

# Normandy Parish Council

Serving Our Community through working in Partnership

Minutes of a **MEETING** of **NORMANDY PARISH COUNCIL** held at **ROYAL BRITISH LEGION HALL** on **THURSDAY 3 JUNE 2021** at 7.35 pm.

**Members present** Tony Coomber, Mark Galloway, Paul Howarth, Bob Hutton, Amy McLeod, Philippa Mitchell, Ben Pryke and Pat Tugwell

**Non-members present** Keith Witham (SCC), David Bilbe (GBC), Andy Beams (Locum Clerk), 8 members of the public in total (in person and via remote access)

## **C-21 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Geoff Doven.

## **C-22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of interest were received from Cllr Hutton (Chairman and shareholder of Normandy Community Shop) and Cllrs Coomber, Howarth, Mitchell, Pryke and Tugwell (shareholders of Normandy Community Shop) in agenda item C-32.

## **C-23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 May 2021 were approved as a true record.

## **C-24 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Cllr Hutton raised an item on behalf of a member of the public regarding the state of the road in Westwood Lane. It was noted that this is a SCC responsibility, but support was sought from the Parish Council to address the issue. Cllr Witham (SCC) confirmed he would cover this in his report (item C-25).

A member of the public raised the issue of the shared financial responsibilities associated with the tenant at Manor Fruit Farm and sought assurances that the Parish Council will keep these under review and ensure they are applied to the Normandy Community Shop in the same manner.

Cllr Bilbe (GBC) stated that as the former interim chairman of the Parish Council he was happy to help with any outstanding issues where the Parish Council wanted assistance.

Via Zoom, a member of the public raised the issue of historic agendas and minutes missing from the Parish Council website. The Locum Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council computer had been recovered and the information downloaded. He was currently reviewing the records and any missing information relating to meetings would be added to the website in due course.

## **C-25 REPORTS FROM OTHER AUTHORITIES**

(a) Surrey County Council

Cllr Keith Witham gave a verbal report to the council and provided a written copy to the Locum Clerk (appended to the minutes).

Cllr McLeod thanked Cllr Witham for the report and Members agreed the Flood Forum should be resurrected and a meeting arranged soon.

(b) Guildford Borough Council

Cllr David Bilbe gave a verbal report and outlined the two major issues under review at present. These related to the Local Plan, which had been adopted but was now subject to a number of challenges. The second issue relates to the Local Government Boundary Review, which may result in a change to the representation arrangements.

Cllr Mitchell asked if it was worth the Parish Council adopting a Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Bilbe replied that some Parish Councils has done so and there were merits to having one, although new planning legislation being considered may mean they hold less weight in future.

**C-26**

#### **CLERK REPORT**

The Locum Clerk provided details of the response from GBC regarding the bin on Manor Fruit Farm. GBC had stated that they were not responsible for the bin as it is on private land. They are currently conducting a review of the bin emptying service and will be contacting all Parish Councils to detail what arrangements and associated costs will be moving forwards.

**C-27**

#### **PAYMENTS**

The Locum Clerk tabled a list of invoices due as at the date of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** The payment schedule below was approved.

Payee	Purpose	Amount
Printways Limited	The Villager	£361.00
HR Services Partnership	Prepaid hours for HR advice	£438.00
CME Digital	Word Press Maintenance May 2021	£108.00
Andy Beams	Locum Clerk May 2021	£1,847.90
Stephen Nevin	Litter picking Feb-May 2021	£720.00

The Locum Clerk was asked to investigate further an invoice for signage at Manor Fruit Farm, as none of the Members present were aware of a new sign having been requested and/or put in place.

**C-28**

#### **BUSINESS PLAN**

The Chairman had circulated a draft business plan including the overall high level aims of the Parish Council during the next year, broken down into different areas of the council's work.

**RESOLVED:** The business plan was agreed as the guiding document for the council for the next year.

**C-29**

#### **IT**

Cllr Howarth confirmed that Office 365 has now been set up and all Members have been issued with a normandyparishcouncil.gov.uk email address. He remains happy to help any Member experiencing difficulties with accessing the email account.

Cllr Howarth agreed to pursue the government preferential rates available to local authorities and report an update to the next meeting.

**C-30**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Cllr McLeod stressed the importance of thinking carefully about what communication channels the council uses, and how information is relayed via these channels.

Cllr Hutton reported that he had been approached by the Guildford Dragon with the offer of a regular column in their publication, which the Parish Council could use to publicise the work it was doing.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to form a working group to review the council's communications strategy and Cllrs Coomber, Howarth, Hutton, Mitchell and Pryke volunteered to be on the group.

**C-31**

#### **OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

(a) Existing council files

Cllrs Hutton and Mitchell had spent some time reviewing the files in the storage container, and work was now underway to split them across the various committees. Older files can then be archived where appropriate. Cllrs Hutton, Galloway and Mitchell volunteered to continue the review of the files.

(b) Repairs and maintenance

The Locum Clerk was asked to review the email files and retrieve a quote previously provided regarding repairs to the playground equipment, and source two further quotes. It was suggested that other local Parish Councils were contacted to find out which suppliers they used. The quotes are to be considered at the Estates & Facilities Committee meeting.

It was agreed that a review of the inspection arrangements for playground equipment was required, and Cllr Mitchell referred to a tree inspection report found among the council documents which needs review to determine any work required.

#### **C-32 NORMANDY COMMUNITY SHOP AND CAFE**

##### **(a) Street Trader's Licence**

Cllr Hutton provided an overview of progress to date and explained the existence of the current market on the site. It had been determined that a Street Trader's Licence was required for the market to continue.

A member of the Normandy Community Shop and Café Management Team (NCSACMT) provided further background and explained that consent was required from the Parish Council to allow them to apply for the licence. The group had consulted with the Village Hall regarding parking, and it was anticipated that the market may run until the Autumn. All stallholders pay a contribution towards the provision of a portable toilet on the site and will fund the licence application fee. If the Parish Council gave consent, there would be no financial or insurance obligation on the Parish Council.

**RESOLVED:** Members gave consent for the Community Shop and Café to apply for a Street Trader's Licence.

##### **(b) Ground investigations**

A member of NCSACMT explained that the works included topographical and subsurface investigations, which would be non-intrusive. A further ground investigation would require four holes to be drilled and core samples taken to complete the required analysis prior to any structural works begin.

Members noted the works due to take place.

##### **(c) Full briefing to the Parish Council**

There was discussion among Members over the original agreements for Manor Fruit Farm, and the obligations these may place on the Parish Council relating to provision of facilities. There was also discussion about previously submitted plans for a new pavilion, and whether the permission may now have lapsed due to it having expired.

It was agreed that receiving a full briefing from NCSACMT, combined with reviewing the original agreements, would be beneficial to everyone involved.

#### **C-33 TRAINING**

The Locum Clerk provided paper copies of The Good Councillor's Guide to Members (apart from Cllr Hutton who has an electronic copy), and future training requirements were discussed. Some of these could be delivered by the Locum Clerk, but a full training programme is available through the Surrey Association of Local Councils (SALC) and the Locum Clerk was requested to forward the link to the information to all Members.

#### **C-34 PARISH EVENTS**

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to form a working group to consider future council events and Cllrs Howarth, McLeod, Pryke and Tugwell volunteered to be on the group.

#### **C-35 FUTURE MEETING VENUES**

Due to the nature and urgency of items requiring discussion, it was agreed to alter the meeting schedule and bring forward the Estates & Facilities committee meeting to 10 June. The previously scheduled Finance & Governance committee meeting will now take place on 15 July.

Cllr Coomber agreed to investigate the availability of the Royal British Legion Hall for the meetings for the remainder of June, while investigations of alternate venues continue.

**C-36**

**EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**C-37**

**CONFIDENTIAL STAFF MATTERS**

The Locum Clerk updated Members regarding the appeal from the former Clerk. Despite repeated attempts to secure his availability, he had failed to respond, and no date has been agreed. The Locum Clerk was asked to confirm with the HR advisors what timescale can be placed on reaching agreement to ensure this matter is concluded soon.

The Chairman informed Members of correspondence received regarding another former staff member. This matter has already been dealt with by the interim council, and their actions endorsed at the Parish Council meeting held on 19 May.

**RESOLVED:** The Chairman agreed to inform the former staff member, via their representative, that the matter was now closed.

**C-38**

**COUNCILLOR DISPENSATIONS**

The Locum Clerk explained that the Standing Orders allowed him to grant a dispensation to Members under certain circumstances.

In reference to Normandy Community Shop and Café, it was proposed that a dispensation be granted to all seven Members who had a non-pecuniary interest for the period up to the next scheduled election, as per SO 13 h (i) below:

*without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business.*

The Locum Clerk's existing agreement with the council is due to expire on 20 May, having been extended to cover the Annual Meeting of the Council.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk agreed a dispensation to all Members for agenda items relating to the Normandy Community Shop and Café.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 10.17 pm.

**Thursday 3rd June 2021 - Report to Normandy Parish Councillor by County Councillor Keith Witham representing Normandy at Surrey County Council -agenda item C25(a)**

I am pleased to attend this meeting of the newly elected Normandy Parish Council. I have been Normandy's representative at Surrey County Council for nine years and have always appreciated the work of the Parish Council and its Councillors - it gives me an opportunity to update residents on Village matters, and to get feedback from residents, which is always invaluable.

For information I keep in touch by sending residents a monthly update via email on SCC/Surrey; Guildford and Village issues. Any of the new Parish Councillors who are not on my email list are welcome to ask to be added to it, so that they are kept informed at the same time as other residents. My monthly updates are now seen by about 900 residents in Normandy. My email is keithwitham1@hotmail.co.uk

My June newsletter issued last Tuesday covered:

- the newly elected Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner, and my appointment to the Surrey Police and Crime Panel whose role is to scrutinise both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable.
- Updates from Surrey Fire and Rescue
- and some publicity for the Sime Gallery at Perry Hill, Worplesdon which was visited by the new Mayor of Guildford as her first official engagement.

Firstly, for the benefit of the new Councillors - a short overview of what Surrey County Council does. The total annual budget is around £2,000 million a year - of which about a quarter comes from the Council Tax, The remaining three-quarters is from national government grants, national business rates, fees and charges, and SCC's capital spending.

SCC's main responsibilities are placed on it through legislation:

- Adult and Children's Social Services for vulnerable people
- schools
- libraries
- highways and road maintenance
- transport
- the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service
- Trading Standards/consumer protection
- planning regarding waste disposal and running recycling sites (community recycling centres)
- emergency planning
- countryside access and rights of way and environmental issues
- Public Health
- the scrutiny of Surrey Police
- and the scrutiny and working with NHS health services in Surrey.

Any Parish Councillors who have not seen my Report-Back leaflets from earlier in the year may like to have copies, of which I have spares available, plus information produced by SCC.

LOCALLY: I can give an update on **seven** Normandy locations and projects, mainly regarding roads and pavements.

- the new road configuration and traffic lights at the junction of the A323 and A324 - Guildford and Pirbright Roads - has now been completed. The work comprised a new "left turn" lane towards Pirbright to improve traffic flow; new pavements; upgraded traffic lights and a Road resurfacing around all three sides of the junction.
- Normandy Flood Forum. Station Approach at Wanborough Station has been fully resurfaced with parking yellow lines. This work was done by Network Rail, who are responsible for the road, and follows extensive contacts regarding flooding issues with Network Rail from our Member of Parliament, Jonathan Lord MP - in his capacity

as Chairman of the Normandy Flood Forum. The Flood Forum, which for your information I proposed the formation of in 2013 and sponsored an SCC grant to support its establishment - that has been co-ordinated by Normandy Parish Council since then. There were originally over 40 locations of concern to residents re flooding across the village, and at the last meeting that was down to about six. The success of the Flood Forum is that it brings together residents, their elected representatives and - vitally - professional engineers from Surrey Highways; engineers from Guildford Borough Council, SCC flooding experts; the Environment Agency and Water Companies. Because all of those have different inputs and responsibilities, depending on the root causes of any flooding at specific locations. So, getting them together, with local input is what has made a big difference.

- At the area of Westwood Lane near the railway bridge, SCC highways officers have had site meetings with the Network Rail Bridge work contractors regarding the condition of the road. As is usual a pre-condition Road survey was carried out, prior to works commencing, so that following completion of the bridge works, Highways can require Network Rail and its contractors to reinstate any damage caused to the road.
- Part of Flexford Road was resurfaced in April.
- REGARDING FUTURE WORKS
- The previous parish council requested support from Highways to prevent lorry parking and protect for pedestrians in the lower part of Westwood Lane near the junction with Guildford Road, at the side of St Marks Church. As a result, Highways are looking at the installation of some 8 bollards on what is legally a Footpath but is used for parking. The bollards should be placed to allow protection of pedestrians and some car parking, but not lorries,
- Another issue in Westwood Lane has been the conditions of footpaths, particularly on the stretch from the railway bridge towards the Guildford Road direction. It is anticipated that a good amount of these will be able to receive new footpaths, albeit not the entire stretch.
- Finally, I continue to support the application by the Normandy Village Shop and Cafe Project for a major Surrey County Council Fund to enable the establishment of a shop and cafe at Manor Fruit Farm and hope this will be able to come to fruition soon.

HIGHWAYS. In response to a question, I confirmed that to resurface all of Surrey's 3,000+ miles of road would cost over £8 billion (£8,000 million). The current (increased) Surrey highways budget is approx. £150 million a year, supplemented by an extra £50 million a year of Capital funds, so a total of c. £200 million a year. So all roads maintenance and resurfacing requests have to be prioritised by Highways Officers according to the relative condition of roads.

Residents and the Parish should always send reports of any road/pavement defects via [www.surreycc.gov.uk](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk) and the "Report It" section or email [highways@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:highways@surreycc.gov.uk) being as specific as possible about the location. As public reports really help support the inspections carried out by Highways Officers.

Keith Witham  
County Cllr - Normandy