

ROOKSDOWN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF ROOKSDOWN PARISH COUNCIL (RPC) HELD ONLINE on 27 April 2020 at 1930

	In Attendance	Apologies	Absent
Cllr Paul Mahoney (Chairman)	✓		
Cllr Paul Lovett (Vice-chairman)	✓		
Cllr Tim Botten	✓		
Cllr Pujitha Jasti	✓		
Cllr Scott Mason	✓		
Cllr Norman Morris	✓		
Cllr Jon Payne	✓		
Cllr Doug How	✓		
Cllr Dan Harris	✓		

Clerk:

Martin Whittaker

In attendance:

Simon Bound, Borough Councillor and Manager of Rooksdown Community Association (RCA)

Action

20/65 **To receive and accept apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from HCC Cllr Taylor, self-isolating due to coronavirus.

20/66 **To receive and note any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and requests for dispensation for items to be discussed**

None.

20/67 **To approve the minutes of the Rooksdown Parish Council meeting and minutes of the Closed Item of 23 March February**

The motion being proposed by Cllr Mason, seconded Cllr Harris, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the minutes.

The minutes were signed on camera by the Chairman.

20/68 **To discuss matters arising from the minutes**

All items complete except:

- 20/4 Apply to BDBC for bus shelters – suspended due to pandemic
- 20/12 LIF fencing update – Clerk/Payne – no progress. Cllr Payne reported that an area of fencing by Saxon Wood School had recently been replaced but it was not clear by whom.
- 20/25 Rewilding – suspended
- 20/55 Delivery arrangements for Rooksdown Reporter – Clerk – no progress as companies currently closed
- 20/59 Skatepark cleaning equipment – suspended
- 20/60 Beekeeping on the allotment – suspended
- 20/61 Salt bins – Clerk - suspended
- 20/64.1 Car park transfer – Clerk – no progress
- 20/64.2 Arrangements for eviction of plothead – eviction stands, but the plot can't be cleared as the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) are shut.

- 20/64.3 Staff matters - Mahoney – ongoing

20/69 **To invite members of the public to address the meeting (up to 15 minutes in total)**

None

20/70 **To receive reports from:**

1. Chairman of Rooksdown Parish Council – no report
2. Clerk to the Parish Council – no report
3. County Councillor
Cllr Taylor had sent information on Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs), saying that if and when trips to the HWRCs were reclassified as essential journeys, it would take HCC 14 days to reopen them. He also sent information confirming that coronavirus protection for bus drivers was in place.
4. Borough Councillor
Cllr Bound reported:
 - HWRC – BDBC is trying to get bulky item uplift reinstated.
 - Community hubs now operating – see BDBC website.
 - There is a difficulty in getting information to people who aren't online – noticeboards are important.
 - Lots of volunteering in Rooksdown – people are supporting their neighbours.
 - All rough sleepers are now in B&B accommodation.
 - All BDBC meetings currently suspended.
 - All council events and events on council land cancelled, including Rooksdown Summer Fair.
 - The skatepark is a hotspot for current activity as it cannot be physically closed. Now being patrolled by police.
5. Rooksdown Community Association (RCA) – Simon Bound reported that all staff had been furloughed and the Community Centre closed. The handyman is still working, and invoices will be presented to RPC when the lockdown eases. No post was being delivered for RCA or RPA: he was investigating why.
6. Sherborne Fields Residents Association – no report
7. Police/PCSO/CSPO – Cllr Bound reported that crime down about 30%. Most people are socially distancing. Non-household burglaries, eg sheds, are starting to creep up.

20/71 **To review arrangements for delegation to the Clerk**

Delegation arrangements have now terminated. Members saw no need to reinstate them.

20/72 **To note decision not to close the allotments**

The Clerk explained that a number of communications had been received suggesting that plotters were not behaving appropriately during the lockdown for coronavirus. The Clerk decided, after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-chairman, and Cllrs Mason and Morris, not to close the allotments but to issue guidance to plotters, asking them to conform to advice from the National Allotment Society (<https://www.nsalg.org.uk/news/covid19-information/>) as endorsed by HALC.

All plotters have been sent the advice - and updates - with the important parts emphasised, and the CSPOs have been asked to keep an eye on the site. The Chairman had also posted the advice on the allotment site gates and noticeboard.

20/73 **To review the financial report and accounts for 2019-20**

The Clerk summarised the financial report and accounts. The council had underspent by £6K compared with budget. Details can be found in Appendix 1.

The motion being proposed by Cllr Lovett, seconded Cllr Mahoney, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the report.

20/74 **To note the revised arrangements for internal and external audit**

Because of the pandemic the audit deadlines had been changed by the government. The new dates are:

Before 1/9 (was 1/7):

- Internal audit (currently set for 2/6)
- Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to be completed, approved and signed by the council
- Documents sent to external auditor.

Before 1/12 (was 1/10)

- Complete external audit and publish documents.

However, the Clerk expected the AGAR to be ready for approval at the June RPC meeting.

20/75 **To approve payments**

The list of payments and relevant invoices were supplied to all members before the meeting.

The motion being proposed by Cllr Mason, seconded Cllr How, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the following payments:

Date	Description	Payee	Amount
28/04/2020	Salary balance	M Whittaker	49.36
14/04/2020	File dividers	West End Stationers	3.95
28/04/2020	Payroll fee	Diane Malley	120.00
28/04/2020	Salary	M Whittaker	767.18
27/03/2020	Phone bill	giffgaff	6.00
27/04/2020	Phone bill	giffgaff	6.00

Cllr Botten was asked to authorise the payments.

20/76 **To note bank reconciliations**

The statements and reconciliations were supplied to all members before the meeting.

Account	Statement date	Closing Balance
Current account	31/3/20	5728.88
Deposit account	31/3/20	79829.68

The reconciliations were duly noted.

20/77 **Planning applications**

1. [T/00138/20/TCA](#) Rear garden tree that has grown too close to the back wall: fell. | 27 Watertower Way Basingstoke Hampshire RG24 9RF

(Ratification of decision of No Objection under the Uncontentious Planning Application procedure)

The motion being proposed by Cllr Lovett, seconded Cllr Harris, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to offer no objection.

Applications not on the agenda

2. [T/00157/20/TCA](#) | Tree work consultation (Conservation Area) T/00157/20/TCA - 44 Basswood Drive Basingstoke Hampshire RG24 9SW

The motion being proposed by Cllr Botten seconded Cllr Lovett, **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to offer no objection.

20/78 **Main Hall Working Group update – Lovett**

Cllr Lovett reported that:

- The Clerk had produced the draft contract for the management of the Hall
- The Working Group had met to go through the details and agree changes
- The Clerk would forward the draft to the RCA for their comments and copy to all members.

Clerk

20/79 **Chairman's correspondence**

The Chairman noted that two complaints had been received in the last month:

- Against the Clerk by an allotment holder for incorrect eviction from the allotments:
 - The Chairman, after discussion with the councillors with responsibility for the allotments and the Clerk, found that the Clerk had correctly applied the policy of the Parish Council as expressed in the Allotment Rules, that the proper procedures had been followed, and that on this basis there were no grounds for complaint. He communicated this to the complainant, who did not respond further.
- Against the Council by a resident over the Easter weekend for not closing the allotments or “policing” them properly in line with the lockdown guidelines:
 - Although a complaint against the council is not covered by the Complaints Procedure, the Chairman decided to apply it in this instance as an effective way of dealing with the complaint.
 - After consulting the councillors with responsibility for the allotments, the Vice-chairman and the Clerk, the Chairman explained to the complainant the limited resources the council had to deal with the allotments, the reasoning behind the Clerk’s decision not to close them, and the steps the Clerk and Chairman would be taking to ensure safety on the site. The complainant was satisfied.

The Chairman reported that he had received a letter from the Basingstoke Citizen’s Advice Bureau asking for a funding contribution to cover the increased demand during the pandemic. As this had arrived too late for a resolution, he explained that the Clerk had suggested contributing up to his delegated limit, and if necessary considering a further contribution at the next meeting. The council was in general agreement with this, and the Clerk was asked to proceed with a payment of £499. This would be made under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 .

20/80 Clerk’s correspondence

The Clerk explained that he was receiving 2 or 3 newsletters a day with COVID-19 guidance. These tended to be repetitive and not all relevant to members and residents. Therefore he was summarising issues and only reporting items of direct relevance, by email to councillors and posting information for residents on the two main Rooksdown Facebook groups.

20/81 Chairman to close meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2055.

Appendix 1

Financial Report – Year End 2019-20

V1.1 27/4/2020

Summary

Year-end figures are in line with quarterly forecasts.

The surplus for the year is tricky to extract because of the large sums in s.106 receipts and loan repayments. However, when these are removed, there was an underspend of £7.5K compared with budget of £1K, giving a difference of £6K. This is largely accounted for by:

- Underspend of £2K on grants
- Underspend of £2.5K on professional fees for the Main Hall
- Receipt of £1.5K from allotment rents omitted from the original budget.

Specifics

Variances

Variances between Actual and Budget figures that are over £200 and over 15% of the budget need to be explained for audit purposes. These are shown, with explanation, in the table below.

S.106

£6,633 was received as a contribution to allotment setup and maintenance, which was assigned to the Allotments reserve.

Loan repayment

£52,000 was received from the Rooksdown Community Association in repayment of the loan made to them in 2017. This was assigned to the Community Buildings reserve.

Surplus

The total surplus was £63K compared with budget of £1K. However, this can be accounted for by:

- Repayment of loan by the RCA: £52K
- Receipt of £6.5K allotments s.106 to allotments reserve
- Expenditure of £2.5K from allotments reserve

...giving:

- $63 - 52 - 6.5 + 2.5 = £7K$

With a forecast surplus of £1K, this gives a variance of £6K underspend compared with budget.

Reserves

After accounting for the Community Buildings and Allotments reserves, the General Reserve at year end was £17,707, giving total reserves of £85,558.

Martin Whittaker

Clerk and RFO

Payments	Budget	Actual	Variance	Variance	Notes
Other Payment				>15%>£200	
Allotments	0	2,439	-2,439	>100%	Paid from earmarked reserve (from s.106 below)
Audit fees	600	480	120		
Books	100	29	71		
Chairman's allowance	50	0	50		
Clerks exp (misc)	50	0	50		
Councillor expenses	50	0	50		
Events	250	94	156		
General admin	600	304	296	49%	No need for expenditure
Grants and Donations	2,500	300	2,200	88%	All requests meeting criteria were granted
Hall hire	600	438	162		
Handyman	8,000	7,820	180		
Insurance	650	639	11		
IT and support	700	818	-118		
Loans	0	0	0		
Miscellaneous Payments	0	0	0		
Misc expenditure	100	3	97		
Phone	60	71	-11		
Printing and publication	2,000	1,384	616	31%	Few editions of Rooksdown Reporter than expected produced
Professional fees	2,500	0	2,500	100%	Main Hall not handed over as expected
Repairs and Maintenance	250	571	-321	-128%	Extra salt and grit purchased
Section 137 payments	250	100	150		
Subscriptions	1,000	1,190	-190		
Training	300	73	227	76%	No major training done. Offset by £500 grant for defibrillator (see below)
Project Costs	2,500	3,180	-680	-27%	
Total Other Payment	23,110	19,933	3,177		
Staff costs					
Salaries and allowance	12,500	13,668	-1,168		
Pension contributions	0	0	0		
Total Staff costs	12,500	13,668	-1,168		
Administration					
Payroll	65	81	-16		
Clerks exp (benefits)	250	135	115		
Total Administration	315	216	99		(error in budget spreadsheet corrected)*
Total Payments	35,925	33,817	2,108		*

Receipts	Budget	Actual	Variance	Variance	
Other Receipts				>15%>£200	
VAT Repayments	1,500	1,257	243	16%	
Miscellaneous Receipts	0	0	0		
Bank interest	8	35	-27		
Grants and Donations	3,500	3,925	-425		£500 grant received for defibrillator
S106 contributions	0	6,633	-6,633	>100%	Allotment contributions - to earmarked reserve
Other receipts	0	52,000	-52,000	>100%	Repayment of loan to RCA
Allotment rents	0	-1,510	-1,510	>100%	Omitted from original budget
Total Other Receipts	5,008	65,360	-60,352		
Precept					
Precept	32,230	32,230	0		
Total Precept	32,230	32,230	0		
			-		
Total Receipts	37,238	97,590	60,352		
Surplus (income-exp)	1,313	63,773	-62,460		*
Payments without allotments s.106	35,925	31,378	4,547		
Receipts without s.106/ loan	37,238	38,919	-1,681		
Surplus without s.106	1,313	7,579	-6,266		*

*Original budget had an error in the formula for Total Administration , giving a total of £60 rather than £315. This error of £255 was carried into the Total Payments and Surplus figures above, which have been corrected.

Statement of Reserves					
Cash and Loans at 1/4/20					
Opening bal at 1/4/19	Treas acc	5,248			
	Bus acc	16,537			
Surplus to reserves		63,773			Includes RCA loan repayment, s.106 and general surplus
Total cash 1/4/20				85,558	
Expressed in terms of reserves at 1/4/20					
Earmarked reserves:					
Community buildings		52,000			
Allotments		6,633			
LIF contributions	Fencing	9,218			Expected RPC contribution to project
Other reserves		0			
			67,851		
General reserve:			17,707		should be 3-6 months expenditure: £7-15K
				85,558	