

## Abbots Langley Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 7.30 pm on the Zoom Video and Teleconferencing Platform. <sup>[1]</sup>.

Those Present:

Chairman:	Councillor Robin Powell
Vice-Chairman	Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst
Councillors:	Councillor Sara Bedford Councillor Jean Bowman Councillor Liz Burns Councillor Ruth Clark Councillor Fran Deschampsneufs Councillor Jane Lay Councillor David Major Councillor Owen Roe Councillor John Swallow Councillor Jon Tankard Councillor Roxanne Yau
Officers:	Tim Perkins - Clerk to the Council
Police:	Sergeant 1490 Amy Stansbury

<sup>[1]</sup> *Permitting legislation - The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.*

The meeting opened at 7:30 pm.

### **52. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received, accepted and recorded from Councillor Simon Stanley (unavailable).

### **53. Public Participation**

None.

### **54. Hertfordshire Police**

Hertfordshire Constabulary is conducting an Operation Sceptre week of pro-active knife operations between 13<sup>th</sup> July and 19<sup>th</sup> July.

During the week members of the public will be able to surrender any unwanted knives to the police, anonymously and without fear of prosecution for possession of these items. Officers will also be conducting searches around open spaces for knives that may have been discarded and also holding public information sessions.

Members were concerned that this has not been particularly well publicised, which was acknowledged as the initiative was launched fairly late.

No major issues when pubs re-opened on "Super Saturday", double crewed cars were deployed and significant problems reported.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst reported that he had seen crowds spilling onto the pavement outside one pub, but other members reported that the same pub had been generally quite the following days

Whilst members appreciated that it was not the highest priority, obstructive pavement parking is an issue and there is concern about pedestrians being forced to walk on the carriageway, which is made more difficult when social distancing.

### **55. Declarations of Interest**

None.

## Abbots Langley Parish Council

### 56. To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns, seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020, copies of which had been sent to all members of the Parish Council prior to the meeting, be taken as read and will be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 57. Minutes for adoption

The following committee minutes were adopted, approved for publication on the Council's website and passed to the committees for resolution.

Finance & Administration Committee - 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020

Staffing Committee - 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020

Leisure Committee - 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Typo correction to minute 28 (Staffing Committee) superfluous "not" to be removed from line one.

### 58. Pandemic Update

Members noted the Clerk's report.

Member's major concern was the potential financial impact of the loss of revenue in this and subsequent financial years. The Clerk shares member's concerns and these will need to be addressed through the Finance & Administration committee and also the budget setting processes for 2021-2022 which may be challenging.

The Ark Community Church has expressed an interest in using Bedmond Playing Fields for services. The church will be asked to contact the Facilities Manager to start the usual Event Planning process.

### 59. Local Government Association - Draft Model Code of Conduct

Members noted the draft Code of Conduct.

The Clerk was asked to respond to the consultation acknowledging members broadly supported the new code and in particular the proposal for the code to be standard across all levels of local government.

Members asked that consideration also be given to drafting a similarly standard "Register of Interests Declaration" which could be used by members at all levels.

### 60. Member Leave of Absence

No members requested "Leave of Absence".

During the pandemic members asked that this become a standing item on Parish Council agendas, in case members become unavailable for meetings.

### 61. Hertfordshire County Council - Storage Facility

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns, seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and **RESOLVED** that a further ten year lease, with a mutual five year break, be granted on the same terms as the original lease to Hertfordshire County Council.

The Clerk was asked to instruct solicitors accordingly.

### 62. Calendar of Meetings

Members noted the requirement for an additional Parish Council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 7:00 pm, prior to the Leisure Committee, for the purpose of approving the Annual Governance and Accounting Return, ahead of the 31<sup>st</sup> August deadline.

Meetings, up to and including the Staffing Committee meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020, will continue as virtual meetings on the Zoom platform.

A decision on the format of the September (14<sup>th</sup>) Parish Council meeting will be taken nearer the time.

## Abbots Langley Parish Council

### 63. District and County Council Member's Reports

District Councillor Jon Tankard

Three Rivers District Council have appointed an Interim Sustainability Officer so it is hoped some progress will be made on related projects.

Councillor Tankard has been appointed Chairman of the District Council's Environmental Forum and also Three Rivers Armed Forces Covenant Holder.

County Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Bow top fencing has been stolen from the Horses Field and also temporary fencing around the play area torn down. The Langley Lane play area has now reopened.

Considerable discussion on local government reorganisation ahead of a government white paper that is due in the autumn. A "unitary" model removing the district councils is one option that the white paper may address.

County Councillor Sara Bedford

On-going work on the Local Plan site selection will be considered by Three Rivers District Council at their Policy & Resources Committee (September) and Full Council (December).

Moto service area planning application will probably be considered in October, it has been held up by Highways England and Hertfordshire County Council objecting to the proposed road layout.

The Environment Agency have also objected on water resources grounds.

It is likely the final decision will be taken by the Secretary of State.

### 64. Chairman's Report

Due to the pandemic the Chairman has not attended any recent events.

Formal VJ commemorations have been cancelled although there will be three small parades in the area. The Clerk was asked to organise wreaths.

The Chairman asked for his thanks to be passed on to all staff for their hard work during these challenging times.

### 65. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Report

Members noted the report.

### 66. Clerk's Report

Members noted:

- Summerhouse Way Garages
- Local Government Salary Review
- Grants
- Office Copies

### 67. Monthly Statement of Accounts

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay and seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and **RESOLVED** that the Statement of Accounts for May & June 2020 as notified to the Council be approved and published on the Parish Council's website.

### 68. Exclusion of the Press and Public (Part II)

It was proposed by Councillor Jane Lay and seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and **RESOLVED** that as the following matters related to the early stages of a dispute into which the Parish Council may be entering, the press and public be excluded from the discussion, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972, ss100.

## Abbots Langley Parish Council

### 69. PC Freehold Land - Encroachment

Members considered the correspondence with the Parish Council's solicitors and the verbal update from the Clerk.

It was proposed by Councillor Sara Bedford and seconded by Councillor Jane Lay and **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council's solicitors be asked to write to the property owner to advise that the Parish Council will be seeking full payment of its legal costs in this matter and also the land remediation costs, as the owner acted unreasonably and failed to take action when the encroachment was brought to their attention.

Members did not believe the public purse should subsidise this unreasonable action.

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_