

	STUDHAM PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES OF VIRTUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD MONDAY 1ST MARCH 2021 @ 7 PM	
	Councillors Present: Bob Wilkin (BW), Mark Poyner (MP), Mohammed Rashid (MR), Geoff Shute (GS), Chrys Smith (CS), Lynne Smith (LS) & Alan Wright (AW). Ward Councillor Eddie Perry (EP) & Kevin Collins (KC). Also in attendance: 5 members of public (MoP). Clerk - Julie Cooper (JC)	
1.	Apologies for absence. None.	
2.	Declaration of Interest. <i>(Personal and / or Prejudicial)</i> 6 a) Gates & Bollards – CS 6 b) Playing Fields (as trustee) CS. Village Hall (as Trustees) – CS & LS 7 b) Possible development of land r/o 48 Church Road – CS & LS 7 d) ii Gardener Contract – BW, GS, CS & LS. 10 b) School corner – CS.	
3.	Public Question time. MoP – Advised of flyer distributed specifically to Church Close / Church Road regarding proposed development of land to the rear of No. 48 Church Road, (Church Mead). He specifically wished to know if the property was sold subject to planning permission being granted, if so, were the PC aware. – response - No the PC were unaware of any sale of property with or without planning permission for any development. He continued to say that whilst it is accepted new homes are expected within the village the anticipated problems with access, via Church Close/Church Mead make this site inappropriate. Second MoP – wished to know - Has planning been granted? - No application has yet been submitted. Were the PC informed? - response as above. How much do PC know about sale of council house? – The PC are in the process of trying to establish this following concerns raised about land works being started at this site and reported to the PC at the February meeting. (See minutes 1st February 2021) MP responded – from PC point of view, raised in January when diggers arrived on site. By 1st February meeting no information had been provided so the PC began to seek assurances from CBC. The developer subsequently contacted the PC (1st Feb.) and advised that CBC sold them the property with the additional land. The PC was informed that the developer was notified by an estate agent instructed by CBC that the land was becoming available. The PC however still wish to understand the process of the sale. The PC Chair & Vice-chair met with representatives of the developer on Thursday 25th February for an informal discussion. The PC agree access to site is tight but are confident that the CBC planning team will request details of the process/method of access ahead of making any decisions. The PC questions whether it is appropriate to build 4 bed homes. It was reiterated that no application has yet been submitted however It is assumed likely that this will happen within the next 4 weeks. MP added that in his opinion an overage clause might be appropriate should any development take place. When the planning application is submitted to CBC the PC will be informed. The PC will then review the application at its next monthly meeting or at a separate planning meeting which will be open to the public and will then submit a formal response to CBC. Any individual can submit responses directly to CBC too. MoP advised village Facebook is rampant with concerns which seem very confused and need clarification and suggested it would be helpful for the PC put a statement giving facts. BW in principle feels this is acceptable and will act on this. MP advised that it is important that everybody who is concerned should respond to the consultation. LS – not been able to access the website to respond to consultation. MP has checked and it does work but it appears there may be a problem with the access information provided on the flyer. AW advised that a recent development in Holywell Road, for a three-bedroom house to be built in replacement of a bungalow has caused major issues with lorries / vans constantly on site.	BW

	KC joined the meeting at 7.28 pm It was noted that parking has already been an issue in Church Road during the refurbishment of No 48, with large vans parking on the pavement causing pedestrians to walk in the road. KC was able to confirm that the land will be accessed via Church Mead. 2 MoP left the meeting at 7.31 pm. EP –if PC advise all the points in query in writing he will get facts from CBC concerning its sale of 48 Church Road and accompanying land for the PC to issue a statement. AW questioned how CBC can be independent in deciding planning permission on a property they have sold for development? EP commented, as a resident rather than a Councillor that he was extremely disappointed that whilst walking the common that people are not clearing away dog poo.	
4.	Matters for the Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillors. • EP – CBC Budget – set at 4.85% increase following lengthy discussion. Hope services will not be cut. • CS requested on behalf of the Methodist Church circuit whether there are any 'Covid-19' grants available as there has been for village halls etc. EP will need to check. KC advised that the Government give a level of funding to each local authority which must then determine the allocation process. Strict criteria on its allocation have to be followed.	
5.	To confirm approval the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 1st February 2021. Following deletion of the final line of the final paragraph of Item 3 the minutes were approved. Any matters arising therefrom. No matters arising other than those included within the agenda.	
6.	Report of the Chairman – Councillor Wilkin. a) <u>Gates & Bollards</u> – BW feels the PC are slowly making progress to achieve their objective of having the gates and bollards removed. Correspondence from S.Rumfitt Associates a Rights of Way Consultancy who is representing the residents of The Forge and Madyar, has requested all related correspondence between the PC and her and her clients since 3 December 2020 be tabled at this meeting. BW listed all such correspondence, explained the background, and confirmed that all such correspondence had been approved by a majority of Councillors prior to being sent. (see Note 1). The PC have now taken the steps of obtaining legal advice and hope that more information will be available at the next meeting. One MoP in attendance wished his request to have his 'Right of Way' along this path unrestricted be acknowledged. BW has today received a telephone call from another resident of Church Road who is extremely concerned as due to the gates remaining in place a parent with a child in a buggy was walking alongside a parked vehicle on the road as the gates and bollards were blocking access. Whilst this resident was attempting to drive past the pedestrians another vehicle travelling very quickly in the opposite direction gave rise to an awfully close 'near miss' to a serious accident. b) <u>HM Land Registry</u> – following up on an earlier query BW confirmed that the Village Hall and Playing Fields are under legal ownership of the PC. BW has discussed with Chairmen of both entities to confirm this ownership and that management thereof is delegated by Trust to management committees. In practical terms documents are all correct. AW enquired whether this ownership gave rise to any insurance obligations – BW advised not.	
7.	Report of the Vice-Chairman – Councillor Poyner. a) <u>New Planning Applications to be considered</u> – i. <u>CB/21/00507/FULL – 2 Valley Close, Studham. LU6 2QN.</u> – Removal of flat roof over garage and erection of pitched roof to enable installation of hydraulic car ramp within. A local resident has contacted the PC to advise that whilst he has no material concerns regarding the building, he is concerned that a hydraulic ramp is unlikely be for personal use and is worried that this may lead to commercial use, increase in parking/traffic/noise pollution. PC also have no concerns with the roof restructure proposal but agree with concerns re ramp – potential noise from such use and wonder whether CBC may consider including time restrictions locally. KC advised to include within the PC response that neither noise nor light pollution will be intrusive to residents. b) <u>Other Planning Matters</u> – Possible development on land to rear of 48 Church Road. See above.	

	c) Mobile Telephone Mast – Nothing material has changed since last meeting. Proposed meeting next Monday with parties concerned. EP & KC aware but no invites have been forthcoming. KC happy for CBC to issue invites if BW advises of all appropriate representatives. d) Other Matters – i. <u>240 Dunstable Road</u> - No update (appeal) ii. <u>Knoll House</u> – no update following the PC request to CBC to formally notify near neighbours. iii. <u>Neighbourhood Plan</u> – see agenda Item 8. iv. <u>Garden Contract</u> – tender process has been undertaken. 3 applications received and MP will circulate to Councillors a summary of the process and their recommendations. Decision will then be ratified formally at the April meeting. v. <u>Section 106 money</u> – no update due to pressure of other planning matters.	
8.	Neighbourhood Plan. This has been deferred at this time. KC & MoP left 8.27 pm	
9.	Report of Councillor Rashid. a) Asset register –MP suggested MR circulate the current list for people to check for accuracy. b) Crime – Nothing to report. c) Community Fire Broadband Project – spoken to Jean-Paul de Jong (JP) and considered the letter which has been circulated to Holywell residents, awaiting additional information. Only looking at Holywell from Fibre Cabinet (Box 3) to include Dunstable Road as far as Linney Head. Whilst funding is available residents may also need to raise funds. JP happy to share information if another person willing to take forward with the other Boxes. CS need to ascertain whether the funding available is for the whole village or just Holywell. If sufficient response the PC should become more involved. AW has a copy of the flyer as circulated which he will share with Councillors. EP advised apathy will not help, people must respond.	AW
11	Report of Councillor C Smith. a) <u>Highways</u> - Unfortunately, due to the pandemic severe delays continue. Requested EP's support with regarded the extreme flooding at bottom of Pedley Hill. EP advised an accident occurred through black ice – he noted the farmer acting, but the problem does not seem to abate. <u>EP left the meeting at 8.49 pm.</u> Problems being reported on 'Fix my street'. b) <u>Playing Fields</u> - see telephone mast – Agenda 7 c) c) <u>Sports & Social Club</u> – Clubhouse remains closed again under latest Covid-19 instructions. d) <u>Parish Link</u> – see Agenda item 19	
10.	Report of Councillor Shute. a) <u>Gardener Contract</u> - see Agenda 7 d) iv. b) <u>School Corner</u> – damaged bollard has been reported. Nails have been randomly appeared on some posts, removed for safety reasons, MR to keep watch. A resident noted that the surface / stone are mismatched, and the base is therefore breaking up. c) <u>Dunstable Road Footpath</u> – waterlogged leaves on the uneven surface are increasing the danger here. d) <u>War Memorial</u> – Ensure safety of slabs. e) <u>Friends of Studham Common</u> – All suspended for now due to pandemic. Nick Opperman has offered his assistance to clean all the benches around the common. Anticipated mid-March start. f) <u>Hedges</u> – Blocked paths still in Oakway & Holywell Road. CBC now handling the Holywell Road issue. A letter has been sent regarding Woodland Rise /Oakway. g) <u>Salt Bins</u> - a system for refilling is now in place. Working efficiently thus far. More volunteers needed. h) <u>Church Lane</u> – remains in a poor state, a large pothole has now formed. i) <u>Discarded PPE & Medical waste</u> – GS reported to Knoll House and dealt with promptly. j) <u>Studham/Whipsnade Lane</u> - GS will liaise with Robin Richardson of CBC to request some clearance of wood and other loose materials. k) <u>Holywell Road</u> – new potholes have formed following recent frosts. (Near No. 36) l) <u>Local Thefts</u> – a large steel gate was stolen from Heath Wood, Dunstable Road, and a small garage next to the Zoo was broken into, gates ripped off posts and other damage. Alarm triggered police response. m) <u>PC Greeting Cards</u> – Photo card has now been developed, wording to be approved.	

12.	Report of Councillor L Smith. a) <u>Village Hall</u> – Contractor had problem sourcing flooring, should be completed next week. Works should be completed by end March (except curtains) inspection due in March to ensure social distancing possible for elections – (Police & Crime Commissioner only). A green bin has gone missing. The flat roof has leaked (above kitchen) awaiting quote for repair.	
13.	Report of Councillor Wright. a) <u>Defibrillator</u> – AW waiting for CBC to arrange the hole to be dug for the post to be fitted.	
14.	Accounts for Payment. <u>Requests for payments</u> relating to February was circulated and approved. It was noted that this was the final direct debit payment for the annual garden contract. The current gardener is happy to work March until the new contract has been agreed. This work will need to be invoiced as contract expired. GS to confirm this is agreed. GS will make direct payment by BACS and PC reimburse.	
15.	Budget Statement Period 11 <u>Financial statements</u> including an Income & Expenditure report & Bank Reconciliation, relating to period eleven were circulated for information and subsequently approved.	
16.	Correspondence. a) A Thank you letter received from The Royal British Legion, for recent £50 donation. b) Kathy Sutton – email raising concerns regarding the PC not adhering to the Equality Act by circulating a newsletter from a third party. In future any external circulation of this type will include a strap line to advise that this does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the PC. c) Rights of Way Consultancy – e-mail see item 6 a)	
17.	Report of Clerk. a) Reminder of Annual Parish Meeting (APM)(NOT called by Clerk). JC to circulate 2019 agenda and draft minutes for reference. b) Scribe, finance management software has now been procured and data entry has been started for the current financial year. All Councillors may have access if they wish.	
18.	Review ongoing actions list. The Ongoing Actions list was circulated ahead of the meeting by BW. Noted Village Emergency Plan should be reviewed annually BW will check that all content is still valid and current. Reminded that policies which were updated in July 2019, should have been reviewed along with several others which have been deferred previously. BW will sort and present essential items first then desirable. MP proposed that a separate virtual meeting be convened to review all in one go. To be confirmed.	
19.	Items for the next Parish Link. Items for online edition: dog poo – (west common). Pedley Hill flooding – caution.	
20.	Items for the next Agenda. Nothing specific.	
21.	Date and time of future meetings. - Monday 12th April @ 6pm followed by APM 8.15pm (virtual) - Monday 10th May @ 7pm (Annual General Meeting – Election of Officers)	

Meeting closed 9.37 pm

Note 1 – Item 6 a) Chairman's Report.

Correspondence list:

Letter to Mr & Mrs Harris dated 3 December 2020

Letter to Mrs & Mrs Rushmer dated 3 December 2020

Letters to ROW Consultancy dated 6 January 2021, 2 February 2021 and 25 February 2021

Letters from ROW Consultancy dated 18 December 2020, 19 January 2021 and 5 February 2021,