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**HEYBRIDGE BASIN PARISH COUNCIL**

**JUNE NEWSLETTER**

Welcome to the first edition of the Heybridge Basin Parish Council newsletter.

**Community Governance Review - Parish of Heybridge - Basin Ward**

Maldon District Council, on 14 February 2019, approved a recommendation arising from the recent Review consultation that Heybridge Basin becomes a Parish in its own right (separate from Heybridge) and has its own Parish Council.  A steering group was then set up to discuss and report back to the Council on the more detailed arrangements for implementation such as Parish Council size, elections, transfer of property, budget requirement and the first precept to be levied on the Council taxpayers of Heybridge Basin.  Representatives of the local referendum group in Heybridge Basin and also from Heybridge Parish Council were invited to work with the District Councillors for Heybridge on the steering group. Following reports back to the Council, most recently on 12 September 2019, approval was given to the making of a Re-organisation Order to bring these detailed arrangements into effect.  The key features were –

* The new Parish of Heybridge Basin will come into being on 1 April 2020
* The new Parish Council will be called Heybridge Basin Parish Council and will have seven Councillors.  They will be elected in May 2020.
* The District Council will set the first precept for the new Parish Council to be levied on the Council taxpayers of Heybridge Basin.
* The new Parish Council will take on responsibility for the Daisy Meadow Car Park and other Parish functions from Heybridge Parish Council later in May 2020 on a date to be agreed.

The Reorganisation Order was made on 1 October 2019. The first precept has been set at £24,374.00 and was determined by the District Council on the basis of a reasonable assessment of the likely budget requirement of the new Parish Council.  For householders in the new Parish of Heybridge Basin this will be the basis of the Parish element of the Council Tax bill for 2020/21 instead of that levied by Heybridge Parish Council.

The precept will be paid to the new Parish Council to fund its operation and responsibilities during 2020/21, and it will be for the new Parish Council to set its own precept for subsequent financial years.

Unfortunately, and due to Covid-19, it was not possible to hold the elections in May 2020 and Maldon District Council appointed two District Councillors to run the Parish Council until such time as elections can be held, the third required Councillor being a Parish Councillor for the Basin Ward of Heybridge Parish Council. The three Councillors are Bryan Harker, Michael Edwards and Jenny Sjollema. Councillor Harker was appointed Chair and Councillor Sjollema was appointed Vice Chair

The first and annual meeting of the new Parish Council was a virtual video meeting held on 7th May 2020. At that meeting a temporary Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer was appointed.

**Going Forward**

The second meeting of the Parish Council was also a virtual video meeting (with technical problems) held on 9th June 2020.

Since being formed, your new Council has opened a Parish Council bank account, created a website, arranged insurance for the Council, Agreed Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, appointed the Clerk as Data Protection Officer, registered the Parish Council with HMRC and arranged new contracts relating to the maintenance of the amenity lights owned by the Parish Council, emptying the rubbish bins owned by the Council and the maintenance of the Daisy Meadow Car Park. We have also appointed Solicitors to act for us in respect of the transfer of a parcel of land and of the Daisy Meadow Car Park from Heybridge Parish Council to Heybridge Basin Parish Council.

We expect to hold monthly Council meetings. These will be virtual audio meetings until the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 are lifted. We will then be holding our meetings in the St George’s Church Community Room. Notices of meetings will be posted on our Notice Boards and on our Website.

Our immediate requirements are to create a Risk Assessment Policy and to agree a Data Protection Policy.

Finally, for the moment, we are aware of the problems caused by visitors to the Basin during lockdown. Our powers are very limited but we are doing everything we can by working with the appropriate authorities to make visitors aware of their responsibilities.

We would welcome your views on how the Parish Council can work for you in the future.