

Harbury Parish Council
Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Thursday 25 March 2021 at 7.30pm
Remote Meeting

Present

Cllr T Lockley (chairman)	Cllr S Allen
Cllr A Knowles	Cllr C Gibb
Cllr K Thompson	Cllr A Rutherford
Cllr J Balch	Cllr S Ekins
Cllr J Thornley	

Absent

Cllr A Mancell

In Attendance

Alison Biddle, Clerk to the Council
County Cllr A Crump
District Cllr Harris
Carole Gwillam, Minute Secretary

Public

High Sheriff of Warwickshire, Joe Greenwell CBE DL
11 members of the public

21/31 Apologies

Cllr A Mancell had sent his apologies but these had not been received by the clerk prior to the start of the meeting and are recorded post-meeting.

21/32 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Ekins declared a personal interest in agenda item 12.6, Harbury Market as his wife is involved with this.

21/33 Dispensations

There were none.

21/34 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the ordinary parish council meeting held on Thursday 25 February 2021 as a true and complete record of that meeting; they were duly signed.

21/35 High Sheriff Award

A presentation was made by the High Sheriff of Warwickshire, Joe Greenwell, CBE DL, in recognition of the sterling work by the Harbury Volunteer Group, co-ordinated by members of Harbury PC, during the Covid-19 crisis.

The High Sheriff stated that he had been giving out awards to nominated individuals and organisations over the past four weeks; he himself had nominated Harbury Volunteer Group under the umbrella of Harbury PC, as he is entitled to do, from his own evidence of work done during the Covid pandemic over the past 12 months – he has been a Harbury resident for many years, and he praised the parish council's contribution and impressive leadership. Cllr Lockley thanked the High Sheriff, on behalf of the council and all the volunteers; the award would be proudly displayed. Arrangements were made to physically present the certificate to councillors and volunteers the following week.

21/36 Public Participation

1 Southam Police - update/exchange of information

No communication received from the police.

2 Rail Travel – discussion item re Harbury Station

A proposal from a member of the public for the possible re-opening of Harbury Station had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, highlighting the possible benefits and seeking the council's views. Cllr Lockley asked Cllr Gibb for his personal opinion as he has over 40 years' experience in the railway industry. Cllr Gibb pointed out that there were already good rail links from Leamington, Rugby and Banbury; a station in Harbury posed various problems and said that the community should think hard about the effects of having a station and the impact on the village – more motorists, more housing, for example. Cllr Harris said that she had explored this a few years ago with Cllr Bromwich (district councillor for Southam) but would be willing to look at it again. Cllr Lockley felt a rail station could provide immediate justification for a large housing development and was sceptical about any benefits.

3 Harbury Energy Initiative

a) Community Carbon Footprint Tool

A web link for the carbon footprint calculator had been circulated to councillors. The tool has been funded by the government and enables people to search for their parish which will show the breakdown of the carbon footprint just in that area. Bob Sherman asked for a councillor volunteer to work with HEI on how to make it useful, use it and improve it. Cllr Balch volunteered.

b) InnovateUK/WPD project 'ADVENT'

ADVENT is a UK scheme for voltage monitoring. At present, there are half a million unmonitored substations, and this simple way of monitoring voltage spots problems before they occur. Western Power has chosen Harbury, one of only 3 communities in the whole country, to take part in this scheme. A total of 40 volunteers would be required to host a monitor for six months. Publicity has not yet gone out – an article is waiting to go in the Harbury & Ladbroke News, then Facebook. The parish council's support was requested; an endorsement would encourage participants. The trial is expected to start late summer, with a briefing session on 22nd April. Councillors felt that this would be a worthwhile scheme and was prestigious for the village.

c) Presentation on Harbury Future Energy Project

A short presentation was made by Paul Quinney, on behalf of the project team, which included details of the equipment that would need to be installed along with suggestions for various possible locations on the playing field and car park and the impact these would have when viewed from different areas of the village.

It was emphasised that climate change is real, and everyone is responsible. 2030 will see a Government ban on all petrol and diesel cars. EV charging stations will be needed for every home but there are many homes which do not have off street parking and therefore councils will need to provide public charging points in their public car parks.

Councillors asked questions about the visual impact of the turbine and what measures would be taken to ensure that there would be no liability for the parish council, should the scheme be wound up. The team is seeking to cover this by way of an insurance bond.

4 Members of the public

There were no further questions.

21/37 Other Organisations

1 Harbury Library

Report circulated, opening 12 April with Covid restrictions. Biblio's to follow in due course.

2 Harbury School Governors

Re-opened successfully and catching up with effects on the children. A substantial grant had been given by WCC for disability improvements to a student with specific special needs. Encouraging that the intake for September will be full.

3 Southam College

Nothing to report, except all students undertake lateral flow tests twice weekly – unfortunately, two outbreaks (in different years) have seen students sent home. The Easter break should help alleviate these outbreaks.

4 Twinning Association

Nothing to report.

5 Village Hall

Clr Rutherford reported building work on schedule and should be completed by the end of April.

6 Harbury Energy Initiative

Nothing further to report than that already covered.

7 SDC & WCC

SDC : Cllr Harris had already emailed her report, main points being:

- **Harbury Crossroads**
S106 money and process is progressing and is now in the design stage. No date has been given for the work to commence. She will ensure this does not cause further issues to the area due to HS2 and other ongoing road works. Cllr Crump is linked in with WCC and they both attend the various forums to raise and monitor these issues
- **HS2**
A collective of local councillors representing residents in the area have held urgent meetings with HS2 to hold them to account over the road closures, length of time and state of the roads. HS2 have been given 3 weeks when we will meet with them again and we have asked them to provide evidence for the slippage of work and why it is taking longer than they predicted - pertinent questions around various options have been asked and we are expecting answers at the next meeting. To date HS2 have been vague and elusive and it has been made clear to them that this behaviour will no longer be tolerated.
- **Covid**
Most Hospitals in the area have few patients with the virus and The Horton in Banbury is fully green having no Covid patients.
- **Fly tipping**
This has continued around the area and groups visiting Chesterton Windmill, areas of Harbury and surrounding countryside have at times left the area in a dreadful state, littering and damage to verges, no respect of the environment or for others. Representations have been made to the appropriate bodies and portfolio holders

WCC : Cllr Crump reported:

- Also disillusioned with HS2 who have no cohesion to their planning; a further 4-11 month delay was reported on Midlands Today on the A425. He vehemently objected to their totally incompetent organisation; regular updates with HS2 were a waste of time as they did not want to share any information. The repairs to the bridge on the Welsh Road West in Southam could have been completed in half the time had HS2 co-operated. They are being held accountable and Jeremy Wright MP was on the case.
- He reported that the traffic survey in Deppers Bridge was now going to take place in June; the police were going to do more enforcing.
- He also informed council, Cllr Gibb in particular, that he had emailed Alison Williams of Safer Routes to Schools, and she was going to get in touch.
- A planning application had gone to Southam for an Aldi Store by Galanos House.
- Road fatalities are 56% down due to Covid restrictions; it is hoped that people will continue to watch their speed and drive safely.
- Cllr Crump is continuing to work with the clerk about Sec 278 enforcements not carried out and making sure that obligations are met.

21/38 Planning

1 [Planning ref 21/00774/TREE – Shakespeare Inn, 11 Mill Street](#)

T1 – willow – reduce from 18 metres to 12 metres to improve its stability

T2 – ash – reduce by approximately 3 metres to the previous pollard point

T3 – horse chestnut – reduce by approximately 3 metres to previous pollard point

T4 – coniferous hedge – reduce by a varying height of between 7.5 metres and 12 metres to a uniform height of 5 metres

It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

2 [Planning ref 21/00006/FUL – The Co-op Store, High Street](#)

Installation of new shop front windows and auto-door, refrigeration plant (with screening), extraction systems, and AC units plus relocation of ATM
(N.B. Review of previous objection)

The clerk had circulated an email received from the planning officer which contained advice from environmental health. Councillors were satisfied with the expert advice given and noted that the resident concerned was also satisfied and had withdrawn her objection. The litter bin was to stay where it was, the manhole cover in front of the ATM was to have non-slip paint, and a timber closed boarded fence, to maximum height, was to be erected along the boundary with the neighbour's property.

It was **RESOLVED** to withdraw the previous objection relating to noise but the comments re widening the pavement and raising the kerb are to remain.

3 **Harbury Library Solar Panels**

This item had been withdrawn as the library committee has decided not to go ahead with this proposal.

4 **Delegated Responses**

Noted as per Appendix A

21/39 Consultations

1 **Local Government Boundary Commission for England Consultation – SDC Ward Boundaries**

It was **RESOLVED** to make no representation.

2 **Closer working/possible merger of SDC & WDC**

This was not a formal consultation but had been requested by District Cllr Harris so that she could obtain the PC's views. Cllr Lockley's own personal opinion was that this made more sense than a county wide unitary authority. However, there were concerns about reduced services. Cllr Thornley was not in favour of large mergers, and Cllr Harris also expressed concern as rural areas always seem to suffer with services being further reduced.

21/40 Environment

1 **Parking Problems at Five Ways**

No update at present. The clerk is due to meet the arborist early next week for advice on a tree planting scheme at Five Ways, but also for the playing fields and the cemetery. She would report back at the next meeting.

2 **Carbon Footprint Tool**

Already discussed at minute ref 21/36 above.

21/41 Properties

1 **Playing Fields**

a) Harbury Future Energy Project- to consider impact on playing field & decide whether to proceed subject to agreement of Fields in Trust

The chairman asked all councillors individually for their views; consensus was that it should be supported. There were one or two reservations but these were clarified: (a) the extension of the car park could be adapted to allow for carnival vehicles by putting in dropped bollards (b) the reduced cost from batteries topped up by solar panels would benefit not only e-Wheels but everyone by being comparable to local prices or even less – it would be important that any successors to HEI in the future did not make a profit at the public's expense and (c) the life span of the battery was as yet unknown; it should be borne in mind that providers are developing these rapidly.

It was **RESOLVED** (Cllr Gibb proposed, Cllr Allen seconded) to support the scheme as proposed in its entirety subject to the consent of Fields In Trust, with the preferred site for the battery store being in the car park and the location of the turbine being at the far end of the field by the skatepark.

Cllr Thompson added that it was imperative that the community understands what is being proposed and has a chance to express their views at a public meeting. There would be further opportunity for discussion at the planning application stage. Thanks was expressed to Paul Quinney, Bob Sherman and HEI for all their hard work.

b) Tree planting

This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

c) Memorial Bench

This was delegated to the properties group to agree a suitable location.

2 Cemetery

a) Update on chapel repairs

Cllr Ekins reported that all was in hand and work was due to start in May. The clerk was concerned that, with only a month or so to go, the chapel had still not been cleared. She and Cllr Ekins would meet as soon as possible to discuss this.

21/42 Finance & General Purposes

1 Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation for February 2021 had been completed by the clerk and checked by Cllr Mancell. All correct.

2 Budget Report

There were no questions.

3 Internal Audit - public rights year ended 31 March 2020

It was **RESOLVED** to sign a letter to the internal auditor confirming that a notice of public rights for the period commencing on Monday, 15 June 2020 and ending on Friday, 24 July 2020 had been published on the parish council's website on Friday, 12 June 2020 in respect of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2020. In addition, the notice had been publicly displayed at the parish council office from the same date.

4 Streetlights Annual Maintenance Contract

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the renewal of the annual maintenance contract at a cost of £1,341.54. The clerk was asked to discuss the replacement of the remaining non LED lights with LEDs as they fail.

5 Office Computer

It was **RESOLVED** to approve an upgrade at a cost of £181.00.

6 Harbury Local Market - request for PC to fund hire of village hall

This request was for £1560, although Cllr Ekins pointed out that it should be a bit less as there is no market in December or January (10 months not 12). The clerk pointed out that this had not been budgeted for and some discussion followed. There was some ambiguity re the cost as Cllr Rutherford (chairman of the village hall committee) thought it should be £64 per hire.

It was **RESOLVED** that the parish council could support this reduced cost and pay for 10 events which would total £640. This would start from April this year and would be reviewed next March. Acknowledgement of the council's support would be expected, as is the case with all grants/donations/support. The village hall will be asked to invoice the parish council direct.

7 FOI Requests – Charging Scheme

Cllr Lockley had researched this and found that a charge for FOI requests in respect of staff time of less than 18 hours is not permissible.

21/43 Arrangements for Council Business

1 **Re-confirmation of clerk's delegated powers**

It was **RESOLVED** to re-confirm the clerk's delegated powers in order for her to make decisions on behalf of the council, in consultation with the chair and vice chair should the council be unable to meet; Cllr Lockley proposed, Cllr Allen seconded and all agreed.

2 **Approval of revised meeting dates**

The clerk, in consultation with the chairman and vice-chairman, had put forward a revised meeting schedule in the event that the regulations allowing remote meetings to take place are not extended beyond 6 May 2021. The government is voting on a review of the emergency coronavirus regulations today so their decision will be known very soon. If the regulations permitting remote meetings are not extended, the parish council will have to resume face to face meetings. The revised meeting schedule will remove the need for face to face meetings before the end of June when it is expected that the remaining restrictions on social distancing will have been lifted

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the revised meeting dates as follows:

- 22 April 2021 – Annual Parish Meeting to be held remotely
- 6 May 2021 – Annual parish council meeting followed by ordinary meeting to be held remotely
- 23 June 2021 – Ordinary parish council meeting – face to face meeting

21/44 Accounts for Payment

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounts for payment as per Appendix B; Cllrs Ekins and Allen to authorise payment. They will confirm that they have checked the invoices (circulated prior to the meeting) by email.

21/45 Reports & Questions

There were none.

21/46 Exclusion of Public & Press

There was no confidential business.

21/47 Date of Next Meeting

There will be no parish council meeting in April. Instead, the Annual Parish Meeting (not a council meeting but a meeting of the electorate) will be held via Zoom on Thursday, 22 April 2021. The next parish council meeting will take place on 6 May 2021, also via Zoom. Details will be published on the council's website as soon as they are confirmed.
www.harbury-pc.gov.uk

The meeting closed at 9.53pm

Signed Chairman Date.....

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APPENDIX A

Planning Applications – Delegated Responses 25 March 2021

- 1 [Planning ref 20/03160/FUL - 19 Bush Heath Lane](#)
Proposed two storey rear extension
No representation

- 2 [Planning ref 21/00394/TREE - Wissett Lodge, 10 Church Street](#)
T1 – yew – reduce height from 7 metres to approximately 5 metres.
H1 – conifer hedge – reduce height from 12 metres to approximately 8.5 metres.
No representation

- 3 [Planning ref 21/00053/FUL - 3 Binswood End](#)
Replacement windows, new bifold doors to kitchen, replace lounge patio doors with window. Render outside of the property.
No representation

- 4 [Planning ref 21/00052/FUL - Bishops Bowl Lakes, Station Road](#)
Outbuilding that contains a workshop/studio, garage, storage and plant room serving the existing dwelling.
No objection but request that the planning officer considers any impact on the view from the public footpath from Harbury to Bishop's Itchington.

