

Minutes of an on-line meeting of Arreton Parish Council held on **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020** at **7.00pm**.

**Present:** Cllrs Kimber, Calloway, Dodson, Healy, Roberts and Verey.

In attendance: IWC Cllr Mosdell and Sheila Caws (Clerk)

**081/20 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Cooper, Cllr Orchard (both unable to attend online at present).

**082/20 Questions from the public**

None

**083/20 To receive and confirm the minutes of the previous meeting (23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020)**

The minutes of the meeting held on March 23<sup>rd</sup> were confirmed and will be signed – proposed Cllr Kimber, seconded Cllr Dodson.

**084/20 To receive regular reports**

(a) IWC Councillor – IWC Cllr Mosdell reported that, as the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, she has been extremely busy with the Coronavirus (Covid 19) outbreak. There is little going on in the Cabinet at the moment but an update is received three-times weekly from the Director of Public Health. The main issues are testing and PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). She has a daily meeting with the Director of Adult Social Care plus regular calls with the MP's Call (including the NFU, the voluntary sector and the ferry companies), a Cabinet Call and a Countryside Call. Paid work will be available for crop-picking and in the care sector. New guidelines on footpaths and rights of way, which will enable farmers to temporarily re-direct footpaths if they cross through a farmyard or next to a house. Local needlework teams are willing to make PPE but the correct materials must be used. A local company has donated a quantity of such material and production will start soon. The care homes are in particular need as the Government guidelines state that if Covid 19 is not present in the home then PPE is not required but everyone wants to feel safe at work. Hostels for the homeless have been closed as the dormitory set-up is not appropriate at present. Thirty-three people were moved to a hotel in Sandown as there is a statutory duty for local councils to house them in appropriate accommodation that meets the requirement for self-isolation. Unfortunately, a small minority – mostly with drug and/or mental health issues – continued to behave irresponsibly and have now been moved to safer accommodation further away. Contrary to some reports, the homeless people have not been 'dumped' in Sandown but are being cared for by helpers and volunteers. There could also be a potential problem if the Government decides to release minor criminals, who may also need housing. Members of an Army regiment have been sent over to help convert an extra 200 beds to deal with the potential peak and a hovercraft has been converted to transport seriously-ill patients to the mainland.

The IW Council is appreciative of the work being done by local community hubs.

(b) Cemetery and Churchyard – nothing to report

(c) Highways and footpaths – groups on bicycles, especially the young, are a potential problem.

(d) IWALC/Chairman's report – IWALC

The March IWALC meeting was effectively cancelled. The 'remote' meeting was simply asking for votes on two matters: the use of video conferencing technology to allow remote attendance at meeting; and a vote on the secretary's salary. It was decided not to proceed with video conferencing using conventional technology – but I think Zoom type meetings may have to be introduced: we'll see. Even as remote meetings go it was nothing – no actual meeting or discussions, only a vote in advance by email. The April and May meetings are cancelled.

IWALC are in contact with Bob Seeley and have invited Councils to put forward any questions that they would like to put to Bob. The next contact is tomorrow Tuesday.

IWALC have circulated national guidance on remote meetings. I found the ideas on controlling meetings interesting – they suggested that anyone wishing to speak should raise their hand in order to be called to speak – a good idea.

There is a steady stream of emails being circulated by IWALC from the National Association of Local Councils regarding Coronavirus but these have little relevance to Arreton PC.

#### Coronavirus leaflets

Drafted and printed by our Clerk and distributed successfully. Simon and the Clerk are the focus of this.

#### Footpaths and Rights of Way

He aims to use his daily walk to cover most of these. He has submitted three defect reports to the council and Simon has suggested a further one which he still has to follow up. The issue that strikes him as most significant is erosion of the banks of the Yar between Herringford and Merstone where there is a medium-term risk to the tarmac path. This has been passed to Island Roads as the cycleway falls within their responsibilities.

#### Rabbit Fencing at Cemetery

The Clerk will cover this. I walked the fence and it seems a good job has been done with a couple of issues.

#### Other Comments

Of necessity this is a quiet period.

Thomas Davies (Isle of Wight Mushrooms at Hale Common) contacted the Chairman asking for the number of people on the electoral roll. He is starting a local fundraising campaign for the NHS and wants to know how many leaflets to print. The Chairman does not have the figures but replied that there were around 400 properties. Mr Davies did not indicate how he would campaign. Unless anybody has other thoughts, I suggest the PC does not get formally involved in this.

(e) Meeting reports – nothing to report

(f) Clerk's report – **Agenda and Minutes Record:** a lot has happened since the last meeting and some of our decisions were overtaken by events very shortly after. The Clerk has not yet written to Bob Seely MP about a possible planning application from UKOG as no applications will be considered by the Planning Department until Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. This is in line with Government guidelines.

**Other matters:** the Newsletter has proved to be a very useful means of passing on information from other bodies such as the IW Council and Island Roads. There have been several e-mails of appreciation for the service. Three newsletters have now been sent, along with relevant e-mails forwarded on from outside bodies.

We are in the process of setting up a volunteer system to support the community and several of them have signed up to the Newsletter as well. See agenda item 090/20.

The application for electronic banking is going forward. It has been approved and the Clerk is waiting for a PIN before fully implementing it.

The Government have issued regulations to permit the holding of virtual meetings by means of video-conferencing. Members of the public can 'attend' but the compulsory meetings such as the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council are not a requirement for the foreseeable future. This means that any postholders remain in place until such time as an Annual Meeting can be held. The regulations are in place until May 2021 unless repealed sooner. May 2021 is also when our next local elections are due.

Regulations regarding the audit process for small councils are due to be issued next week.

The process will be put back by two months, meaning that the paperwork has to be completed by the end of August instead of the end of June. Our external auditors have been waiting for guidelines, so doubtless we will be hearing from them soon.

There was a 20-minute adjournment at this point. The meeting recommenced at 8pm – IWC Cllr Mosdell did not rejoin.

**085/20 To receive any declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest and requests for dispensations under the Localism Act 2011. To give notice of any item to be raised under agenda item 080/20 – nothing was raised.**

**086/20 Finance**

The finance reports for February and March were received and the balance in the current account was noted as being £8,208.55 at the end of March. The following payments were agreed and would be made by BACs once the system was set up:-

Staff costs	£519.60
Brighstone Landscaping (grounds maintenance)	£165.60
JR Fencing & Sons Ltd (rabbit fence)	£2,518.80

**087/20 Planning and Appeals**

To consider any applications recently received:-

None received

**088/20 Data Protection policies**

The Data Protection Policy, the Privacy notice and the Retention and Disposal Policy were all reviewed and agreed.

**089/20 Complaints Policy and Procedure**

The Complaints Policy and procedure were reviewed and agreed.

**090/20 Covid-19**

A flyer was delivered to every household in the Parish asking for volunteers to help with shopping and other tasks and also giving details of where to contact for those needing help. Several people have offered their services as volunteers and the Clerk has created a list. As yet, there have been no requests for help. Cllr Dodson will co-ordinate requests and volunteers. There is also a Government website for those requiring help to register. The Clerk will create an e-mail list to keep in touch with volunteers and for general information. The Chairman will draft guidelines for volunteers, based on those being used in the West Wight.

**091/20 Asset Register**

A minor mistake was corrected and the Asset Register was then approved.

**092/20 Pest control**

As the fence at the Cemetery was replaced before the rabbits were removed, they now need to be dealt with. There is no easy answer and the Clerk will contact Environmental Health for advice.

**093/20 Oil drilling**

As yet no planning application has been submitted. The Clerk will write to Bob Seely MP to make him aware that the application process has been started by the company but the members of the Parish Council do not think that this is the right time to be considering such a major issue. The IW Council Planning Department will not necessarily start the process even if such an application is made but this is not a given fact. The question was also raised as to who would be responsible for policing any meetings or protests?

**094/20 Climate change**

The IW Council's draft strategy, issued in March, asked for community-based ideas. Tree-planting is a possibility and trees are available from the Woodland Trust. Holm oaks on the bund at the anaerobic digester site was another suggestion. Cllr Verey will circulate ideas and councillors are

asked to give then some thought. Water fountains were suggested either in the school or in community areas as grant funds may be available. School children usually have their own bottles but the Chairman will contact Southern Water and investigate the possibility of a drinking water tap on the cycleway at Horringford. The Clerk will put something in the newsletter. Cllr Dodson mentioned fuel poverty and will investigate the possibility of flyers from Warm-up Wight.

**095/20 Flooding**

The Clerk will send a note to IWC Cllr Mosdell outlining the problems. There is a chamber in the main road at Arreton for the capture of flood water from the nearby fields but improvements are needed as the water by-passes the chamber after heavy rain. The pipe that empties it has probably not been cleaned out in years and there is also a pipe under the road at Merstone that is not moving the water from one ditch to another. There is apparently no register of culverts and whilst the farmers have been doing their best, Island Roads has not.

Contact will be made with Southern Water but the Clerk will circulate a note first but not before the end of the Covid-19 current restrictions. There is also an issue with flooding on the main road between Blackwater and Arreton where water runs off the fields near Pyle Cottages.

**096/20 To note the date of the next meeting, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

This should have been the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council but this will not take place due to the current restrictions. A regular meeting of the Parish Council will be held on-line. NALC are hoping to set up a deal with Zoom, which the Clerk will investigate, otherwise the cost will be in the region of £12 a month. As was pointed out, the Parish Council are not paying hall hire charges at the moment and so the expense was agreed.

**097/20 Any other matters raised by Councillors for discussion only**

Nothing was raised

There being nothing else raised, the meeting concluded at 8.40pm.

**Sheila Caws, Clerk to the Council**

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9<sup>th</sup> April 2020

..... Chairman

..... Date