

Hurworth Parish Council

Minutes of the Virtual Parish Council Meeting held at Hurworth Grange on Thursday, 2nd July 2020.

Parish Councillors present:-

All the Councillors were made aware of, and had the opportunity, to contribute to this Virtual Council Meeting. The Council comprises the following Councillors:-

Cllr Graham Wylie. (Chairman), Cllr David Crisp, Cllr Peter Foster, Cllr Janine Forster, Cllr Elaine Hedley, Cllr Sam Ring-Viney, Cllr Bree Stamp, Cllr Lynn Wylie, Cllr Amanda Oughton, Cllr Dorothy Oughton,

Also

Cllr Tostevin, Cllr Chou, Peter Allan (Parish Clerk) and four members of the public attended this meeting.

292. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Amanda Oughton, Cllr Dorothy Oughton,

293. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Crisp – Allotments

294. Opening address.

The Parish Clerk addressed the Council and informed the meeting of the following changes in situation.

- a. Cllr Joyce Wedge has resigned from the Council; she has sold her house and is moving away.
- b. Cllr Tony Winnett has tendered his resignation with immediate effect. Tony is leaving the Council for personal reasons.
- c. Cllr Winnett was the present Chairman of the council, so a new Chairman is required. The Vice Chairman Cllr Graham Wylie has agreed to take over the position until the end of this Council year, 31st March 2021.
- d. A formal proposal was tabled, Proposed by Cllr Lynn Wylie and Seconded by Cllr Hedley, and the motion was carried unanimously.

294. Chairman's Address

- The Chair, Cllr Graham Wylie opened the meeting, by welcoming all the Councillors and members of the public who are attending this virtual meeting, using the ZOOM Conferencing media.
- The Chair, on behalf of the Council, extended his thanks to both Cllr Wedge and Cllr Winnett for their valuable service on the Parish Council, and wished them both good fortune with their future interest.
- The outdoor concert which needed to be postponed last Sunday due to high winds, is scheduled for Sunday 5th July starting at 2:00pm, weather permitting.

295. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th June 2020 were accepted by the Council, Proposed by Cllr Hedley, and Seconded by Cllr Stamp.

296. Public Participation

- a. A resident expressed his concerns about the lack of a pathway from the new two housing estates on Roundhill Road.

Both Miller Homes and Bellway have agreed to construct a pathway, but to date this has not been started. There is concern that pedestrians need to walk on the busy road or mount the grassy verge.

He further expressed his concern that the Council has not seen the plan for the pathway, and that that it needs to be agreed that it will not involve removing the hedge. A pathway on the east side of the road will be much preferred, and he asked the Council and Ward Councillor Tostevin to contact the constructors to obtain details of their plan. **Action Cllr Tostevin & Parish Clerk.**

- b. A resident expressed his concern about the amount of vehicles speeding and the alarming speeds which are evident near Elmfield Road end and the main road passing Hurworth Grange. The meeting agreed with his sentiments, and the subject will receive further discussion under Highways and Traffic. The resident would like to see radar traps used from time to time to induce a deterrent.
- c. A parishioner has concerns for the users of the no.12 bus. They want the Parish Council to look into ways in which this service can improve. At the moment the bus goes one way, and this is on a 90 minute loop. So going to the Doctors, for example, would be a long journey to undertake just to get back home. A meeting will be set up with Arriva, Cllr Tostevin, and Parish Councillors Amanda and Dot Oughton, and the Chairman. **Action Cllr Tostevin & Parish Clerk.**

297. Planning Applications.

Cllr Ring-Viney gave the following report regarding planning applications in the month of Jun

Planning applications 02/04/2020-06/05/2020				
1	Rec'd Date	Val Date	REF	Comments
	01/06/2020	09/06/2020	20/00399/FUL	No comments
Address	10 Elmfield Road HURWORTH DARLINGTON DL2 2JJ			
About	Erection of extension to front and side elevations with pitched roof to form garage and utility/wc			
2	Rec'd Date	Val Date	REF	Comments
	12/06/2020	23/06/2020	20/00447/FUL	No comments
Address	Blackbanks Farm Snipe Lane Hurworth Moor DARLINGTON DL2 1QB			
About	Erection of stable block comprising six loose boxes and one tack room			
3	Rec'd Date	Val Date	REF	Comments
	15/06/2020	26/06/2020	20/00451/LBC	No comments
Address	Old School House 3 Church School Blind Lane HURWORTH DARLINGTON DL2 2JB			
About	Replacement double glazed timber entrance door and frame			
4	Rec'd Date	Val Date	REF	Comments
	15/06/2020	29/06/2020	20/00457/FUL	No comments
Address	12 Evesham Grove HURWORTH DARLINGTON DL2 2YE			
About	Conversion of existing integral garage into habitable space with first floor extension above, single storey rear extension, erection of boundary walls and gates 1.3m upto 1.75m high, formation of hard-standing for additional car parking to front and widening of dropped kerb			
5	Rec'd Date	Val Date	REF	Comments
	25/06/2020	25/06/2020	20/00502/FUL	No comments
Address	Springfield Farm Croft Road DARLINGTON DL2 2SD			
About	Erection of double garage with pellet store			

298. Tree Report

Cllr Foster reported as follows:-

Tree Report June 2020

Cllr Foster reported:-

Two new trees have been planted at Hurworth Grange near the entrance. One is the tree which we have nursed back to health after it was vandalised in Sanderson Road.

Following a request from a resident, whose husband had a long association with the Hurworth Community Association, and recently died, it has been agreed that the family will plant a quince tree near the Heritage Orchard.

So that the tree is not lonely, EPICH has agreed to plant another quince tree next to it.

Following a request from a resident, a large tree in Friars Pardon will be cut back as it is causing problems and overgrowing their garden.

The Council has received a complaint about tree roots; this is being fully investigated, and the tree will be preserved unless it is deemed to be unhealthy. This is in accordance with DBC tree policy.

During our monthly inspection, it is noted that two trees near the main road fence at Hurworth Grange have branched overhanging the pathway. We will make arrangements to have these trimmed back so they do not cause inconvenience or danger to pedestrians.

299. Open Spaces & EPICH Report

Cllr Lynn Wylie reported as follows:-

a. Open Spaces Report – July 2020

Open Spaces Audit

I will be looking to carry out the yearly Open Spaces audit in late July/ early August and will provide a full report for the September PC meeting.

Open Spaces Policy

A draft of the proposed Open Spaces Policy has been sent to all Councillors for their views and consultation. This document was initially composed by ex Councillor Wilma Campbell prior to the last election, but the policy was never put before the Council.

After some discussion it was agreed that the draft document should receive consideration and the Council agreed:-

- A focus group to will be set up to investigate and formulate a proposal
- The focus group should comprise 2 PC representatives (Cllr Hedley and Cllr Lynn Wylie), 1 representative from the Neighbourhood Plan, 3 representatives from EPICH (including Wilma, Campbell and two selected other members) and maybe 1 representative from the village.

- The outcome of what is decided at this forum will be presented back to the PC when it is ready – most likely later in 2020 at the earliest, as we are now moving into the summer break, and this meeting will probably be better held as a live meeting, rather than over Zoom, so will have to assess social distancing restrictions come September

Cllr Lynn Wylie will co-ordinate the process and contact relevant people to approach participants and make the meeting arrangements.

b. EPICH Report – July 2020

Update on the Lychgate Orchard

Several EPICH members met back on the 15th June to discuss the state of the Lychgate Orchard, following the unauthorised strimming of vegetation.

Due to Covid-19, EPICH had been unable to proceed with the planned upkeep of the Lychgate orchard earlier in the year, so it was agreed that the area had become rather unkempt, and it was understandable that someone had taken the matter into their own hands; thinking that they were also doing the Parish Council a favour too.

As a result of the meeting it has been agreed to install a number of bird boxes (to be provided by Ken Pattison/ DOVES), install a bug hotel (to be built by Colin), suitable planting such as foxgloves/ spring bulbs, sowing shade tolerant grass, removal of garden waste (dumped by residents who back on to the orchard), removal of hogweed (by Colin) and removal of vegetation/ moss on the path alongside the orchard.

Last Tuesday (23rd June) Colin and Helen, from Urban Eden, completed an amazing clear up, and though there is still some work to be done, the area is looking a lot more welcoming and cared for - photos of the work have been posted on the PC website under EPICH

Colin and Helen were asked to quote for the required work (mini digger = £70 to £80, Skip = £200), and the EPICH members have voted 'yes' to ring fence £500 from EPICH budget to fund the work to allow the orchard to be maintained as a wildlife corridor, and allow residents access to enjoy the space.

The existing sign commemorating the location of Home farm and lime kiln pits has been removed as the sign is not factually correct so is not suitable for either the Orchard, or beside Lime Cottage. Content for the new sign was discussed – to include detail of Home Farm, detail birds living and plants growing in the orchard, as well as promoting EPICH's involvement. Costings for a new sign need to be investigated and agreed, but Jaime Westwood has already offered her help on the design.

Graveyard Clear Up

EPICH members and other village residents met last Saturday (27th June) to complete a much-needed tidy up of the All Saints graveyard (nearest end to the fish and chip shop).

Removal of branches/ twigs around the graveyard, removal of self-seeded trees (which could damage the graveyard wall), overgrown shrubs cut back, picking up of rubbish and general tidying up of the graves was completed over a couple of hours.

Photos of everyone's efforts can be viewed on the PC website under EPICH.

Wildflower Meadow

We have a common spotted orchid flowering in the wildflower meadow at the Grange, so we are starting to see some success with this area and shows that the area is developing as a wildflower meadow habitat.

A further wildflower meadow has been proposed in the rough grass area at the Grange. Discussions with and permission from HCA will be required before any work can take place. To help save money, we will be able to use seeds from the current meadow such as the Yellow Rattle, and transfer some of the Knapweed too.

Promotion of EPICH Activities

Following the unauthorised clearance of the Lychgate orchard, EPICH members have been discussing how to promote designated wildlife corridors (Lychgate orchard and Goblins' Wood are the 2 main areas) supported by EPICH as well as engaging everyone in the village – ideas would be welcome.

c. Wild Flower Verges

With the prior agreement of the Council, Wilma Campbell made the following presentation.

EPICH request to HPC to support Plant life national campaign.

There are nearly 313,500 miles of rural road verge in the UK – equivalent in area to our remaining lowland species-rich grassland

700 species of wild flower grow on road verges– nearly 45% of our total flora – but there has been a 20% drop in floral diversity due to poor management and nutrient pollution

For 23 million commuters, road verges can be their only daily contact with nature

EPICH would like HPC to start an ongoing dialogue with neighbouring Parish Councils (Neasham, Sadberge etc) to work together in gaining support for the national campaign led by Plant life to change how roadside verges are managed within their Parishes. They can then approach DBC and request that they take the same approach. By making some changes to their grass cutting routine wild flowers would flourish supporting a vast array of invertebrates including pollinators such as bees and butterflies.

Plants provide invertebrates with a wide range of resources. While the current focus is firmly on providing nectar and pollen for declining pollinators, especially bees, it's worth remembering that there is very much more to the relationship between plants and invertebrates. The most critical role that plants play from an invertebrate point of view is as a source of food: caterpillars of moths and butterflies, aphids, grubs, weevils, grasshoppers, mites, gall wasps, shield bugs, sawflies – the list of invertebrates that feed on living and dead plant material is enormous.

You can see that, even if only a small number of flowering plant species can be encouraged to grow on verges, the potential benefits are huge. And if the insects return, so does the wildlife that feeds on them, all the way to the top of the food chain.

Liaising with DBC about the type of cut required, the timing of the cut and removal of the cuttings seemingly small changes would lead to an increase in both flora and fauna and establish wildlife habitats and corridors within Hurworth Parish.

In 2015 Highways England produced a new plan to protect and increase biodiversity on the motorways and trunk road verges of England. This policy is followed on the A66.

(Grass cut at different times throughout the year depending on where it is situated. The 2 metre verge cut twice a year. Grass within a sightline 3 times a year, Grass which is close to traffic signs cut annually. The whole verge is cut once every 5 years to control the scrub.

Rural road grass verges eg from Blackwell Grange Golf Club down to Hurworth Place is owned and managed by DBC. (Grass cut annually, starting August)

The Council's comments:-

- Wilma' Campbell's presentation was well received
- Cllr Lynn Wylie provided a summary which included that she will contact the PC Chair for Neasham and Middleton-St-George to arrange getting together to discuss a plan of action to take to DBC regarding cutting (or non-cutting) of verges within in said villages/ DBC authority area.
- Cllr Lynn Wylie stated that meetings will take place in September at the earliest – she would prefer that the meetings are held face to face, so will be reliant on lifting of social distancing advice; this has been up for discussion for some time, so it was agreed that a few more weeks will not be an issue; also we are now late into the season, so aim is to get something in place for the start of the grass cutting season in 2021 – everyone agreed with this approach

The Chairman thanked Wilma Campbell for her enlightening presentation.

300. Playground and Youth Affairs

Cllr Stamp reported:-

- Due to the COVID 19 shut down, the playground has been closed but will re-open on 4th July at Hurworth Grange,
- Arrangements for the Scarecrow Festival, to take place on 24th and 25th July, are well advanced, and Cllr Stamp all Councillors to enter the competition.
- Arrangements for the Hurworth Craft and Produce Fair on 19th September are also well advanced, and entry forms are now being circulated. Naturally this is subject to the Government restrictions, but we are all hopeful that it will go ahead.

301. Highways and Traffic Report

a. Speed Watch Due to the lock down, no sessions were held.

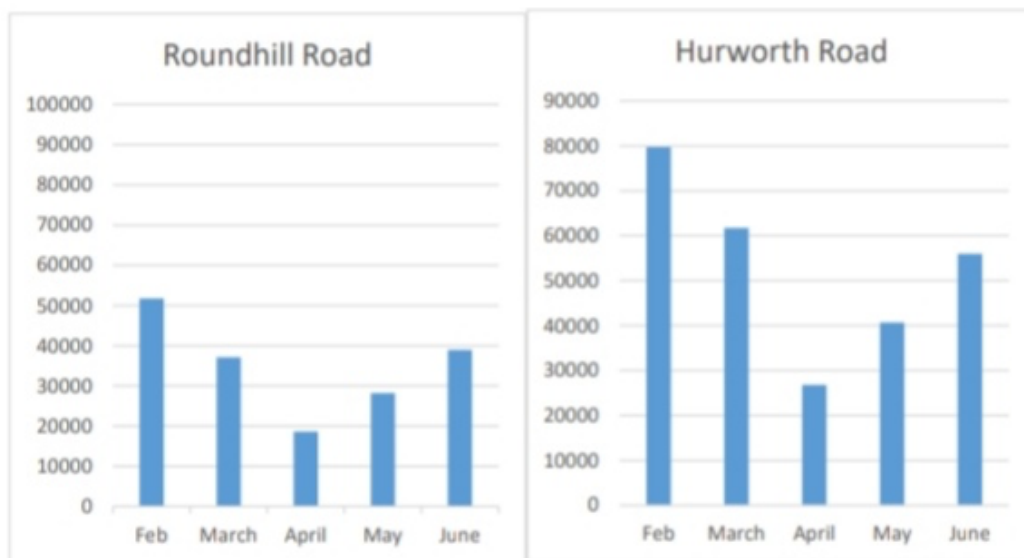
b. Traffic Statistics in Hurworth

Cllr Hedley reported as follows:-

Vehicle Counts Feb – June:-

Traffic report June: The monitor on the Metal Bridge was moved On 10th June to The Green in response to a complaint about speeding vehicles in the area. A total of three complaints have been

received about the same problem. The data for Roundhill and Hurworth Road are shown below:
Vehicle Counts Feb – June

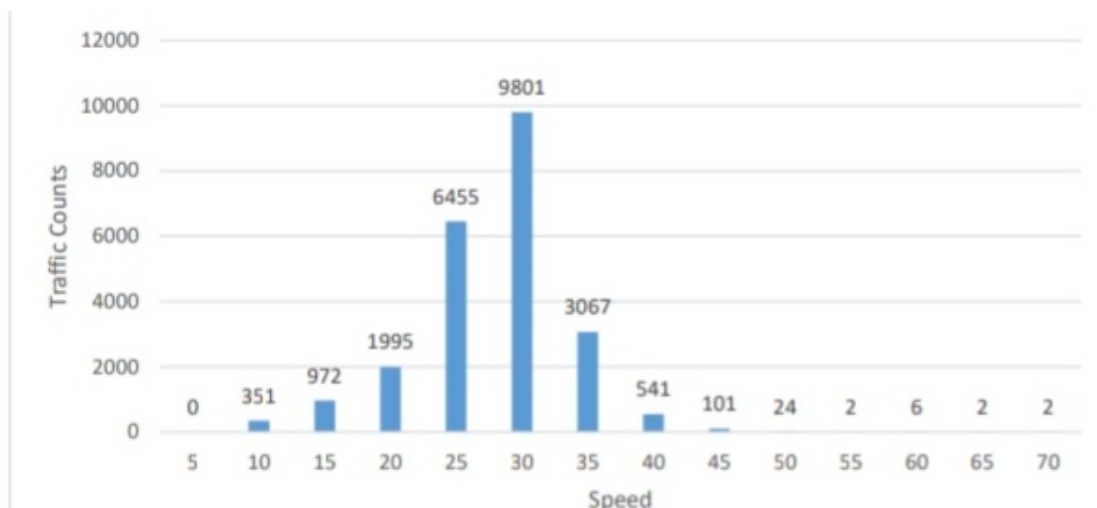


In June both the Roundhill Road and Hurworth Road sites show an increase in traffic volume over the levels in April and May. On Roundhill Road traffic volume was 33% down June on 2019 and Hurworth Road was 30% down on last year. If we compare the percentage of vehicles travelling in excess of the speed limit in June 2020 with those of 2019 we see the following: On Roundhill Road those at 30 MPH or above is up from 14% in June 2019 to 19% in June 2020 however on Hurworth Road the figure is down from 43% to 38% for the same period. The overall picture for Hurworth Road is still a cause for concern where the average speed of all vehicles is 32 MPH. The average for Roundhill Road is 27.7 MPH.

Full details can be found on the HPC web site: www.hurworthonline.com

If we now turn our attention to The Green:

The Green 10th-30



In the period covered 16.05% of vehicles exceeded 30 MPH - a total of 3745. The Average Speed was 27.8 MPH. Given that three complaints had been received it was decided to look deeper into the raw data. (Note there is a minor difference in the way that the Graphing tool labels the bars and how the spreadsheet labels the columns, essentially it is the same data)

Please refer to the HPC Web Site for the table of statistics.

Date Starting Hr:min 5 to < 35 MPH column and then look at the times at which the greatest numbers of offenders can be located, we find that: On 16 out of the worst 20 records i.e. the highest volume of speeders can be found between 16:00 and 18:00 (4:00 PM – 6:00 PM). Due to the number of cars parked in the area Darlington Constabulary SpeedWatch coordinators do not consider the site to be a suitable location for the SpeedWatch team to monitor because the device is inaccurate in such conditions. We will keep the monitor facing the same direction over July and then take another detailed look at the results. As usual the summary statistics along with this report will be forwarded to Darlington Police for their consideration.

Cllr Hedley stated that the Council has received several complaints from residents about a new bout of speeding. This was borne out by other Councillors confirming that more vehicles are abusing the speed limit, particularly through the Village Green main road.

Cllr Hedley responded to an appeal from the public, saying that the SpeedWatch team are not allowed to hold sessions on the stretch long the village green; the police have said that it is too dangerous due to the number of parked cars. Cllr Hedley did agree that SpeedWatch can start again this month. New members to join the team would be welcomed. Several other residents have been through the training program but have not come forward to participate recently.

302. Matters of Interest

Claim for Legal Costs status

The Chairman reported:-

- a. **Claim for Legal Costs** from Court Case. No payment has been made to the PC. Accordingly the Council, though our solicitor is increasing the severity of their efforts to recover the costs.
- b. **The defibrillator** has been installed at the Mustard Tree Café, and is currently being registered.

A resident, who operates a children's home has offered to hold a fund raiser to purchase and install another defibrillator to be located beside the Parish Council notice board near the Comet Inn. The Council confirmed that they will be delighted to accept this generous offer.

c. Neighbourhood Plan

The Council has now completed the Business Consultancy exercise, having contacted 14 local businesses within the Neighbourhood catchment.

A summary of the responses and comments has been send to Darlington Borough Council. This completes the Neighbourhood Plan preparation by HPC, and it is now in the hands of DBC. The latest Government legislation dictates that a referendum for any Neighbourhood Plan cannot be carried out until May 2021.hence, the project will go into abeyance.

303. Police Report

Cllr Amanda Oughton submitted the following Police Report:-

HURWORTH CRIME FIGURES JUNE 2020.

ASB:

01/06 – Reports of youths entering the grounds of Rockcliffe hall. Officers attended but no youths seen. Rockcliffe Hall has been added to the patrol rounds.

14/06 – Reports of people gathering on private land on Linden Drive and littering. Officer attended but people had gone.

24/06 – Several reports of youths gathering in the grounds of Hurworth Grange. Officers attended and moved some youths along.

30/06 – Report of off road bikes riding along Blind Lane. Officers could not attend this incident due to being on immediate jobs. No more reports of this were received.

WILDLIFE:

26/06 – Report of loose cows at Rockcliffe Hall. Farmer was contacted who attended to incident. No requirement for police to attend.

RTC:

01/06 – Report of a vehicle hitting another vehicle and a property on Avon Road. Officers and Fire attended. No injuries

THEFT FROM VEHICLE:

20/06 - Theft from vehicle reported at Westfield Drive. Officer has confirmed crime. Investigation has been carried out and no suspect identified.

THEFT:

30/06 - Report of theft of plants in pots from a property on Roundhill Road. Officer 'crimed' the incident as a theft and full investigation carried out. No suspect identified.

30/06 – Report of theft of milk off doorstep from property on Roundhill Road. Officer crimed incident as a theft. Investigation still ongoing.

304. Parish Walks

Cllr Forster reported that no parish walks had been arranged in June, but a program of walks starting July will shortly be published.

Cllr Ring-Viney said that we had completed several walks on his own, and these will be recorded.

Cllr Ring-Viney also said that the Council had been approached by a group who are concerned about the damage to walks in the area of Dalton and Croft. It was agreed that as this is not within Hurworth Parish, we will not participate. Details of their concerns have been passed to Steve Petch at DBC, who will contact his counterpart in North Yorkshire.

305. Accounts for Payment

The Schedule of Accounts for Payment for June 2020, having been distributed to all Councillors has been accepted as no Councillors has raised a query.

Hurworth Parish Council - Accounts Payable June 2020

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Zurich Insurance	103395	Insurance	288.73
HCA	103396	Planters flowers	50.40
Johnston Trees	103397	Treework	148.50
M Harrison	103398	Handyman	160.00
HCA Rent and copying	103399	Annual rent + N Plan + Newsletter	892.14
T Winnett	103400	HPC flag	80.34
M Harrison	103401	Handyman, Defib., pathways	95.00
A Iles	103402	Salary	479.60
P D Allan	103403	Salary	721.80
Inland Revenue	103404	PAYE	127.20
BT Comms	DD	Telecommunications	156.72
Total Expenses payable for June 2020			3200.43

Due to the resignation of Cllr Winnett, the Council requires a new signatory for the bank. An application will be made for Cllr Graham Wylie to become a signatory. **Action Clerk**

306. Financial report

The Financial report to 30th June 2020 has been circulated to all Councillors, was accepted by the Council.

BLUE=AllocatedBLUE=Allocated		Financial Report to 30th June 2020												Ringfenced funds £12,689		
		Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Total	Yer to Date	Budget 2020-21
Revenue																
Precept	59000													59000	59000	59000
Litter Picker & VAT refund			3189			2950							2950	9089	3189	9000
Rent, Interest & sundry				19	400			30		30			330	809	19	500
Grants, etc							2000							2000	0	2000
Allotment rent											620	540		1160	0	1180

307. Association Reports

1. HCA

Cllr Graham Wylie reported:-

The Community Centre is still in lockdown, and due to the extensive conditions and restrictions currently deployed, it is unlikely to re-open until 1st September.

However, the Grange Bar will open on Saturday 4th July, with shorter hours and probably only three days a week initially.

308. Any other business

- a. Cllr Peter Foster raised concerns that there are too few benches along Neasham Road between Strait Lane and Neasham village. He asked if another bench could be placed between Strait Lane, and Newbus Caravan Site. The Chairman will look into this.
- b. Cllr Lynn Wylie asked Cllr Foster if the dead trees can be removed from the Mannorfields.
- c. Cllr Ring-Viney asked the council to check the legality of spending charitable money on a bench and tree on the Green.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 3rd September 2020. It is expected that this meeting will be held using Zoom and will be in interactive mode.

The meeting was closed at 8:10pm.