

LYMM PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council: Kerry Duffin
Telephone: 07741 877870
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Address: The Village Hall, Pepper Street
Lymm, WA13 0JB



Minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting of LYMM PARISH COUNCIL

**Held on Tuesday 20th March 2020 at 6pm
in the Council Chambers, Village Hall, Pepper Street, Lymm.**

Councillors:

- * Cllr G Hawley (Chairman)
- * Cllr B Barr (DeputyChairman) (arrived at 6.20pm)
- Cllr J Bamforth
- * Cllr K Buckley
- * Cllr A Carter
- * Cllr A Cooper
- * Cllr G Gowland
- * Cllr J Griffiths
- Cllr A Johnstone
- * Cllr I Marks
- Cllr A Fradgley
- * denotes attendance

Also in attendance: Kerry Duffin (Clerk)

1. Welcome, Introductions and Housekeeping

Cllr Geoff Hawley opened the meeting at 6.07pm. Councillors and Staff sat a minimum of 1 metre apart and washed hands on arriving and leaving the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Bamforth and Johnstone due to self-isolating.

3. Code of Conduct – Declaration of Interests

Members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or prejudicial interest that they may have had in any item of business on the agenda no later than when the item was reached.

4. Public Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

5. Scheme of Delegation

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the scheme of delegation to enable council to operate during special circumstances.

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6. Emergency Contingency Policy and Plan

Council will consider the introduction of a policy and plan to cover emergencies such as those raised with the current Coronavirus outbreak and other future situations at a future time.

7. Pandemic Contingency Policy and Plan

It was **RESOLVED** to Council to adopt and introduce the policy and plan to cover the current Coronavirus outbreak and other future situations. The Policy was implemented a range of actions were **RESOLVED** as approved below.

7.1. The Emergency Team consists of Councillors:

Gowland
Marks
Cooper
Hawley
Buckley
Griffiths
Barr

It was agreed that a minimum of 6 Councillors would allow for some Councillors to become ill, leaving a sufficient number of Councillors to be able to make decisions.

A Whatsapp group will be set up by the Clerk to inform the Emergency Team when an email has been sent that requires attention. No decisions will be made on the app. Councillors will reply to the Clerk **ONLY** when giving their decisions by email so other voters are not influenced.

7.2. Briefing Document

A briefing document was shared including the latest update from NALC.

Council Meetings are suspended with immediate effect, awaiting The Coronavirus Bill to be passed and virtual meetings to be legalised. Until then, emergency decisions will be taken by the Emergency Team.

NALC strongly encourages councillors and staff to follow government guidance on social distancing and self-isolation. This is particularly important if anyone is in an at-risk group as identified by the guidance. NALC encourages local councils to consider if they need to hold scheduled meetings at all. The health and safety of councillors, staff and the public should be the primary concern. If local councils do follow government guidance on social distancing and social isolation and so they do not hold scheduled meetings, including annual council meetings, NALC's opinion is that the likelihood of a successful legal challenge is low.

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NALC is expecting government guidance on holding meetings remotely early next week, and will also produce further guidance next week. In the meantime, if local councils decide to not hold meetings and take decisions by email or other remote methods NALC feels it's likely that afterwards if there were a challenge that the courts will accept that exceptional times called for exceptional measures. In the absence of government guidance, NALC suggests only taking decisions remotely for truly urgent issues. In this case, local councils should evidence their decision making as best they can, for example by asking councillors to confirm their votes by email to the clerk and for the clerk to keep as a record of the decision.

7.3. Community Support

It was **RESOLVED** that Lymm Parish Council will support the 'Leave No One Behind in Lymm' community initiative by:

- 7.3.1. Paying an initial £100 to the Round Table to cover printing and set up costs of the scheme
- 7.3.2. Approving payment of another £400 when needed for materials and supplies.
- 7.3.3. Parish Council admin and hall team to use their capacity to cover the phone lines from Monday to Friday until such time as the scheme comes to an end.

Cllr Carter left the meeting at 6.45pm

7.4. Library Office and Home Working

The library will close from 5pm on Friday March 20th 2020.

7.5. Village Hall

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 7.5.1. The village hall will close with immediate effect. All but 2 regular hirers had already cancelled their booking by the start of the meeting. Clerk to put a notice at the entrance to the hall. The hall will only reopen when it has been announced that it is safe to do so or at such a time the the hall needs to be opened as part of the current crisis.
- 7.5.2. Hirers will not be charged a cancellation fee and any fees paid in advance will be returned in full.
- 7.5.3. The cleaners will be continued to be paid and their time to be used for deep cleaning until such time as the hall reopens as normal.

7.6. Staff

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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- 7.6.1. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk will work from home and will receive a weekly allowance of £4 up to 5th April 2020 and £6 from 6th April 2020 for a contribution towards utilities at home.
- 7.6.2. The Village Hall Admin Assistant and the two Village Hall Keyholders will use their capacity to cover the NOLB in Lymm phone service.
- 7.6.3. The Green Book will apply to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.
- 7.6.4. Normal Legislation applies to all other staff.
- 7.6.5. The Clerk will write to all staff updating them on the current situation and that regular communication will follow as the situation changes.
- 7.6.6. A contingency plan to cover the Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Village Hall Admin Assistant and Village Hall Keyholders and Environment Tea (Manager and 2 Wardens) will be arranged between the existing team should the need arise.
- 7.6.7. Staff to remain on full pay even in the event of staff not being able to work.

Cllr Buckley left the meeting at 6.55pm

8. Allotments

It was **RESOLVED** that, following National Allotment Society advice, allotments will stay open during the pandemic as long as social distancing and self-isolating rules are still applied. Allotment inspections will resume once the current pandemic has passed.

9. Finance

Authorised Councillors will be confirmed and the Clerk will ensure they have the tools to authorise payments. In order, the Councillors who will authorise payments are:

Cllr Buckley
Cllr Barr
Cllr Marks

It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk will have two months salaries on the banking system as future dated payments at all times.

Many bills are on direct debit and the invoices to be paid are up to date.

The AGAR deadline has been extended to September 30th 2020. The Clerk has already contacted the Internal Auditor to confirm dates for the internal audit.

10. Volunteer Group in Lymm

Staff to contribute their hours to supporting this scheme. Clerk to set up a system and liaise with the volunteer coordinators.

11. The Annual Parish Meeting

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The meeting should take place between March 1st and June 1st. The Council will follow imminent legislation and then decide the date of the meeting. The Council will then decide on the format of the meeting to make it more engaging, inclusive and responsive to the current pandemic but only when it is safe to do so.

12. Clerks tasks

Tasks to be completed include:

- a. Website
- b. AGAR
- c. HR updates including recruitment pack for new Environment Warden
- d. Finance – setup systems for 2020-21
- e. Prepare for Annual Meeting – Standing orders, Financial Regs etc
- f. Operation London Bridge
- g. Manage staff and situation
- h. Update policies including Health and Safety, Data Protection, CCTV

The meeting closed at 7.10pm