

Manston and Hammoon Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Virtual Online Meeting Held on Wednesday 3rd March 2021 at 6.00pm via Zoom

Present:

Councillors – N. Frampton, E. Clark, R. Stone, S. Vestbirk, C.Poe

In attendance:

J Ramsay (Parish Clerk)

Cllr Jane Somper (Dorset Council)

Chairman's Welcome

20.72. Public Discussion Period (30 mins)

No public present.

20.73. To receive and accept apologies for absence

No apologies recorded.

20.74. To agree the minutes of previous meeting on 2nd December 2020 are a true and accurate record

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

20.75. Declarations of pecuniary and other interests in relation to the agenda

Cllr Clark declared an interest in item 20.80 on the agenda.

20.76. Issues arising from the last meeting – Clerk's Report

- VAT return – has been completed and sent to HMRC, however the refund has not been received yet.
- Play Area equipment – At previous meetings it was agreed to investigate new/different types of play area equipment to replace the current equipment. This cannot be done without a site meeting and under current Covid-19 restrictions this has not been possible yet.
- Fingerpost Update – The roundels have been done, except for one in Hammoon, there was an issue with the casting. Roger Bond was hoping to fit it before the end of February. Cllr Vestbirk reported that an insurance claim was put in for the fingerpost that was hit in Manston (just past The Plough public house), and the insurance is going to reimburse the Parish Council, which is good news.
- Hammoon Village Sign replacement – The insurance money has been received and the sign is ready to be replaced. Chairman confirmed that it would be replaced when the flood gates are installed.
- Mirror Sign opposite the Village Hall – In relation to concerns raised by the Village Hall Committee it had been agreed to install a mirror sign opposite the entrance to help visibility when exiting the car park. Clerk stated that there are several variations of mirror sign and without a site visit we cannot get quotes for the style of sign required. **Action: Cllrs Poe and Frampton to review the site opposite the car park and determine what type of sign is required. Clerk to get quotes based on that information.**

20.77. Update from the Chairman

Chairman reported that he had attended a site visit last week with Highways and other Dorset Council representatives with regards to the installation of the flood gates, further details will be discussed under item 20.83.

There has been more fly-tipping at the top of Hammoon Lane - Chairman stated that he has reported it again.

Chairman raised question as to the legality of a mobile home being permanently used and lived in on the site of a local farm. Could it lead to a lawful development certificate or future building development?

Action: Cllr Somper to email the Planning Enforcement Team at Dorset Council.

Chairman advised that he has also received a quote for the oak posts in the churchyard and grass cutting, this will be covered under agenda item 20.82.

Chairman stated that he had also attended one of Cllr Somper's Ward meetings and was able to meet the new Community Highways Officer (CHO) for the area, Enrico Dimarino.

20.78. To receive report from Dorset Council (*report circulated in advance*)

Cllr Jane Somper attended the meeting and asked if anyone had any questions on the report. Cllr Somper stated that she had held two Ward meetings so far for Councillors, one to meet the new CHO and one to meet the Rangers/Footpath team. They were very successful, so Cllr Somper hopes to hold more in the future, especially with Highways.

Cllr Somper requested that Councillors take note of the message that Household Recycling Centres should not be visited at this time, they are becoming increasingly busy as people tidy their houses and do more gardening.

Cllr Somper questioned whether the Parish Council was going to respond to the Draft Local Plan. The plan does indicate that there could be a lot more houses built in Sturminster Newton, which would have an impact on the infrastructure and traffic in the area. Manston and Hammoon are not specifically mentioned in terms of development. It was agreed that the Parish Council should respond as a whole. **Action: Cllr Vestbirk to prepare a response on behalf of the Parish Council to be circulated to all.**

The main areas of development are around towns already in existence as they have the infrastructure already in place to support extra housing. However it does look to create satellite towns outside of that, and Sturminster Newton would be one. Cllr Somper stated that the plan is important as having a plan means that you are not open to speculative development, and the development can be put where Dorset Council wants it to be.

Chairman raised issue with the language of the recent news article put out about the Household Recycling Centres, saying that they are 'shut' - this does not help with fly-tipping in the parish. Fly-tipping is an ongoing problem, discussion was had about putting up signs around Hammoon Lane, but it is felt people would still fly-tip regardless of signs. Councillors must be more vigilant.

20.79. To receive a finance report (*report circulated in advance*) and to agree action in response to proposals and payment approvals

Councillors noted the below payments made under delegated powers by either cheque or bank transfer out of Council:

01/01/2021	Clerk	Salary (Monthly)	£138.45
11/01/2021	Cllr Poe	Expenses Claim	£66.98
01/02/2021	Clerk	Salary (Monthly)	£138.45
09/02/2021	ICO	Data Protection Fee	£40.00
09/02/2021	Vision ICT	Website Hosting and Support 2021/22	£150.00
01/03/2021	Clerk	Salary (Monthly)	£138.45

Payments to be sanctioned:

03/03/2021	Clerk	Expenses Claim	£10.20
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Clerk requested that the above payment as listed be sanctioned. ALL IN FAVOUR.

20.80. To consider Willdoes Youth Bus Project Grant Proposal (*email circulated prior to the meeting*)

Cllr Clark provided a brief summary of the Bus Project and due to its base in Swanage, question was raised as to whether the bus would travel around to the area. It is thought a grant request has made to all Parish Councils in the Dorset area. It was raised that there are many good causes to contribute to, and perhaps there may be some more local to the Manston & Hammoon area. It was agreed therefore to defer the decision until more information on the project is known. **Action: Clerk to put on June agenda.**

Cllr Poe raised that each year a grant would normally be given to the Air Ambulance to the value of £100 and questioned whether this has happened this year. Clerk confirmed that this was not in the Cashbook for 2020/21. It was felt that grants should be used to be of benefit to the local area and community. Chairman therefore proposed that the Air Ambulance grant should be paid again this financial year. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Clerk stated that there is a limit on s137 grants, dependent on the number of electors in the parish. Clerk also raised that in the last DAPTC newsletter there was a Grants Policy, procedure and application form which ought to be adopted to assist future decision making. **Action: Clerk to clarify grants limits and bring Grants Policy to the June meeting for agreement.**

20.81. To comment on any planning applications

No new applications have been received since the last meeting.

20.82. To receive an update on Hammoon Churchyard (oak posts around monument)

Chairman stated that he had received a quote from Mr James to replace all 10 oak posts around the monument and re-hang the chain. The cost is £290.00. Chairman proposed that this quote be accepted. ALL IN FAVOUR.

Chairman informed Councillors that Mr James would also take on the grass cutting in churchyard, which would be paid on cost per cutting basis, rather than pay a yearly sum. Cllr Poe questioned whether Mr Salisbury had been paid for last year's grass cutting, Clerk confirmed that he had been paid in May 2020. Cllr Poe also raised that some comments had been made about the state of the gravestones, and the path

in the churchyard. Chairman stated that Mr James would look at all areas as necessary with regards to churchyard maintenance.

20.83. To receive an update on Hammoon Bridge & Flooding – Site Visit Report

Chairman attended a site visit last week with regards to the installation of the flood gates. The flood gates will be placed as near as possible to the footpath/gateway on the right hand side coming from the cross in Hammoon. The latching post will be installed on the other side, the landowner was present and happy with that arrangement as it will encroach slightly onto their property (roughly 6 inches). The gates are allowed to be there as Highways are allowed to put signage on the verge legally. The gates cannot be put further up the road as it becomes too dangerous for cars to turn around in the road if the gates are shut. The Parish Council have discussed flooding several times in the past over the years and having done our due diligence, and secured funding, it seems the only way forward is to put these physical barriers in place in order to try and save lives.

In addition, the site visitors noticed that the weight limit blue sign at the end of the lane on the A357 is over grown and faded, this should have been replaced. It was agreed to move the post that this sign is on, re-do the sign and add a flood flip-down sign onto the same post. There will also be several other flood flip-down signs placed around the area. The flood flip-down signs will be re-designed to make them easier to use as we are relying on non-Council works to flip the signs.

Chairman stated that the gates should be put in place in 2-3 weeks time. The flood gates will have combination locks on. It is thought opening the gates is not an issue as you can open one, then drive through to open another, closing the gates is slightly more difficult. Chairman stated that he would be happy to close the gates one end, provided someone else closed them at the same time the other end. Cllr Clark offered to assist, and Cllrs Poe and Vestbirk are also happy to help. It was agreed the gates would not need to be closed every time it rains, and we must appreciate that there will be a period of trial and error on closing the gates.

20.84. Discussion on any highway issues in both villages (to include traffic and speeding)

Nothing reported, although Chairman noted that at the site meeting last week all visitors commented on the amount and speed of traffic that was passing through the area. Since Child Okeford and Shillingstone roads have been shut more people use the Manston/Hammoon run. Chairman raised he would like to see bright red road markings with the speed limit painted on, on entry to the villages like they do in the Cotswolds. Comment was made that in the past when the Parish Council has asked for this, the response is that the paint will fade and wear away, but it is felt that local residents would still prefer this to be put in place. **Action: Clerk to follow up with Dorset Council**

Chairman reported that the Manston sign, that was damaged and dirty, raised previously by the Clerk will also be replaced when the flood gates are installed. **Action: Cllrs Poe and Frampton to review all the signs in the parish between now and the next meeting for remedial action.**

20.85. Agree Sickness Absence Policy, Equality & Diversity Policy, Disciplinary Policy and Grievance Policy
Councillors unanimously agreed the policies.

20.86. Confidential Matters (public and press to leave the meeting)

Nothing to raise.

20.87. Items for the next meeting

Casual Vacancies – Discussion was had about the six month non attendance rule for Councillors, whether meetings are face to face or virtual. Clerk explained that originally DAPTC had said a dispensation could be given for those Councillors who struggle with IT, however as the pandemic has continued and virtual meetings have become more the normal, this has changed. DAPTC’s advice was that not having access to IT was not an acceptable excuse for missing a meeting, especially since Zoom has the functionality to dial-in (where a mobile or landline is used to listen to the meeting). Every effort was made by the Chairman and Clerk to contact Cllrs Morgan and Murphy prior to the meeting to assist them to attend this meeting. The Parish Council discussed various options on how to take this forward, but unfortunately there is no other way but to declare that we now have two casual vacancies as both Cllrs Morgan and Murphy have not attended a meeting within six months.

A Parish Councillor will cease to be a Councillor if they fail to attend a meeting, or represent the Council, for a period of six months. “Failed to attend” means has not attended and a Councillor who has not attended a meeting for six months has failed to do so whether or not a meeting has been called because s.85 of the Local Government Act 1972 says that the six months starts with the last meeting attended and therefore covers the entire period up to the next meeting called.

It is felt that the six month attendance rule is unjust in these times and that the pandemic has made it difficult for those who are not technically proficient to maintain their roles as Councillors.

Clerk explained that now that we have casual vacancies they need to be advertised. If 10 electors wish to request an election for Parish Councillors this will be held this year (there is a certain time-frame procedure to follow). If an election is not requested, Councillors can be co-opted onto the Parish Council, provided they apply to become a Councillor, this would happen at the next meeting in June.

20.88. Date of next meeting(s)

2nd June 2021

1st September 2021

1st December 2021

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:55 hours.