

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 28th September 2016 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall.

The Clerk welcomed all present and stated that there would be public discussion after a Chair has been elected.

1 Present

Cllr E Powell, Cllr G Dean, Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Sams, Cllr S Morris, Cllr M Allardyce, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr J Moore, RFO Mr M Cuerden, Community Warden M Sherwood, PCSO J Boyd and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst.
9 Members of the Public

2 Apologies for absence

Lenham Parish Representative Cllr M Cockett

3 Appointment of Chairman

The Clerk asked for nominations for a Councillor to Chair the meeting. Cllr Dean proposed Cllr Powell to be appointed as Chairman and this was seconded by Cllr Allardyce; with all in favour.

Cllr Powell then read out the following statement, on behalf of the Parish Council:

Following issues that have arisen at recent Parish Council meetings, during the public discussion sessions, I wish to make this statement on behalf of all members of Harrietsham Parish Council.

The Parish Council will not tolerate any kind of racial, sexual or any other prejudicial or abusive behaviour. We would ask that all members of public show respect for Councillors, Council Employees and other Parishioners who choose to attend our Parish Council meetings.

If any further meeting is disrupted, as was seen at the Full Council Meeting held on the 27th July 2016, the Chairman will take one or more of the following actions:

- *Ask for the behaviour to cease*
- *Suspend the meeting*
- *Call the Police and ask them to remove the individuals involved*
- *Report the incident and any perpetrators to the Police for further investigation*

The Parish Council may also decide that public discussion is withdrawn, until further notice, as we are under no obligation to offer this session to members of the public.

Public Discussion

Police Report: PCSO Boyd reported that there had been 66 incidents reported through 101 or 999. There had been 6 crimes since the last meeting, three thefts, 1 incident of a dangerous dog, one criminal damage and a burglary where nothing was stolen but it is being dealt with as suspicious behaviour. Other incidents reported included 4 RTs, a vehicle obstruction in Fairbourne Lane and a report of bad driving.

Cllr Allardyce queried the burglary and PCSO Boyd confirmed that the property had been occupied at the time.

Community Warden: The Community Warden reported on the following items:

- Dog Control Survey - A survey is available to complete on the RK9 Facebook page to gather opinion about dog control across the Borough.
- Highways Tracker Resident Survey - KCC are hoping to receive response from 12,000 residents in Kent. If one of their staff knock at resident's doors they will be carrying photo identification but if anyone has any concerns they should contact either the Community Warden or phone 101.
- A free plumbing course is available to young people aged 18-25. This course will also cover health & safety and starts on the 17th October.
- Resolving disputes between Customers and Traders - KCC are now offering a service to try to resolve issues between customers and traders, before court action is taken.

No matters were raised by members of the public.

4 Decision to Discuss Agenda Item 19 Under Closed Session

All Councillors were in agreement that Agenda Item 19 (Staff Pensions) should be dealt with in a confidential closed session.

5 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 27th July 2016 - The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Stanley; with 5 in favour and 3 abstentions.

Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting 22nd August 2016 - The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr T Sams, seconded by Cllr Morris; with 6 in favour and 2 abstentions.

6 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

Cllr Morris declared that he would need to complete a new Register of Interest form as he no longer has any pecuniary interest in the Amenity Contracts. He asked the Clerk to send him a new form. **ACTION: Clerk**

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Cllr S Morris Agenda Item 8.3 (Environmental - Damage caused by salt bag - VHT) as he is a Trustee of Harrietsham Village Hall

Agenda Item 12 (Venue of Parish Council Meetings) as he is a Trustee of Harrietsham Village Hall Trust

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

7 Planning

7.1 The current planning applications were noted.

The Clerk reported that 16/505808 - 12 West Street is due to be discussed at the MBC Planning Committee meeting to be held on the 5th October. Cllr Dean confirmed that she will speak on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Moore offered to assist with drafting the 3-minute speech.

Cllr J Sams stated that asbestos on the site was only mentioned as an informative in the Committee report and she intends to ask that this be incorporated into any approval as a condition.

Cllr Powell stated that it was very frustrating for the Committee when Parish Councils request that the application be reported to the Committee but then fail to attend to speak on the evening.

7.2 The approved planning applications were noted.

8 Communications

8.1 Recommendations from the Communications Committee:

There were no recommendations.

Cllr Dean clarified for all present that the public discussion sections of the meeting do not form part of the Parish Council meeting and that, following the incident at the July meeting, she wanted to propose that the video recording should only cover the actual meeting and not the public discussion sessions, to ensure that no 3rd party data protection rules are breached. This was seconded by Cllr J Sams, with all in favour.

9 Environmental

9.1 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 8th September: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Stanley; with 3 in favour and 5 abstentions (not present at meeting)

9.2 Other Environmental Issues:

- Update on the Awarding of the Amenity Contracts: Cllr Powell reported that the 6 contracts had been awarded as follows:
 - J B Landscapes Contract 1 - War Memorial area
Contract 3 - Woodlands Walk
Contract 6 - Verges
 - Kent Valley Contract 2 - New Burial Ground
 - C&A Landscapes Contract 4 - Medical Centre
Contract 5 - Key Features around the Village
- Damage caused by salt bag to Village Hall Hedge: Cllr Dean reported that three quotes had been circulated to all Councillors. Cllr Allardyce stated that digging out and replacing the soil was a sound option as it was better to start from scratch for any remedial work completed. Cllr T Sams stated that the beech trees will probably not recover even if the contaminated soil is removed. Cllr Stanley queried whether the soil will be disposed of correctly and Cllr Dean suggested that this would need to be a condition of the approval of the selected quotation being accepted. Cllr T Sams then proposed that Contractor A be approved to complete the remedial work required, at a cost of £375 (+ vat), subject to the satisfactory disposal of the contaminated soil. This was seconded by Cllr Moore with 7 in favour and 1 abstention.
- Gates leading to the New Burial Ground: Cllr Powell reported that it has become apparent that there is an issue with the main gate leading into the new burial ground. The gate appears to have dropped and it is now a two person job to open and close it. A quote is

going to be needed to rectify this, however, before this can happen, the ivy that is now covering part of the gate needs to be removed. Cllr T Sams stated that he believed that this could be removed by a working party in the next 4 weeks and the Clerk added that David Oversby had offered to assist.

ACTION: Cllr T Sams

10 Finance

- 10.1 The Income/expenditure finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Allardyce and seconded by Cllr Morris, with all in favour.
- 10.2 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 8th September: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr T Sams; with 3 in favour and 5 abstentions (not present at meeting)
- 10.3 Other Financial Matters:
- Report from the RFO: The RFO reported that the External Audit report had been received back from the Auditor which gave a clean bill of health, confirming the correct governance of the Parish Council.
 - Grants and Donations Policy: Cllr Dean reported that she has circulated an amended Grants and Donation policy. Cllr J Sams commented that the policy covers everything that had been discussed at the previous meeting. It was then proposed by Cllr J Sams that the Grants Policy be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Stanley, with all in favour. Cllr Moore queried how groups in the village would be made aware of the changes and Cllr Dean confirmed that it would be added to the website and that an article could be added to Network magazine to inform everyone that a Grants Policy will now accompany any application form given out.

11 Highways

Cllr J Sams reported on the hole in West Street which is still awaiting repair. This should have been completed on the 2nd September, however the utility companies are arguing over who is responsible for the repair and associated costs. Susan LaPorte (from Kent Highways) is chasing this as it is an issue for pedestrians, drivers and in particular the bus company. The Clerk reported that there is another water leak through the pavement in Chippendayle Drive and this has been reported to Kent Highways. Cllr Moore commented that the drains along the A20 have recently been cleared. Cllr Stanley asked whether the street lights were ready for winter, as the nights are now drawing in. Cllr T Sams responded that he periodically drives around to check that the lights are working. Cllr J Sams added that, on the Kent Highways fault reporting website, you can now pinpoint the exact street light and it confirms the light number. Cllr Morris reminded all present that street lights along certain parts of the A20 are turned off during the night now. Cllr J Sams also mentioned that the sewage issues that homes along the A20 had encountered earlier this year now seems to have been resolved.

12 Lenham Parish Council

Cllr Dean reported that the following items had been discussed at the last Lenham Parish Council meeting:

- Land that has been gifted to the Parish Council
- BMX skate park requires work
- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations had been reviewed and approved
- Lenham's Neighbourhood Plan, which has been submitted to MBC, although the Parish Council feels that they are back to the start as the Local Plan seems to be overtaking the NHP
- Lenham's swimming pool has reopened
- Jenny Whittle had spoken about grants and mentioned that MBC and KCC have now agreed to cooperate over the Local Plan.
- Thames Link service that will be running into the City from next spring

13 Venue for Parish Council Meetings

As there are new members on the Parish Council, the Clerk gave some background information on this item. In October 2015 Councillors had approved to move the meetings to the school, subject to agreement from the Head Teacher. Reasons for reaching this decision included the noise coming from the Ambrose Hall during the meeting and also the cost of hiring the Booth Hall, which had recently increased to £48.50 per meeting. When the paperwork had been received from the school, there was a charge of £15.00 an hour which meant that each hire would cost approximately £45.00. Following the November meeting there were resignations from the Council, which affected the membership of the Communications Committee, who were instrumental in arranging the move and so the decision was not progressed further. As a resident had queried why no further vote had been taken to remain using the Booth Hall, the decision reached during the October meeting now needed to be revisited. Cllr Moore stated that the option to move to the school had been largely removed and, with this in mind, Cllr T Sams proposed that the meeting continue in the Booth Hall, unless an alternative venue became available. This was seconded by Cllr Stanley, with 7 in favour and 1 abstention.

14 Traffic and Parking Issues in West Street

Cllr Allardyce reported that, since he moved to Harrietsham in 1980, he has seen huge changes in West Street. In the past 18 months he has become increasingly concerned that there is a real danger to pedestrians and also access by emergency vehicles. He has recently taken photos of an articulated lorry that couldn't get out of Station Road as vehicles had parked opposite the junction. With this also being the bus route, the area was gridlocked for approximately 10 minutes which could have been disastrous if an emergency vehicle had needed access. Cllr Allardyce stated that the Parish Council needed to look into how this issue can be addressed. Options included:

- Yellow lines - this would give access but move the problem.
- Introduce parking permits - people's expectations are that they will be able to park along West Street but with the development already in place and any future expansion, the problem is going to get worse as there is more demand on parking. Permits would spread the problem out across the area rather than there being pockets of parking issues.

Cllr Allardyce stated that a full investigation by MBC/Kent Highways urgently needs to take place before a serious incident occurs. Cllr Moore added that she too had photos of a smaller lorry who couldn't gain access to Station Road and she had recently nearly been knocked off of her bicycle by someone who was speeding out of the pub car park. Cllr T Sams reported that families now have more cars and that this is a huge contributing factor to the issues in West Street, along with the larger vehicles that are now used for deliveries. He suggested that he meet with the businesses in Station Road to see if the size of vehicles that they use could be reduced to try to lessen the impact; Cllr Allardyce offered to accompany him. **ACTION: Cllrs T Sams & Allardyce**

Cllr J Sams reported that she had met with Charlie Reynolds to discuss the issues in Forge Meadow and it had been agreed that there was a sight line issue and yellow lines have been applied for on this particular junction. Parking permits had been briefly discussed at the MBC representative had not felt that this was a good idea. It was noted that parking charges at the station also have a knock on effect as commuters park along Station Road and West Street. Another contributing factor is the builders currently working on the CTRL development, as they too are parking in West Street. Cllr J Sams offered to speak to the Site Manager.

ACTION: Cllr J Sams

15 Change of Councillors on the Staffing Group

Cllr Dean proposed that Cllr Moore replace Cllr Powell on the Staffing Group. This was seconded by Cllr J Sams, with all in favour.

16 Future Events

5th October - School Expansion Consultation Event (at Harrietsham School)

8th October - Soup Saturday (St John the Baptist Church)

14th October - Chicory Tip

16th October - Parachute Jump for the Katie Piper Fund

21st October - Film Club

17 Items for Future Consideration

No further items to be added to the agenda.

18 Date of next meeting

Full Parish Council Meeting - **Wednesday 26th October 2016** from **7.30pm** in the Booth Hall

With no further matters to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 8.29pm for public discussion

Public Discussion:

A resident commented on the vehicles that are delivering to businesses in Station Road, stating that the Parish Council will not be able to control the size of vehicles used. They added that there are approximately 33 dwellings in West Street that have no off road parking. Another resident asked whether West Street could be made one way. Cllr Powell responded that discussions with the MBC Parking Control department would be ongoing and that safety must come first.

A resident queried whether the stream will be covered in the new contracts and the Clerk confirmed that the contracts remain unchanged.

A resident queried whether there was an email subscriptions list that could be used for sending out agendas as he had been unaware of the extraordinary meeting as he had not visited the noticeboard. Councillors felt that this was something for the Communications Committee to discuss at a future meeting.

A resident asked whether the grants policy will be added to the website and Cllr Dean confirmed it would be, in due course.

Minutes of Confidential Agenda Item 19 - Staff Pensions will be filed with a sign copy of these minutes.