

## 1. Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

This is possibly the biggest issue on many people's minds.

The official position is that there are, as of Sunday, no reported instances of Corvid-19 within BANES and 1 in Wiltshire.

The only thing that this says is 'so far, so good' – but how long this remains is anyone's guess.

ALCA have provided guidance, which is presented in the document Coronavirus Briefing.

In anticipation of an epidemic being declared, and public meetings being stopped, I have been investigating the possibility of using specific software to enable the PC to continue to function through the use of online meetings which allow for others to join as a phone conference. This will enable the PC to hold meetings via online conferencing and these meetings will be open for all to participate in.

## 2. Online Meetings

The PC uses a basic Microsoft Office 365 license.

Microsoft have additional offerings within Office 365, including a function called Teams which provides conference facilities that can be joined either via a PC/Mac or by phone.

The current Office 365 license provides cloud based storage via OneDrive, which all councillors have access to, so there is currently the ability to share documents via a central source.

Using the Microsoft options, the PC would need to use business licensing with the following annual costs:

- £112.80 - 1 Office 365 Business Premium license to include full Office 365 software including Word, Excel etc. which is required by the Clerk
- £410.40 - 9 Office 365 Business Essentials licenses to provide Teams and additional business software, but not Word, Excel etc.

This solution would also enable an Annual Parish Meeting to be held online with anyone from the community being able to join via PC/Mac or by phone. It is a legal requirement for this meeting to be held between 1 March and 1 June.

There are alternative solutions, some claim to be free, but when there is the need to have wider communications, then pricing becomes an issue. For example Slack, a competitor to Teams, whilst having a free option, when the needs of the PC is considered its pricing is higher than Microsoft.

I may be wrong about this, but

Microsoft also have a non-profit licencing scheme that significantly reduces the pricing to:

- £27.60 - 1 Office 365 Business Premium license to include full Office 365 software including Word, Excel etc. which is required by the Clerk
- Donations - 9 Office 365 Business Essentials licenses to provide Teams and additional business software, but not Word, Excel etc.

# Freshford PC Chairman's Report – 09 March 2020

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I have requested Microsoft to consider the PC as a non-profit organisation and I await their reply.

## 3. Community Climate Emergency Meeting

The objective of this meeting is to build community defined local initiatives in relation to addressing the Climate Emergency.

Communication via Parish Communications has been sent, posters are being distributed and candy boards are planned.

With the corona virus situation, the advice from BANES is:

- Currently there have been no instructions to limit public gatherings and so I would not advise you to call the meeting off.
- With zero current cases in BaNES and I think one in Wiltshire, the virus is clearly not circulating widely yet, and so this is a proportionate approach ... you are meeting to discuss a very serious problem and society cannot just go on hold, or at least not without careful weighing of costs and benefits in terms of reducing virus spread against disruption to everything else.
- If advice changes before 23rd March, and phe starts to recommend more social distancing and limiting of non-essential meetings then my advice would also change to reflect that. Certainly there is a chance of that happening but I do not know how likely because it will depend on how the outbreak develops which is not fully predictable.

In summary, we continue to plan this meeting, but we will need to take on board events and there is a real possibility of this meeting being postponed.