

KILMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD AT 7.30pm ON THURSDAY 19th MARCH 2020 IN THE CRICKET PAVILION

Present: Cllrs B. Trott (Chair), M. Jones,
J. Mear, S. Seward, P. Ball,

In Attendance: A Jenkins (Clerk/RFO)

Members of Public: 2

COUNCIL BUSINESS

Councillors were asked to sit apart and maintain a safe social distance.

1. Apologies

Cllrs. E. Styles, M. Collier, A. Dare, S Huscroft

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. To consider extending the delegation of Council decisions to the Clerk working in association with the Chair during any period of restricted activity declared by the Government in respect of the Covid-19 virus or where Council cannot meet due to illness or self isolation of Councillors. Such delegation is to enable the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to its residents.

The Clerk advised that it is likely that the Government will pass emergency legislation to support the prevention of the spread of Covid-19. This may include restricting and preventing groupings of people for meetings and events. As yet, we do not know what form this will take.

This doesn't stop Councillors preparing and thinking about the Parish Council's activities in the context of a "lockdown". In Italy restrictions have been put in place until 3rd April. If the same happened in the UK how will the Parish Council continue to operate all its functions.

NALC and the Society of Local Council Clerks have issued advice that Parish Councils need to consider different scenarios and actions that will assist in the continued running of the Council in the event that Council meetings cannot be held due to meetings being banned or Councillors being unable to attend due to illness, self isolation or being in the perceived vulnerable groups.

Their advice is that Council meet to pass a resolution establishing a suitable delegation to the Clerk (working in association with the Chair) in order to keep the Council operating. The Local Government Act 1972 allows a local authority to arrange for the discharge of any of its functions to an officer of the authority, which in the case of Kilmington Parish Council would be the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Cllr. Trott proposed extending the delegation of Council decisions to the Clerk working in association with the Chair during any period of restricted activity declared by the Government in respect of the Covid-19 virus or where Council cannot meet due to illness or self isolation of Councillors. Such delegation to enable the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to its residents. Seconded by Cllr. Seward, all in favour.

4. To consider establishing a Pandemic Crisis Management Team.

The Clerk advised that following prior consultation with the Chair and in view of the urgent need for the Parish Council to respond to this crisis and support the Community, much work had already been done. Cllrs. Ball, Huscroft and Seward had offered to act as coordinators for a Kilmington Neighbourhood Support Group which would offer support and assistance to Parishioners working with existing groups such as the Kilmington Little Helpers, Kilmington British Legion and the Churches.

Cllr. Trott proposed that the Clerk working with Cllrs. Ball, Huscroft and Seward should manage the Council's response to the Pandemic Crisis but also call on other Councillors if assistance is needed. Seconded by Cllr. Jones, all in favour.

5. To consider the consultation process to be adopted for Planning, Finance and other matters.

The Clerk advised that it was highly likely that Planning Applications would continue and that the Parish Council as a statutory consultee would be asked and be expected to comment on any new planning applications. It was important that Councillors view the plans and documents of any application and they could do this online. He suggested that a procedure be adopted whereby when he was notified of a new planning application he would email all Councillors advising them of the application and the EDDC link in order to view the documents. He would ask them once they had viewed the documents to email the Chair (cc to the Clerk) within a set period advising whether they had to declare any interest in the application, whether they supported the application or had no objection or objected to the application and any comments they wished to make. The Chair would then collate all the replies and formulate the consensus decision, (If necessary contacting Councillors for agreement) and email the Clerk.

Cllr. Trott proposed this procedure be adopted. Seconded by Cllr. Ball, all in favour.

With regard to the new planning application 20/0435/FUL | Construction of 5 no. dwellings and formation of vehicular access. which had been made for land at Pit Orchard and which Councillors had viewed online, Cllr. Ball proposed that the Council object to the application on the following basis:-

The proposed development is situated in the open countryside outside the Built up Area Boundary (BUAB) and the only previous private housing permission granted for this site was for 2 private dwellings and 4 affordable dwellings. That permission (15/1746/OUT) was only granted as an exception due to four of the six proposed houses being for affordable social housing.

The present application is for 5 four bedroom dwellings with no provision whatsoever of any affordable social housing and should not be granted as an exception.

The Council wish to strongly object to this application and also for EDDC Planning to note that a Kilmington Neighbourhood Plan which was started in 2015, is under preparation and nearing completion. Residents have completed a detailed questionnaire and have been actively participating in ongoing discussion meetings.

Seconded by Cllr. Trott, all in favour.

The Clerk to consult with the Chair on any finance and other matters.

6. To consider how the Council can best inform and support the Community during this Covid-19 Pandemic period.

The Clerk advised that he together with Councillors Ball, Huscroft and Seward had already after careful consideration drawn up a plan on how the Support Group would support the Community and particularly those who were in the vulnerable at risk category and would have to self isolate. Support and assistance would be provided through a network of volunteers and would consist of picking up prescriptions, shopping for those unable to travel or self isolating and making friendly supportive phone calls. The Clerk read out a letter which was due to be printed and sent out to all parishioners within the next few days. It was felt important that the Support Group establish contact details for all parishioners particularly landline telephone numbers and the letter asked parishioners to contact the Coordinators and provide these details.

The Support Group had already contacted the local pharmacies about agreeing the picking up and delivery of prescriptions and local food shops who could support the community through the crisis and any lockdown period.

The Village Website would be vital for relaying official and any other relevant information to Parishioners. Cllr. Ball had agreed to act as editor and the Clerk would pass on to him all official guidance received from Government, Public Health England, Devon County Council, East Devon District Council and other bodies.

The Chair thanked the Clerk and Councillors Ball, Huscroft and Seward for the work they had done setting up the Support Group.

7. To consider any other official Government issued Covid-19 virus guidance or imposed measures issued and received after agenda publication

The Clerk said that all bodies were having to consider unprecedented measures necessary to protect the public in this crisis and that there was a lot of consideration being given to the social and legal impact of any of these unprecedented measures on the governance of and the services etc provided by local authorities. He anticipated a constant flow of information and guidance cascading down in the coming weeks.

The earlier decision of the Council to delegate Council decisions to himself working in association with the Chair would enable the Parish Council to legally function, fulfil its responsibilities to its residents and respond to the various changes and guidance as it is received.

The Meeting closed at 7.55pm.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and to follow the published KEEP SAFE NHS advice.

Signed *B Trott*

Date *31/07/20*