

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY MAY 12TH 2020

Item 12. Correspondence & Clerks Report

- 1. Council Insurance Policy Renewal** – On June 11th 2019 Council agreed (minute 267/19) to enter into a Long Term Agreement through Came & Co with AXA for our insurance requirements for the three years commencing June 8th 2019. The renewal premium for 2019/20 was £654.89. The renewal premium for 2020/21 is £673.04 which reflects index linking at 4% of the assets covered. A copy of the renewal schedule has been sent to all councillors. I have though asked Came & Co to arrange for our “Street Furniture” cover to be increased from £16,037 to £20,000 to reflect the value of the new village signs and bench replacements. This is likely to result in a modest increase in the annual premium. The sum of £680 had been allocated for Insurance in the 2020/21 Council budget, I expect that this will be slightly exceeded by the revised annual premium.
- 2. New Inn Road, Bartley** – In my last report to Council I advised that In response to my question to HCC Highways about the likely timescale for New Inn Road to benefit from a future resurfacing scheme I have received the following reply, *“I am afraid that it is not possible to provide a time scale in which we will carry out any maintenance. We use condition data to drive our surface treatment and surface replacement programmes. This ensures that common criteria compare all roads across Hampshire and only those that meet the criteria will receive funding for work. Currently, and despite the localized defects at the northern end of New Inn Road, the condition has not deteriorated more generally and therefore does not justify funding for treatment or surface replacement. Every road is inspected regularly and will be kept in a safe condition until the general condition justifies planned work to be carried out, when you will be notified.”*

Cllr. Chillcott asked me to reply to HCC Highways and asked them whether they considered the road safe and when it will next be inspected by them. On April 15th 2020 they replied as follows *“Further to your previous enquiry regarding the condition of New Inn Road, our engineer advises it was inspected at the end of February and again today, and is considered to be in a safe condition. The next scheduled inspections are in May, and then August and November.”*

- 3. Japanese Knotweed** – It has been reported to the Council that Japanese Knotweed is growing in a number of locations in the Romsey Road, Cadnam area of the Parish. Cllrs. Goodwin & Hawks have asked me to investigate what role the Parish Council has in dealing with this non-native invasive plant. I will report the outcome of my investigations to members in the next few weeks.
- 4. Operation Resilience Road Repairs** – I have been advised by HCC Highways that over the course of the next few weeks Surface Dressing Works will be undertaken on Old Romsey Road, Pollards Moor Road, Barrow Hill Road; and Old Salisbury Road as part of the above project. Members were advised of these works in February 2020.
- 5. Matters reported to HCC** – Attached is a list of matters reported by the Clerk to HCC. Also included are matters reported by councillors or residents who have then supplied the reference number to me.
- 6. Clerk’s Annual Appraisal** – It had been previously assumed that my annual appraisal (salary & performance review) would take place a year after my appointment (April). However my contract actually states *“A salary and performance review will take place in the autumn of each year”* . The review therefore is not yet due and will take place in due course as per my contract. Following the review the Personnel & Governance Advisory Committee will be make a recommendation to Council.
- 7. Advisory Committees** - I am aware of the following meetings that have been scheduled:-
Finance – June 23rd 2020 (11am)
5 Year Plan – June 23rd 2020 (12pm)

(These will be held as “Virtual” meetings if “Face to Face” meetings are not possible)

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8. **Playground & Visual Inspections** – In my last report to Council I advised that our insurers had advised the following:-

“In instances which playgrounds and amusement devices are in a fenced area which has been locked and a sign attached stating the playground is closed, these would be considered outside of use and therefore we would not require inspection by a competent person. We would however still suggest that the facilities are checked to ensure locks are still in place, and there is no evidence that the playground has been used. In situations in which the playground or amusement devices cannot be made secure (i.e. could still be accessed), then the inspection requirement is extended to 8 weeks, as checks should still be carried out to help ensure the safety of any children that might access the equipment. In situations where the usual competent person is deemed vulnerable, during the additional period granted, the council should find an alternative competent person to carry out these checks.”

On April 20th 2020, Came & Co (our insurance brokers) advised that AXA (our insurers) have stated *“that if the area is fenced off (regardless of the height) with signs stating the facility/playground is currently closed then they consider it to be out of use. This means the routine checks do not need to be undertaken.”*

Whilst the Playground is closed therefore we do not need to undertake visual inspections.

DAVID RIGBY
Parish Clerk
May 7th 2020

