



NEIL HITCH
Town Clerk

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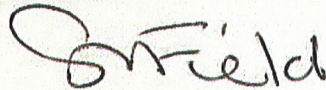
*The Town Hall
Heath Road
Petersfield
Hampshire
GU31 4EA*

3rd July 2020

Dear Councillor,

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the Petersfield Town Council to be held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Petersfield, on **Friday 10th July 2020 at 10.00am** and via Zoom teleconference/video-conference facility as permitted by UK Government legislation during the current Covid-19 pandemic.

Yours sincerely,

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Neil Hitch
Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. Town Mayor's comments.
2. To receive and record apologies for absence.
3. To consider the granting of a dispensation under Section 33 of the Localism Act (2011) to enable members to participate in, and vote on, an item of business on the agenda where they would otherwise have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and to confirm how long this dispensation may have effect.
4. To receive and record Declarations of Interest. Councillors are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, members may not participate in any discussion of, or vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which they have a pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State under the Localism Act 2011. Councillors must withdraw from the Chamber when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.



5. To approve as a correct record and authorise the signing of the minutes of the meeting of the Petersfield Town Council held on 19th March 2020 (*previously distributed*).
6. Public Representation - Councillors to receive representation (including agenda items) from members of the public provided they (public) have given due notice of their intention to the Town Clerk no later than 5.00 pm on the day before the meeting. The maximum time limit allowed per person is 3 minutes although this may be reduced if a large number of people express their wish to address councillors.
7. To receive County Councillor's Reports for April, May, June and July 2020 (*attached*).
8. To receive District Councillor's Report (*to follow*).
9. To receive Town Clerk's report (*attached*).
10. To consider a Motion submitted by Cllr J. Matthews under Standing Order 4:
"That Council;
- welcomes the temporary Covid-19 'Pop Up' town centre scheme being implemented by Hampshire County Council & East Hampshire District Council and commends both authorities and their officers for the speed at which this scheme has been designed and implemented during a challenging period for all citizens and organisations in the community.
- recognises that the economic recovery of the town centre, protection of residents from the ongoing transmission of the Covid-19 virus and longer term economic viability of the town centre can only be achieved through the implementation of such innovative ideas and collaborative working between all local authorities.
- will continue to listen to the views of residents and businesses and provide feedback on the "Pop Up" town centre scheme to Hampshire County Council & East Hampshire District Council."
11. To Receive and note the Annual Internal Auditor's Report for the year ending 31st March 2020 (*attached*).
12. To receive and approve the Annual Governance Statement for the year ending 31st March 2020 (*attached*).
13. To receive and approve the Accounting Statement within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2020 (*attached*).
14. To ratify and approve the decisions made under the Emergency Procedures which were put in place at the Council meeting on 19th March 2020 due to the Covid-19 outbreak (*attached*).
15. To receive and consider the recommendations from the Grants Panel in respect of the first tranche of Community Grants for 2020/2021 (*attached*).



16. To receive and note a report from the Appeals Panel in respect of a Grounds complaint (*to follow*).

17. To receive and approve the Schedule of Payments for March, April and May 2020 (*to follow*).

CONFIDENTIAL

18. To consider any staff or other confidential matters

~ End ~



COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT TO ALL PARISH COUNCILS IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS

1 APRIL 2020

Hampshire response to Coronavirus pandemic

Firstly, I hope you and your families are keeping well during this challenging time. I thought it would be helpful to summarise a few of the key actions which Hampshire County Council has taken over the last month.

Supporting vulnerable residents

The County Council has launched its new Coronavirus Hampshire Helpline – Hantshelp4vulnerable - for frail or vulnerable residents who do not have existing support networks and require urgent assistance. Depending on need, residents may be directed to one of eleven district-based Local Response Centres, or to the County Council's specialist support team. The helpline can be contacted on **0333 370 4000** and is available seven days a week, from 9am-5pm. More information is set out on the [helping Hampshire residents most in need webpage](#).

Education settings to continue over Easter holidays Hampshire schools, early years' education settings, nurseries and childminders will continue to look after vulnerable children and children of key workers throughout the school Easter holidays (6 to 17 April 2020). This is in response to the Department for Education's request to keep the provision in place over the holiday fortnight, including bank holidays.

Supporting Hampshire's economy

The County Council's Economic Development team is working with partners to engage with and [support Hampshire businesses](#) as restrictions on travel and movement affect them. Details of the various forms of national support available for businesses in response to the Covid-19, including funding support schemes for businesses, can be accessed on the [Business Hampshire webpage](#).

Closure of HWRCs (tips)

In line with government guidance, all Hampshire's HWRCs have been closed. There is some guidance available on handling waste during this period (see link below). The key message is to a) not generate waste if you can possibly avoid it and b) store any waste somewhere safe, where it will not catch fire.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/27032020>

More information is available on the Hampshire County Council webpages on coronavirus (including links to press releases) at this link:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/coronavirus>

Finally...

All the Council Officers have been under enormous pressure over the last month due to the restrictions and the number of staff self-isolating. They have still managed to respond with impressive haste. I am sure you will agree that they deserve huge credit and our thanks.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT TO ALL PARISH COUNCILS IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS

1 MAY 2020

1. Coronavirus Updates

HCC has now received two tranches of emergency funding from the Government to cope with the Coronavirus pandemic: £24.3m and £29.6m. This should help to plug the additional funding gap caused by extra care costs and loss of revenue during the lockdown. The total overall impact of the crisis on County finances will be calculated in due course.

So far 6,515 calls have been received at the helpline HantsHelp4Vulnerable (0333 370 4000) with 3,650 calls referred to Local Response Centres. 914,114 items of PPE have been delivered to local partners.

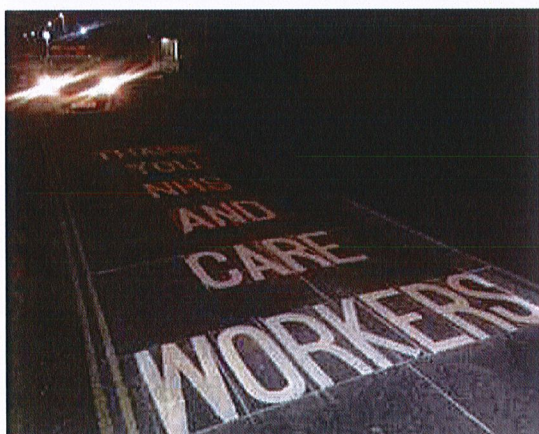
On 28 April the Local Government Secretary asked councils to plan for the organised reopening of their Household Waste and Recycling Centres. It is understood that updated guidance will be published shortly to support local government to open sites safely during the coronavirus pandemic. HCC is working closely with our partner Veolia to introduce social distancing measures and we are targeting the week commencing 11 May for reopening. Visitor access and numbers will be controlled and inevitably this will lead to queues.

Hampshire Highways teams are increasing the amount of routine highway maintenance carried out as the supply-chains reopen at national and local level. Together, with new processes and procedures in place to protect the workforce and residents, the teams will be taking advantage of the quieter roads to carry out more routine maintenance and repairs. During this time, the teams will also be looking at a small number of suitable sites for a temporary reallocation of road space in favour of cyclists and pedestrians on a strictly experimental basis.

Last month, the County Council confirmed its continued support for Hampshire's bus operators during this time by maintaining normal bus subsidy, concessionary fares, and home to school transport payments (where students use bus services)

even where services were operating below normal levels. This approach seeks to offer at least some protection to the income of local bus operators and helps them to continue paying their staff and suppliers with the aim of ensuring that when passengers begin to return, the bus operators are in a strong enough position to provide a good level of service to Hampshire's residents. The Government have also committed funding to the bus sector to compensate for reduced fare income. The County Council also agreed to remove the restriction on older persons bus pass users travelling before 9:30, to support access to priority shopping provision and other journeys. We have also maintained payments to Community Transport Operators with vehicles sometimes now being used to make deliveries or in support of ambulance services for patient transport.

Hampshire Highways have worked overnight to create road lining messages thanking NHS and Care workers on roads outside hospitals and care homes all over Hampshire. Weather permitting, they hope to complete several more ready for the next Clap for Our Carers event.



2. Early cutting of verges

Some Parishes are aware that Hampshire Highways are experimenting this year with an early cut of the verges. This has led to concerns about the loss of bluebells and wild garlic, especially in Hawkley, Froxfield, Colemore and Priors Dean. It remains to be seen whether the early cut will have the desired effect which is to facilitate summer wildflower growth.

I welcome all feedback and I will be passing on feedback as soon as the coronavirus crisis is over. I will also be scrutinising the issue of verge management at the Environment, Transport and Economy Select Committee later in the year.

The Highways Team have shared this response with me, which I hope is helpful in clarifying the thinking behind the early cut:

“Hampshire County Council has a duty of care to ensure that the grass verges adjacent to the road network are cut to maintain visibility and, in many rural locations, to allow pedestrians to step off the road to allow vehicles to pass by safely. With around 5,500 miles of road and 2,000 miles of roadside verges to look after managing the grass cutting for the network to achieve this safety requirement has to be balanced with the desire to promote biodiversity and deliver value for money.

During the course of the last financial year concerns were raised by residents and local groups in Hampshire in light of a growing wave of public interest over the protection of wildflowers and bees. These focussed on the timings of our grass cutting programme and the potential damage being done to roadside flora and fauna. In order to determine how our operations could be changed to better manage this, we liaised with the British conservation charity Plantlife in September last year to discuss their new management guidelines for roadside verges. This has led to a number of changes being made to the timings of the work we carry out. As per Plantlife’s guidance we have adjusted our cutting season this year to keep the main summer months of July and August clear of cutting (except for junctions and bends where forward visibility will continue to be maintained). Undoubtedly not cutting the grass at all would make a valuable saving but aside from the road safety implications of this, Plantlife’s guidance is that no cutting is worse than cutting at the wrong time as this changes the composition of the verges and all the species we wish to protect begin to decline.

Whilst at this time of the year grass in some areas has only minimal growth, in others it is far greater and with the whole of the county to cover in 3 months there will inevitably be some areas that are cut earlier than they ideally need and some that are cut later. However, this early cut is just the first 1 meter adjacent to the carriageway, leaving the remaining areas free from cutting. During the summer months the primary aim switches to cutting for safety purposes only to maintain safety with visibility at junctions and bends. This leaves the wildflowers to be able to thrive and provide food for the pollinators. At the end of the season, from mid-September onwards the primary aim changes again with cutting back the full width of the remaining areas of verge to inhibit the growth of trees, brambles and gorse etc which otherwise can quickly create an overhead canopy stealing light from plants below and reducing biodiversity.

We are still in liaison with Plantlife regarding our current regime and will be reviewing our revised programme with them at the end of the season to see if further adjustment can be made.”

I look forward to discussing this issue with you further and to reporting back on HCC deliberations over the pros and cons of the experimental early verge cut.

3. Launch of New South Downs website and PMP

The new South Downs website has gone live at www.southdowns.gov.uk

The website has been refreshed following extensive user consultation. We found that people wanted two separate things from the site. Some wanted practical and easy-to-find information about our planning service or committee meetings, while others wanted to be inspired and supported to learn about and explore the National Park. When viewing the new-look website, you will notice a number of major changes. These include:

- Drop-down menus – this will allow users to more easily find the information they are looking for by hovering over the menu, without the need to constantly click-through;
- Dual navigation – this helps the website speak to a range of different types of users who are all looking for their own information;
- Tables, forms and site search – all of these have been smartened up to help improve the overall user experience of the website;
- Accordions – several pages make use of the new accordion function. This is especially useful for pages that need to contain quite a lot of information, such as FAQs;
- Discovery Map – we also have a new Discovery Map we will be looking to add and expand in due course with a view of using it to support more of our partners, many of whom face a difficult recovery post-COVID 19

The new 5-year SDNPA Partnership Management Plan has also been published. It has a strong focus on green infrastructure, climate change and nature recovery. A new timely “Health & Wellbeing Outcome” with new priority actions has been created. The plan also has communities running through the heart of it. I invite you to take a look at this link: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/partnership-management-plan/>

As we (hopefully) approach the end of the lockdown this month, I hope you all stay safe and well and keep your spirits up insofar as possible. And I look forward to seeing you all at your next non-virtual meetings.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT TO ALL PARISH COUNCILS IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS

1 JUNE 2020

1. Schools update

As you will be aware, Hampshire schools have remained open for vulnerable children and the children of keyworkers throughout the Covid-19 crisis. We are very grateful to the teachers and support staff for all that they have done. Each day in April and May there were around 7,000 pupils attending Hampshire schools.

As of today, schools are now welcoming more children back. All schools were sent detailed guidance by the Department for Education; Headteachers and their staff have analysed that advice and undertaken careful planning to make sure they can open safely. HCC's School Improvement Team has been actively supporting all Headteachers in the task of preparing risk assessments. HCC officers have also drawn together a series of FAQs and checklists to help Headteachers think through the practicalities of opening and these have been well received.

Precise arrangements vary from school to school but the phased return will hopefully see the majority of children from Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 back at school in smaller class sizes this month. The Government has previously indicated that it will only be *recommending* to parents that they send their children back to schools when they partially re-open. There will be no compulsion for parents to do so and therefore the Government has indicated that parents will not be fined if they choose not to send their children back.

2. Opening hours of HWRCs extended

The HWRCs did reopen in the week of 11 May 2020 as envisaged in my last report. Since the HWRCs reopened, the queues have unfortunately impacted on local people trying to get to work as well as having a detrimental impact on the ability of businesses nearby to get back up and running. Social distancing means that less people are allowed on site at any one time, so the queues are likely to be around for a while.

I am very conscious that there is a large backlog of waste which needs to be deposited, since many people have been clearing out attics and undertaking DIY whilst under lockdown.

In response to this unprecedented demand, since Saturday 23 May, I am pleased to report that HWRCs have been open until 6pm every day so the hours are now 10.00 – 18.00.

HCC is urging everyone to follow traffic management directions and queue responsibly. In particular the “Do not queue beyond this point” signs are important to prevent people waiting but not getting in, which is obviously a frustrating thing to happen. I would also urge people to consider if they really do need to take their waste to an HWRC at this time. If the waste can be safely stored for another month or so, this would help to ease the current congestion problems.

3. Country Parks car parks have reopened

To enable residents to enjoy the countryside and look after their mental and physical health, Hampshire’s Country Park car parks are open to visitors. All country parks (excluding Staunton Farm and Manor Farm attractions) are operating normal opening hours and normal parking rates. Toilets are open but **cafes, shops, visitor centres and play areas remain closed** until further notice and in line with current government guidance. We are hopeful that it will be possible to reopen the cafes and shops in July.

4. Priority Cutting List

Parish Councils will (I believe) have been contacted by the Countryside Service about arrangements for cutting the Priority routes this year.

The increased popularity of Rights of Way during the pandemic means that our network is busier than ever and needs good maintenance, particularly as we are now moving into the heavy seasonal growth period. Unfortunately, the recommissioning of the cutting contract has been affected by Covid-19, with contractors unable to start work until mid/late June. Consequently, the Countryside Service has decided to deliver the work directly, for this season only, rather than face the further delays and impacts associated with the re-procurement process. We are now mobilising our teams and will be working closely with Parish

and Town Councils to ensure that the network of paths is open to our communities.

On this issue, I wanted to mention one more thing. Grants are currently available from the HCC Rural Communities Fund to Parishes who wish to purchase equipment and take charge of their priority routes with teams of local volunteers.

I hope some Parishes will take advantage of this opportunity. In many years, as we know all too well, one annual cut to priority routes is simply not enough. We have had little rain so far this Summer so growth has not been too severe but next year could be different. It would be great to have more resilience in the community to keep key routes open in years where we face a lot of overgrowth. We all know how important these routes are to the community.

5. South Downs sets up Recovery Fund

A COVID-19 Recovery Fund of £375,000 has been approved by the South Downs National Park Authority to help support local communities and step up the National Park's role as a 'natural health service'. Members of the National Park Authority voted to approve the release of funds at an Authority meeting.

The fund, from earmarked reserves, will be used to help support projects across the National Park as organisations and businesses make steps to move into the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also help to maximise opportunities for people to connect with the National Park and its many health and wellbeing benefits.

The funding has been split into five priority themes: landscape and biodiversity, cultural heritage, sustainable access, connecting people and communities, and economy and tourism, with an additional, smaller amount going towards engaging more people with the National Park during this unprecedented time.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT
TO
ALL PARISH COUNCILS
IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS**

1 JULY 2020

1. HWRCs

Early in June it became necessary to implement a booking system at HWRCs due to problems with queueing. The queues were disrupting local businesses at a time when many were trying to reopen. This was an unacceptable situation.

The booking system successfully reduced the queues but has had teething problems. I am aware that many residents have been frustrated that they cannot always book when they want to, with slots only released 48 hours in advance. I have been passing on all feedback I have received, which has been taken on board.

I am pleased to report that HCC is poised to increase the number of slots each day to 5,000 in total across Hampshire's network of 24 sites. This will be done by allowing more people to book in during each half hour slot. We are also increasing advance booking slot availability to allow people to book up to seven days in advance. These changes take effect next week.

We would continue to urge people to think about how they might waste less such as by composting food and garden waste, or upcycling or donating unwanted items.

Bookings for HWRCs can be made online at:

www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/recyclingcentres/book-appointment

2. Children's social care

I wanted to make Parishes aware of recent pressures on children's social care services which have the potential to impact communities, schools and the Council.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, Children's Services has continued to support children, young people and their families. The service has responded to all contacts

about vulnerable or at-risk children, through the ‘front door’ (the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and the Out of Hours Service). During the first few weeks of lockdown the number of referrals was lower, but by May referrals were back to normal levels for the time of the year. In June, there has been a significant rise over and above what would normally be expected, and there is no evidence yet to suggest this is reducing. Between 1-8 June, there was an increase in referrals of around 30%.

For the 14 months prior to lockdown there had been a slow but sustained reduction in the numbers of looked after children, due to Children’s Services’ well-regarded transformation programme. However, the number of children in care has increased since April. This is primarily due to the lockdown measures which have been in place and the pressure that this has placed upon vulnerable families. Children’s Services reasonably expects the number of children in care to increase as more return to school and nursery and become more visible to professionals. The complexity and severity of the cases has increased significantly in the last two months – and it is anticipated that more children will require urgent help and protection and to need to come into care for their own protection.

3. Hampshire Highways uses lockdown to ramp up repairs

The Hampshire Highways teams have used the time well over the past three months, carrying out maintenance work across the county, and changing schedules so that planned work near schools and businesses was completed when there was less traffic on the roads, thereby keeping disruption to a minimum. Our teams have also been working closely with utility companies to reschedule works that could otherwise have caused significant disruption during busier times.

Between March and May 2020, Hampshire Highways completed:

- 17,000 defect repairs
- The clearance of 55,000 gullies, catch-pits, weir kerbs and grips
- 280,000 sqm of surface treatment
- Repainting 232,000 metres of lines
- Cleaning 30,000 signs

As well as highways maintenance, highways teams have been supporting Hampshire through Covid-19 in a number of ways, including helping set up a warehouse used for the distribution of PPE and other essential equipment. Once we started to move into the stabilisation phase of recovery, after the initial

lockdown, Highways teams have been helping manage the traffic demand at HWRC sites and also installing ‘pop-up’ measures for sharing road space, allowing people to safely carry on with the walking and cycling habits they had developed over the past three months.

4. Lockdown restrictions to ease for libraries

As the lockdown eases we will be putting in place the necessary measures at libraries to ensure staff and public safety – similar to those in shops now. All libraries will be Covid-secure, with hand sanitiser available and distancing measures in place. We would ask people to use the self-service kiosks as far as possible and expect to wait sometimes, as there will be reduced capacity in the buildings due to social distancing.

Changes in Hampshire libraries from 6 July include:

Ready Reads: We Select You Collect

Library staff will handpick a selection of books for customers who complete an online form or call 01962 454747. These can be collected without queuing.

Book Lending and Short Visits

To reduce wait times and allow as many people as possible to visit our libraries, people are asked to limit their visits to a maximum of 30 minutes and to keep browsing to an absolute minimum. Reserved items can also be collected at this time. Newspapers and magazines won’t be available for the time being.

Self-service including new library app

Customers are asked to use self-service machines to borrow or return items where possible or download the new Spydus Mobile app to check out books by mobile phone.

Finally it is worth mentioning that we have seen an enormous increase in our digital services during lockdown, which is a small positive. As I have reported previously, the BorrowBox app contains books and audiobooks available for free to all Hampshire Library card holders.

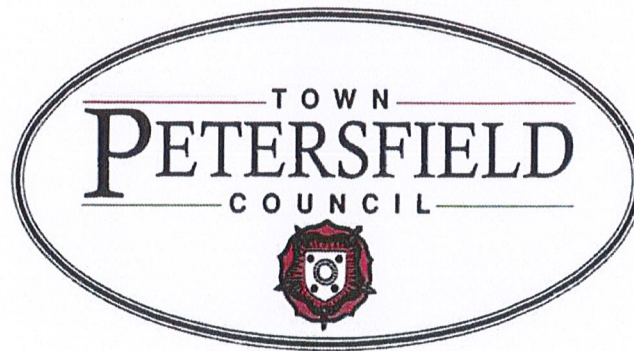
5. South Downs Chairman Margaret Paren stands down after 10 years

Many Parishes will be aware that Margaret Paren led the successful campaign to establish the South Downs National Park, and subsequently has led the National Park Authority as Chairman since its formation in 2011. Margaret has now come to the end of her term as a Secretary of State Member and stood down yesterday during an emotional Zoom call with all Staff and Members. Margaret has been thanked for her outstanding service and achievements and was presented with a glass display ornament representing the curves and colours of the South Downs.

The National Park Authority will formally elect its new Chairman Ian Philips at a meeting on 7 July.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER

County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers



CLERKS REPORT

Members are reminded that the items within this report are provided for information only and are not available for debate. If it is considered that an item listed within the report should be debated fully by members, then it will be placed on the next appropriate Committee or Council agenda. Any member wanting clarification or further information on any aspect of items within the report, please contact me in advance of the meeting.

General Reading and Information

The following publications have been received and are available for members to read:

- * The Rural Bulletin from the Rural Services Network
- * Crime Prevention Update March and May 2020 issued by the Hampshire Constabulary Crime Prevention Officer
- * Petersfield Museum News
- * Enewsletter from the Institute of Groundsmanship
- * Annual Review of 2019 issued by the East Hampshire Community Rail Partnership
- * Report on the Actuarial Valuation of the Hampshire Local Government Pension Scheme as at 31st March 2019
- * Access Hampshire Newsletter issued by Hampshire County Council
- * Direct Information Service issue number 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964 & 965 along with the April, May and June 2020 Funding & Grants Bulletin issued by The National Association of Local Councils
- * South Downs News April 2020, May 2020 and June 2020 issued by the South Downs National Park Authority
- * Councillor newsletter issued by East Hampshire District Council
- * Enewsletter from Community First
- * Community Rail News from the East Hants Community Rail Partnership
- * Planning Newsletter Spring 2020 issued by the South Downs National Park Authority
- * Discover our Countryside booklet issued by The Campaign to Protect Rural England
- * Countryside Voices magazine issued by The Campaign to Protect Rural England
- * Fieldwork Spring 2020 issued by The Campaign to Protect Rural England
- * Access Hampshire Community Special 2 Newsletter issued by Hampshire County Council
- * Councillor newsletter issued by East Hampshire District Council
- * Petersfield Matters No 7 issued by The Petersfield Society
- * Petersfield Museum News May 2020
- * Ramshill Roundabout newsletter issued by the Ramshill Residents Association
- * Newsletter May 2020 issued by the Hampshire Association of Local Councils
- * Clerks & Councils Direct

- ✱ Countryside Service Newsletter issued by Hampshire County Council Access Team
- ✱ Investment Update from Rathbones Investment Management

Other Information

- 1 All members need to be aware of their Disclosable Pecuniary Interest Forms and consider whether there have been any changes since it was last written. If there is a need for any change to be made please contact me and I will supply a fresh document for completion.
- 2 A letter of thanks has been received from Victim Support for the Community Grant awarded to them at the Annual Town Meeting last month.
- 3 A letter of thanks has been received from Petersfield Open Air Swimming Pool for the first tranche of their perennial grant.

Neil Hitch
Town Clerk
30th June 2020

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:
 - The Annual Internal Audit Report is completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** are to be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published **before 1 July 2020**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2020**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2020
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on a publicly accessible website:

Before 1 July 2020 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2019/20**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2020 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this Annual Governance and Accountability Return. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Where amendments are made by the authority to the AGAR after it has been approved by the authority and before it has been reviewed by the external auditor, the Chairman and RFO should initial the amendments and if necessary republish the amended AGAR and recommence the period for the exercise of public rights. If the AGAR contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report if possible before approving the annual governance statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2020.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2019) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2020).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the period for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the approved accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets it **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2020**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been published?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2020 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

**Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

EN Petersfield Town Council

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The internal audit for 2019/20 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. IF the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2018/19, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2018/19 AGAR tick "not covered")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
L. The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2019 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

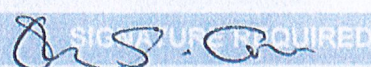
Date(s) internal audit undertaken

21/11/2019 16/01/2020 22/04/2020

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

ELANOR S. GROWE
Do The Numbers Limited

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

22/4/20

*If the response is 'no' you must include a note to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

EN Petersfield Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
	✓		has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

www.petersfield-tc.gov.uk

AUTHORITY WEBSITE ADDRESS

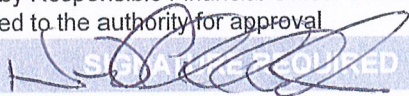
Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

El Petersfield Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	5,183,776	1,869,974	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	589,390	634,522	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	684,584	725,296	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	356,618	408,201	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	4,231,158	1,068,833	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	1,869,974	1,752,758	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	1,804,019	1,712,414	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	12,083,660	12,237,913	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
	✓		N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date

15/06/2020

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20

In respect of

ENPetersfield Town CouncilTY

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2020; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2019/20

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2019/20

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2020.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

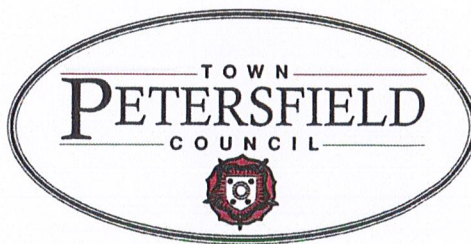
Date

DD/MM/YY

*Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

Name of Organisation and project/item	Legal	History	Amount Requested	Amount proposed by Grants Panel	Date to be paid	Amount agreed at Council	Date of Bacs payment			
Petersfield Youth Theatre (PYT) - To advance education in music and theatrical arts amongst young people aged 5-23. For a 30th birthday community event in Spring 2021	LGA (1972) Section 145	Grant History: 2019/20 2nd tranche: £1,500 towards summer workshop 2019/20 1st Tranche: £1,000 towards Easter workshop in 2020 2018/19 2nd tranche: £750 towards the costs of Easter and summer workshops 2017/2018 2nd Tranche towards to advance the education of children and young people in music and theatre arts 2017/2018 first tranche £1000 towards 3 x cases for 'delicate' stage equipment (sound, lighting etc) 2016/2017 second tranche £500 for workshop leaders for a five day summer school for children aged 5-13 years in August 2017 2014/2015 first tranche £400 towards the costs of 'flying' equipment for the 2014 Christmas production of 'Peter Pan' 2013/2014 first tranche £1000 to replace obsolete radio microphones 2012/2013 first tranche £1,000 for additional refurbishment to premises at 2a Heath Road, known as The Space. 2011/2012 £NIL - to pay workshop leaders for a five day summer school for children aged 5 - 13 years to be held at Bedales School in August 2012, open to members and non	£1,500.00	£1,500	(Event is in Spring 2021 so payment to match)					

Petersfield Town Council - James Deane - for VE day and VJ day anniversary events (including commemorative stone)	S7 Localism Act 2011	New applicant	£3,000.00	£3,000	As required		
Fitzroy- on Track - To provide a day service for people with learning disability and autism, and assicaited physical and sensory impairments. To removate the sensory room	S7 Localism Act 2011	New applicant	£3,000.00	£2,000.00	ASAP		
Total Applications for 1st Tranche			£7,500.00	£6,500.00			



Epidemic or Serious Infection Emergency Policy

Introduction

Members will be aware that this Policy was approved at the last meeting of Council held on 19th March 2020 immediately prior to the Coronavirus lockdown being announced by the Government.

In accordance with clause 7.6 of this Policy, all decisions made during the Emergency Procedures require ratification at the first available meeting of the relevant committee. In view of the fact that committee meetings will not be re-starting until at least September, it is considered appropriate instead to bring these decisions to Council as a body to ratify instead.

All of these decisions will previously have been advised to councillors as part of the weekly report of activities throughout the period when the Emergency Procedures were in place and for ease of discussion, have been separated out into the relevant committee that would have dealt with them under normal circumstances.

Town Development Committee

- Steve and I attended a remote Petersfield Operational Group meeting this week as part of the Place-Making enhancements for the town. Petersfield has succeeded in receiving funding for Department of Transport Emergency Measures that will be completed in the near future. The likely measures will include removal of some car parking spaces in the High Street, around the Square and in Lavant Street, additional disabled car parking spaces in the town centre area; new cycle parking infrastructure; a possible bus gate allowing buses only access through the top of the High Street by the Square; narrowing of some roads to enlarge the space available for pedestrians; care to enable deliveries to still take place in Lavant Street. It is stressed that this will be a test or trial with public feedback being sought through QR Codes and that the visual impact of some of the measures may not be great because of the short term nature of the works and the plans to install them.

Public Halls Committee

- A perspex screen has been ordered for the front reception desk at the Town Hall and an initial supply of masks and gloves have been obtained.
- Approval has been given to Petersfield Museum to extend their lease on the first floor offices until February or March 2021.
- Emergency hot water repairs were needed to Love Lane Pavilion where the Nursery reported a loss of hot water.
- At the request of a neighbour to the Avenue Pavilion notices are being put up asking drivers to park 'bonnet on' to their garden fence to avoid the worst of their exhaust fumes.
- Penman Antiques requested that their Hall hire cost for the Festival Hall be reduced by up to 50% to enable the Fair to proceed as currently planned over the first weekend in September. The Fair will be at a vastly reduced scale with smaller numbers of stalls and visitor attendance being managed to ensure social distancing is observed. The request was approved after discussion with Cllrs Watkinson, Deane and Farrow on the basis that a reduced event with reduced income was better than none at all.

Grounds Committee

- Play areas closed following the Government announcement on Tuesday 24th March that such spaces should no longer be open
- Heath toilets closed Monday 23rd March because of health & safety concerns regarding the supply of toilet rolls and soap due to thefts
- Fresh signs were produced and displayed advising people that the play areas, which are not enclosed naturally by fencing, at Woods Meadow and Borough Road are closed at the outset of the lockdown period
- A member of the public planted some iris' near the disabled drop-off point on Sussex Road. Some additional fencing has been sourced to close off any gaps in the hedgerows and areas adjacent to the boardwalk in an effort to prevent public access to the newly planted areas of reed bed, and new signs asking members of the public to keep their dogs and themselves away from these areas.
- New signs have been produced and erected to inform members of the public that fishing is not permitted during the lockdown period.
- The Plump Duck on the Heath asked permission to re-open the kiosk on a takeaway basis with no seating provision. Social distancing procedures would be in place as was the case prior to closure. It was suggested that a phased opening be operated prior to full 7 day opening in a few weeks and that no duck food is sold at this time.
- Correspondence was received from EHDC planners in respect of the Heath Pond Bank Stabilisation works. We were surprised to hear that in planning terms, the Boardwalk is regarded as a building so, in summary, we have to apply for planning permission for all the works as the planners consider them to be either a building or engineering and therefore not falling under local government permitted development rights. EHDC has recommended that we employ the services of a planning consultant due to the anticipated level of opposition to the works from some of the Sussex Road residents. Southern Planning Practice Limited, based near Winchester were contacted for a quotation, and following consultation with councillors Farrow, Deane and Matthews, their fees of just over £5,000 to undertake this work have been accepted. The cost will come from the contingency that Council put in place for the project from Capital Receipts Reserve.
- A zoom meeting was held with Cllr Matthews and the Town Mayor to discuss the best way to respond to the re-opening of some of our grounds facilities from Wednesday 13th May onwards in the light of the Government announcements. It has been decided to do the following:
 - All play areas are to remain closed in accordance with Government advice. Dugg is going to look at the aerial runway at Borough Road with a view to disabling the equipment and similarly chaining the titan swings at Borough Road and Woods Meadow
 - The skatepark at Love Lane is also classified as a play area and under advice from Ellis Whittam, our Health & Safety Consultants, the signage at the site has been updated and it remains closed. It is very difficult to prevent access to the skatepark so the best we can do is publicise its closure, advice of CCTV being present and monitor developments in the short term.
 - Basketball hoops at Woods Meadow and The Avenue to re-open
 - Tennis courts at the Avenue to be re-opened but only 1 court on each side of the central fencing to ensure social distancing is respected as far as is possible. People booking the courts will be advised to bring their own sanitisation as it simply isn't feasible to place any on site.
 - Woods Meadow sports wall to be re-opened along with any football goal posts on any of our sites.
 - Bell Hill and Love Lane car parks to remain closed for the time being.
 - Heath car parks have been re-opened and timed to do so with QECP car park.
 - Heath Boardwalk to remain closed for the time being but plans to be looked at for how we can open the boardwalk in line with advice from our Health & Safety Consultants –

almost certainly with some form of one way route being suggested – within the next week or two.

- Fishing at Heath Pond to be permitted and bailiffed, as usual, by the Heath Pond Association.
- Heath toilets to remain closed for the time being whilst monitoring what other authorities are doing in relation to the re-opening of public toilets.
- Boating on the Heath to re-commence shortly. Discussions to be held with the concession holder over the practicalities of how this might be done and once this has happened, permits may be issued for ordinary residents to use their boats on the condition that social distancing is respected and it is only members of their own household being allowed within the boats. Officers will monitor the number of permit requests to ensure there is not an unsustainable number being issued.
- In consultation with the Town Mayor and Cllr Matthews it was been agreed to accept the quotation of £1,470 to have 2 of the tennis courts at The Avenue cleaned of moss and algae. The company (EnTC Ltd) have been used by us before and were the cheapest of the 2 quotations obtained by the Grounds Manager.
- The Council has joined the HCC Parish Lengthsman Scheme again this year that will generate an additional £1100 income.
- The opening of the boardwalk on the Heath was agreed in early June. Signage was created to advise people the boardwalk is one way – anti-clockwise – with additional signage planned by the Sussex Road car park directing people in the correct direction. The signage design has been shared with our Health & Safety consultants to ensure it is appropriate.
- The new containers have been delivered for the Grounds Depot. I approved the cost of just under £500 for the connection of water to the containers and the Grounds Manager is contacting SSE to enable electricity to be connected. The cost for this is unknown at present.
- Discussions were held with EHDC's Environmental Health section on the best way to enable the Heath toilets to re-open. I have had correspondence with the Health & Safety Executive in which I expressed my concerns over not being able to guarantee people's safety when using the premises and the mitigation that we might be able to put in place. Their response has been very 'generic' which wasn't particularly helpful. A risk assessment has been done and shared with Environmental Health & our Health & Safety Consultants prior to re-opening the facilities in the near future.
- The issuing of boating licences to residents was started from 16th June with the agreement that the Council can stipulate they are issued subject to the individual complying with all Government Regulations in respect of social distancing and mixing with other households as this places responsibility for the compliance back on the individuals concerned and not the Council.
- Arrangements are being made through the Friends of Petersfield Heath for the usual bracken cut by Peter Caines on the Heath to control its growth and prevent its spread.
- Churchers College has requested that up to 30 of their students use the car park with their permits for the last 3 weeks of term starting on 22nd June. This has been agreed.
- I have had a request from one of the residents of Ramhill to purchase some of the land recently transferred to us by Taylor Wimpey. The area of land is backing onto Kingsfernsden Lane and is part of the wildlife corridor there. I have advised the resident that it wouldn't be appropriate for the Council to sell the land because of the requirements to maintain the wildlife corridor and create a Management Plan for it in conjunction with EHDC and the South Downs National Park. Jenny Edbrooke, who has completed all the other Management Plans in the town has been approached with a view to undertaking this task for us.
- We have taken the view that with continued relaxation of the social distancing restrictions it is appropriate for all of the tennis courts to be opened at The Avenue. The latest Lawn Tennis Association guidance has been shared with our Health & safety Consultants who are supportive of this move. Full opening will take place once the courts have been cleaned of moss next week.

- The Government announcement that outdoor play areas can be re-opened means that the grounds team has prepared all these sites for public use again in time for their permitted opening on 4th July. Notices are being prepared to be placed at all sites reminding people of their obligations and these notices are being shared with our Health & Safety consultants to ensure they are content. The issue by the Government of the Regulations to apply following the re-opening of the play areas has created problems due to the impracticability of being able to comply with all the stipulations which will almost certainly cause some delay in opening all of the sites.

Finance & General Purposes Committee

- During April, Tourism South East advised they would be furloughing the staff running the Town Visitor Centre now that the library is no longer open. I have made it clear that the Council will be looking for a reduction in the cost of this service on a pro-rata basis. This was agreed by TSE.
- Following completion of the land transfer of the public open space on the Ramshill Estate, the financial commuted sum of £127,931 was received. The previous Council resolved to invest this money in the CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund where the interest rate of 4-4.5% per annum would pay for the equipment needed to maintain the Estate as well as contribute towards the staff wages for the land's maintenance. Currently this Fund is not trading because of the volatility in the market so until the Fund is operational again, these funds will be invested in our 1 months notice account at Cambridge & Counties Bank.

It is recommended that ratification of all the above decisions is approved in accordance with clause 7.6 of the Epidemic or serious Infections Policy.

Future Operation of the Council

Under clause 8.1 of this Policy, the agreement of the Town Mayor and all Committee Chairman is required in order for the Emergency Procedures to be revoked and normal Council activities to be re-started.

Whilst it is clear that the pandemic situation is far from over and real concerns remain over the future direction to be taken, it is also clear that the Council now has the ability to operate and run remote meetings through Zoom Teleconferencing. The strong advice from the Hampshire Association of Local Councils and the National Association of Local Councils is that face to face meetings should still **not be held** but that any meetings should be held remotely.

Bearing in mind the regular summer recess for local councils and the need for all senior officers to try to get some sort of break from the work environment which has not been possible for most of this year, it seems eminently reasonable that the Council revert to its normal timetable of committee and Council meetings with effect from the beginning of September and this has been suggested to all of the Committee Chairmen and the Town Mayor. There has been no disagreement to this suggestion.

It is therefore recommended that the Emergency Procedures under the Epidemic or Serious Infection Emergency Policy be suspended and that the normal routine of committee and Council meetings be recommenced with effect from September.

Neil Hitch
Town Clerk
1st July 2020