

Minutes of the Meeting of Beech Parish Council

Monday 23rd March 2020

(Due to the Coronavirus and Government social distancing advice the meeting was not held, Councillors voted on agenda items by email.)

PARTICIPANTS BY EMAIL: Councillor Graham Webb (Chairman)
Councillor Daniel Gordon
Councillor Ruth Duffin
Councillor Alana Coombes
Councillor Tony Ransley
Mrs Louisa Thomson – Clerk to the Council

20.35 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 4th March 2020, copies previously circulated,
Agreed as a true record, Tony Ransley abstained because he wasn't at the meeting.

20.36 CORONAVIRUS

Following advice from the National Association of Local Councils meetings to be held remotely by email or conference call until further notice.

20.37 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Council to wait for advice from the Government / National Association of Local Councils regarding rescheduling.

20.38 PLANNING

Council considered one applications their comments to be forwarded to East Hampshire District Council, comments to include reference to the draft Beech Neighbourhood Plan where applicable.

30021/069 Land at Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital site.

NO COMMENT

Deed of variation on section 106 agreement to modify the provisions of schedule 5 of the original deed (S106).

Agreed by majority to respond 'No Comment'.

20.39 ROAD SAFETY AND FOOTPATH WORKING PARTY

- a) Council recommend the Working Party cease all physical meetings in line with the Parish Council. The Working Party Chairman may be asked to participate in future Parish Council meetings if conference calls are adopted.
- b) The Working Party last meeting minutes have been circulated, Councillors are asked to respond with any comments directly to the Working Party.
- c) Following the 30 day free trial the Working Party confirm that Parish Online is not required.
- d) Review of Cala Homes grant application to be deferred until a future meeting.
- e) Graham Webb emailed EHDC to find out whether the use of the Section 106 money previously approved can be amended.

20.40 GRANT APPLICATION

Beech Village Hall & Recreation Ground grant application to be decided at a future meeting which can hopefully be held in public.

20.41 BEECH NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Beech Neighbourhood Watch are to approach Alton Town Council to write to the Chief Constable requesting more police support in Alton and for the local Neighbourhood Watch. Council to review the letter once Alton Town Council have agreed to it.

20.42 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Following a request from Gladman for a meeting to reply that under the present circumstances a meeting is not possible and to include this on the agenda for a future meeting.

20.43 SPEED LIMIT REMINDER SIGN

Agreed by majority to renew the deployment agreement with PHS Group for a further 12 months at the cost of £68.90 excluding VAT per deployment, and increase of £3.90 per deployment.

20.44 BUSHY LEAZE WOOD FOOPATHS APPLICATION TO HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Agreed by majority, Tony Ransley abstained, that the following letter is sent to Hampshire County Council:

Beech Parish Council – Application for a Definitive Map Modification Order DMMO/1250

Further to your email correspondence with Councillor Daniel Gordon, we ask that our above application be moved from your List A to Priority List A1.

This is in line with the guidelines published by the Countryside Service, which states that the criteria for prioritisation include:

- “The extent to which the claimed route would provide a link between existing public highways, population centres or places of interest.”

In this application, the claimed public rights of way (in the privately-owned northwest corner of Bushy Leaze Wood) are the only footpaths or footways that connect the western (Kings Hill) end of Beech village with (i) the public rights of way (footpaths and bridleways) in the rest of Bushy Leaze Wood and Ackender Wood (both of which are open-access woodland owned by Forestry England); and (ii) the wider network of public rights of way that run east and south from those two Woods.

The situation is readily apparent from an inspection of the rights of way definitive map.

Bushy Leaze Wood and Ackender Wood are well used by residents in all parts of Beech village for recreational purposes. Most of the village has easy and direct access to the open-access Forestry England land, but residents at the west end of the village habitually walk to the Forestry England land via footpath tracks through the adjoining privately-owned woodland.

So the claimed public rights of way are the sole pedestrian links between the public highway at a population centre (i.e. Kings Hill at Beech village western end) and other public highways in places of interest (i.e. existing public footpaths and bridleways in Busy Leaze and Ackender Woods).

We trust this is sufficient for you to move this application from List A to Priority List A1.

20.45 TRAFFIC CALMING – WHITE LINING & SIGNS

Invoice not received.

20.46 ALTON RAMBLERS WARDEN MEETING

Alton Ramblers & Hampshire Countryside Service – 6 March 2020

Report by Councillor Graham Webb

Alton Ramblers hosted a talk by Hampshire Countryside Service, on their services, particularly with regards to maintaining footpaths. Present were:

- Alton Ramblers, including their voluntary Footpath Wardens for many of the parishes around Alton
- HCC Community Engagement Rangers Adam Macey (Central/Eastern Area – including Alton/Chawton/Medstead/Four Marks/Worldham/Binstead and all points south) and Gemma Clinch (Northern Area – including Beech/Bentworth/Shalden/Lasham/Froyle/Bentley)
- Miscellaneous parish councillors

Key points:

- HCC use voluntary groups (Alton Ramblers in our area) to act as Footpath Wardens and to perform straightforward maintenance tasks. HCC provides the volunteers with tools and light equipment for maintenance work, which can include maintenance of the path surface, steps or bridges.
- Footpath Wardens perform a quarterly patrols of the footpaths of their designated parish, carrying out very light vegetation clearance duties as they go.
- More substantial clearance or maintenance issues are reported to the Rangers by Footpath Wardens or others. The Rangers then pass on the task to Alton Ramblers for completion, as part of HCC's Community Access Plan.
- The annual footpath cutting list that we provide to HCC is work that is carried out by HCC's contractors, not by volunteers. We could liaise with the Beech Footpath Warden as to which paths are best kept clear by HCC, and which by Alton Ramblers.
- HCC's Rangers only deal with registered footpaths & bridleways i.e. those on the official maps and HCC register. (This doesn't include the footpath from Beech down to the A339; we might be able to separately persuade the Beech Footpath Warden and Alton Ramblers to keep it clear for us. Or perhaps register it as a footpath and/or put it on our annual HCC cutting list.) Nor do they work on the creation of new footpaths.
- Trees which have fallen across a path are the responsibility (for clearance) of the landowner from where they have fallen, not HCC.
- HCC is always responsible for the footpath/bridleway surface and vegetation. An ongoing project is the replace stiles with more accessible gates.
- Susan Rogers co-ordinates path maintenance work for Alton Ramblers. Footpath Wardens report an issue, she goes to have a look and decides whether HCC's help is needed or whether the Ramblers can fix it alone. Alton Ramblers also survey footpaths & bridleways for HCC in 2 or 3 parishes each year. Perhaps the Footpath Warden could advise Beech Parish Council when Alton Ramblers are doing maintenance or surveying in the parish.
- HCC has a tool/management system ('CAMS') for reporting and tracking issues with rights of way. <https://row.hants.gov.uk/standardmap.aspx>. The Rangers will distribute a toolkit for using this system. People wondered whether a maintenance schedule (including both HCC and Ramblers work) could be added to the system.
- Footpath improvement projects that cost money can obtain cash from the Hampshire Rural Communities Fund <https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/grants/grants-list/rural-communities-fund>. It is a 50% matched funding arrangement, and will grant up to £5000.
- Another possible local source of funds is the Hampshire Rights of Way Improvement Trust <https://hrowit.home.blog/>

20.47 GREENING CAMPAIGN - Postponed until a future meeting.

20.48 CPRE Workshop – Cancelled.

20.49 ACCOUNTS 2019/2020

Unanimously agreed to make payments as follows:

payments are approved:

a) Clerk's Salary (March 2020)	£710.57
b) Clerk's expenses (March 2020)	£ 9.45
c) Hampshire Pension Fund (Clerk's Pension – March 2020)	£159.52
d) HM Revenue & Customs – PAYE January, February & March	£ 15.09
e) DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd – Monthly payroll processing	£ 30.00
f) PHS Group – Speed Limit Reminder sign move	£ 78.00

20.50 MEETING DATES - Confirmed the date of the next scheduled Council meeting as Monday, 27th April 2020 at 7.30pm, with public question time at 7.15pm.

signed:

Chairman Beech Parish Council

date: 27th April 2020