

ELDERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Eldersfield Parish Council held on 5th May 2021 by tele/video conference, commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Mrs C Joseph (Chairman), Mrs W Burr,
Mr P R Chichester MBE, Mrs D E Holt, Mrs T A Owen

In Attendance: District Councillor Bronwen Behan

**Members of the
Public:** Mr C Mills

1. Tele/video conferencing

Councillors noted that the meeting was being held by tele/video conferencing under The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 and that the Public had been invited to attend.

2. To elect a Chairman

The meeting elected Cllr Mrs Joseph to act as Chairman of the meeting until the arrival of Cllr Chichester.

[Dealt with after item 23 of the Agenda:]

Cllr Chichester announced that regretfully he declined to offer himself as a candidate for chairmanship. After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Mrs Joseph be Chairman.

[Dealt with after item 23 of the Agenda:]

3. To elect a Vice Chairman

After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Mrs Holt be Vice Chairman.

4. Apologies for absence

None

5. Members' interests

None

6. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous meeting

The draft Minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2021 were accepted as a true record of that meeting. In view of the fact that the current meeting was being held remotely, it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk sign the minutes on behalf of the Chairman.

7. Matters arising

Defibrillator: Councillors noted a number of difficulties with the defibrillator: the box containing the apparatus could not be opened with ease; the defibrillator – which it was understood was intended to be used by members of the public in an emergency - was

accompanied by an instructions booklet which advised that the booklet be read in its entirety before the machine was used; and that the box was not marked with instructions on how to obtain the code which was needed to open the lock.

It was agreed that a working party be established to consider the best means of progressing.

The Clerk advised that the machine had been withdrawn from South West Ambulance Service's list of operational defibrillator machines.

Litter Picking: The Clerk advised that MHDC encouraged local groups to litter pick nominated roads and, subject to an undertaking by the group to perform the exercise at least four times a year, would provide equipment to be stored by the group for its use.

Councillors enthusiastically received this information and decided to consider a scheme for proposal and adoption at the next meeting.

8. Reports from the Police

The Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team were unable to attend the meeting and no report was available. They advised the Council, however, that if the Council had specific questions they would do their best to answer them.

Councillors noted that there had been some unruly behaviour within the Parish which had merited notification to the Police. This was done through the non-urgent 101 number, which connected to Gloucester. A request by the Councillor that the call be forwarded to Upton was actioned.

9. Report from District and County Councillors

District Councillor Bronwen Behan advised the meeting that MHDC had adopted important policies on domestic abuse and Clara's Law.

She also advised the meeting of recent planning applications, including the refusal of an appeal in relation to 20/00448/FUL (Orchard Stables, Wad Lane, Dunshill, Corse Lawn, Malvern GL19 4PF).

10. Report from the Parish Paths Warden

The Parish Paths Warden was not present but it was reported that she was developing a dossier of issues for reporting to WCC.

11. Public Comment

None

12. Parish Plan

Cllr Mrs Holt reported that she had prepared a draft of the Parish Plan which she had submitted to the Clerk, with whom she had then had a constructive conversation. She would therefore now be making revisions and hoped that the revised draft would be circulated to Councillors prior to the next meeting.

13. Lengthsman

Council noted the report from the Clerk on the services provided by the Lengthsman since the last meeting for which an invoice of £118.00 had been submitted in respect of March 2021.

14. Insurance

The Council considered the offer of insurance received from the Council's current insurer and **RESOLVED** that the Council renew its policy with Zurich Municipal for the year commencing 1st June 2021 at a premium of £257.60

15. CALC

After a short discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Council renew its membership of Worcestershire CALC for the year commencing 1st April 2021 at a cost of £377.97.

16. Accounts: Adoption of Accounts

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council approve and adopt as the Accounts of the Council for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2021 the draft accounts circulated prior to the meeting.

17. Accounts: Internal Auditor for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2021

The Clerk reported that the COVID19 restrictions had made it impossible for the Internal Auditor to conduct the Annual Internal Audit Report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), but that the completion of this Report was not a necessary precursor to the completion by the Council of the other sections. He would seek completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report when the COVID19 restrictions permitted.

18. Accounts: AGAR Certificate of Exemption

It was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Certificate of Exemption for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2021.

19. Accounts: AGAR Section 1

It was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Section 1 for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2021 as circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting.

20. Accounts: AGAR Section 2

It was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Section 2 for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2021 as circulated by the Clerk prior to the meeting.

21. Investment Policy

It was **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with item 15 of the minutes of the meeting of 11th May 2006, the Council's investment policy remain that all funds be maintained in a current account and that this Policy be reviewed annually.

22. Risk Assessment

The Councillors considered the Risk Assessment Policy adopted on 14th July 2011 and decided that no amendments were required. It was recognised that the Council had prepared a covid risk assessment with respect to the lengthsman.

It was however noted that covid was a new risk, with six of the 100,000 people living in the Tewkesbury area currently estimated¹ to be suffering from the disease. Although the epidemic is in retreat throughout the country and the government has indicated its intention that there be no legally enforceable restrictions pertaining to covid transmission reduction after 21st June, Councillors nevertheless asked the Clerk to review the situation closer to the Council's July meeting which it is expected will be held face to face and, if appropriate, to propose a covid risk assessment for consideration by the Council.

23. Authorisation of Disbursements

It was **RESOLVED** that the following disbursements be made for goods and services:

£220.15	J L Gabbott
£53.80	HMRC
£118.00	J P Moore (Lengthsman: £118 March)
£257.60	Zurich Insurance
£377.97	Worcestershire CALC (membership)
£30.00	Worcestershire CALC (training, Cllr Burr)
£83.94	Defibrillator pads (Clerk)
£14.39	Zoom (to 12 th May, Clerk)
£1.83	Kayfast (bolt for defibrillator, Clerk)

24. Future Meetings

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council be held on Tuesday 13th July 2021, commencing at 7.30 p.m.

25. Any other business

Black Smoke: One councillor had been advised by a parishioner that he had seen heavy black smoke emanating from a fire in a field. The Councillor considered that it was possible that the smoke was toxic and advised the parishioner, and any others who might be in a similar position, that they should contact the Environment Agency (01684 864346) or the Environmental Health department at MHDC (01905 822799). It could be very helpful to take photographs which show the smoke and identify the origin, and these can be sent by email to the relevant authority for possible future action.

Email addresses: the Clerk advised the meeting that it has been recommended that parish councils use formal government email addresses (of the type a.non@parishcouncil.gov.uk). It is suggested that these are more secure (in that they identify parish councillors and can easily be deleted after the resignation of the councillor); that they are generic (the address of the Clerk can be passed easily to his successor) and that because of their formal and official nature they inspire in members of the public the confidence which can properly be associated with a government department. Councillors received the idea warmly, and instructed the Clerk to ascertain the costs of implementing such a proposal.

¹ ZOE/King's College study

Zoom: With the renewed requirement to hold meetings face to face, Councillors saw no need to continue with the Zoom subscription, which the Clerk was therefore requested to cancel.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

JLG
10.5.21