**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD USING ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING ON WEDNESDAY 20th MAY 2020. NO 107**

**1. Present:** Cllr. Ray, Cllr. Simmons, Cllr. E. Lee, Cllr. J. Lee, Cllr. Stewart, Cllr. Fraser, Cllr. Shilvock, Cllr. McMillan, District Cllr. Shenton.

Part meeting: County Cllr. Cargill.

**2. Apologies:** There were no apologies.

**3. Written requests for dispensation for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

**where that interest is not already in the register of members’**

**interests.**

No written requests were received.

**4**. **To approve for signature the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting**

**held on 22nd January 2020.**

These minutes were approved by all and signed by the Chairman.

**5. Public Participation:**

No members of the public had requested to join the meeting.

**6. County & District Councillors’ reports:**

Written reports were received from both County Cllr. Cargill and District Cllr. Shenton and are appended at the end of these minutes.

**7.** **Planning Applications: status of current planning applications:**

An update detailing progress for applications was circulated to all Cllrs. prior to the meeting.

A request for a discussion with the Councillors was received from the applicants of a recent planning application. District Cllr. Shenton offered to host a virtual meeting for this purpose.

**8. Correspondence:**

All correspondence circulated electronically to date was taken as read.

**9. Road Traffic Group Project:**

Prior to the meeting Cllr. Simmons had circulated file notes of the actions taken by the group so far, information and costings provided by Graham Stanley, Principal Engineer, WCC and including recommendations to date for consideration by the full Parish Council. The fee involved for WCC to produce the drawings, raise the orders and check the works with the Contractor has yet to be provided.

Cllr. Ray proposed accepting the recommendations and Cllr. J. Lee seconded the proposal. All other Councillors agreed with a show of hands.

**10. Wilmcote School retaining wall:**

Cllr. Ray had provided an update on this matter prior to the meeting. A planning application has been submitted and SDC have requested both an archaeological assessment and a formal tree survey. The cost figures provided were estimated, not a final quotation.

Cllr. Ray proposed that we agree in principle that the Parish Council is willing to contribute but not specify an amount. Cllr. Shilvock seconded the proposal and all other Councillors agreed with a show of hands.

**11. S 137 Grant application process for 2020**

Cllr. Shilvock had updated and circulated the application form proposing that applications must be made by 17th September 2020 to enable decisions being made by the 18th November 2020.

Cllr. Shilvock also proposed that a notice should be put in the July edition of the Village Vine, on the noticeboard and

Parish Council website.

Cllr. Simmons seconded the proposals and with a show of hands all were in agreement.

**16. Date of next meeting:** To be advised.

*No.*

No further business – Chairman closed the meeting at 7.57 p.m.

District Councillors report – Wilmcote 18/05/2020

**General**

Another busy week for both the county and district as they get to grips with lots of new guidelines announced this week with the easing of the lockdown restrictions, but there certainly seems to be a bit of light at the end of the tunnel.

The opening of the garden centres has been particularly welcomed by many of us and I’ve been impressed by the social distancing and hygiene measures in operation at all these facilities, helping us to feel safe, getting their businesses going and providing us with some added colour for our gardens.  SDC’s Environmental Health Teams have also been in contact with every garden centre to ensure they are all comfortable with social distancing guidelines.

SDC are looking very closely at the finances as we will have up to an £8m shortfall in our revenues which will need to be addressed. It is unclear whether there will be further funds from the government as they have now distributed £3.2b worth of funds to Councils and have said that this includes lost revenue. On further losses the Government have made it clear that it is too soon to estimate what the impact may or may not be so our view is that we should plan for the worst and hope for the best.

**Pedestrianisation of Town Centres**

The Government have made monies available to help Councils in this respect and SDC is currently looking at this, in the light of the first weekend of the lockdown being relaxed.

What was evident on Saturday17th May and Sunday 18th May was that generally people were socially distancing but there will always be some who think that the rules don’t apply to them, unfortunately.

I think that we could pedestrianise (temporarily) parts of Stratford Town Centre, especially Bridge Street as the McDonalds side of the street is narrow. Whether we close off one side of the street to cars or the whole street will need to be the subject of conversations between SDC and the County with party politics put aside. Other streets could be added to this but key to all of this is to make sure that we don’t cause gridlock as traffic returns. Adding in cycle lanes would be great but then reduces the space again for pedestrians. There is a balance and it might take several attempts and changes to get it exactly right.

One of the key differences between Stratford and other Towns and Cities that are bringing in temporary measures is that most people that come to Stratford to work or for leisure, live miles away and the practicality of cycling in is debatable. It would be great if we did all cycle in but for many reasons this is not an option for many. In other Towns and Cities the average commute is a lot less so cycling is an option and in many, light railway/tram systems are very much a part of the pedestrianised areas.

The danger with closing off street is that you could create a ghost town at night which is unsafe to walk around due to anti-social behavior. In some ways, and this isn’t a justification for not closing streets, cars provide security for pedestrians, especially the vulnerable pedestrian.

Unless we try we will never know, if it fails (as many people have said on social media) then at least we tried and we can remove temporary structures.

For the record I am very much in favour of pedestrianising from Henley Street down to Waterside but we have to be certain that the traffic will still flow and not cause unintended consequences to the Town.

The same issues apply in other Towns and Villages such as Henley in Arden which has one main road running through it, with various pinch points (some historical….some due to parking on double yellow lines outside the Co op). Pedestrianisation or pop up cycle lanes could prove problematic.

Wilmcote and Bearley could also find it difficult to bring in pop up cycle lanes although both would probably benefit from traffic calming measures to reduce the average speed of motorists.

As I said earlier, we should review and try, as quickly as we can, but be prepared to remove if we have unintended consequences that can’t be mitigated by any other method.

**COVID-19 Update**

The cumulative cases in the county are now 1347 with confirmed cases in Stratford on Avon District at 351 representing an increase of 75 new cases since the previous week.  The expanded testing programme which now includes a pop-up site at Stratford College has inevitably resulted in more cases being identified.

Out of the 425 SWFT Hospital Beds there are 34 cases of COVID-19 and three cases in intensive care.  Sadly, the cumulative deaths across Stratford District as of 13th May is 100 with a cumulative total of 369 deaths in Warwickshire due to COVID-19.  Over the same period there have been 2074 non COVID-19 related deaths in Warwickshire.  The higher proportion of deaths in Stratford District reflect its older demographic profile when compared to Warwick District, Rugby or North Warwickshire.

Across the county there were 130 COVID-19 deaths in care homes settings compared to 635 non COVID-19 deaths in care homes over the same period.

In the ONS data which now reports on place and occurrence of death, based on registrations up to 9 May there were 56 COVID-19 deaths which occurred in care homes settings in Stratford District, with all cause deaths over the same period in care homes reported as 250.

(The variance in some of the figures reflects the differences between the Public Health England and ONS data which are reported at slightly different times of the day/week).

The capacity in hospitals remains good with 8% of beds occupied by COVID-19 patients and 13% with suspected COVID-19 patients and two patients in Intensive Care.  There are 22% of beds occupied by Non-COVID-19 patients and a spare capacity of 57% reinforcing that the NHS is very much open for business!

There has been a total of 562 cases or suspected cases in 62 care homes settings from a total of 160 homes in Warwickshire and WCC is continuing to work closely with all care homes in respect of PPE, testing and training in respect of infection control and hygiene to help bring the number of cases down. There are 30 care homes which have requested WCC’s support for additional training.  All care home staff and residents are continuing to be tested and re-tested as a priority.

There is positive news on the PPE front in there being sufficient supplies in the system and WCC is continuing to liaise closely with all the care homes.

**Crime**

The message from the Arden Safer Neighbourhood team is that crime is down, especially acquisitive crime, but there has been in increase in rogue traders and issues with quad bikes that the Police are addressing.

**Flytipping**

During April we have seen an increase in the numbers of flytipping especially in the Earlswood area where 4 tonnes of waste was dumped. The Streetscene team are investigating and we are hopeful that in at least one case we now have an address and can pursue the matter.

We did have three incidents at the Maybird but we have the offender on CCTV and first hand witness accounts. The offender will be issued with 3 tickets this week, each for £200, hopefully this will serve as a message that we will not tolerate this and will punish offenders.

**Household Recycling**

WCC is opening six larger sites in the first instance on 18th May but this excludes the Wellesbourne, Stockton and Shipston facilities which, because of their size and access, will be reviewed at a later date.

Safety is paramount for staff and customer and PPE will be worn by staff. There will be additional security at those sites opening which will operate seven days a week and booking is essential as anyone turning up without a booking could be turned away by the traffic management team.

The message still is that only take waste to the sites if you have a booking, you can’t store it safely, you have no other way of disposing of it and it is essential that you dispose of it now.

**Household Waste**

The door to door waste collection service has continued throughout the lockdown period and BIFFA has worked extremely hard and diligently.  However, due to the increased tonnage of curb side waste any additional items not placed in the respective bins have been able to be collected. Unlike other districts we have been able to maintain services for all three types of waste throughout this period plus continue to collect bulky waste, street clean and litter pick. My thanks go to Biffa and all the crews who have continued to provide us with a first class service.

**Grants**

There are a variety of government backed grants and loans available including a discretional grant scheme that will be available via SDC. If you know of any businesses that have been unable to get a grant up to now then get in touch with SDC or myself and we’ll look into it.

SDC has now paid out over £28million to businesses and organisations which are registered for business rates and the team have worked exceptionally hard in challenging circumstances to help as many businesses affected by the lockdown.  I have also been busy contacting and helping various individuals, businesses and organisations who are potentially eligible to claim for the grant with their application.

I was made aware of one business within Wilmcote that hadn’t applied so I paid them a visit to encourage an application last week.

**Community Hubs**

SDC has played a key role in setting up the Community Hub in Stratford Leisure Centre and delivering food packages to vulnerable and shielded residents across the districts.  Over 1000 food parcels have now been distributed and the team has worked extremely diligently and in liaison with WCC.

If anyone (who is entitled) is experiencing difficulties in receiving the food parcels then please let me know.

I have been in touch with the Adult Social care (ASC) team and the Mental Health Team (MHT) after being advised by the Wilmcote community outreach team that they had concerns regarding two residents. I am aware that the ASC team have contacted the resident concerned whilst the MHT will be getting intouch with the other resident.

**Land Searches**

Unfortunately due to the current crisis and the fact that not all land searches can be carried out from home the service has had to be temporarily suspended from accepting any new searches. As soon as the position changes I will let you know.

**Planning Committee**

Plans are well established now to get this Committee up and running over the next few weeks as “dummy” runs have been held to see what the issue are and address them. It is likely that a combination of Microsoft Teams and You Tube will be used but again, once I have the firm details I will come back to you.

**Economic Recovery**

SDC has already been identified as the fourth worse district/borough council to be hit financially in the UK due to its reliance on tourism and is set to lose up to £8m in its collective revenues from car parking, licensing fees, planning and building control fees, leisure fees and business rates. There is a focused effort in terms of developing a strategy to give businesses confidence and to encourage residents and visitors back into the town in accordance with Government guidelines.

**Public Toilets**

Apart from opening the toilets that are on the recreating ground on the south side of the River Avon this weekend, on a trial basis, all others remain closed but we will be aiming to open them as soon as we safely do so.

**Refill Scheme**

I am keen to keep the aims of this scheme in everyone’s minds because the aim is to reduce the number of single use plastic bottles so, if you can, carry a reusable water bottle and fill up with tap water either at home or in the increasing number of businesses that have the Refill sticker in their window.

We will steadily return to some kind of “normal” and hopefully a vaccine will be available later this year. The Times reports that if the current trial is successful the up to 30m doses could be available by September. We can only hope that the Oxford trials coupled with support from Astro Zeneca will prove successful.

Over the coming months we aim to pick up where we left off in February and increase the number of Electric Vehicle charging points through funding from the County Council and private companies in our major towns and villages. In addition the County Council are funding new cycle ways in and around Stratford Town Centre.

**Cllr. Ian Shenton 18/05/2020**



For information only

HMRC 377.40 BACS

WALC 423.00 BACS

SDC Website hosting 224.99 BACS

E.on energy 163.26 BACS