

MINUTES of the Extra Ordinary Lydiard Millicent Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd September 2020 at 7.00pm. Due to COVID 19 restrictions this meeting was held remotely.

PRESENT : Cllrs Dean Cobb (acting chairman), Andre Kayani,
Richard Selwood, Mike Sharp, Phil Shepherd.
Mrs Deborah Bourne (clerk)

Also Present : Three members of the public

Public Question Time

Members of the public asked questions about the closure of the play area, with no communications; and raised concerns about communication with residents generally. They were particularly concerned that the clerk was able to unilaterally take such a decision.

042/20 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Jim Stubbs, who was away and Cllr Vernon Montgomery who was called to work urgently.

043/20 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made by members in relation to any items due to be discussed on this agenda.

044/20 **Closure of the Play Area at the Recreation Field**

This meeting was called to consider actions that were needed to be taken to re-open Lydiard Millicent play area. A written report was circulated containing the recommendations listed below.

The play area was temporarily closed on Monday 14th September 2020 under the clerk's delegated authority¹ because of changes announced by the Government due to creeping higher levels of Coronavirus (COVID 19) in recent weeks.

The following recommendations were detailed in a report to aid members, and so enable the play area to be re-opened safely.

- ✓ Appropriate, dedicated signage setting out regulations;
- ✓ A cleaning regime is put in place;
- ✓ Adaptions are made to equipment to conform with new regulations;
- ✓ Random inspections are arranged to monitor compliance within the play area, and around the whole site. Inspections must be formally recorded; a rota of staff and councillors would make the task less onerous.
- ✓ Consideration should be given to what happens in the future if, or when, the current situation changes.

Current Government guidelines were discussed, and the debate included:

- Whether clerk was able to make such a decision
- Should the play area be re-opened?

¹ Local Government Act 1972 s 101

- Was additional signage needed, and what was appropriate
- Should the Council be supplying hand sanitizer for the play area?
- Are there any cleaning regimes needed, either as general maintenance, or enhanced in consideration of the current COVID 19 pandemic?
- What should the signage be – simple and to the point, including pictograms or wordier signs giving more explanation.

The chairman first asked if members wished the play area open, or to arrange some alternative procedure. It was unanimously:

RESOLVED to re-open the Play Area with appropriate signage.

Debate continued on signage:

- should more signs be added or have no signs at the site to allow visitors to take responsibility for themselves?
- Possibility of signs needing to be changed frequently in the current situation
- Where should signs be placed – at the entrance to the Recreation Field or at the play area gate?
- Should a “Use at own Risk” type sign be erected?
- Is there a need to put signs on all Council areas
- Are there too many signs within small villages and open countryside now

RESOLVED to erect signage at the entrance to the Recreation Field, on the Play Area fence and alongside the play equipment in The Mews, all current signs at play area to be removed.

Further RESOLVED wording would be :

Please allow Everyone to Enjoy this facility
Keep to the current COVID 19 Government Guidelines

The clerk is instructed to contact the sign makers for an appropriate sign. A proof must be sent to all members for their written approval before an order can be placed.

It was agreed that no further intervention was needed. The Handyman would be responsible for weekly general inspections. No decision was made as to how the play area will be managed in the future.

044a/20 **Football and Cricket:** Members were concerned about the wider use of the Recreation Field.

RESOLVED that sports clubs be written to requesting that changing rooms are not used at present and that the building is only opened for use of the toilets. It was further RESOLVED to instruct the clerk to request Risk

Assessments from each club to demonstrate how they will manage the new social distancing regulations.

045/20 **Location of October Ordinary Council Meeting**

The next ordinary meeting of Lydiard Millicent Parish Council is due to take place on Thursday 1st October 2020.

During these current circumstances Legislation has temporarily been amended until May 2021, allowing Local Councils to hold meetings virtually rather than physically. Advice from the National Association of Local Councils has been received reinforcing the recommendation to hold virtual meetings.

RESOLVED to hold the next two ordinary meetings (1st October and 5th November) remotely, reassessing the situation for the December meeting.

046/20 **Policy Direction of the Council – A way to move forward**

The chairman addressed councillors and the clerk. He has been concerned about the morale within the Council recently and asked that everyone be more respectful towards each other; this included members with each other and with the clerk and the clerk with members. He also asked that members engage more fully with residents, including those not represented on social media.

047/20 **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held virtually on Thursday 1st October 2020 at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

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Chairman