UPTON BY CHESTER AND DISTRICT

 PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of Upton by Chester and District Parish Council held on

24th February 2020, 7.00pm, at Upton Pavilion, Upton, Chester.

Present: Cllr S Booth, Cllr M Carter, Cllr J Egerton-Parry, Cllr T Egerton-Parry,

Cllr J Evans, Cllr P Greenhalgh, Cllr J Houlbrook, Cllr G Hulmes, Cllr M Keenan,

Cllr N Poulton, Cllr F Samuel, Cllr J Schmidt and Cllr B Walker.

In attendance: 8 members of the public, Mark Brazil, CW&C Street Care and

Ms S Bull (Clerk and Proper Officer).

**17.20 OPEN FORUM.**

A resident attended the meeting to provide Members with information regarding flooding from surface water running off Chemistry Pits playing field onto the resident’s garden.

A representative of Upton businesses attended the meeting to inform the Parish Council about the decline in trade at the Weston Grove shopping area thought to be due in part to the impression made by a long-term empty unit and inadequate car parking arrangements.

Concern is increased by the imminent closure of the local bank. The reason given for this is low/reduced footfall.

The bank refers residents to the Post Office branches in Long Lane and Mill Lane for ongoing banking arrangements.

Upton Borough Councillor Houlbrook has written to the bank to make objections to the local branch closure on behalf of Upton residents; the response was read out at the meeting.

**18.20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bryan and Cllr Southward.

Cllr Bennion was absent as approved in Minute no:134.19

**Resolved: noted.**

**19.20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

Cllr Houlbrook and Cllr T Egerton-Parry declared a personal interest in item 22.20.

**20.20 COMMUNITY SAFETY.**

No members of the Community Safety team were present at the meeting; a crime report was not received.

**Resolved: The Clerk will send a note to PC Brown to say how much the Parish Council values the input from our local community safety team and to request a crime report.**

**21.20 FLOODING AT CHEMISTRY PITS.**

Following on from information received from residents, further information regarding flooding to a property adjacent to Chemistry Pits playing field was provided for Members consideration. Details of a proposal to install a drain to and re-direct surface water away from the area was also discussed.

**Resolved: The Parish Council will arrange for an independent examination of the ground to ensure there is no underlying reason for the excessive volume of water pooling on the surface.**

**CW&C Street Care will provide sandbags to be used by the resident**.

**Notices to** **alert field users of the potential risks to their safety will be posted on the entrance gates.**

**22.20 LLOYDS BANK CLOSURE.**

Following on from the information provided at item 17.20 a further discussion took place.

**Resolved: Cllr Houlbrook will act in her capacity as Borough Councillor by continuing to liaise with the bank and include the following points:**

* **The bank closure will add to the decay of local amenities.**
* **Older people and those with disabilities will be further disadvantaged.**
* **Information for the onward plans for the empty bank unit.**
* **Request details of when the footfall data was taken.**

**An agenda item to discuss improvements to Weston Grove shopping area will be brought to the next meeting on 6th April, where a petition against the bank closure will be presented.**

**23.20 STREET CARE.**

The Chairman welcomed a CW&C Council officer who attended the meeting to discuss Street Care issues that affect Upton-by-Chester.

Street Care Services includes cleansing and grounds maintenance, allotments, play and waste management. Recent procedure changes are moving towards cyclical maintenance rounds with the use of new electronic devices.

Issues raised by Councillors included:

* Untidy waste collections by contractor.
* Poor quality grass verge cutting.
* Over-zealous weed spraying and concerns regarding chemicals.

**Resolved: Matters raised relevant to the Highways department will be passed on to the appropriate officer.**

**24.20 MINUTES.**

**Resolved: The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20 January 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**Proposed by Cllr Carter, seconded by Cllr Poulton.**

**25.20. CLERK’S REPORT.**

It was reported that the Food Poverty Workshop held for interested parties in Upton, Hoole and Newton was well attended with several ideas to take forward for further discussion

**Resolved: The Clerk’s Report was received and noted.**

**26.20 COMMITTEE MINUTES.**

**Resolved: The Minutes of the following committees held since the last meeting were received:**

QE II Sub-Committee 27 January – meeting cancelled.

NDP Steering Group 27 January.

Communications Committee 3 February.

**Resolved: due to the level of complaints and issues regarding the distribution of the Upton residents’ complimentary zoo ticket via the Parish Council newsletter, this will now be handed back to the zoo.**

**27.20 BOROUGH COUNCILLORS’ REPORTS.**

**Resolved: The Borough Councillors’ Reports were received and noted.**

**28.20. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN.**

The Chairman of the NDP Steering Group gave a verbal update on progress with the plan which is expected to go to a referendum in May 2021.

**Resolved: noted.**

**29.20 FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS REPORTS**.

**Resolved: The payment of salaries, expenses and payment for goods and services rendered were approved. Receipts and balances were noted.**

Information on new accounting software ‘Scribe’ was previously circulated to councillors; this would provide the clerk with a tailor-made accounting system for recording receipts and payments, monthly bank reconciliation, budget setting and monitoring, year end calculation and document completion. It will also be possible to provide accurate and appropriate financial reports.

**Resolved: The Parish Council will subscribe to Scribe at an annual cost of £462.**

**Proposed by Cllr Houlbrook, seconded by Cllr T Egerton-Parry.**

**30.20 ANNUAL ASSEMBLY.**

**Resolved: This year’s Annual Assembly will be held on Monday 6th April at Upton Pavilion.**

**Dr Christian Dunn will be invited to attend to make a presentation on local wetlands.**

**This will be followed by the Chairman’s Report and an Open Forum.**

**31.20 PARTICIPATION IN VE DAY AND VJ DAY COMMEMORATION.**

**Resolved: The Parish Council will participate in the commemoration of VE Day in May and VJ Day in August.**

**The Clerk will contact Upton British Legion and Upton Churches Together to see if it is possible to co-ordinate a joint event.**

**Cllr Walker will investigate the possibility of an historical re-enactment event.**

**32.20. NEWSLETTER.**

Due to unforeseen delays the draft newsletter was not available for approval.

**Resolved: The draft newsletter will be circulated to all councillors prior to printing.**

**33.20 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.**

**Resolved: The date and time of the next meeting will be 6 April 2020 at 7.30pm, immediately following the Upton Annual Assembly.**