



BOX PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A REMOTE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD BY ZOOM ON 8th MARCH 2021

1. Present: Councillors S. Parker (Chairman); N. Botterill; R. Campbell; R. Case;
J. Cox
Mrs Carey (Clerk)

2. Apologies: Cllr Tye

3. Absence: Nil

4. Public Question Time: There were four members of the public present.

Mr Walton raised an issue concerning the Parish website, pointing out that the drop down menu does not work on his ipad

Mrs Walton recommended that the drop down menu should be user friendly for everyone. She also asked for a link to the nomination papers for the elections be put on the website.

Mr Davies stated that he could not agree with the decision made about the junction at the top of Chapel Lane/Devizes Road and stated that if an accident occurred the parked cars would be a contributory factor. He also stated that at the Full Council meeting it had been agreed to pollard the hawthorn trees at the bottom of the allotments but in effect these have been cut down. He was disappointed and asked that consideration be given to planting further hawthorn trees.

He was also extremely disappointed about the monitoring of the Box facebook page – particularly the post stating that the Box Parish Council disagreed with David Attenborough and naming certain Councillors. He felt that only half the facts had been given.

5. Chairman's Announcements and Declarations of Interest: Nil

6. Minutes: The Minutes of the remote Meeting held on 8th February 2021 were taken as read and will be signed as being a true record subject at the next proper meeting

7. Matters Arising/Actions:

- a. **McColls:** New safety railings had been put in on the pavement in front of McColls
- b. **Blocked drains:** Flood Wardens were still awaiting training.
- c. **Water meter – Box Pavilion:** Cllr Campbell will monitor the use of water and take regular readings of the meter.
- d. **Replacement mowers:** Look at the options for replacing the present mowers. It had been agreed that the Council continues with the present lease at a single annual payment of £296

8. Policy Matters:

- a. **Review of policies:**
Grievance Procedure/Disciplinary Policy: Revised policies to be drawn up shortly

Use of Social Media Policy: On-going. Cllr Tye to look at any amendments to the policy.

Risk Assessment form: To be reviewed every twelve months

- b. **Discussion on how to deal with rude and demanding correspondence**; It was reported that several emails had been received which were rude, offensive and demanding and that the tone of the language has worsened.

This was discussed and it was stated that the parish council are elected democratically. They are volunteers working for the benefit of the community. It was felt that it is sometimes better to give a short neat reply to these. It was agreed that if these then continued the council should look at whether they are repeated or vexacious complaints and deal with them in line with the Council's complaints policy.

- c. **Business Plan/Forward Plan**: On-going

9. Financial Matters:

- a. **Investment of Earmarked Reserves**: Continue to monitor investments.
- b. **Monitoring of Committee budgets**: Monitoring reports to be circulated regularly
- c. **Loss of Revenue due to Covid-19**: The decision from the Supreme Court had been received. Hiscox Insurance were pursuing the claim made for loss of revenue.
- d. **Reconciliation of Bank balances**: Cllr Cox to carry out a further internal audit shortly
- e. **Appointment of Internal Auditor**: It was reported that the Internal Auditor would not be continuing this year. It is **recommended** that Mr Steve Farrow be appointed.

10. Legal Matters:

- a. **Lodge**: No issues
- b. **Licences**: Licences to be renewed from April
- c. **Data Protection**: On going
- d. **Community Governance Review** Letter received from Wiltshire Council stating that this had been delayed until June/July this year
- e. **Agreement with Gigaclear re Box Hill Common**: Cllr Case had met with a representative from Gigaclear. A wayleave is required for them to lay pipes over a very small part (about 10ft) on the edge of the Common. This was agreed.

11. Correspondence:

- a. **Sale of parcels of land in Quarry Woods**: Two letters had been received regarding the proposed sale of two parcels of land in Quarry Woods by auction on 1st April 2021. One letter had asked for the Parish Council to consider purchasing these and also asking for support with crowd funding. The other letter asked for the Parish Council to approach the landowner to ask why he was selling this and what his future plans were. These letters were discussed and the Committee agreed that it was not within the remit of the Parish Council to ask why this land was being sold. It was also felt that this was not just about the purchase but also the liability of the future upkeep of the woods, especially with the mines located underneath. The Parish Council had not budgeted for this and it would be too much of an obligation for a future Council. The Parish Council already owns a vast amount of community land and the time scale for considering this was too short.

After discussion it was **recommended** that the Parish Council would support crowd funding but there could not be any financial support. It was also agreed to advise the parishioners that professional advice is sought before any action is taken.

- b. **Corsham AFC**: Letter received from AFC Corsham stating that the Youth Football will be starting from 29th March and, as the league will be extended til the end of June, asking for use of the football pitch to continue until then. It was **recommended** that this be granted
- c. **BT Telephone Kiosk – Ditteridge**: BT had agreed the sale of the telephone kiosk at Ditteridge and the Agreement had been signed. BT will arrange for the removal of the telephone.
- d. **Triangle of land at Ashley**: Letter received from a resident regarding the untidy state of the triangle of land just up from Budgens. It was agreed to contact the owner of the land in question. It was also reported that the VW garage next to Nissan is parking numerous vehicles for sale on the main road and pavement. Clerk to write to Wiltshire Council.
- e. **Dangerous trees at bottom of Doctors Hill**: Letter from a parishioner pointing out the dangerous trees. Clerk to write to Wiltshire Council about the ownership of the land.

- f. **Bowling Green:** Letter received from Avon Sportsground Maintenance Co stating that it has been their practice in recent years to analyse the bowling greens once a year to ensure the products they use are the correct ones to rectify any deficiencies. The cost for the analysis will be £20. This has been met in the past by the company but they are no longer in a position to meet the costs. If this is agreed it will be added to the usual monthly materials invoice. It was **recommended** that they be asked to carry out that analysis at a cost of £20
- g. **Best Kept Village Competition:** Entry form received – to be submitted by 26th April

12. Accounts; The following accounts were submitted and approved for payment

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------|
| <u>BACS</u> | | |
| Salaries | - | 5823.33 |
| HM Revenue & Customs | - | 1631.58 |
| Avon Sportsground Main Co | - | 678.16 |
| J.H. Jones & Son | - | 1036.80 |
| SSE | - | 89.40 |
| Lemon Gazelle plc | - | 1000.00 |
| John Miller | - | 621.83 |
| Acorn Joinery | - | 908.40 |
| Tree Parts Ltd | - | 288.00 |
| LP Property Developments | - | 75.00 |
| <u>Direct debits</u> | | |
| Initial Washroom | - | |
| NEST | - | 167.04 |
| Hitachi | - | |
| Hills Waste | - | 45.55 |
| Fuel Card Services | - | 10.80 |
| Plusnet | - | |
| Plusnet | - | |
| Wiltshire council | - | 304.00 |
| John Deere | - | 444.00 |
| Tallis Amos Group | - | 304.19 |
| <u>Standing Order</u> | | |
| T.H. White | - | 63.60 |
| <u>Debit card</u> | | |
| Zoom | - | 14.39 |

13. Highway Issues:

Cllr Campbell reported on the CATG meeting. The following issues had been discussed

- **Warning sign for horses at Prospect:** The Parish Council has been asked to collect data evidence to present at the next meeting
- **Farm Vehicles turning at Boxfields Rd** Again the Parish Council has been asked to collect data evidence to present at the next meeting
- **Leafy Lane:** A proposed scheme including dropped crossing points, improved signage etc has been agreed and is now awaiting a final scheme cost. The final cost will be shared with the Parish Council so confirmation is needed that a 25% contribution is agreed. The total cost will be in the region of £7000. It is **recommended** that the Parish Council contributes 25% to the cost of the work.
- **B3109 Bradford Road:** The problems experienced by pedestrian walking along and crossing the road were recognised and agreed by CATG. The School is in the process of updating their School Travel Plan and there will be discussions between the School Travel Plan Advisor and CATG officer to agree where in Wiltshire Council the work should be owned and progressed and how the costs of surveys and improvements will be funded.

Other issues B3109 – Change to speed limit/safety of crossing:

- **A4 opposite Budgens Garage:** The Clerk has asked for the work to the damaged drain and to raise the pavement to proceed. A letter had been received asking for consideration to reducing the speed limit to 30 mph but it was agreed that this stretch of road would not meet the criteria for this. The Clerk has asked Wiltshire Council if the SID could be sited on this stretch of road

- **Junction at top of Chapel Lane/Devizes Road:** A letter had been received from Wiltshire Council stating “as stated in the Highway Code vehicles must not park opposite or within 10m of a junction or they are causing an obstruction, which the police can enforce. The regulations relating to double yellow lines have not changed and the existing restrictions are perfectly legal. We do not provide restrictions to protect every junction in the County of Wiltshire because the Highway Code stipulates what a vehicle can and cannot do in close proximity to a junction.”
The Committee discussed this issue again. It was stated that there is restricted parking in Chapel Lane and the Council could perhaps look at altering it. However, it was felt that this is not a major problem and there are many dangerous roads to exit out of in the village. Wiltshire Council will not come and meet on site. It was agreed to look at this again when all the restrictions had been lifted.
- **Dangerous section of wall at Quarry Hill:** Letter from Wiltshire Council stating that the wall had been checked. They have also spoken to the owner of the adjacent building and comparing the wall now with photos taken back in October there is no measurable deterioration or movement evident and the vulnerable looking section remains quite sound when touched/struck with a hammer. The landowner will ask a builder to remove some of the top heavy stonework. The planning application for the redevelopment of the site should be determined shortly and the front wall will be taken down when the site is cleared.
- **Parking at Chapel Plaister:** It had been reported that the parking of cars at Chapel Plaister had worsened. There is parking provided for three cars but up to 8 or 10 cars are now parking on the opposite side of the road. The area of grass is unregistered but the local residents undertake the cutting of the grass. The Committee felt that this was a problem that had extended across the whole of the parish. There could be no enforcement on this land but it was agreed to look at the possibility of putting stones down or creating a designated parking area.

14. Issues raised at Full Council:

Discussion on the Parish Council elections; new councillor training and induction

The revised information for new councillors and induction had been circulated and was agreed. The draft poster and flyers were discussed and suggestions made.

By Brook Conservation Plan; This had been raised at the Public Question Time at Full Council. The Council approved the use of the logo and for the information board to go up by Real World Studio.

Gigaclear – siting of box at bottom of Hazelbury Hill: It was reported that the situation had been resolved and the cabinet will be sited at an alternative location on Quarry Hill.

Parking by residents at Hazelbury Hill; The letter from Mr R. Smith had been circulated to all Committee members. It was agreed to write to all residents of Hazelbury Hill, Townsend and the other properties nearby to ask that everyone parks with consideration for others and be mindful of neighbours who need to have access to their properties. If the problem was not resolved the Council would look at the possibility of taking steps to remove parking but it was felt that double yellow lines were not the solution. No dedicated notice board would be put up. This could cause problems with visibility and all the Council’s notice boards are for use of all parishioners and not just for one issue but it was suggested that maybe planters could be put here. This would first have to be agreed by Wiltshire Council highways. It was stated that this is a problem in all areas of the village and the Council cannot solve all the problems.

Proposed changes to the website: Cllr Campbell reported that there were two options. The heading Councillors would be changed to Our Council and there would be five tabs under that.

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|-----------|---|---|
| Option 1 | - | Click on Our Council and there would be a small drop down menu with tabs This would cost £80 |
| Option 2. | - | Click on Our Council and there would be a drop down menu picture for each Category This would cost £160 |

Cllr Campbell had also put an extra tab under Planning which had a link to all planning applications.

15. Items of report:

- It was reported that a new sign for Chapel Parking is needed at Chapel Plaister
- It was reported that the footpath by the Hermitage was to be closed as the wall was unsafe. Clerk to write to the Rights of Way Warden.

Meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Chairman