



Highnam Parish Council



Lassington Oak

Highnam ~ Linton ~ Over ~ Lassington

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of Highnam Parish Council

held on Tuesday 9 March 2021

Present: Cllrs: M Welch, V Tustin Smith, C Coats, K Emmerson, W Badham, W Nicol, R Keene and J Smith

In Attendance: R Hicks (Clerk), Cllrs P Awford

Public Forum:

A problem with the meeting ID led to Councillors having difficulty signing in, and resulted in residents not being able to join the meeting

1. To receive apologies for absence
None
2. To approve Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 February 2021
The minutes have been circulated to all Councillors, and were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting. They will be signed by Chairman in due course
3. Members of the Council are invited to declare any interest they may have in the business set out below
None
4. To allow dispensations
None requested or required
5. To receive County Councillor's Report – Cllr P Awford
GCC has now set its Budget around that consulted on with a few small amendments
Environment Scrutiny met last week and the main topic was the report into the Christmas flooding events. Sadly, this was the worst event since 2007 with over 300 properties flooded across the County and of course severe disruption on the highway network and a high level of impact on sewerage networks that are operated by Severn Trent. Locally, Highways England have started their overnight work on the A40 and in doing so will seek to improve the drainage for their section. My thanks to Cllr Keene for all his work on investigating and providing a clear report on the issues. On the parts that come under Gloucestershire Highways, the junction of the B4215 and the A 40 will see attention to the beanie blocks that frequently become blocked. I can report that prior to the scheduled work on Two Mile Lane any drainage work will be carried out in advance to mitigate the risks of flooding. I do not have dates as yet but will forward them on to the Parish Council. Whilst I do get an additional £5000 in my dedicated budget it does have to cover other Parishes and I doubt would cover the drainage work on its own. However, this year's work does include considerable drainage hot spots so I will do what I can!! Safe to say that the Environment Scrutiny Committee raised concerns about the EA role during the flooding, not least around alerts and warnings, timeliness and accuracy which will be raised with them at high level. The A 417 debate rolls on and does feature in the Local Transport Plan however, funding is not likely in the near future and there are wider considerations to be made around the tidal Severn.
Also, Glos Highways are compiling a program of works for the gully sucker, and a large part of Cllrs. £5K extra budget will be committed to funding these works
Q asked for definition of a pothole; safety inspection is to be requested for Two Mile Lane before repair work is started. Comment that 7.5t limit sign is facing wrong way
6. To receive Borough Councillor's Report – Cllrs J Smith & P McLain

There has been recent updates and the Councillors received a presentation on the Ashchurch Garden Town and the Golden Valley Garden Community. Both large developments progressing well. Information can be found on line. The Garden community is a joint project with Cheltenham Council and will provide some 3700 more houses and much employment, especially around cyber security, making the area one of the top areas in the country for this type of employment.

Consultation on the M5, Junction 10 has closed and feedback is being reviewed. The summary of the findings will be available later this month, with the full report mid 2021.

Health Overview and Scrutiny meeting stressed there should be no relaxation of Covid measures and to please all stick to the Government Guidelines. Vaccine rollout continues to go well in Gloucestershire with the County being one of the leading areas.

TBC Local Plan is undergoing a virtual examination in public. This is to check the soundness of the plan and it is judged against National Planning Policy.

Census 2021, please encourage all to complete this.

Q asked regarding TBC land supply; 3,700 houses to be built at Golden Valley and around 10,000 at Ashchurch, which it is hoped will take pressure off rural areas. The matter of TBC land supply has yet to be resolved.

7. To receive Clerks Report and Correspondence

To date, we have received 3 payments towards cost of the FOD report prepared by David Crofts. Payments are still outstanding from Blaisdon and Huntley Parish Councils. These have been chased by Email and by telephone. A report had been requested from HCCT, reference February Parish Council meeting, all Councillors received this on 2 March 2021.

The vacancy for Clerk/RFO has been advertised on Parish Council notice boards and web site, also in the Link, with GAPTC and a request sent to TBC Human Resources for them to advertise it with Job Centres. We have had several enquiries so far, and one application received to date; others are anticipated.

The Annual Parish Meeting, which was cancelled in 2020 due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, is under consideration currently. Face to face meetings will not be permitted until after 7 May at the earliest; it might be that the APM for 2021 which has to take place before 1 June, should be held by Zoom.

8 Finance –

i. To approve invoices for payment

15 February 2021	Mainstream Digital	DD	4	£	0.40
28 January 2021	R D Hicks (Zoom)	Online	17	£	14.39
24 February 2021	D Crofts	Online		£	1826.00
28 February 2021	Admin Costs	S/o	17	£	547.95
9 March 2021	Zoom	Online	17	£	14.39
9 March 2021	Goodwood Fencing	Online	4	£	888.00

Q asked what Goodwood Fencing payment was for; this was repositioning of Highnam village sign on The Green

ii. To confirm Risk Assessment Document

Proposed Cllr Tustin Smith, seconded Cllr Emmerson, all in favour

9. To receive and comment on Planning Applications

1.. 21/00053/FUL	1 Poppy Field, GL2 8LU	Amendment to parking and fencing
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Further comment regarding issues with this application; to be added to TBC Planning Portal

10. To discuss NDP Review

NDP Planning Group have been refining the documents; it is anticipated that consultation will run for 3 weeks. An indicative road map setting out the various steps has been circulated to Councillors. Face to face meetings should be able to be held late June '21. No feedback has yet been received from Forest of Dean Council following the consultation on their plans for development in the Churcham area. A meeting with M7 Planning has resulted in them deferring their planning application to take account of Council views

11.. To receive update on Parish Plan Refresh

Quotes are now being sought for the Village Footpath; these will be referred to PC before a decision is made. Work continues on the Recreation Field project plans. EW Group had a meeting with TBC; TBC may be able to offer a replacement for the Lassington Oak. Q was asked regarding the specification for the footpath.

12. To discuss overgrown hedges/footpaths

EWG have suggested the possibility of taking over the management of Lassington Wood. An idea was put forward that a small group could be set up to take on small projects; suggestion that this could be aligned with HGNS. A small group led by Cllrs Badham and Coats will discuss this with HGNS

13. To discuss HCCT
Reports have been received from HCCT, and circulated. It was suggested that HCCT should be congratulated on their work to date on Old School project, and on the redecoration of the Community Halls. Q was asked as to whether they have a contingency plan in place, in the event of reduced future bookings. Cllr Emmerson agreed to become an HCCT Trustee.
14. To discuss signs around the Parish
Photos of various signs around the Parish had been circulated; responsibility for road signs rests with Glos Highways and street signs with Tewkesbury BC. Some have already been reported for action
15. Bank Reconciliation

Bank Reconciliation February 2021

Lloyds Bank Account

Bank Balance at 1 February	51,202.18	Payments February	3321.99
		Outstanding Payments	0.00
Receipts February	304.33	Restricted Funds	<u>24,473.27</u>
		Available Balance	<u>23,712.81</u>
		Bank Balance at 28 February	48,183.52
		Petty Cash	2.56
		Total Balance	<u>48,186.08</u>
<u>Restricted Funds</u>			
Council Reserves	10,000.00		
Project Reserves	10,000.00		
NDP Reserves	4378.21		
Fun Day Proceeds	<u>95.06</u>		
	<u>24,473.27</u>		

16. Residual Items

1. As Highnam Flood Warden, I would like to update the parish on items occurring behind the scenes to reduce flooding and help with flood responses in the future. Please share this information with others who may not have seen it.

The focus will be the flooding on the 23rd of December 2020 and mainly the A40.

The flood event occurred after 52mm of rain fell on already waterlogged soil. Whilst almost all main drains and ditches were overcome with the quantity of water, there were some key issues that worsened the situation. The A40 by Over Farm to the Toby Carvery is drained by an underground pipe (culvert) that takes water from road drains and farm ditches, then follows the road before heading under the travellers park opposite the Toby Carvery, the railway and then to an Environment Agency water gate (sluice) that sits on the banks of the Severn. As far as we can tell, there are no records of the culverts route beyond the Carvery, it has not been cleaned for a long time and the out fall is partially covered with silt. As each landowner has responsibility to keep clear the water courses flowing through or under them, Highways England, Network Rail, the Lower Severn Drainage Board, the Environment Agency and landowners will be coming together to ensure the cleaning operation takes place. Highways England are also surveying/mapping the culvert and checking their maths to demonstrate its ability to take the rainwater that is supposed to flow through it.

Getting all these entities talking has taken a while and having the works completed will take further time. The first signs of action will take place towards the end of the re-surfacing work being carried out. The collection chambers on the side of the road will be emptied by a large tanker (last done in August 20) and Highways England employees will be seen inspecting the areas around and under manhole covers.

Moving on to the Highnam traffic lights. The area is often flooded by small rainfall events and issues to resolve it are complicated due to road or asset ownership. The B4215 is a Gloucester Highways asset where as the lights and beyond are a Highways England asset. Highways England built the junction in 2008 but handed it back to Gloucester Highways once completed. GH have been back and forth with HE to try and resolve the flooding but again the issue appears to be with culverts flowing back to Linton Farm and uncertainty as to their location and outflow. GH now have a work order in place to inspect and clean the clogged kerb stones which Councillors hope will lead to a reduction in the severity of the flooding. The flooding at Linton between the Highnam Roundabout and traffic lights was exacerbated by a missing drain guard at the entrance to the culvert that flows under the road to the farm, which allowed debris into it and partially blocked it. The culvert has been inspected by Highways England and works to clear the ditch adjacent to Highnam Court will be taking place soon to ensure the water cannot collect debris as it flows.

Flooding was greatly reduced at the approach from Ross to the Highnam roundabout after a parish landowner cleared ditches, pipes and created temporary dams on the southern side that support Gloucester Highways drainage . They are also investing in new ditches later in the year to carry even more water away from the road.

Two Mile Lane routinely floods and sees an influx of vehicles during flood conditions due to the effect on local routes. Resurfacing is planned to address the potholes, but Councillors are wary about encouraging these works without first resolving the poor drainage there.

So what are the various authorities doing to help with the immediate response in the future?

Straight after the flood event, there was a large meeting where many key figures got together to raise and share ideas. Much came out of it and there will be various reports made later in the year detailing changes. Immediate responders such as the Fire Service will also be changing their procedures, an example being drafting more call handlers at short notice when a large event occurs to handle the increased call volumes.

Did you suffer with the floods? Was your house flooded or your access blocked by the water? Please raise the issue using the [Flood Online Reporting Tool](#). This helps the local authorities build a picture of the local issues and will allow resources to be directed to try and fix the issues in future. The more responses, the more it will highlight problem areas.

Want to plan for the future?

Consider following the pointers in [this booklet](#), sign up for flood warnings with [the Environment Agency](#) or create your own [personal flood plan](#).

A [useful tool to check river levels](#) is available that will help if you use the A417 to Maisemore regularly and want to see if it is likely to be open.

I hope this is helpful to residents in some degree, and hope that as we move out of the pandemic and into the summer, we can enjoy some respite from recent issues.

2. Q was asked regarding applications for the position of Clerk
3. A suggestion was made for a white line marked parking bay outside Highnam Stores, as a means of reducing/stopping damage to the grass areas
4. Request was made for litter and dog waste bins in Mary Grove open space to be moved to a more central location

Meeting closed at 8.24pm

Next Meeting 13 April 2021 at 7.30pm by Zoom

Signed

Date