also used to make most hygiene products e.g. nappies, wipes, etc.

Also, the recent mandating/advising of wearing masks in public in an increasing number of countries is creating an exponential increase in demand.

Testing - We are in contact with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) and they are working with a supplier to the car industry who has made sample gowns out of an alternative material (used for airbags) however these need to be tested in a laboratory and certified that they meet the relevant British/European standards. So far, they have been unable to find a laboratory in the UK that is able to undertake the tests and subsequent certification. WCC Regulatory Services have put them in contact with Cabinet Office and BEIS who are co-ordinating nationally.

Scale – Scaling the production of gowns will be relatively easy as this requires basic textile making equipment (sewing machines) and skills however this would be subject to inspection and certification of the process, quality control, compliance marking and sample testing of final products therefore same problem as above.

The quantities of masks required needs automated production. The machinery needed is made in China or India. See video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pK_tquYwOLk

We have made initial enquiries with one supplier of mask machines however we need to do more research on costs, production rates, maintenance etc and due diligence if this was an option. There are no local representatives in the UK of machine manufacturers. Similarly, this would require testing, certification and ongoing quality control, marking and inspection processes.

Gloves

Gloves are classified as a 'medical device' and need to meet specific standards. Malaysia is the country that produces the most medical gloves and is where the world's largest manufacturer (Top Glove) is located. There are also factories in Thailand, Vietnam and China. We are not aware of any manufacturing plants in the UK.

This video from Top Glove from 3 weeks ago gives info on demand and also shows parts of the production process.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7Qa589M8u8>

Establishing a glove production line is a significant undertaking. The setup is unique to medical glove making and has multiple stages of chemical dipping, treatment, heating, drying, testing, inspection and packing. As gloves are classified as 'medical devices' UK manufacturers need to be registered with the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/medicines-and-healthcare-products-regulatory-agency>

Local Production of Other Products

We have been successful in sourcing all other products from manufacturers in the UK. Locally we have procured:

- Hand sanitizer from Equilibrium and Piston Gin
- Aprons from Imperial Polythene Products
- Spray bottles from Sema Sprayer
- Face shields/Visors from PSW Paper & Print

These products are relatively easy to make by adapting existing processes and the materials are readily available. The only exception initially was obtaining alcohol for sanitizer however this seems no longer to be a problem. Distilleries are able to make sanitizer as they have the relevant licences and processes for handling alcohol.

Face shields/Visors are very easy to make from clear plastic sheets however the quality and effectiveness of the hand-made ones e.g. by schools and individuals, is very variable. We have been discussing with WCC Regulatory Services and concerns are being raised nationally about the use of untested and 'non-approved' PPE products.

We get many offers of PPE every day however almost without exception these are either for the products we can source locally as above, for the wrong type of masks or are very dubious, e.g. asking for 100% payment upfront, companies formed in last few days or weeks, source is unclear with no test certification etc and don't pass any due diligence tests.

The drive for ever cheaper products and the reliance of "just in time" models of operating has meant that production has been moved offshore and limited stocks are carried to avoid putting cost into the system. As explained above starting production of the key products in the UK is not straight-forward and it seems it is unlikely that there will be any significant UK based manufacturing of masks and gowns within the next 3 to 6 months; the timescales for gloves could be much longer.

District Cllr. Bateman

During the Coronavirus crisis Wychavon District Council are providing a Leader's and Resident's update each Friday. Ongoing and updated details of Wychavon District Council's Coronavirus information and support can be found on their website at:

<https://www.wychavon.gov.uk/covid-19-update>

Below is a brief update as of Monday 27th April.

Business Support

- WDC have paid out support payments totalling more than £19million to 1,683 businesses.

Impact on services

- Customer Contact Centres in Droitwich, Evesham and Pershore are closed. You can still use our online services or contact us by phone.
- All children's play areas are closed. Our parks remain open, but you must follow social distancing rules.
- Droitwich, Evesham and Pershore Leisure Centres are closed.
- Public toilets are closed.
- Household Recycling Centres (managed by Worcestershire County Council) are closed.
- Libraries (run by Worcestershire County Council) are closed. You can still download free audio books.
- Committee meetings are now being held virtually.
- Our bulky waste collections have re-started. Garden waste and waste and recycling collections are unaffected.
- Our licensing functions have also been affected. Visit the Worcestershire Regulatory Services website for more information.
- Car parking - all of Wychavon's Pay and Display Car Parks are now free to use. NHS Staff and health care staff can also park for free in any on-street parking bay, for any length of time, while carrying out essential duties, as long as they are displaying evidence of employment.

Dogs on Leads

- WDC will be keeping its parks and public spaces open, however it asks people with dogs to comply with the government guidance and keep dogs on leads.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 20th April 2020 be signed as a correct record with two minor grammatical errors corrected.

6. PLANNING ISSUES

20/00850/CU – Hay Loft, Low Hill, Hartlebury – change of use of holiday let accommodation to flexible holiday let accommodation or annex use – **No objections**

20/00675/OUT – The Yard, Bishops Wood Lane, Crossway Green – Construction of a live/work unit of accommodation – **No objections**

20/00789/AGR – Podmore House, Droitwich Road, Torton – proposed steel framed building – **No objections**

Planning Appeal - APP/H1840/W/20/3245884 (18/02270/CU) - The use of land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes for 10 no. gypsy pitches, 1 site managers pitch together with the formation of additional hardstanding and utility/dayrooms ancillary to that use, and the siting of 24 no. touring caravans for transit pitches for use by gypsy and travellers - as approved under planning permission ref. no. W/14/00297 (as allowed on appeal ref. no. APP/H1840/A/14/2229284 but without compliance with condition no. 3 (so as to allow the permanent use of the land for the stationing of static caravans for residential purposes for 10 no. gypsy pitches, 1 site managers pitch together with the formation of additional hardstanding and utility/dayrooms ancillary to that use). Site at: Shorthill Caravan Site Crossway Green

7. FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

1. **Allotments** – It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendations from the Finance Committee to offer any disused/overgrown plots at half price for the year. To arrange for the unused plots to be strimmed for a donation of £10.00 to be given to the school. To obtain quotations to repair the tracks on site with either stone/tarmac.
2. **Budget** – It was unanimously **RESOLVED** for the parish council going forward to adopt the benefits of having a new Excel unified spreadsheet.
3. **Financial Regulations** – It was unanimously **RESOLVED** for the parish council to adopt the changes to the Financial Regulations until such time as a Responsible Financial Officer is appointed.

8. VIRTUAL MEETING POLICY

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt this policy.

9. TO REVIEW COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The following were updated: -

Playing fields and parish hall surrounds advisory Group

Cllr. Miss Howard

Cllr. Mrs Humphrey

Cllr. Mrs. Atkinson

Allotments Advisory Group

Cllr. Mrs Atkinson

Cllr. Tranter

Cllr. Mrs Humphrey

Crime, Speeding, Traffic and Road Safety

Cllr. Mrs Meredith

Cllr. Mrs Cleaver

Cllr. Bateman

COVID 19 Help Team

Cllr. Mrs Atkinson

Cllr. Mrs Humphrey

Cllr. Tranter

Website Development Group

Cllr. Tranter

Cllr. Mrs Meredith

Cllr. Miss Howard

Parish Hall Management Committee

Cllr. Buck

Cllr. Ingham

10. SWDP HARTLEBURY CATEGORY 1 SETTLEMENT – NEW PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF 59 HOMES

Cllr. Bateman gave an update on the SWDP and confirmed at present:

- 7 new proposed homes off Inn Lane
- 52 new proposed homes off Southall Drive

11. REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to set up a working party consisting of Cllr. Tranter, Cllr. Ingham, Cllr. Mrs Meredith, Cllr. Humphrey, Cllr. Atkinson and Cllr. Mrs Cleaver to read through, digest and review the Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessments.

12. TO CONSIDER THE APPROVAL OF THE NEW ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT

On the Chairman's request, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

Cllr. Mrs Atkinson confirmed that all allotment rent had now been collected.

13. WEBSITE UPDATE

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to get three quotations for a new parish council website.

In the meantime, it was agreed to use Worcestershire County Council's free "my parish pages" so the council can be legally compliant.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence list circulated to all councillors.

15. CALC'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Cllr. Mrs Cleaver as Acting Clerk gave an update on the CALC Recommendations and how the council were working towards achieving them.

16. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

1. Allotments
2. Website

3. Cllr. Mrs Cleaver – has found an old request from a resident showing interest in joining the parish council. This request was never actioned, so permission was given for Cllr. Mrs Cleaver to contact the resident and see if they were still interested.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 2nd June 2020 – 7.00pm

Meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed(Chairman) Dated