



## **LISS PARISH COUNCIL**

A meeting of Liss Parish Council took place at 7pm on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020 via Zoom teleconferencing.

### Members

\*Mr R Hargreaves (Chair), \*Mrs S. Baldwin, \*Mr K Budden, \*Mr R Finn \*Mr D Jerrard, Mrs M. Knibbs, \*Mr H Linsley, \*Mrs G Lowe \*Mrs L McDonald, \*Mr A Smith, \*Mrs C. Williams and \*Mr N Wilson

\* Present, in addition to County Councillor Russell Oppenheimer  
Clerk: S. Smith

### 112/20 Apologies

Members accepted apologies from Cllr Knibbs.

### 113/20 Declarations of interests

All Members confirmed that they did not have any interests to declare.

### 114/20 Chair's announcements

The Chair noted the following:

- a) That Cyndi Edwards had resigned as councillor and the vacancy was being advertised with a deadline of 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021;
- b) That a draft License had been agreed with the Trust on LPC's occupation of the Groundsman's Hut alongside the Men's Shed. The License would come to Full Council in January for formal ratification. Planning had also been granted and so the project was now getting underway. The Facilities Committee would maintain communication with the Men's Shed to ensure everything ran smoothly during the transition.

### 115/20 Minutes of the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the Council Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 be accepted as a correct record, subject to a small amendment (proposed by the Cllr Linsley and seconded by Cllr Wilson with all in favour).

### 116/20 Matters arising

The following matters were highlighted:

101/20 c): Cllr Wilson noted that the Pétanque Terrain at Liss Forest Recreation was nearly complete.

101/20 e): Cllr Wilson noted that it was unfortunate that the West Liss Recreation Ground play and leisure project had not been successful in attracting CIL funding from the SDNPA Infrastructure Business Delivery Plan 2020. He advised that the project bid would be worked on further in January for re-submission by the 31st January deadline; the Clerk was pursuing feedback from the SDNPA to help inform this. Cllr Wilson also highlighted that initial discussions had been undertaken with the NCPFT on pursuing a village wide project. This would consist of two separate but compatible and complimentary projects for West Liss and Newman Collard, with the pursuit of a Multi Activity Games Area at Newman Collard.

### 117/20 Update from the County Councillor

County Councillor, Russell Oppenheimer, presented his report (at **Annex A**).

Cllr McDonald enquired as to the take up of the Healthy Start payments in Hampshire (or in East Hampshire or Liss if this could be established) as national take-up was low at 55% and proposed that LPC might be able to assist in advertising the scheme locally.

Cllr Linsley asked whether there was any feedback on the issue of pedestrians accessing Petersfield Recycling Centre. Cllr Oppenheimer advised that he had pursued and lobbied on the issue and that the issue was considered at Rob Humby's (Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment at HCC) Decision Day, with proposals for a trial of pedestrian and cycle access to Household Waste Recycling Centres in a controlled and safe way.

Picking up on the issue of verge cutting, the Clerk enquired as to whether the verges around the Triangle Community Centre (including the green area where the War Memorial is sited) had now been scheduled in the cutting list as these had previously been missed and cutting had to be chased in preparation for Remembrance Day commemorations in November; LPC was grateful to Cllr Oppenheimer's assistance in making sure the cut took place in time. Cllrs Budden and Oppenheimer advised that these were now on the Norse cutting schedule for regular cuts.

Cllr Finn highlighted the issue of parking on the double yellow lines opposite Tesco which had led to near misses of children crossing. Cllr Oppenheimer advised that HCC shared these concerns and agreed that a formal crossing point closer to Tesco was needed but that this was tied up with the wider village centre improvement scheme being worked on by the LPC Highways Committee.

Cllr Smith noted the importance of reporting illegal parking to EHDC Enforcement to help with allocation of parking enforcement officers and offered to discuss the proposals with Cllr Finn.

#### **116/20 Update from the District Councillor(s)**

Cllr Budden advised the following:

- a) That Liss had come third in the Community Rail Awards 2020 'Community Art Schemes Permanent and Larger' category with the Liss Station Vinyls worked on by stakeholders including the SDNPA and Liss Historical Society;
- b) That the Community Rail Partnership were working with the British Transport Police to address an anti-social behaviour issue involving a group of youths arriving in the village by train; patrols would be mounted on Friday evenings;
- c) That the governance review had now been made public and did not make comfortable reading for district councillors; Cllr Budden highlighted that a lot of the issues raised were under the previous leadership team, that Chief Executive Gill Kneller and Leader of the Council Cllr Millard had worked hard to turn this around and that he, as Chairman, and Cllr Millard, operated a policy of zero tolerance towards bullying and harassment;
- d) That EHDC has approved a new constitution, councillor code of conduct and digital strategy and were working to progress climate initiatives in East Hants by working with PeCAN (the Climate Strategy for Petersfield) for whom Cllr Oppenheimer was a trustee;
- e) Budget preparations were underway and would come to January's Council.

Cllr Linsley referred to an order which placed restrictions on gatherings in Liss previously which seemed to address the problems; Cllr Finn confirmed this was a Public Order Notification.

Cllr Budden noted that the anti-social behaviour by the group was also at Newman Collard as well as the station and along the way to Newman Collard; Cllr Wilson highlighted the need to relay this information to Dorothy Collard, Chair of the NCPFT (Cllr Budden undertook to do this).

Cllr Jerrard left the meeting during this agenda item.

#### **117/20 Responsible Finance Officer's Report**

Cllr Linsley enquired about the varying percentages concerning pension contributions in relation to percentage of salary; the Chair concluded the query should be addressed to the RFO outside of the meeting.

**Resolved:** That the payments and receipts recorded in Responsible Finance Officer's Report be approved (proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr Linsley with all in favour).

### **118/20 Budget**

Cllr Williams highlighted that no queries had been received relating to the budget since the November meeting of Council and that following conformation of the Band D figures, the increase on payment per household was confirmed to be 2.69%.

Cllr Smith felt that LPC had done well to keep the precept increase to this level given the implications of Covid on income as well as running a new Pavilion; the neighbouring parish of Liphook had increased the household payment by 2.5%.

**Resolved:** That Liss Parish Council agrees to adopt a Parish Council budget for the Financial Year 2021/22 of £223,829 to be funded by a precept of £224,250 and a total budget for the Parish Council and the Parish Council's charities together of £290,000 (proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr Smith with all in favour).

### **119/20 First Interim Internal Audit Report**

Cllr Williams highlighted an "except for matters" was to be raised by the External Auditor but that this was due to the reclassification of the Pavilion loan and so was not a reflection on financial control.

Members agreed to note the First Interim Internal Audit Report.

### **120/20 Mid-year review of the Action Plan**

The Chair noted that 2020 had been an exceptional year due to Covid-19 and one which had placed a strain on the office; he extended his thanks and appreciation to the officers for their work during this time. Although there were some gaps in progressing the priorities identified there had been good progress in a number of areas.

Key points relating to progress on the Action Plan included:

- The Village Voice newsletter had not been issued due to restrictions and other issues; consideration was being given to an appropriate format for communication going forward;
- Social media communications however had increased as a means of communication;
- Work with the Flood Action Group had been limited as the group had disbanded due to the lack of a lead and LPC was not able to undertake this role;
- Training and induction of new councillors had been somewhat impacted by restrictions but cllrs and officers were looking to engage via alternative means;
- The Council had adapted well to holding meetings via Zoom which had enabled decision making to continue in a speedy and transparent manner;
- Liss Neighbourhood Plan monitoring had been hindered by the SDNPA progress in the area due to current circumstances;
- The Project Review Group had formed with the aim of identifying priorities for CIL spending;
- Highways priorities were underway with the installation of the pavement outside the Pavilion and the first of the courtesy crossings in place. Cllr Smith highlighted this project as a good example of what can be achieved making use of s106 and CIL funding and the framework of the Community Funded Initiative;
- Facilities priorities: full refurbishment of the Village Hall toilets had been completed, funds had been secured for the Mill Road Community Garden and the project would be progressed once an agreement on with EHDC on the land had been achieved, improving the play and leisure facilities at West Liss had not been able to be delivered due to lack of funding but would remain a key priority and as such a further application for SDNPA CIL funding would be made in January as part of the Infrastructure Business Delivery Plan 2021;
- The new financial software system was in place and would be running by the end of January.

Cllr Wilson highlighted that although some forms of community engagement had been inhibited due to circumstances, the Covid leaflet distributed to all households at the start of April had been well received by the village. He added that the level of interest in the councillor vacancies reflected well on LPC's social media and that the public consultation on the Mill Road Community Garden had also been well received.

Cllr Budden extended an expression of thanks and gratitude to all LPC staff for their good work in

difficult circumstances which was again echoed by the Chair.

**121/20 Appointments to committees and external bodies**

The Chair invited Cllrs Finn and Lowe to consider which committees they might light to join and noted, following Cllr Edwards' resignation, there was a vacancy for an LPC appointee to the Crossover. Cllr McDonald expressed an interest in taking up the position; this would be agreed at the meeting in January once other cllrs had the chance to consider.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20.06 hrs.

Next meeting: Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 19hrs via Zoom

Signed:.....Dated:.....

DRAFT

# COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT TO ALL PARISH COUNCILS IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS 1 DECEMBER 2020

## 1. Extra funding from Government to support vulnerable families with meals

I mentioned last month that Hampshire County Council had moved early to ensure that free school meals would be available to vulnerable families throughout the half term and holidays. On 9 November, the Government then announced a £170 million winter funding package. £2.89 million of this funding will come to Hampshire. The funding will provide further support to the most vulnerable children and families - including providing free meals to disadvantaged children during the Christmas holidays. The funding package comprises three schemes:

- The Covid Winter Grant Scheme funding will support children, families and the most vulnerable over the season.
- The Holiday Activities and Food programme will be extended to cover the Easter, summer and Christmas breaks in 2021.
- Healthy Start payments will increase from April 2021 to help expectant mothers and those with young children on low incomes and in receipt of benefits to buy fresh fruit and vegetables.

## 2. Training for Lengthsmen to work on the Highway

Both the County Council and Parish Councils greatly value the role of the Parish Lengthsmen. The scheme allows quick response to localised issues. HCC is keen to extend some of the work which Lengthsmen can do on the highway and are offering **Traffic Management Training** which will enable Lengthsmen to work under the appropriate safety requirements.

The training will allow the Lengthsman to erect basic traffic management signage and then work within the live carriageway on low speed roads. Currently the Lengthsman are not permitted to work within the live carriageway, only on footways and verges. The funding for all Lengthsmen for next year was confirmed on 19 November by Executive Member Cllr Rob Humby.

## 3. HCC Tree Strategy

Hampshire County Council has published a Tree Strategy. It is a very readable document and, for those interested in trees, I would say that it is worth a read. To accompany this new strategy, Hampshire County Council has made a commitment to

plant 1 million trees by 2050. There is a commitment to working with partners and residents in the Strategy. Here is a link:

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/environment/tree-strategy.pdf>

#### 4. Verge cutting in 2021

I would like to clarify the HCC approach to verge-cutting. I have recently had a long conversation with the HCC Officer responsible for these matters.

There are two types of verge cut: the annual 1m cut and the biennial 3m deep cut (every other year).

##### *Annual Cut*

The Annual Cut is primarily aimed at maintaining pedestrian refuge points and visibility. Parish Councillors will recall that HCC undertook the annual verge cut early in 2020 as an experiment (around April). There was not universal approval for this, and I did pass on the feedback I received from Parishes. However the consensus seems to be that the early cut experiment was successful; Plantlife and County Botanist Nicky Court have been involved in the assessment process and they are apparently satisfied that the biodiversity of the verges did benefit from the early cut. A final decision on whether to undertake the cut early again next year will be taken in January but at this time it does seem that this is likely.

##### *Biennial Deep Cut*

The Deep Cut is aimed at preventing the formation of scrub which could negatively impact the Highway network, pedestrian safety and wildflower growth. The 3m Deep Cut used to take place every three years. In 2020 the frequency changed to every two years on the advice of Plantlife. The 3m Deep Cut will always take place at the end of the season, around October. **This means that every other year, all Parishes will get two cuts.**

I hope that is helpful clarification.

#### 5. Hampshire chosen for innovative pilot offering regular testing to family members for safer care home visits

A number of care homes across the Hampshire County Council area will be taking part in an innovative new national scheme to support family visitors to have regular Covid-19 tests in order to visit loved ones more safely. Hampshire is one of only three areas in England chosen to take part in the pilot ahead of a wider roll-out nationally.

Regular testing will be offered to one family member or friend per resident, which – when combined with other infection-control measures such as PPE – will support more meaningful visits. The aim is to enable, where possible, indoor visits without a screen to take place while reducing the risk to care home residents, staff and visitors.

For more information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pilot-for-family-members-to-get-regular-testing-for-safer-care-home-visits>

**RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER**  
**County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers**

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