



Aylburton Parish Council

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Meeting Pack

Aylburton Parish Council

Full Council Meeting, May 2020 (Tues 12/05/2020)

Clerk's comments/updates below in *italics*.

1. To receive any apologies for non-participation

Please email if you would like your apologies recorded.

2. To note declarations of interest relating to the agenda

3. To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on 07.04.2020

4. Public forum

We have received two communications from parishioners regarding the speeding situation on the A48 in the parish, and assertions that the speeding is worse during lockdown. As a result, I have requested speed monitoring from the police speed van, a speed survey, and I have chased up the Community Speedwatch team to look into a Speedwatch session as soon as possible (though this will likely be after lockdown). I continue to liaise with Brian Watkins over siting of the new vehicle-activated sign but have been held up by the installation of another sign in the location agreed by Highways so am awaiting further siting options from Highways.

Question: Are there any other speed mitigation actions the council wishes to take?

5. To receive any updates from district and county councillors

6. Planning

a. To receive any progress reports on local planning matters.

None at this time. No new applications.

7. Parish: to note updates

a. Flooding and Drainage, including Unmanaged Ditches and Culverts. To agree on actions to take remotely to progress good flood mitigation in the parish. To note flood damage grants and consider how to disseminate information.

In April, Council had a hearty debate on the matter of how much control is in Lydney Park Estate's hands. No decision was taken on whether to write to LPE urging them to do what is within their power to reduce flooding risk to the village. Cllr Harrison has offered to draft a letter for council approval.

Question: Do you support/not support the idea of a letter?

b. Grit stocks and storage. To receive any updates and agree on a way forward.

The question was raised in April of the need for a grit store, so the May meeting will give an opportunity for Council to take a decision on whether existing grit provision (numerous Highways-maintained/stocked bins throughout the parish) are sufficient, in which case the stock at Ray Woodward's could be disposed of.

c. Allotments. To receive any updates.

The majority of allotment rent payments have now been received and I am prompting outstanding payments. I have placed a notice near the allotment entrance confirming that the allotments remain open and encouraging social distancing.

d. Litterpicking: to note any updates

Cllr Topping continues to carry out litterpicking contract; community litterpick to be scheduled once lockdown is lifted.

e. Churchyard safety: to consider adopting the memorial safety policy.

I previously sent the draft to Philip Blatchly because someone suggested that he would be willing to have a look and suggest any improvements. I haven't heard back from him and sadly he's likely to have a busier than normal few months at least. I suggest therefore that we adopt what we have and if any further good advice comes to light we can amend the policy at a future date. I'm asking therefore for you to confirm you're happy to adopt the policy as it stand – see <http://aylburton.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/DRAFT-Memorial-safety-policy-and-procedure-v1.pdf>

f. Grass cutting: to note the appointment of MowTech to mow Upper Common upon the dissolution of AUCA. Grass cutting: to note any updates.

Martin Rice is comfortable to continue with the normal grasscutting arrangements. We sought, with urgency, quotes from two suppliers to take on the task of cutting Upper Common Rec, and accepted a quote from MowTech for £45+VAT per cut, to be carried out as needed throughout the growing season. Due to time-critical nature of the work this contract was agreed via email. Quality/extent of cut to be monitored initially to ensure continuity. MowTech has a key to the gate which is theirs to keep for the duration of 2020 growing season. I will get some copies cut once lockdown is lifted.

g. Wildflower verges: to note any updates.

Cultivation licence application submitted; awaiting response.

h. Housing Needs Survey: to note any updates

Council noted the comments from Planning and has agreed to put this on hold during lockdown.

i. Phone Kiosk, Upper Common: to receive any updates

None; ongoing.

j. The Cross Monument. To receive any update on restoration project

Council fully supported the diversion of £800 funding offered by Summerfield Trust to Forest Food Bank. (see also: Item 'Donations' in 'Finance')

k. Management of trees/hedges. To receive any updates.

No updates from the last month.

l. Highways and Road Safety

*New comments in **bold**.*

Speeding	<p>VAS – Flashing speed sign Clerk to arrange meeting with Road Safety group and parish council; delayed due to a query with Highways (a different road sign has now been installed at the location discussed with Highways for the flashing sign). Still awaiting response from Highways</p> <p>Parishioners' concerns on increased speeding during lockdown Community speedwatch and police team contacted; police speed van will be booked; speed survey also proposed by police and requested by Clerk.</p>
A48: Debris from road surface around Maplefield	Chased numerous times; Highways advise that they are currently looking into this thanks to an email from Cllr Harrison to Brian Watkins.
30MPH countdown signs eastbound into village	Parishioner idea raised in survey – to be explored in the future

Missing Bus Stop sign pole nr Stockwell Lane	Should be in place by the end of March 2020. Not yet in place, so I will chase my contact.
Poor drainage on Church Road	24/2/20: Clerk raised the issue of the poor quality of gullies with Brian Watkins, and he has asked his contractors to inspect the gullies and arrange for any clearance work as required. In April Cllr Lord reported that this looked to have been worked on so it is hoped that this has been resolved, although it is hard to know until we get some rain.
Need for a new grit bin at lower end of Chapel Hill loop	Request submitted to Highways on 24/02/20 and has since been acknowledged. If anyone spots a new grit bin here, let me know.
Debris from tree falling, Chapel Hill	On 26/02/20 Brian Watkins replied: Hi Meg, Thank you for your email. I do apologise for not updating you on this one. I did look at the site with my colleague Clive Saunders and our conclusion was that the ground appears to be stable with no obvious signs of deterioration and ongoing failure. I haven't looked at the site since the last two storms passed through so I will have another look when I am next in the area. April update: I drove past the site and noted that the cones have now been removed and there is no debris. I will close this issue if no one objects.
Upper Common – ditches in poor state	On 26/02/20 Brian Watkins replied: I have recently received a reply from LPE regarding my initial contact. I have sent them some additional information through to them and offered to meet them on site. I will update you as soon as I get a reply. I continue to chase Highways to secure a timescale for their works, and to ask them to urge LPE to carry out the tasks under their control.
A48/Sandford Road street sign missing	Reported to Highways on 03/02/2020. Apparently this type of sign is FoDDC's so I will get in touch with them now.
Lower Common/Colliers Pitch - poor visibility at junction due to hedge overgrowth	Reported to Highways on 03/02/2020. No update at this time.
Lower Common/Sandford Road road	On 09/02/20 Brian Watkins replied:

surface	<p>Unfortunately nothing planned at the present time. I was hoping to do some patching this year but the funding went on extending the Sanford Road resurfacing scheme.</p> <p>I will arrange for the road to be inspected by the safety inspectors. They will identify and arrange for the repair of any defects that meet our intervention criteria. As for more extensive works and the tree issues I will have a look at the road the next time I am in the area.</p>
A48 road markings	<p>On 09/02/2020 Brian Watkins replied: Thank you for your email. we refreshed the markings on the approach to the village from the Chepstow direction up to and including the 30 limit. The markings through the village are in a reasonable condition so I have put this on hold until I have confirmation that the resurfacing of the A48 from Aylburton to Lydney Roundabout (past Taurus Craftes). If this scheme does get into the programme then I will arrange for both sections to be remarked. I get a better rate if I combine the two lining schemes together.</p>
Church Road poor surface	<p>Reported to Highways on 24/02/20 No update yet; timescale likely to be longer due to scale of resurfacing wor.</p>
Creeping verge at west end of village (near existing speed sign)	<p>Reported numerous times, including most recently on 24/02/20. In March Highways advised that the task had been booked in. If anyone notices that the work has been done, please let me know.</p>
Poor drainage on Sandford Road	<p>Reported on 24/02/20. Some work has been carried out to address this so it is hoped that it has been resolved for the time being.</p>
Tree overgrowth encroaching onto A48 footpath at west end of village	<p>Reported to Highways on 24/02/20. Highways responded to say that they couldn't find a fault, so I will liaise with Brian to clarify the issue.</p>
Poor drainage on Chapel Hill	<p>Reported to Highways on 24/02/20. Some work has been carried out to address this so it is hoped that it has been resolved for the time being.</p>
Poor road surface on Stockwell Lane	<p>Reported to Highways on 24/02/20. Some potholes have been filled as a result of this report but numerous large potholes remain. Cllr Blamey</p>

	has kindly recorded these and I will report them ASAP.
Poor drainage on Stockwell Lane	Reported 24/02/2020. Highways' Clive Saunders wrote on 16/04/2020: I have looked at Stockwell lane, met with most of the local residents. I will arrange for the gullies to be cleaned and investigate possible buried gullies.
Missing road sign on Lower Common	Reported 02/04/2020. Apparently this type of sign is FoDDC's so I will get in touch with them now.
Mud/debris on road at Stockwell Lane	Request made to Lydney Park Estate for awareness and attempts to clear; LPE have advised that they have been making efforts to clear up but that it isn't particularly effective.

m. Notice Boards refurbishment

Last time I checked, Tudor Rose had yet to reinstate the Upper Common Rec board and begin work on the school board. However, speed is not crucial, and (as with all of our contractors/services) I have been in touch with them to advise that we support whatever social distancing measures they want to put in place for themselves.

n. Parish flower tubs 2020.

Lydney Town Council are not able to confirm at this time whether they will be able to plant up the tubs, in which case Martin Rice has expressed willingness to carry out the task for a cost of £200-300.

o. Churchyard tree maintenance. To note TrunkArb report and consider actions.

TrunkArb have carried out the survey and I circulated their report recently. Council will need to consider which of the recommendations to action.

p. Former Upper Common allotments wall deterioration

AUCA forwarded their comments to Steph and I arguing for restoration of the wall over replacement. This view has been relayed to LPE, who have confirmed receipt and have relayed it to Gavin Green, estate manager.

q. Footpaths. To receive any updates.

No updates at this time.

r. Bus shelters. To receive any updates

No updates at this time.

s. Cross Inn. To receive any updates.

No updates at this time, though councillors may personally be aware of updates?

t. Dog waste bins. To receive any updates and note new cost per collection: was £37.50, now £60 (fortnightly).

Merlin now invoicing for the revised amount.

9. Council

a) Climate crisis: to note any updates on this topic.

No updates from Clerk.

b) Parish Plan: to note any observations from councillors' re-reading of the Plan, and to consider any preparation work that could be carried out during Covid-19 lockdown.

To refresh your memories of the Plan see <http://aylburton.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/AylburtonPlan.pdf>

c) Code of Conduct: to review and re-adopt existing Code (routine review).

Annual review of Code of Conduct to ensure it remains relevant. I have not identified any changes required but I seek Council's confirmation.

d) Asset Register: to review and note the addition of the additional dog bins.

Accepting the two additional dog bins increases our assets by £400 in value; I have notified the insurer of this. See updated Asset Register at <http://aylburton.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Asset-Register-May-2020.pdf>

10. Finance

a. Payments. To approve the following council payments:

0501	Clerk: Salary	£351.62
0502	Clerk: Expenses	£15.60
0503	Merlin Waste: April	£60.00
0504	Merlin Waste: May	£60.00
0506	Martin Rice: Grass	£601.44
0507	Simply Gdns: Weedspraying	£130.00
0508	Hedge Trimmer Hire (Churchyd)	£42.00

Electronic Payments: *To reduce risks to councillors and payees, Council agreed to setting up electronic payments and I have been progressing this task, and I anticipate that we can use electronic payments for the above, and therefore I have assigned them a payment reference number (0501, 0502 etc.) accordingly.*

b. Income. To note any income received since the last meeting:

09/04/2020	Bank Interest	£0.33
09/04/2020	Allotment rent	£40.00
15/04/2020	Allotment rent	£40.00
17/04/2020	Precept pt 1 of 2	£8,226.00
20/04/2020	Allotment rent	£40.00

c. Audit 2019/20: To approve the council certifying itself as exempt from external audit due to both income and expenditure being under £25,000.

As in previous years, because our income/expenditure are both under £25,000 we can certify ourselves to be exempt from an external audit. I seek Council's confirmation of this plan.

d. Audit 2019/20: Progress update from the Clerk

I am working with GAPTC to supply the required documents and information for them to carry out the audit and I hope to present the report to you in the next couple of weeks, ready for approval of the AGAR at the June meeting.

e. Funding/Donations. To consider any funding requests and to officially approve the diversion of £800 Summerfield Trust grant to the Forest Food Bank.

To consider amount to donate to Great Oaks Hospice and formally approve donation.

First: I note widespread support but I now seek Council's approval on diverting funds thus.

Second: Regarding Great Oaks, I seek Council's consensus on amount to be donated.

11. To note correspondence and any additional notes from the Clerk.

Generally, any significant communications have been forwarded to all councillors shortly after receipt. However, two less urgent emails were received too, for consideration:

No1: Dig For Victory (Town and Parish Councils)

Good evening colleagues and councillors,

As part of the District Council's response to this crisis, I have been asked by the Leader of the Council and by the District's Cabinet to oversee the creation of new allotments and community food growing schemes. To this effect we'll soon launch our 'Dig For Victory' campaign aimed at identifying suitable land, bringing together experienced growers with volunteers and establishing new allotments; as well as several larger scale market gardens, ideally one for each of the Forest's towns. On behalf of the District Council, I would like to formally extend an invitation to all Town and Parish Councils, to become an official partner organisation in our new Dig For Victory campaign.

Councils across the District as well as several other public bodies including Forestry England are being asked to help identify land suitable for emergency food production. If you know of any site (public or privately owned) which may be suitable for either community allotments or a market garden – please get in touch, and then working with the District's planning department we will make all the necessary legal inquiries and arrangements.

The last Dig For Victory campaign during WW2 led to the creation of many of the allotments we have today, which kept many families fed through those challenging times. It's our hope that with the support of our Town and Parish Councils, all Forest residents who wish to grow food will be encouraged and supported to do so by their local councils.

This is a chance for the Forest of Dean to lead by example, to rediscover our longstanding tradition of rural self-sufficiency and – should the campaign be a success – to demonstrate a practical model of community resilience in response to this crisis, which may be capable of being learnt from and replicated elsewhere.

Kindly forward this message on to whomever you think may be interested in getting involved in your area, and we look forward to hearing back from you and to working with yourselves and all our partner organisations to further these ambitions.

Sincerely,
Cllr Thom Forester
Group Leader, Forest Independent Alliance
Member for Mitcheldean, Ruardean & Drybrook
"Happy is the Eye, betwixt the Severn and the Wye!"

No 2: Re: FUSE - a community project for the Forest

Dear all

I hope this email finds you well amidst these challenging times. Despite having to drastically change the way we connect with our partners and stakeholders and slowing the pace (a little!), project FUSE continues to progress and build momentum.

If you haven't yet heard of us, we are Forest Urban Sports Experience. Our vision is to create a unique, sustainable and thriving community sports facility here in the beautiful Forest of Dean. Our plans include a 40,000sft indoor skatepark, gym, soft adventure play, indoor climbing, gym and cafe, plus free-to-use outdoor skatepark, pump track and cycling training facility plus outdoor picnic and play area. We have been working closely with the District Council on plans for this for the last few weeks.

We are currently at stage one of funding - crowdfunding. Stage two will see us from the FUSE C.I.C and bring in money from large grant funding pots. We are already working with Active

Gloucestershire, Sports England, Skateboard England plus smaller local organisations, including Forest youth Association, FVAF, Tic Tac Skate School, Five Acres High School amongst others.

I have attached our project overview visuals to give you a little more flavour for what we are about and what we are looking to achieve.

During Lockdown we have teamed up with Tic Tac Skate School and plan to offer live online skateboard training, tips and tricks for all our local young people unable to get out and ride currently. We also plan to pop up some videos that aimed at strength and conditioning training to help anyone on a BMX, skateboard or scooter improve their fitness and skill levels for riding once they can get back to it properly. We are looking for some funding for this project, so if you have any pots of funding available for the provision of fitness/sports to local young people digitally to keep them active and engaged during lockdown then please do contact us.

Likewise if you have any available money to fund any parts of the overall FUSE project, we would be delighted to hear from you

If you would like to know any more or have any questions about the project, please don't hesitate to contact us!

Best wishes

Kelly Bluett | 07880 499 747
Director, Forest Urban Sports Experience
&
Andy Hammond | 07974 217 531
Director, Forest Urban Sports Experience

12. Exempt item. Item information excluded from the agenda under Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972.

No updates at this time, although Clerk and Cllr Lord remain active in progressing the matter.

13. To note the date of the next meeting – May Full Council Meeting is on Tuesday 9th June 2020 via Zoom.