

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 26th July 2023 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

Cllr Powell welcomed all present to the meeting.

Public discussion

KCC Community Warden, Martin Sherwood, spoke regarding the current KCC Community Warden Consultation and the likely impact this will have on the service from next April. Currently Martin is part of the Maidstone and Tunbridge & Malling area which has a Team Leader and 13 Wardens. Under the proposals, this will reduce to a Team Leader and 3 or 4 wardens and the consultation is considering a geographical allocation, with wardens being deployed where there is the greatest need. The concern is that, in the absence of a Warden, residents will not know who to contact if they need assistance. Cllr Powell commented that Martin is a valuable member of the village. It was noted that there needs to be a high volume of responses to the consultation and the Clerk added that this would be discussed further under agenda item 14. Martin confirmed that he has a quantity of consultation booklets, which he can give to anyone who is unable to complete the online form.

The Community Warden informed Councillors that he had received a report of ASB around the lake, with the life buoys being thrown into the water. He has been to check the area since and the buoys have been removed.

A resident reported that newly planted geraniums had been stolen from one of the planters and a local nursery had kindly donated replacement plants.

A resident raised concerns that the vegetation in Holm Mill Lane (close to the A20 junction) is encroaching so far into the lane, that it is becoming very hazardous for drivers and pedestrians. The Clerk offered to report this to Kent Highways.

ACTION: Clerk

The Clerk reported that she has booked the hall for the Parish Council meetings for 2024 and, due to further elections in May, the meeting that month will be held on Wednesday 15th May.

The Clerk asked that all Councillors read through the KALC training list and let her know of any training they would like to be booked onto. Cllrs Powell and Dayes were reminded to sort out a convenient date to attend the Dynamic Councillors training course.

ACTION: Cllrs Powell & Dayes

1 Present

Cllr E Powell, Cllr J Sams, Cllr T Sams, Cllr C Roots, Cllr T Griffiths, Cllr R Dayes, Cllr S Brown, Community Warden Martin Sherwood, RFO/Amenity Manager Mr M Cuerden and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst

3 Members of Public

2 Apologies for absence

Cllr C Lay, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr S Luck

3 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 28th June 2023 - The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr T Sams; with all in favour.

4 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

There were no changes to the register.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Cllr R Dayes: Agenda Item 12 (Shed for Food Station at the Hall) as he is a member of the Charity Group who have submitted the request.

Cllr C Roots: Agenda Item 12 (Shed for Food Station at the Hall) as he is a member of the Charity Group who have submitted the request.

Cllr S Brown: Agenda Item 12 (Shed for Food Station at the Hall) as he is a member of the Charity Group who have submitted the request.

Cllr E Powell: Agenda Item 12 (Shed for Food Station at Hall) as he is a VHT Trustee.

Requests for Dispensation

Cllr J Sams: Agenda Item 12 (Shed for Food Station at the Hall) as she is a VHT Trustee.

Cllr T Griffiths: Agenda Item 12 (Shed for Food Station at the Hall) as he is a VHT Trustee.

5 Planning

5.1 The outstanding planning applications were noted.

5.2 The approved applications were noted.

5.3 The refused application was noted.

5.4 Other Planning Matters

- Local Plan Stage 2 Hearing: Cllr Powell reiterated the points he made at the June meeting regarding the Local Plan and added that he had attended Lenham Parish Council's meeting to confirm Harrietsham's position. The Preliminary Report from the Inspector seems to hint that there could be a way to move the Plan forward. The Parish Council's Barrister had fought for Fish Legal to be able to submit further evidence and this will now be allowed, resulting in a further short consultation, ending on the 16th August. Lenham Parish Council is also prepared to support a Judicial Review and Cllr Roots confirmed that they have agreed an informal working party, who are happy to meet with Harrietsham representatives, if required.

6 Environmental

6.1 Minutes of the Environmental Meeting held on 17th July: The minutes were deferred.

6.2 Recommendations from the Environmental Committee:

- To accept quote from Medway Valley Countryside Partnership for Two Maintenance Days (approx.. £500 per day). It was proposed to accept the quotation received from MVCP by Cllr Powell, seconded by Cllr T Sams; with all in favour.

6.3 Other Environmental Matters

- Cllr T Sams asked that the Parish Council works with contractors to discuss the possibility of rewilding areas in the village, when the contracts are due for renewal in April 2025.
- Cllr Roots reported that a resident has raised concerns that there is giant hogweed along the footpath to Court Lodge Road. The Amenity Manager responded that the contractor has cleared any giant hogweed that they had found and added that it had been noted that there is a very similar weed in the area. He added that there is one area in the farmer's field, and this would be monitored, in case it encroaches onto the footpath.

7 Finances

7.1 Income and Expenditure spreadsheets: The finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Griffiths; with all in favour.

7.2 Minutes of the F&GP Meeting held on 13th July: The minutes were deferred.

8 Highways

Cllr T Sams reported that residents in Fairbourne Lane are concerned larger vehicles are going to use the lane whilst the Leeds village road closure is in place for 6 months. This has been referred to Highways who have forwarded it to the Water Company. There is currently no additional signage in place. He reported on the various water leaks which have appeared in the village and asked that these are reported on-line, as soon as they are spotted:

(<https://www.southeastwater.co.uk/help/emergencies/report-a-leak>)

Cllr Roots spoke regarding the recent meeting with Helen Whately MP where Operation Brock had been discussed. Helen was surprised that the system was not working as well as she thought and will feed the information provided back to the Secretary of State for Highways. The Leeds/Langley bypass was another topic discussed. This had been introduced at the last minute during the Local Plan Stage 2 hearing and the impact this could have on the Heathlands development going forward was considered. A number of other subjects were discussed which were not relevant to Harrietsham.

The Clerk reported briefly on the temporary average speed camera installation, which is currently underway. The agreed 6-month period agreed also includes the installation and removal of the equipment. Cllr Roots asked whether the Clerk to enquire where the cameras are to be deployed after Harrietsham.

ACTION: Clerk

The Clerk reported that KHS has offered to come out to the Parish Office to discuss the HIP and had suggested Monday 7th or Wednesday 9th August. Councillors on the Highways group will confirm availability.

ACTION: Highways Group/Clerk

The Clerk reported that, following submitting the most recent version of the HIP to KHS, it had become apparent that the Hook Lane signage, which should be part of the West Street 20mph project, has not

been included and KHS have now requested further information. It was agreed that a 'Parent & Child' warning sign should be installed at the West Street end of Hook Lane, a 'No Footpath' warning sign near the junction of Hook Lane and Qusted Way and a pole with both signs attached at the A20 end of the road, just past Tithe Mews (heading towards West Street on the left verge).

Cllr T Sams reported that the 'Welcome to Harrietsham' sign on the A20 is obscured by vegetation and he will report this to KHS.

ACTION: Cllr T Sams

9 Marley Road Traffic Survey

Cllr Roots reported on the need to carry out a traffic survey on Marley Road, as the Parish Council has added this area to the HIP. He suggested that an appropriate area for the survey would be by the property, Hunters Way, as it is 100m from the change in speed limit. It was proposed by Cllr Roots to complete the survey and this was seconded by Cllr T Sams; with all in favour.

ACTION: Clerk

10 Vacancies on Various Committees and Working Parties

The Clerk reported that there are the following vacancies within the Parish Council Committees and Working Parties:

Planning (2), F&GP (1), Environmental (1) and Communications (2)

After discussion, it was agreed Cllrs T Sams & Cllr Brown would join the Planning Committee. Cllr Dayes would join the Environmental Committee and the Communications group. This will leave 1 vacancy on both the F&GP Committee and the Communications group.

These changes were proposed by Cllr Griffiths, seconded by Cllr J Sams; with all in favour.

11 Parking on the Glebe Field for a Wedding (Sat. 9th September 10am - 1pm)

The Clerk reported that a request had been made to use the Glebe Field for parking for a wedding. It was noted that, along with the usual caveats, the entrance would need to be blocked off at all times. After further discussion it was suggested that the guests use the hall car park, as this will be empty during the times given. The Clerk offered to discuss the matter further with the enquirer and report back to Councillors over email, as there will not be another Council meeting until after the wedding.

ACTION: Clerk

12 Shed for Food Station at Village Hall

The Clerk reminded all present that prices had been circulated for the metal containers before the meeting, however it was noted that the charity would prefer a wooden shed, as the containers get very hot in the Summer and are prone to condensation. Packets would be stored in labelled metal containers to protect the contents. The high level of donations from families of children attending the Pre-School and Harrietsham School were noted and there was discussion regarding an email received from the Vicar of St John the Baptist Church. The Charity would like to proceed with purchasing the shed from a company based in Lenham, at a total cost of £1,716, however it was highlighted that this sum would fund the current food station for a year. The food station being located in the Church is to be discussed at the next PCC meeting on the 10th August and it was proposed by Cllr Griffiths to defer making a decision until after the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr T Sams, with 3 in favour and 4 abstentions. Cllr Roots then stated that the original discussion was supposed to be whether the Parish Council would fund the cost of purchasing the shed on the VHT's behalf and this has now progressed into the Parish Council getting involved with the location of the food station. In light of this, Cllr Roots stated that the Culpepper charity will fund the cost of the shed and arrange for it to be installed outside the village hall.

13 Wreath for Remembrance Service

It was proposed by Cllr J Sams to purchase a wreath for the Remembrance Service in November at a cost of £25, with an additional donation added to a total of £100.00. This was seconded by Cllr Roots, with all in favour.

ACTION: Clerk

14 KCC Community Warden Consultation

The Clerk reminded all present that the documentation for this consultation has been circulated to all Councillors. The closing date for the consultation is the 3rd October 2023 and the Parish Council will need to submit their comments by the end of September. It was disappointing to see that residents will need to register on the KCC consultation page before they can complete the response form, as it was felt that this could put people off from responding. The Clerk has managed to turn the large A4 consultation document into an A5 brochure and asked whether Councillors wished for her to print some off to be given to residents to complete. It was confirmed that 50 should be printed in the first instance. Any letters or consultation documents can be given to the Clerk, who can pass them to the Community

Warden, as his Team Leader intends to hand deliver any received to ensure they are included for consideration. The Clerk added that Martin is an important asset for the village, and it would be a huge loss if he is moved to another area. As had previously been mentioned at the beginning of the meeting, the Warden numbers will reduce significantly, if the proposal is agreed. Therefore, Councillors may wish to consider employing a Warden directly to ensure that the village continues to have support. All Councillors present agreed with this and the Clerk suggested that this be given further thought, once the outcome of the consultation is known.

ACTION: All Cllrs/Clerk

15 Parish Charter

The Clerk reminded all present that information had been circulated before the meeting, adding that the consultation closing date had been moved from the 23rd August to the 30th September 2023. The Clerk asked that all Councillors complete the paper copy of the survey so that she could merge them into one response to be submitted.

ACTION: All Cllrs/Clerk

16 Future Events

12th August - Ploughman's in the Church (Midday to 2pm)

9th September - Village Autumn Litter Pick (9-11am meeting on West street Green)

23rd September - Invicta Band Concert in the Church (£10 per ticket which includes cheese & wine)

Coffee Morning - Every Friday in the Booth Hall (10am - midday)

17 Items for Future Consideration

Santa's Grotto - Cllr Griffiths (September Agenda)

80th Anniversary of D-Day - Clerk (September Agenda)

18 Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 27th September 2023 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

Cllrs T & J Sams gave apologies for the September meeting, as this clashes with a Full (Borough) Council meeting.

With no further matters to discuss the meeting was closed at 9.01pm.