

Minutes of the Yardley Hastings Parish Council

Tuesday 2nd February 2021, at 7.30pm, by "Zoom Video"

(On 4th April 2020 Parliament passed "The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020" authorising local councils to hold their meetings by means of video-conferencing, allowing remote access and participation by Council members and members of the public.).

Participating: Mr H. Cave, (*Chairman*), Ms D. Smith, and Messrs J. Quilter, A. Rowton, C. Pickering, R. Houghton, M. Cooke, J. Keggin and D. Winter.

Clerk: Mr G. Gill Public: One

Councillors: None

164./20 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Michael Clarke, Carole Clarke and Steven Hollowell.

165./20 Members' Declarations of Interest for items on the Agenda

None.

166./20 Approval of Minutes of last Parish Council meeting held 11th January 2021

The Minutes were approved on the proposal of Mr R. Houghton, seconded by Mr J. Keggin, and signed by the Chairman.

167./20 Matters arising from Minutes

(Item 149./20) The Clerk reported that NCC Highways had now accepted responsibility for the repair of the damaged railings in Little Lane.

(Item 149./20) The Clerk reported that NCC Highways were requesting the Compton Estate to take responsibility for rectifying the potential trip hazard outside Avenue Farmhouse.

(Item 151./20(d)) The Clerk reported that Brian Osborne had now signed the Handyman contract, and that he had supplied evidence of his Public Liability insurance cover in the sum of £5million, together with a copy of the waste carrier's licence which he had now obtained.

(Item 152./20) The Clerk reported that he had now received confirmation from the SNC's Democratic Services Officer that the Parish Council had authority to co-opt two replacement Councillors in advance of the May election, if it chose to do so.

(Item 162./20) It was noted that Anglian Water had excavated the area in the highway verge adjacent to 56 Chase Park Road from which water was issuing, and had established that this was not caused by a leaking water main, but was the result of a leaking clay pipe from a storm drain. They had reported the issue to NCC highways. The Compton Estate had also been notified.

(Items 152./20 and 162./20) The Clerk reported that earlier in the day he had had a conversation with Councillor Michael Clarke, during the course of which Councillor Clarke had indicated that he was aware of a groundswell of opinion in the County that the elections to the new unitary authorities should not be postponed beyond 6th May. He had reassured Councillor Clarke that the Yardley Hastings Memorial Hall, the village's usual Polling Station, was quite large enough to be able to accommodate a "socially distanced" poll, and for his part Councillor Clarke had encouraged the Parish Council to actively promote the advantages of postal voting.

168./20 Recreation Ground

(a) Progress Report from the working party

The Clerk reported that he had returned Playdale's "final" plan duly approved. He was intending to pay in the cheque for the 1st deposit (*see item 169 below*) at a branch of Barclays in the morning. Once this had cleared he would produce the evidence of payment to the SNC to claim the first instalment of the grant monies. **Action: Clerk**

(b) Skateboard Ramps

The Clerk observed that following the vandalism to the quarter pipes in September 2020 he had obtained a quote for their repair in the sum of £970.00, of which £720.00 had been received in settlement of the subsequent insurance claim. There had been two previous insurance claims, and each time the Council had had to contribute the "excess" of £250 to complete the repairs. There was no legal obligation to spend the £720 received from the insurers in any particular way. It was noted that the overall picture gained from a perusal of the results of the recent survey was that there was no majority of opinion amongst the youth of the village in favour of the skateboard quarter-pipes being reinstated. There followed a wide-ranging discussion at the end of which the emerging consensus of Councillors was summarised by the Chairman as follows:

- The skateboard quarter-pipes should not be repaired, but should be removed
- The small ramp and the grind rail should be kept, and possibly moved to another position on the tarmac
- The current position of the goalpost should be reviewed, with consideration being given to the desirability of installing a net
- The ground in front of the goalpost, wherever situated, should be kept level
- The option of installing another basketball post and ring should be actively considered
- The possible installation of some seating adjacent to the tarmac area, in the vicinity of the oak tree, should be actively pursued. The rationale behind this was to provide a "hang-out" area for the older youth (as suggested in some of the survey responses)
- The overgrown "BMX cycle track", between the tarmac area and the hedge, should receive a make-over. Although "BMX" bikes were no longer in fashion, mountain bikes were still popular.
- The possibility of installing some additional features in the tarmac area (e.g.: A low wall at the edge, against which one could kick a football) should be actively considered.

Mr J. Quilter observed that the working party's discussions with Playdale had hitherto been concerned principally with the provision of equipment suitable for younger age groups. They would now have some further discussions with Playdale around the possible provision of seating and other ancillary equipment as a "hang-out area" for the older youth. **Action: Mr J. Quilter**

The Clerk observed that the budget agreed at the previous meeting contemplated that the Council's total spend on the Rec. project would be £66,771.48 (Net of VAT), with 75% of the Council's actual spend being refunded by the SNC. The cost of the current contract with Playdale was only £54,861.60 (Net of VAT).

It was agreed that the quarter-pipes should be demolished as soon as possible, but that this would have to wait until the ground conditions allowed. The work would be undertaken using volunteer labour. However concerns were expressed that in the meantime the current state of the ramps might constitute a danger to members of the public, and that it might therefore be appropriate to carry out some work in the immediate future which would have the effect of reducing any such risk. A number of Councillors volunteered to meet up at the Rec. at 10.00am the following Saturday (6th Feb) to agree an action plan for the demolition, and to discuss options for possible replacement features in the tarmac area. **Action: Mr C. Pickering and others**

(c) General

The Clerk confirmed that Terry Watton’s latest inspection report was clear.

169./20 Finance

(a) Payment of accounts received

Terry Watton	Handyman 01/01/21 – 31/01/21		267.00
G. Gill	Clerk’s remuneration – January		300.00
G. Gill	Clerk’s office expenses		40.98
Matthew George	Tree Surgery		2,320.00*
Playdale Playgrounds Ltd	First deposit – Recreation Ground Project	NET: £13,715.40 VAT: £2,743.08	16,458.48
SSE	Street Lighting - January	NET: £95.09 VAT: £4.74	99.83

*Not to be paid until receipt of invoice

The Clerk observed that the financial statement approved at the previous meeting showed a reconciled bank balance of £32,660.64 as at 31st December, and that the total value of the payments made in January was £724.99. Earlier in the day he had submitted a claim for refund of VAT totalling £5,519.47. Matthew George had told him that he had now completed all his work. Mr J. Quilter proposed, Mr M. A. Rowton seconded, and it was agreed that the above accounts be paid. The Chairman then signed the cheques to give effect to the above payments, having confirmed that these cheques had already been written and signed by the Clerk. It was agreed that the cheques could be signed subsequently by one of the other Councillors mandated to sign the Council’s cheques, notwithstanding the provisions of Section F6 of the Council’s Financial Regulations.

Action: Clerk

170./20 Planning Applications

a) S/2020/2395/FUL - Two storey side and single storey rear extensions and alterations – “Hi-view”, 14B Little Street

It was agreed that the Council had no objection to the proposed development. **Action: Clerk**

b) S/2021/0168/TCA - T1 Fir - Fell to ground level T2 Yew Tree Reduce back by 1m over driveway and away from house – Fernbank, 1 Little Lane (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

It was agreed that the Council had no objection.

171./20 Councillors’ Reports and Concerns

The Clerk observed that the top end of Church Lane had recently had a “makeover”. The ditch running alongside the path been cleared out, and overhanging tree branches had been cut down. Ms D. Smith confirmed that this had been done by the Compton Estate, at the instigation of the owners of “The Old Barn”, following the recent heavy rainfall.

172./20 Future Meeting Dates

Wednesday 17th February, Monday 22nd March.