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| **The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Great Witley and Hillhampton Parish Council** |
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| **Held Remotely via Zoom on Wednesday 13th May 2019** |
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| **Present:**  Cllr F Chapman (FC), Cllrs C Shaw (CS), C Dermietzel (CD), A Goodman (AG), N Drew (ND), B Dallow (BD), A Symonds (AS), P Trow (PT) and District Councillor P Cumming (PC). |
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| **In Attendance:** Clerk, J Evans |

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| **1.** | **Election of chairman and signing of declaration of acceptance of office:** FC was proposed by CS for Chairman. A unanimous show of hands voted FC in as Chairman who duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office. | | | | | |
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| **2.**  **3.**  **4.** | **Apologies:** Received and accepted from C Jones and County Councillor K Pollock.  **Election of Vice Chairman:** FC proposed CS as Vice Chairman and was seconded by BD. A unanimous show of hands voted CS in as Vice Chairman who duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office.  **Declarations of Interest:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | Register of Interests: Councillors were reminded of the need to update their register of interests. | |
|  |  | | | b. | Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: none. | |
|  |  | | | c.  d. | Other Disclosable Interests: none.  Application for a dispensation: none. | |
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| The meeting was adjourned for **Public Question Time**, notes of which are appended to these minutes. **NO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WERE PRESENT AT THE MEETING**. | | | | | | |
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| **5.**  **6.** | To consider any requests for the council to grant a dispensation: None.  The Standing Orders were reviewed by FC and no changes have been made. | | | | | |
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| **7.**  **8.**  **9.**  **10.**  **11.** | The Code of Conduct was circulated and noted.  The Scheme of Delegation was noted, and members were appointed to the following committees:   1. Staffing Committee: CD and AS. 2. Planning Committee: Whole Parish Council. 3. Clerk’s Finance Committee: FC and CS. ***ACTION***: Clerk to telephone HSBC to confirm signatories.   Financial Regulations were reviewed. The Risk Assessment was updated, and Insurance requirements are being approved. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 2 was approved and signed.  **Councillors were appointed to the following roles:**   1. Lengthsman Scheme – Chris Jones and Footpaths Officer Liaison – Frank Chapman. 2. Village Hall Management Committee: Charles Shaw. 3. Maintenance of Bowen’s Field: Andrew Goodman. 4. Online Communications Administrator: Jo Evans (Clerk). 5. Quarter Green Committee: Charles Shaw. 6. Neighbourhood Plan Working Party: Adrian Symonds and Frank Chapman.   The Whole Parish Council are available for Worcestershire CALC Area Meetings. | | | | | |
| **12.**  **13.** | **Minutes:** The Minutes of the meetings held on 13/03/20 and 08/05/19 were approved and signed.  **Progress reports:** | | | | | |
|  |  | | | a. | PT thanked Mike and Sarah from the Post Office for staying open during the COVID-19 crisis:  “On behalf of our community The Parish Council wish to thank Mike and Sarah for their hard work and good spirits in keeping Great Witley Post Office open during this difficult time. It has meant so much to everyone.” | |
|  |  | | | b. | **Village Hall and Quartergreen:** CS reported that an incident between 2 dogs had occurred on the Quartergreen. The owner of the offending dog was extremely sorry and wished to reassure the owner of the injured dog that they would not walk their dog off lead again. The Clerk reminded the Parish Council that during the current crisis the Government has issued guidelines that where you walk dogs where other people walk your dog should be on a lead. It was also voiced again that although the Quartergreen Committee provide dog waste bags and bins, there are still many owners who are not picking up after their dog. | |
|  |  | | | c. | FC suggested that once Lockdown is eased and it is appropriate and safe to do so, an event should be organised for the Parish to celebrate together life returning to some normality. It was suggested that a picnic in Bowens Field might be the best way to facilitate this as social distancing can still be adhered to. This will be discussed again later. | |
|  |  | | | d. | FC, the staffing committee, and ND publicly thanked the Clerk for all the work she does for the Parish Council. | |
|  |  | | | e. | PC updated news from MHDC. There was focus on the Homelessness. There is a register of assistance being complied for vulnerable people. The Council will lose a lot of money due to the current crisis and although £800,000 has been made available to cover costs, it will not be enough. 80% of money has gone to small business and the Government now will make a small amount of money available to business who have premises with rate bills. Meetings of the Council have been made over the telephone and are now expanding to the platform Zoom. FC asked PC if there was any news regarding the state of 5 Stourport Road. PC has approached Worcester Regulatory Services and the Enforcement Office but as yet no progress has been made. | |
| **14.** | **Date of next meeting:** It was agreed by a show of hands that the next meeting will be at Great Witley Village Hall at 7.30pm on Wednesday 8th July 2020. | | | | | |
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| The meeting closed at 21.00 | | | | | | |
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| Signed …………………………………….. Date …………………………………….. | | | | | | |
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|  | | Chairman | | | |

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County Councillor’s Report:

**GREAT WITLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**13.05.20**

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT**

1. **National policies**

Anyone living in England is entitled to feel a little confused about the current state of play in our battle against the coronavirus. Sometimes it seem the media in general, and the BBC in particular, are more interested in scoring points against the government than in elucidating the current situation.

To take one example, the Prime Minister speaks to the whole nation of the United Kingdom. The devolved administrations have the power to modify the plans put forward by the Prime Minister. The BBC chooses to say that Boris is speaking only to and about England. This is not true, but sows confusion.

If you read the 60 page document produced by the government, you will see clear policies for the current situation but you will also see that reference is made to the powers of the devolved administrations to modify the UK laws. That is their right.

Broadly speaking, the current position in England is that we should work from home, if possible, but otherwise go to work as usual, while observing social distancing. Some classes of primary schools may open on the 1st June, with others later, but some may not open until the autumn term.

1. **County council policies**

The County Council has adopted the “work at home” policy, and is managing to conduct much of its work satisfactorily that way. Naturally, there are many areas where on site working is required. Highway work continues and attention to the A443 between Great Witley and Newnham Bridge is imminent. Social workers need to keep in touch with children in care and those older people who need their assistance.

There are 186 care homes in the county and early on they indicated they did not want to take patients from hospitals, if they might be infective with C19. As a result, the county booked 200 hotel rooms to take these patients, to ensure there would be no infection of others in care homes by these discharged patients.

It appears that other counties did not do this, and some authorities actually threatened to withhold payments to care homes, if the latter did not take these potentially dangerous patients. This county avoided such problems, but has now stood down all the hotel rooms, except at Cadmore Lakeside, in St Michael’s Tenbury.

While the number of patients dying in hospitals and care homes seems to be declining, vigilance must be maintained. Meanwhile, our household recycling centres have re-opened, Tenbury opening for the first time tomorrow, 14th May. Garden centres may now open legally, as will be true of many shops. Small village shops have always been exempt from the general closure, and I am sure we are all grateful for the service they have provided.

Personal and business advice is still available through the County website and “Here2Help”, and the Worcestershire 1000 site, run by Worcestershire Business Central. In seeking to revive the economy we are very grateful for the help of the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Chamber of Commerce, the FSB and the NFU, among others.

Agriculture has more or less always relied on seasonal labour for fruit and vegetable picking and the like. It is widely believed that supplies of overseas help have been terminated by our leaving the EU. This is not true, and various groups of workers have arrived from the east of Europe. In addition, however, the call has gone out for local people to offer to help, particularly for those displaced from their normal work.

Sometimes, this has not been successful, for a variety of reasons. Access to farms may not be easy. The work may be long hours for little pay. It may be hard and skilful. All in all, we must hope that our essential farming community continues to serve us with excellent local produce, at a time when overseas supplies may be limited or non-existent.

While not able to meet any of you face to face, I would like to assure you that I am available through the usual channels, and can offer help in a variety of circumstances, where the county is concerned.

Again, good luck to you all!

**Cllr Ken Pollock**

**Cheltenham,**

**Gloucestershire,**

**GL50 2BZ**

**13.05.20**

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