

THE BOOKHAMS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Company Limited by Guarantee - Number 10053863

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on

Monday 4th May 2020 at 7.30 pm

Via Conference Call

Present: Peter Seaward (chair), Michael Agius, Nick Forrer, Chris Pullan, Andrew Freeman, Margaret Lawson, Geoff Tranter, Les Huett, Richard Davey, Carolyn Elson, John Howarth, Frances Fancourt, Dan Coffin, Julia Dickinson, Andrew Matthews, Paul Kennedy,

Invited Councillors: Cllr. Clare Curran, Cllr. Nancy Goodacre, Cllr. Elizabeth Daly, Cllr. Roger Adams, Cllr. Richard Moyse,

Apologies: David Cox OBE, Cllr. Metin Huseyin, Cllr Simon Edge, Keith Francis, John Allen, Martin Hollins, Diane Poole, Michelle Smith, David Smith, Arthur Field, Marian Williams.

1 Minutes

1.1 Subject to a few amendments, the Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record.

2 **Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda.

3 Covid-19

3.1 Surrey County Council

3.1.1 **Covid Support:** Clare Curran reported that SCC continues to focus on supporting the vulnerable. This is in partnership with a range of partners and agencies, with a hub at the Guildford Spectrum. There is a very significant emphasis on sourcing and supplying Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to all professionals who need it. SCC is also working with PHE to extend the availability and reach of testing.

3.1.2 **Community Recycling Centres:** After the announcement from Government this week, SCC is planning the safe opening of the Community Recycling Centres, including Leatherhead, probably from next week.

3.1.3 **Highways:** After a short pause, Surrey Highways has also this week been able to resume work on essential safety projects - one of the first ones to be completed was the resurfacing of the junction of East Street and Lower Road and also the square-about. The verge cutting programme and routine gulley cleansing have also resumed.

3.1.4 **Countryside Car Parks:** Clare also confirmed that the country car parks would remain closed. It was noted that displacement parking had been an issue in some areas.

3.2 Mole Valley District Council

- 3.2.1 **Refuse Collection:** Kerbside collections are coping well at increased volumes for black bins and recycling bins. Green waste collection also continuing. Bulk cardboard collections from car parks are also being processed.
- 3.2.2 **Housing & Benefits:** There has been a huge increase in claims and requests for general advice and staff transferred in to help. Significant changes to benefit schemes have been implemented and the Council is now dealing with housing benefit subsidy claims.
- 3.2.3 **Economic Development:** Mole Valley has made massive efforts to reach businesses from a standing start. As at the end of April, grants had been provided for 76% (around £14 million) of those entitled to claim. Mole Valley officers are in the process of making personal telephone contact with those who have not yet claimed. Digital Skills training continuing via Zoom.
- 3.2.4 **Community Helpline:** As at 28th April, MVDC had handled over 100 calls referred through SCC, and residents directed to appropriate community organisations that can help.
- 3.2.5 **Vulnerable Residents:** Co-ordination of contact has been mainly by telephone, but some visits have been made where electronic contact has not been possible. Over 2,000 residents have been contacted and help provided where necessary. A round of second calls will begin this week. Contact has also been made with shielded residents, Fairfield Centre members, Community Transport customers, and households in temporary and emergency accommodation.
- 3.2.6 **Emergency Fund Distribution:** The Council has, so far, awarded 3 grants covering the Bookham area - one to the Bookham Meeting Place, Community Coronavirus Care and the Mid Surrey Community Fridge.

3.3 **Mole Valley Chamber**

- 3.3.1 The Chamber of Commerce – now Mole Valley Chamber – will be running an online Q&A session on Wednesday 20th May, starting at 8am and running for about an hour. The session will be about the support available to businesses in the current situation. A Panel, including a representative from Mole Valley District Council, will answer questions posted on the Chamber Facebook Group before 5pm on Friday 15th May.
- 3.3.2 Details, including how to take part, are on the Chamber web site under “Events.”
- 3.3.3 Businesses can now join the Chamber free of charge – since this initiative was started membership has grown by just under 20%, which means more businesses are networking with each other!
- 3.4 **Headley Court:** Keith Francis reported that NHS Headley Court hospital is opening for patients on Monday, 4th May 2020.

4 **Correspondence**

- 4.1 **Covid-19:** There had been several inquiries regarding where to get help. These had been redirected to the appropriate bodies as required.

- 4.2 **Post Covid-19:** There had been some emails regarding what could be done post Covid-19. It was suggested that posters saying Thank You to Local Traders and Essential Workers could be displayed on the notice boards. This was agreed.

5 Group Updates

5.1 Management Group

- 5.1.1 **Annual General Meeting:** John Howarth reported that the latest date the BRA can hold an AGM is 10th October 2020, i.e. no later than fifteen months from the last AGM that was held on 10th July 2019. Les Huett reported that he has booked the Old Barn Hall for the evening of Thursday 17th September 2020 starting at 8.00pm, and, as a contingency, the 22nd October.

5.2 Planning Group

- 5.2.1 **Planning:** Development Management arrangements are continuing and applications being processed. The first virtual meeting was held with public participation on 29th April. Two letters of representation were sent.

- 5.2.2 **Local Plan:** There were responses from 3,708 residents and other bodies (please note, letters, etc. signed by more than one person represent one respondent). By way of comparison the 2017 Issues and Options consultation saw 519 detailed representations. Over half of the responses to the Draft Local Plan consultation were made online.

- 5.2.3 The Council is now analysing these responses prior to the next consultation phase. There were several suggestions as to how the next phase could be improved, e.g. a longer consultation period given that the most recent one was interrupted by Covid-19; better communications with SCC,/improvements

- 5.2.4 **PIC and CIL Funds:** It was noted that PIC is no longer available to SCC so CIL, which is collected by MVDC, is now increasingly important to them. The issue is that no spend is possible until an infrastructure delivery plan is in place, which in turn is dependent on the Local Plan being agreed.

5.3 Environment Group

- 5.3.1 **Litter Pick:** The monthly litter pick is temporarily suspended although individuals are reported to be litter picking whilst out for their daily exercise. Clare Curran reported that she has seen a number of discarded disposable gloves which should be disposed of in a hygienic way.

- 5.3.2 **Verges and Wildlife:** It was reported that several complaints had been received by SCC that verges containing wildflowers had been mown. Clare Curran spoke of a scheme whereby certain areas could be protected which would entail the topsoil removed and wildflowers planted. There would be no maintenance required thereafter although there would be an initial cost of around £2,000 per site. Alternatives could be a) to remove certain areas from the maintenance programme, although SCC would need to be advised as to which areas to exclude, or, b) the Blue Heart Scheme which promotes the rewilding of gardens, parks, road verges and school grounds, and marked with a blue heart symbol, made out of recycled materials, is staked in the ground over the area being rewilded to indicate that rewilding is in process. **Action: Peter Seward and Frances Fancourt to discuss options.**

5.3.3 **Verges:** Frances Fancourt reported that the Virginia Creeper at the former Rusts site had been cut back but the project is not yet complete.

5.4 **Community Group**

5.4.1 **Rail Replacement Bus Service:** There is an indefinite rail replacement service in place between Effingham and Leatherhead. It is not known when services will return to normal.

5.5 **Communications & Membership Group**

5.5.1 **Communications:** Web site traffic was slightly down during April, but interestingly there are increasing number of new visitors to the site. Les Huett reported that he has been updating the site regularly with village content along with information from other organisations such as MVDC and community support groups. These have also been posted to the BRAs' Facebook page and to I Live In Bookham, as appropriate.

5.5.2 No email campaigns have been run during April. There are just over 700 subscribers to the e-mail service.

5.5.3 **Look Local** been published online in April; there was no print edition. The BRA's contribution was the AGM Calling Notice which is now cancelled. The Look Local team are furloughed so further editions are unlikely at moment.
(<https://www.looklocalmagazine.co.uk/>)

5.5.4 **Membership:** Carolyn Elson said that an email will be sent out this week to update Road Stewards on the Newsletter and subs collection. There has been a delay due to some database maintenance.

5.6 **Business Group** - Nil to report.

6 **Any Other Business**

6.1 **ATM:** Clare Curran said she had been contacted by an organisation that provide ATM machines in villages without one. Clare to send details to Peter Seaward.

6.2 **Disabled Access** – Bookham Station: Andrew Matthews had been able to identify some broad costings although these were very high, e.g. £285k plus AVT for a lift (plus groundworks) or £1.8m for a ramp. The only realistic option in the short term would be to improve the access by investing in a footpath, which could cost circa £8k. A meeting with the National Trust to be arranged.

6.3 **Parking Restrictions – Bookham Station:** Clare Curran reported that the temporary yellow lines would now be made permanent.

7 **Next BRA Meeting:** Monday 1st June 2020 at 7:30 pm.