

## Twyford Parish Council Minutes of the Meeting of the Council

Meeting held remotely on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 at 7:45pm.

**Present:** Mr R Mantel (Chairman), Mr R Abeywardana (from item 7 onwards), Mr M Alder (from item 6 onwards), Mrs E Ashley, Mr J Bowley, Mr M Bray, Mrs B Ditcham, Mrs J Duffield (until item 12), Mrs A Evans, Mr J Jarvis, Mrs L Jarvis, Mrs T Ramsden, Mr C Wickenden, Mr T Winchester & Mrs S Wisdom.

**In attendance:** Mr S Conway (Borough Councillor) & 1 member of the press.

**Clerk present:** Mrs L Moffatt (Clerk).

1. **Public Questions have been invited in advance of the meeting via email, telephone or in writing.** No questions.

2. **Apologies.** None.

3. **Declaration of interest in items on the agenda.** None.

4. **Dispensations** None.

5. **Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021** Proposed Mrs B Ditcham, seconded Mr M Bray to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **Matters arising.**

6.1 To consider forming a letter to send to MP's requesting that the legislation to permit virtual meetings is extended. Proposed Mr J Bowley, seconded Mr M Bray to send an amended letter from the Council. Motion carried nem con.

6.2 Scrutiny request – WBC responded that this would better fit in to the Borough Parish Liaison Forum. The Council would like the matter to stay with the Scrutiny panel.

7. **Borough Council Matters**

Mr S Conway reported:

- The Piggott School admissions – as at 1<sup>st</sup> March, 58 children were waiting for places. Due to churn some places will arise however there will not be enough places for all 58. Stephen Conway has been liaising with WBC's director of Children's Services to negotiate an increase however there are fears for Emmbrook School. This has an impact on The Colleton who won't be able to attract children if they cannot then move on to The Piggott senior school. Temporary expansion of The Piggott School is the way forward.
- Bridge Farm – there are 150 new dwellings on the draft local plan. There is activity on site and a speculative application is expected. Concerns over access, air quality and flooding and causing extra pressure on schools.

Malvern Way – progress has been made to register the open space as common land which would give it a level of protection against development. Mrs B Ditcham reported that Malvern Way had been put forward to WBC on the list of official green spaces.

Mr J Bowley reported that The Piggott School had offered to increase the intake size before the offers were made. Is this the case? There were concerns over transparency.

Councillors were concerned over children needing to commute and the additional stress and demotivation for youngsters after a year of covid.

It was unanimously agreed to delegate to the Planning & Amenities committee that they should write a letter on behalf of the Council concerning these matters.

8. **Liaison with Ruscombe Parish Council**

Mr P Cassidy (Ruscombe Parish Council) had given his apologies.

Mrs L Jarvis reported on the Ruscombe Parish Council meeting highlighting: suggestions of a new footpath by Ruscombe Bridge; a successful litter pick; plans to plant more trees; hanging baskets; Neighbourhood plan and election of a new planning chairman.

**9. Reports and to receive any recommendations from committees**

**9.1. Planning and Amenities & Neighbourhood Plan Committees 02.03.21**

Mrs B Ditcham reported highlighting the following items: 6.2, 6.3, 15.2, 16 & 19.

Mrs Ditcham provided an update on Twyford in Bloom, the changes due to Covid-19, meeting with the judges, 2 meetings with the local organisations and a generous donation of £2,400, ringfenced for Twyford in Bloom projects.

It was noted that the response from WBC on taking over the street lamps had not been recorded on the minutes.

Mr C Wickenden reported on the Neighbourhood plan reporting that guidance notes for the teams had been written. Consultancy fees had not been required and so a grant application will be made when applications are opened.

9.1.1 National Planning Policy Framework Consultation (CW & BD) 27.03.21 deadline - no report.

**9.2. Parish Lands Committee 09.03.21**

Mr J Bowley reported highlighting the following items: 6.1, 8.1, 12.10 & 13.10.

**9.3. Finance and General Purposes Committee 16.02.21**

Mr T Winchester reported highlighting the following items: 6.6, 7.1 & 10.

**Recommendations:**

9.3.1 The committee **RECOMMEND to Full Council** to extend the Twyford Comets Dutch tour grant timescale (date to be used by) to end 2022. Motion carried unanimously.

9.3.2 The committee **RECOMMEND to Full Council** to offer a loan of up to £8,000 (depending on affordability) over 5 years to Twyford Bowling Club. Motion carried unanimously.

9.3.3 The committee **RECOMMEND to Full Council** a grant of £350 to Keep Mobile. Motion carried unanimously.

**10. Other representatives reports** – no reports.

**11. Community Resilience program**

11.1 Twyforward Arts and Crafts festival 2020-21 – Mr R Abeywardana requested that the Twyford in Bloom photos will be added to the Twyforward submissions.

11.2 BALC AGM 24.02.21 (RM & JB) Minutes will be circulated in due course. The BALC subscriptions will remain the same.

**12. Communication & liaison with other groups within the Parish** – no reports.

**13. Clerks report**

**13.1 WBC Climate Change drop in session – Transport**

This is one of the easier climate change areas to improve because of the relatively short life of cars. There are incentives for companies to provide company electric cars and as a result, in 3-4 years time, its thought that the market will be flooded with electric cars which will make them more affordable. There are different chargers according to the locations. Home charges will charge overnight where as supermarket chargers will charge over a couple of hours. There are grants for homeowners and businesses to install chargers. We were shown the WBC car parks that were being considered for suitability for charging points -this included the Polehampton Close car park.

They spoke about incentives:- cheaper parking for electric vehicles; developers installing charging stations and all new buildings having a charger point. We were also show the [www.zap-map.com](http://www.zap-map.com) which shows charging points.

### **13.2 Clerk Forum 2.03.21**

**Borough Parish Charter** – colleagues are working with WBC on writing a framework for partnership working. It will be circulated in due course.

**Virtual meetings** - The clerks did not think it would be possible to have meetings in person after 7<sup>th</sup> May [which is when the current legislation runs out] under the Covid-19 guidelines of wearing masks and social distancing. Our meeting rooms would not be large enough and we have to make the meetings open for members of the public to attend. We discussed a hybrid approach where there could be a mixture of people attending in person and some virtually.

We spoke about lobbying MP's about virtual meetings and agreed to write a joint letter which was subsequently circulated to councillors. 12 Councillors were in favour of signing the letter, 1 against and 2 wished to meet and discuss the matter. Throughout the Borough 16 out of the 17 Towns and Parish Councils agreed to sign the letter which was sent off omitting Twyford Parish Councils name. This highlights the need for discussion about the standing orders so that the Council can respond in similar circumstances whether that be consultations or joint letters. Should email decisions be made in this circumstance and what majority of the councillors would be required? It should be noted that the Council chose to join the other Towns and Parishes in signing a joint letter on housing numbers in September and have agreed numerous consultations by email. Other matters discussed were Operation London Bridge, website accessibility and Parish Online.

A brief discussion took place on the Council's ability to make quick decisions. Agreed for the Finance Committee to discuss further, discussions could include: changing the standing orders; making delegated authority; extra meeting to allow time for discussion.

- 14. Twyford Rethinks Its Plastic (TRIP)** – Mr R Abeywardana reported. The group have met and are looking to arrange a community litter pick linked to the 'Clean Air' event in June 2021. It will be linked with the Council and Twyford Together. Other actions are to arrange a survey, to ask opinions on ways to reduce plastic consumption, and make an eco planter from eco bricks for the Twyford in Bloom initiative.

**15. Items to be discussed at the next meeting**

15.1 Annual Meeting of the Council – HALC advice is to hold the Annual Meeting of the Council (which must be held in May) before 6<sup>th</sup> May. This is because the existing regulations allow for virtual meetings before 7<sup>th</sup> May. Afterwards, they must be held face to face. New regulations might come into place before the April meeting and so the date and venue of the Annual Meeting of the Council will be agreed at the April Full Council meeting.

15.2 Mr J Javis asked for 'Protocol for election of Chairman and officers' to be added to the next agenda. He will forward a draft protocol for the clerk to circulate.

**16. Correspondence** (in Councillor one drive folder):

16.1 Borough Parish Liaison Forum meeting 08.02.21. Noted.

16.2 Ruscombe Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan. Noted.

16.3 RPC minutes and agenda 03.03.21. Noted.

16.4 Parish Online – training sessions 30.03.21. Noted.

- 16.5 Involve newsletter – February. Noted.
- 16.6 WDALC draft minutes 21.01.21. Noted.
- 16.7 Involve. Noted.
- 16.8 Local Charity Sector Newsletter. Noted.
- 16.9 We will be getting a new number - Citizens Advice Wokingham. Noted.
- 16.10 Patient and Public Newsletter - February 2021. Noted.
- 16.11 BALC Newsletter. Noted.
- 16.12 Understanding the employer role – training – Pensions. Noted.
- 16.13 Involve - Local Charity Sector Newsletter 1-5 March. Noted.
- 16.14 Request to join the Towns and Parish Councils in writing a joint letter to MP's requesting an extension to the legislation to extend the ability to have virtual meetings. Noted.
- 16.15 HALC Guidance – Virtual Meetings – recommendation re Annual Meeting of the Council. Noted.
- 16.16 Introduction to the Neighbourhoods and Communities Assistant Director at Wokingham Borough Council. Mr R Mantel to confirm his availability to the clerk.
- 16.17 March 2021 BALC Newsletter. Noted.
- 16.18 CCB – Action for all bulletin. Noted.
- 16.19 Invitation for Chairman & Clerk to meet with Simon Price (Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods & Communities) and Cllr. Michael Firmager (Chairman of Borough Parish Liaison Forum) – suggestions of items for discussion (partnership working).

**17. List of authorised payments – list for March (in Councillor one drive folder)**

List dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Approval proposed Mr T Winchester, seconded Mr C Wickenden, motion carried unanimously.

**18. Dates of meetings:**

All meetings 7:45pm by Zoom unless noted otherwise.

Neighbourhood Plan Working Group 7:30PM	29.03.21
Neighbourhood Plan Sub Committee 7PM	06.04.21
Planning and Amenities Committee	06.04.21
Ruscombe Parish Council meeting (LJ)	07.04.21
Parish Lands Committee	13.04.21
Practise Annual Parish Meeting	15.04.21
Finance & General Purposes Committee	20.04.21
Annual Parish Meeting 8pm	21.04.21
Neighbourhood Plan Working Group 7:30PM	26.04.21

**19. Staffing matters (part 2)** Part 2 recommendation from the Finance committee

The Council agreed that as confidential items were to be discussed the Chairman invoked Standing Order 1C “That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw”. Proposed Mr J Jarvis, seconded Mrs S Wisdom and carried unanimously.

19.1 Assistant Clerk Job Evaluation – discussion took place and the decision is documented in a confidential set of minutes.

**20. Date of next meeting of the Council Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021.**

**Meeting closed at 21:57**

