



# KINGS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES of the Virtual Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

Present: Cllrs Anderson, Angiolini (Vice Chair), Button (Chair), Collins, De Silva, Johnson, McLean and Rogers.

Also Present: Mr Paul Dunham, Clerk to the Council: Debbi James-Saunders

### 1. Apologies for Absence.

1.1 Cllr Morrish.

1.2 At this point the Chair raised an issue of concern in that he had received an email from Dacorum Borough Council's Elections Team Leader (via the Clerk) regarding the distribution through letterboxes of a copy of an email from the Clerk to the Elections Team Leader relating to the setting of an election date to fill the casual vacancy on the Council. He was very unhappy about this as a) this type of email is not intended for public distribution and no permissions had been sought, b) it contained his personal email address and other email addresses not generally available to the public, so he believed this may constitute a breach of GDPR and might have made the Council liable, and c) the Clerk had only shared this email with Members of the Parish Council.

The Clerk and Cllr Button responded to some questions which sought further clarification.

### 2. Declarations of Interest.

2.1 None

### 3. Public Participation.

3.1 None.

### 4. Police Matters and Other Services.

4.1 Crime reports.

4.1.1 The reports for May 2021 were not available.

4.2 Any Other Police and Neighbourhood Watch Matters.

4.2.1 It was noted that there had been two incidents during the month worthy of mention at this stage:

- Cllr Johnson mentioned the spate of vandalism which emanated from a group who had been drinking in the Old Palace PH; he hoped that further information relating to any action having been taken would be known when PCSO Martin is next available. The Clerk added that that the Village Warden had gone out in the aftermath and, in his own time, cleared up litter in Langley Hill and on The Common, and is to be commended;



# KINGS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

- The Clerk mentioned a break-in at the Steiner school, adding that a witness had provided the police with CCTV footage and further information including descriptions. So far though, it did not look like there has been very much progress.

## 5. Hertfordshire County Council Matters.

### 5.1 General Matters / Highways Matters

5.1.1 Cllr Roberts was not present.

### 5.2 Highways Matters

5.2.1 Verge Parking Issues.

5.2.1.1 Cllr Button reported that he had gone down to measure the verges opposite the football club the previous weekend from which he had produced some figures to feed into a cost plan for posts and other grass protection, eg “grass-mesh”. These would bear in mind that the proposed solution would not merely move the problem elsewhere. Cllr Button added that he needed some help with a decent map and with the drawing, which Cllr Anderson offered to do; Cllr Anderson would try to get a plan from the Borough’s GIS, adding that this would also engage the head of Clean, Safe and Green from a grass cutting point of view, but also that as the land belonged to HCC, it would depend on its permission.

5.2.1.2 Imagination Technology had offered help to the Council in some other aspects, and it was hoped that they may be able to assist with the installation. Cllr Johnson would explore this possibility.

5.2.1.3 Cllr Johnson added that there were several matches at the ground on Sunday resulting in the car park and the grass verges being packed.

5.1.2.4 Cllr Button added further that he would be discussing this topic in the Environmental Group.

## 6. Minutes of Previous Meeting(s).

6.1 It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 be adopted as a true record.

6.1.1 The Chair then signed the Minutes.

## 7. Matters Arising.

7.1 None.

## 8. Reports.

8.1 Standing Committees.

8.1.1 Planning & Licensing Committee.

8.1.1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April and 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were adopted as a true record.



# KINGS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## 8.2 Chair's Reports.

8.2.1 The Chair felt that he had covered what he wanted to report in the item regarding verge parking above (5.2.1), to which he added that if the "grass-mesh" that he had mentioned proved to be successful outside the football club (if allowed), he wondered whether it should be "offered" elsewhere in the village.

## 8.3 Reports from Chairs of other Committees / Groups.

8.3.1 None.

## 8.4 Clerk's Report / Action List.

8.4.1 The Clerk confirmed that the Council's Internal Audit would be carried out in June and that this would necessitate an extra Council meeting being held. This would be on 29<sup>th</sup> June to agree all the papers, which had to be with the External Auditors by 2<sup>nd</sup> July. He reported that he had a long "to do" list. He had just received the Notice of Election to fill the casual vacancy for publication on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. The election would be on 8<sup>th</sup> July provided there are sufficient nominees. Cllr Rogers asked how many nominations had been received to which the Clerk respond there had been none as it hadn't reached that stage yet. The stage prior to this was to get sufficient people to request an election, of which there would have been at least ten. Cllr Anderson added that he was aware of some five candidates who were sorting out their nomination forms currently.

## 8.5 Village Warden's Activities, Priorities and Planning.

8.5.1 The Clerk reported that the Warden, as some Members will know, has built a "bug hotel". It needs a little more work but is quite an attraction in the village garden. He has a very busy time approaching because it is the bedding plant season so he will be clearing the beds at the bottom of Great Park and elsewhere, and emptying the High Street troughs. The Clerk added that a home will need to be found for 14 Hellebore and numerous red daisies (*Bellis Perennis*) from the troughs. The Clerk continued by stating that the plants from the Great Park beds would not be kept as the beds are full of celandine and we would not want it to be spread elsewhere. The celandine needed to be dealt with, as this year it ruined the display at Great Park and will only get worse. The Clerk had received advice that the most effective way to do so was with the use of a systemic weedkiller. This has to be applied when plants are green and in the case of celandine this would be around March, meaning that we would have to forego the winter / spring planting. A further problem is that the box hedge on the steps leading to the war memorial is being devoured by box hedge moth caterpillars and it will be completely destroyed if allowed to continue. Cllr Rogers responded that he had this problem with his box hedges and treated it with an appropriate pesticide and the hedges had now almost completely recovered. The Clerk acknowledged that Cllr Rogers' solution would probably be the best approach at this stage. It would need to be done soon whilst still in the caterpillar stage. Cllr Rogers undertook to provide the Clerk with details. The Clerk continued. Four new benches had arrived, two of which are for The Common (one replacement and one new dedication (for which the Council has already received the normal donation)), one for Rucklers Lane in memory of John North, and a replacement for a very old and broken Borough bench on the corner of Blackwell Road.



# KINGS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

There is a problem with the matting in front of the goals in Green Park, which is damaged and is now a trip hazard. (The goals were provide by the Parish Council). Cllr Johnson responded that he had raised this with Dacorum Borough Council.

## 9. Finance Matters

### 9.1 Schedule of Payments for May 2021.

#### 9.1.1 It was proposed, seconded and RESOLVED:

That the payment schedule for May 2021 in the sum of £12,992.85 be approved, and that the Clerk be authorised to issue the appropriate payments.

#### 9.1.2 The Chair then signed the schedule of payments.

### 9.2 Examination and signing of the Council's Bank Account Statements (as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021).

#### 9.2.1 The Chair examined the Council's bank account statements and signed a statement to that effect on behalf of the Members that the balances as at the above date were:

|                          |             |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Current Account:         | £5,000.00   |
| Reserve Account:         | £208,885.15 |
| NS&I Investment Account: | £45,865.32  |

### 9.3 Examination of the Council's Bank Reconciliation Statement (as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (revised)). The Clerk explained that the statement had been revised to account for a payment that had previously been shown in the wrong year.

#### 9.3.1 In accordance with Audit requirements and recommendations, the statement was examined by the Members and signed by the Chair.

### 9.4 Asset Register as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

#### 9.4.1 The Clerk informed Members where amendments had been made to the register, which were highlighted on the document, and that these related to the replacement of the office PCs.

#### 9.4.2 Cllr Rogers questioned whether the Council was insuring too much, for example, £35,000 worth of bus shelters which he felt would have to be paid for by whoever might damage them, and the war memorial, £40,000. The Chair responded that he didn't agree, as he recalled that two bus stop shelters were damaged the same day and the offender disappeared. Fortunately the Council was able to claim off the insurers. Cllr Anderson added that they would cost £6-7000 to rebuild. The Clerk added that he would be very concerned if the war memorial was damaged (perhaps by vandals, or a vehicle that could not be traced), and the public outcry if it had not been insured.

#### 9.4.3 Having discussed the item, it could be stated that the Council had reviewed, noted and agreed the contents of the Asset Register.

## 10. Dacorum Borough Council and Other Public Bodies.

### 10.1 Dacorum Borough Council.

#### 10.1.1 Cllrs Anderson and Johnson – Reports and Members' questions

Cllr Johnson reported that there had been only one meeting which was the annual council meeting, primarily to elect a Mayor and deputy.



# KINGS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## 11. Members Items / Reports and Questions (not included elsewhere).

### 11.1 Parish / Neighbourhood Plan Reports.

#### 11.1.1 Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Morrish was not present.

Cllr Button reported that the Chairs of the three Parish Plan groups had met as a steering group the previous week and all agreed that there was a need for a restructure and re-focus. See under each heading...

#### 11.1.2 Parish Plan – Environment Group (Cllr Button).

Cllr Button felt that the group had made some good progress initially but then got a little bogged down with some distractions. He plans to reconstitute the group to concentrate on (in particular) sustainability and environmental protection (eg the grass verges), and to try to introduce some “new blood” and start up again in the summer.

#### 11.1.3 Parish Plan – Leisure Group.

The resignation of Cllr Hubberstey meant that this group now needed a chair, to which Cllr Johnson was appointed. He reported that like the other groups, Leisure group would be re-focusing on what is achievable and ensuring that each group and individual knows what it is doing, avoiding overlaps and uncertainty. Cllr Button agreed that there was a need for clarification. He added that he would like to see brief written reports which he felt would achieve this.

#### 11.1.4 Parish Plan – Transport Group (Cllr McLean).

Cllr McLean agreed that the steering group meeting had been very useful and reported on a meeting of the group the previous Thursday, for which he would be providing notes to the Clerk for circulation. This meeting had also been very useful and constructive, especially as HCC’s Andrew Freeman and Cllr Roberts were present.

Firstly, the group agreed that it still wanted to implement the Arup report in full, recognising that it was a longer-term strategy; there have been question marks around the technical and financial feasibility of so doing, and Andrew Freeman has been asked to look at this, who was hopeful that he would be able to do this within a month.

It was felt though, that there were some immediate, short-term issues that needed to be addressed.. The first of these, somewhat hastened by the imminent opening of the children’s’ day nursery at the junction of Vicarage Lane and Hempstead Road, was to find a solution to improve the road safety there, whilst not jeopardising the longer-term goals included in the report. The possibilities being discussed for the junction included a platform or traffic lights, or both. Next, there was a focus on cycleways and footpaths and where these could be combined and improved, including a “community” route between Berkhamsted and Watford along the towpath. Next was the High Street “pinch-point”. The Transport Group felt that the easiest solution to this was to utilise the pavement towards Blue Court, and HCC agreed to look at this again. Next was car parking, looking at the north side of Langley Hill and the space next to the community centre. Next was looking at the one-way on Vicarage Lane, for which there are several options. And finally, road safety crossing points through and either side of the village. It was felt that a crossing near the junction of Rectory Lane was a high priority.

Cllr Button thanked Cllr McLean for his very comprehensive report.

Cllr Collins expressed his concern regarding the use of cycling along the towpath because of the general disregard that cyclist there have for other users, which he



# KINGS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

finds annoying and dangerous. Cllr McLean responded that he fully agreed and assured Cllr Collins that it would be given serious consideration. Safety was of the utmost importance.

Cllr Rogers added that, as part of the Leisure Group's activities, he and Cllr Johnson had visited Berkhamsted Motor Cycle and Car Club at Nash Mills. The facilities there are primarily for the use of powered bikes, but they are open to the idea of increasing the use of the facilities. Cllr Rogers was putting together a brief discussion paper. He had also visited Oxhey Activity Park, which he felt was an excellent facility which would be great for the youth of Kings Langley. Cllr Button responded that he would be interested to know more about the funding for the Oxhey facility.

## 11.2 Geographical Areas Reports

### 11.2.1 Abbots Rise area (Cllr Angiolini).

Cllr Angiolini reported that he was very pleased with repairs to the potholes on the estate.

### 11.2.2 The Common, Vicarage Lane / Langley Hill / Great Park (Cllr Button)

Cllr Button reported that The Common was very busy at the weekend, adding that, sadly, there are verge parking issues. Langley Hill as suggested by Cllr McLean, needed the parking to be more formalised, which would help traffic flow and safety.

### 11.2.3 Hempstead Road areas (Cllr Collins).

Cllr Collins informed Members that he would include Rectory Farm in his patch. He had visited the site today and reported that the tree that had been saved from felling a few weeks ago because it contained a birds nest had now gone and a tree at the entrance to the site had also been removed. He had spoken to a neighbour who confirmed that the developer had permission. Cllr Johnson confirmed that there was a tree plan in the application that included the felling of trees that were outside the site, which the developer had undertaken to replace. Cllr Collins added that some telephone wires had been ripped out when the tree was removed. Cllr Collins added that a building that had been used by a local drama group for storage had been inspected for bats, but none were found. Cllr Collins added further that the mud and debris reported at a previous meeting that had washed down from the woods had been cleared by the Borough's sweeper. Cllr Anderson added that he had become involved when the tree was removed because houses had been damaged when the cables were ripped out. He had written to the developer. He added further that it would have been far better had HCC allowed access to the site from Hempstead Road for which he had been pressing.

### 11.2.4 Blackwell Road area (Cllr De Silva).

Nothing to report.

### 11.2.5 London Road area.

There was no representative for this area, so Cllr De Silva agreed to take it on as it was part of his daily commute.

### 11.2.6 Watford Road and Coniston Road areas (Cllr Johnson).

No report.

### 11.2.7 Rucklers area (Cllr Morrish).

In the absence of Cllr Morrish, Cllr McLean reported that the old unused telephone box at the bottom of the lane had (finally) been removed. He added that, as the Borough had not been clearing the verges in the rural part of the lane, many of the residents have taken it upon themselves, and were doing quite a good job.





# KINGS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## 11.2.8 High Street area (Cllr Rogers).

Cllr Rogers was looking forward to Cllr Roberts' intervention in the pavement licencing saga, and also to the easing of restriction on the 21<sup>st</sup> June for various local establishments.

## 11.3 Village Garden (Cllr Johnson).

11.3.1 Cllr Johnson reported that the relaying of the garden path had started, after a delay because of being let down by the supplier. The job should be finished on Thursday. A slight issue was that the supplier blocked the entrance the church path with the materials. He had reassured Fr James that it would be cleared in time for the next service. It would be reported in the village newspaper.

## 11.4 Litter Picks

11.4.1 Cllr Johnson reported that despite it being the Great British Spring Clean at the moment, he was the only attendee for the latest litter pick. He added that, because of the very good work of the warden (and his predecessor), there was very little litter. He added further that Imagination Technology was keen to be involved with a community litter pick during the week, and would be looking to get a small team together from their offices after 21<sup>st</sup> June. A small team of 6-8 year old Beavers had borrowed some pickers and did a litter pick a couple of weeks ago.

Cllr Rogers gave his apologies and left the meeting at this point.

Cllr Johnson was asked whether he wished to continue with litter picks given the very small numbers, if any, attending, but he was happy to do so for the time being.

## 12. Kings Langley Parish Council Representatives on Outside Bodies.

12.1 The Kings Langley Community Benefit Society (KLCBS) (Cllr Morrish).

12.1.1 Cllr Morrish was not present.

12.2 Kings Langley Community Association.

12.2.1 Cllr Collins reported that there had been no change since the last report. The Clerk added that the he had seen the centre being used for dance classes.

## 13. Council Surgeries.

13.1 Cllr Button and Johnson had attended a surgery on 15<sup>th</sup> May. The main topic was the proposed service station at Hunton Bridge. The next surgery would be on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June.

## 14. Other Matters.

14.1 Dacorum Borough Council.

14.1.1 New Street Name Requirement (SNN 6978) – Rectory Farm Site.

The Parish Council is being consulted and invited to submit its suggestions for a new street name.

Members were unanimously in favour of calling the new street Rectory Farm. The Clerk would respond to Dacorum Borough Council accordingly.



## KINGS LANGLEY PARISH COUNCIL

- 14.2 Scamming/Personal Data Security (Cllr McLean).
- 14.2.1 Cllr McLean raised a recent issue of emails being “spoofed” and appearing to be from Cllr Anderson using the Kings Langley Parish Council email address and requesting help with a bill payment. This raised his concerns about the publication of Members’ details on notice boards and websites etc. Cllr Anderson responded that this had also happened at the Borough Council where the IT team responded that there was very little that could be done to stop it. He added further that Members’ details have to be available for the public to contact them, although personal email addresses are not published. The Clerk added that the email addresses published are not real but are a “front”, passed through a translation table within the Council’s internal set-up, to then send on the personal addresses. Cllr Anderson added further that mailboxes are not being “hacked” because the addresses being published are not real; they do not have licences associated with them. The Clerk had been in contact with the Council’s IT support who confirmed the above explanation, and that it happened to him and many others he knows on a regular basis, and that he believed that the information to do it on this occasion had been obtained from the Council’s website. Cllr McLean responded that he is becoming more and more concerned about the type of personal information that can be used in this way being publicly available. The Clerk responded that ultimately this would mean that one would have to withdraw from the use of IT entirely where personal data is used all the time and / or alongside payment information.
- 14.2.2 It was agreed that Cllr Anderson and the Clerk would give this further consideration and report back.
- 14.2.3 Cllr Angiolini added that although he did not have an email account, he received numerous phone calling scams.

### 15. Any Other Business.

- 15.1 Cllr Collins wondered whether “crushed rubble” could be used on the footpath by Miller and Carter (Hempstead Road to KL woods) to consolidate against the mud etc being washed down. Various suggestions were discussed; Cllr Johnson agreed to ask Sunnyside Trust if they could think of a solution.

Meeting closed at 9:20pm.