Combe Hay Parish Council

<https://combehaypc.org.uk>

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held at 6:00pm**

**on Wednesday May 20, 2020 remotely via Zoom**

**Present:** Councillors M. Austwick (Chairman), S. Bellars, M. Boyce, C. Harrison,  
 S. Saker. J. Young

**In attendance**: R. Campbell (Clerk), one member of the public

20.043 **Election of Chairman**

RESOLVED (proposed Cllr Boyce, 2nd Cllr Saker, unanimous) to elect Cllr Austwick as Chairman for the coming year. The were no other nominations. Cllr Austwick signed the declaration of acceptance of office after the meeting.

20.044 **Apologies** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr J. Long, unwell.

20.045 **Council**

(a) **RESOLVED** (proposed Cllr Austwick, 2nd Cllr Boyce, unanimous) to elect Cllr Long as Vice-chairman for the coming year. The were no other nominations.

(b) There were no declarations of interests.

© It was AGREED that Councillors’ lead areas of responsibility would continue as follows:

* Malcolm Austwick *Chairman, planning policy, climate change*
* John Long *Vice-chairman, development control*
* Simon Bellars *Finance, utilities, emergency planning*
* Martin Boyce *Data Protection, communications, Combe Hay Church*
* Crock Harrison *Built and natural environment, cemetery*
* Sue Saker *Waste, cleansing and sustainability*
* Janet Young *Transport and transport infrastructure, cemetery*

(d) It was AGREED that ordinary meetings of Combe Hay Parish Council would be held at 7:00pm on the following Wednesdays:

July 15  
September 16  
November 18   
January 20, 2021  
March 17

May 19 (at 6:00 pm, followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7:45pm).

Meetings will be held online via Zoom until further notice.

Standing orders were suspended to allow public participation.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

* Andy Jeffries said that Japanese Knotweed was still growing at the junction of Old Bath Road byway and the track past Fortnight Farm, partly on the byway and partly on private land. He was obtaining prices for dealing with the outbreak on private land.

He had been disappointed at the lack of response from B&NES to two previous reports of knotweed. (*See Highways, below.*)

The hedge on the left-hand side of Old Bath Road past the stables needed cutting. There was also rubbish in one of the gateways. (*See Highways, below.*)

Standing orders were reinstated.

20.046 **Minutes** The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 29 April 2020 were agreed to be a true record. They were signed by the Chairman.

20.053 **Finance; statutory matters**

*This item was taken next*

(a) The Annual Internal Audit Report 2018-19 was RECEIVED.   
It was NOTED that in relation to Objective L, Exercise of Public Rights, the auditor had said that while they had seen the required Notice, there was no formal documentary evidence that the notice had been posted and indeed no requirement for the evidence to be maintained by the council. It had therefore marked the response as ‘not covered’ and expected most if not all councils to be marked in the same way by their internal auditors.

NOTED that the Public Rights Notice 2019-20 is published on the council’s website.

(b) **RESOLVED** (proposed Cllr Bellars, 2nd Cllr Boyce, unanimous) to APPROVE and SIGN the Annual Governance Statement 2019-20

(c) **RESOLVED** (proposed Cllr Bellars, 2nd Cllr Austwick, unanimous) to APPROVE and SIGN the Accounting Statements 2019-20

(d) **RESOLVED** (proposed Cllr Bellars, 2nd Cllr Austwick, unanimous) to APPROVE and SIGN he external audit exemption certificate 2019-20

(e) NOTED that the period for exercise of Electors’ Rights will be advertised to begin on Monday 15 June and end on Friday 24 July 2020

20.047 **Coronavirus**

Community support Cllr Austwick had circulated a report.

* There had been one confirmed and two suspected cases in the village. All had recovered. The support network was still functioning well. The Wheatsheaf Farm shop and ready meals were being well received and used. The choir had visited a number of elderly residents on VE day and sung to them – in a socially distanced formation! Letters from young to old were being written and much appreciated.
* The co-ordinators group will be asked again if they know of anyone who is struggling during lockdown. Cllr Austwick will talk to SS Philip & James’s Church about a possible need for food parcels.

20.048 **Clerk’s report**

A written report had been circulated. Actions are noted under the relevant minute.

20.049 **Planning**

(a) No applications

(b) No planning decisions

(c) No planning enforcement updates

(d) B&NES Local Plan Partial Update consultation Cllrs Austwick and Boyce will ‘top and tail’ the response circulated by Cllr Bellars before the meeting and APPROVED, ready for submission to B&NES.

20.050 **Highways and Rights of Way**

* AGREED to ask for the support of Ward Councillors McCabe and/or Butters in dealing with the outbreak of Japanese Knotweed, as well as contacting B&NES
* The Clerk to contact Mr Osborne about cutting the hedge on the left of the byway above the stables

(*see Public Participation, above, for both items)*

l20.051 **Cemetery**

New land

* The ‘Burial Board of Combe Hay’ is shown at the Land Registry as the registered owner of Combe Hay Cemetery. The Clerk will write to the Chief Land Registrar and state that the land was vested with Combe Hay Parish Council under provision of the Local Government Act 1972.
* Following a site meeting with Mr Osborne, a revised plan of the land to be gifted is being drawn up.
* To make sense of the site, there may be a requirement to transfer a small triangle of land to Mr Osborne which is shown at the Land Registry as being in ‘Burial Board’ control

**RESOLVED** (proposed Cllr Austwick, 2nd Cllr Harrison, unanimous) to fund up to £400 in additional legal costs, the money to come from the earmarked cemetery reserve.

20.052 **Risk assessment – financial controls**  
(a) It was AGREED that the current system of control (signatures/initials of two councillors and the clerk on invoice, cheque and cheque stub) continues to be satisfactory.

(b) Financial controls to be reviewed again once online banking is in operation

20.053 **Year end** *Follows minute 20.046 above*

20.054 **Finance**

(a) The Month 1 financial statement was APPROVED. The bank statement was signed outside the meeting.

(b) Unity Trust Bank Verification documents had been submitted as requested

(c) **RESOLVED** (proposed Cllr Bellars, 2nd Cllr Austwick, unanimous) to pay

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| --- | --- |
| Staff salaries – May 2020 | 315.70 |

20.055 **Information only**

(a) Weclome pack No new residents

(b) Correspondence received

Cherry Tree

* Cllr Harrison will look at a leaning cherry tree at the top of Stony Lane, discuss with Sam Brown and report to the July meeting. Ditto another tree halfway down Stony Lane

(c) Miscellaneous reports None

20.056 **Meetings**

As agreed above, the next ordinary meeting of CHPC will be on Wednesday 15 July at 7:00pm, via Zoom.

The Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 7:15pm