

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE **25th AUGUST 2020**

(Meeting held remotely via Zoom)

PRESENT: Parish Councillors Mrs K. Reeves, Messrs P. Bailey, A. Brown, P. Harriman, S. Moore and the Clerk, Mrs D. Key.

APOLOGIES: These were received from Parish Councillors Mrs S.Dodd and Mr D.Massie.

LATE ITEMS: The Chairman, Mr S.Moore requested that the late item in relation to opening of the play ground be discussed after Item 4 Finance.

OPEN FORUM: Was not required on this occasion.

FINANCE: The Clerk reported on the Audit return forms following the recent internal audit conducted by Mrs Helen Bellamy and explained, where relevant any significant differences with the audit figures from 2018-2019. These included a reduction in receipts due to the previous year's defibrillator donations and a VAT claim in that year. The figure for payments was reduced due again to the one off purchase of defibrillators in the previous financial year. The other matter raised by the Clerk following the internal audit was a proposed review of the register of assets which the Clerk had discussed with Mrs Bellamy.

Following this discussion it was agreed that the Chairman, should sign the relevant audit forms including the Annual Governance Statements, Accounting Statements and Certificate of Exemption from the external auditor. This was proposed by Councillor Mr P.Harriman, seconded by Councillor Mr P.Bailey. All were in favour. Arrangements were then made for the Chairman to sign the forms so that the Clerk could return the completed Exemption Certificate to Mazars, the auditors, by the 31st August 2020 deadline. The Clerk was also to arrange for the notice for the public to exercise their rights to inspect the accounts for the period commencing on the 28th August 2020 until the 9th October 2020. To this effect, Councillor Mrs K.Reeves was to post a copy of the notice on the village notice board and the Clerk was to send copies of the notice and audit information to Mr Jon Gibbs to be displayed on the Parish web site.

There had been no further invoices received although it was confirmed that the Clerk had paid the invoice for the new planters amounting to £385 and a JWH grass cutting invoice of £96, as agreed in the 4th August 2020 remote meeting. The fee for the internal audit was discussed for Mrs Helen Bellamy's work and it was agreed that this should be increased to £60. This payment would be made, at Mrs Bellamy's request, as a donation towards Church Eaton Primary School's PTA.

CHURCH EATON VILLAGE PLAYGROUND: The proposed re-opening of the playground was discussed at length, however there were still concerns over complying with the Government guidelines. The Chairman had attended a recent SPCA training course and had also been in contact with the Parish Council's insurance company. The Clerk had also been in contact with two other local Parish Councils to discuss how they were managing their play areas and had forwarded this

information to members of the Parish Council. From all these investigations, it was still far from clear whether, should a problem arise from unintended compliance, the Parish Council could face potential litigation with the issues of adequate signage and cleaning remaining areas of concern. It was therefore reluctantly agreed to keep the playground closed but to discuss this matter again as a matter of urgency at the 1st September meeting of the Parish Council. In the interim the Chairman was to chase up his previous enquiry with Staffordshire County Council and Stafford Borough Councillor Mr M. Winnington as to how the Borough had opened their play areas and were dealing with COVID-19 management of these. The Clerk reported that she had received an enquiry from a local resident about the play ground being opened and also that should it be re-opened shortly there were some nettles which required managing. The Clerk was to report this to the grounds maintenance company.

CORRESPONDENCE: All items of correspondence had been forwarded to members of the Parish Council since the last meeting however two notifications of road closures had been received affecting the Stretton to Lapley Road and Common Lane due to required road works. The Clerk had forwarded these notices to Councillor Reeves to display on the notice board.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Tuesday the 1st September 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Village Institute subject to availability and COVID-19 compliance. The meeting closed at 8.20pm.