

# Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall.

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and requested notification if anyone intended to film or record the meeting.

## **Public Discussion**

A resident queried the content of the noticeboard and the Clerk responded.

Police Report: The Clerk reported that there had been no crimes reported in Harrietsham since the meeting in January.

## **1 Present**

Cllr K Kay, Cllr J Sams, Cllr T Sams, Cllr M Williams, Cllr G Trussler, Cllr G Dean, Cllr E Powell, Lenham Representative Cllr N Osborne, RFO Mr M Cuerden and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst.  
13 Members of the Public

## **2 Apologies for absence**

Cllr S Morris, Community Warden Martin Sherwood

## **3 Election of Chairman**

Cllr Trussler nominated Cllr Kay as Chairman and this was seconded by Cllr Dean. With no further nominations, Cllr Kay was duly elected as Chairman and completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

## **4 Election of Vice-Chair**

Cllr Kay nominated Cllr Dean as Vice-Chair and this was seconded by Cllr Powell. With no further nominations, Cllr Dean was duly elected.

## **5 Decision to Discuss Agenda Item 26 Under Closed Session**

Cllr Kay reported that two complaints have been received by the Parish Council and, following the Parish Council's Complaints Procedure, proposed that these be addressed in a closed confidential session at the end of the meeting. This was agreed by all present.

## **6 Minutes of the last meeting**

Parish Council Meeting 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 - The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Powell, seconded by Cllr Williams; with all in favour.

## **7 Disclosures and confidential items**

Changes to the Register of Interests

No changes to the Register of Interests were declared.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Cllr J Sams Agenda Item 13 (Playscheme) as she is employed as the Manager of the Playscheme and her daughter is also a member of staff.

Cllr T Sams Agenda Item 13 (Playscheme) as his wife is employed as the Manager of the Playscheme and his daughter is also a member of staff.

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

## **8 Planning**

8.1 The current planning applications were noted.

8.2 The planning decisions were noted.

8.3 Recommendations from the Planning Committee

Cllr Dean proposed that Jackie Moore be co-opted temporarily on to the Planning Committee. This was seconded by Cllr Trussler, with all in favour.

## **9 Communications Committee**

9.1 Recommendations from the Communications Committee:  
There were no recommendations

## 10 Environmental

### 10.1 Recommendations from the Environmental Committee: There were no recommendations

### 10.2 Other Environmental Issues:

- Community Litterpick: Cllr J Sams reported that she has contacted MBC to arrange the annual Litterpick and this will take place on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March from 8.30-10.00am. A concert to celebrate local talent is taking place in the Church on the same day so the early start time for the litterpick will avoid clashing with this event. MBC will supply the litter pickers and will collect all of the litter at the end. This event will be advertised on Facebook and on posters around the village.
- Teers Meadow Scrub Bash: Cllr J Sams thanked the volunteers who attended. A lot of work had been completed, however another day is planned before the start of the nesting season. Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March has been arranged, having spoken with Simon from the Mid Kent Downs Partnership.
- Duck Islands: Cllr Dean reported that the duck islands require new floatation aids as the islands are sinking and they have been removed from the lake in order to dry them out. The floatation aid is a superior closed cell sheet of non-absorbent waterproof foam and an estimate of £236 (inc. vat) has been received. Cllr Dean also stated that the islands need to be painted with anti-foul paint but has been unable to obtain a price for this. After brief discussion Cllr Kay proposed that £400 be set aside for the required work to be completed as soon as possible, this was seconded by Cllr Williams, with 5 in favour and 2 abstentions (GT, GD).

## 11 Finance

### 11.1 The Income/expenditure finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Trussler and seconded by Cllr T Sams, with all in favour.

## 12 Highways

Cllr Williams reported that he had met with a resident in Goddington Lane who had raised speed and traffic concerns. Cllr Trussler reported that the Planning Committee had recently recommended refusal on an application for two dwellings and stated that one of the reasons was that the lane did not meet the requirements detailed in the KCC Kent Design Guide. Cllr Williams added that he intends to write to Kent Highways on the matter.

Cllr J Sams and the Clerk both reported on "Unsuitable HGV" signs which Boughton Malherbe Parish Council is asking surrounding Parishes to consider purchasing. Cllr Trussler asked where these would be situated and it was noted that it would be on the A20 leading towards East Street. Cllr Trussler reminded all present that an application had been agreed for the Chilton sandpit which allowed HGV lorries to gain access to the site via East Street for the next 18 months. The Clerk added that, if the Parishes all buy the signs at the same time, there would be a reduction in the cost per sign which could mean that it would be cheaper to purchase the signs now but have them installed on the conclusion of the work to take place at the sandpit. Cllr Kay stated that, at the Police meetings that he had attended, it was noted that the signage in other areas is being ignored. After further brief discussion it was agreed that the item should be deferred as the final costings for the signs has still not been confirmed by Kent Highways.

*Cllrs T & J Sams left the room*

## 13 Playscheme

The Clerk reported that information for this year's Playscheme had been circulated to all Councillors which highlighted some potential issues. Cllr Kay asked whether the Village Hall Trust had been contacted regarding the concerns which had been highlighted and the Clerk asked whether Councillors wished for her to go out and enquire. On returning to the meeting, the Clerk asked for this matter to be deferred to the next meeting. This was agreed by all present.

*Cllrs T & J Sams returned to the meeting*

## 14 Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk reported that the Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April at 8.00pm. As with previous years, this would follow on from a shorter April Parish Council meeting which will be from 6.30 - 7.30pm, with public discussion at the end; if time allows. The Clerk asked that the following points be agreed by Members:

- Speaker for the Meeting: The Clerk has spoken with the Organiser of the North Downs Walk who is keen to engage with residents to try to increase the number of walkers who live in Harrietsham. He

wants to make everyone aware that the sponsor money is split between Cancer Research and the walker's preferred charity and so this could raise additional funds for groups within the village. All Councillors were in agreement that this would be a good topic for the meeting.

- **Report Booklet:** The Clerk reported that the Parish Council usually produces a booklet which includes all of the Parish Council committee reports and articles from the various groups in the village. Whilst this is time consuming to produce, it gives the parishioners attending the meeting the opportunity to read the reports at their leisure. Councillors asked that this booklet be produced again this year.
- **Refreshments:** The Clerk asked whether Councillors wished to provide refreshments at the end of the meeting to give residents the chance to speak with Councillors and other group members informally after the conclusion of the meeting. Cllrs agreed that tea, coffee and biscuits should be purchased for the meeting.

## **15 Renewal of Annual Membership to CPRE**

The Clerk reported that the annual subscription to Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) is now due for renewal at a cost of £36.00. Cllr Trussler proposed that the subscription be renewed, this was seconded by Cllr T Sams; with all in favour.

## **16 Village Hall Trust**

### **• Use of the Glebe Field for Parking for the VHT Music Event**

Cllr Kay reported that the Village Hall Trust is aware of its obligations (ie. marshalling the field at all times and the need to reinstate any damage) but acknowledged that the use of the field would be later than other events in the past. Cllr Dean raised concerns that the area will be dark when people are returning to their vehicles and queried who would be liable if someone was to be injured tripping over. Cllr Trussler responded that the VHT had emailed to confirm that they will take full responsibility. Cllr J Sams stated that she would like the Trust to be given permission for parking on the field to avoid parking congestion in surrounding roads. Cllr T Sams asked that the Trust complete a risk assessment, with the Parish Council being given a copy before the event takes place. It was then proposed by Cllr J Sams that the VHT be given permission to use the Glebe Field for parking, subject to the usual caveats and the risk assessment being submitted. This was seconded by Cllr Trussler, with all in favour.

### **• Grant Request for the VHT Music Event**

Cllr Trussler explained that the F&GP Committee had discussed a request from the VHT for £750 at their meeting in November 2015. The Committee had agreed that the Trust had done a good job of stabilising the finances of the hall and unanimously agreed the recommendation to provide the requested grant. However, at the Full Council meeting in November, Councillors had requested that further information be provided by the Trust prior to committing. The RFO had subsequently written to the Treasurer and a response had been received on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February which had answered all of the questions. Cllr Trussler added that he had been saddened that the Trust would not release a copy of their accounts (although it was noted that there was no legal requirement to do so). Cllr Trussler raised concerns that no accumulative balances or reconciliation papers are circulated at VHT meetings, which could have been used instead. Cllr Trussler felt that the grant should be approved with the caveat that, if the event does not go ahead, the money should be returned and that the Parish Council takes no responsibility in the running of the event. Cllr Dean stated that, having looked on-line, other Parish Councils also request a copy of accounts when grant applications are submitted so this is not an unusual request. Cllr Powell queried whether the VHT have enough money to run the event without the assistance of the Parish Council and Cllr Trussler stated that this was unknown. Cllr Trussler went on to explain the financial situation, as he saw it, of the Trust (taking in to account the information which was available). He then stated that the decision should come down to whether the Parish Council wants to support the event. Cllr Dean stated that the Parish Council has awarded grants to various groups in Harrietsham who have then given money to the VHT in the form of hire charges.

Cllr T Sams stated that the fact that the Parish Council has not seen the accounts is irrelevant, he is more concerned that the Parish Council will be seen to be endorsing the event by giving the grant of £750. Having been involved in other music events, he would have liked to see the first event on a much smaller scale to ensure that it is sufficiently managed to a safe level and that time would be left to ensure the area was cleaned up afterwards; the event as it stands seems too open ended. Cllr Trussler stated that he did not feel the Parish Council would be endorsing the event through approving the grant. Cllr Kay stated that there was nothing wrong with endorsing the festival and indeed we should be endorsing it as it was something for the whole village. Cllr Williams queried the level of security being employed for the event and Cllr Trussler read an excerpt of the email which confirmed the security arrangements. Cllr T Sams asked what the anticipated number of people attending was and Cllr Trussler responded that this was unknown. Cllr Trussler then proposed that the grant of £750 be paid to the Village Hall Trust. This was seconded by Cllr Kay with 2 in favour (GT, KK), 4 against (TS, JS, EP, MW) and 1 abstention (GD).

**17 Lenham Parish Council**

Cllr J Sams reported that the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan public consultation is now underway and the closing date for comment is the 24<sup>th</sup> March. It was unfortunate that the timing of this clashes with the MBC Local Plan consultation. It was noted that a huge amount of work has gone into producing the plan. The Clerk reported that she has a copy of the document for Councillors to read. Cllr J Sams also reported that there was discussion around the toilets in the village as the Parish Council wants to ensure that they are accessible for disabled people, however this will have large financial implications.

**18 Village Defibrillator**

Cllr Kay reported that the grants from the British Heart Foundation have now closed and having looked into the cost, 2 units will be in the region of £2,500 to purchase. Cllr Trussler stated that there was no money set aside in the budget for these, however, the money could be taken from the general reserves. Cllr Trussler offered to speak with the doctors to see if they could assist with some funding towards the units and Councillors thought that other groups in the village may wish to make a contribution to the units. Cllr Kay proposed that the Parish Council purchase two defibrillator units (complete with external housing) for the village. This was seconded by Cllr Dean, with all in favour. Cllr Kay stated he would see whether the Company could do a small presentation at the Annual Meeting.

**ACTION: Cllrs Kay & Trussler**

**19 Big Lunch & Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations**

Cllr Dean reported that she had attended the last Big Lunch group meeting with Cllr Williams, the next meeting is to take place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

**20 Parish Council Representative on the Big Lunch working Group**

The Clerk reported that Cllr Dean had offered to attend the last Big Lunch meeting, as it was arranged prior to formally agreeing a representative. Cllr Dean has since offered to take on the role for this year and the working group are happy for Cllr Williams to assist too. This was agreed by all present.

**21 Parish Council Noticeboard for West Street (by The Hollies)**

Cllr Kay suggested that the Parish Council may wish to look into purchasing an additional noticeboard for West Street (close to The Hollies) however, landownership and permission would need to be investigated first. The Clerk reported that, once the Parish Council moves to its new premises, a noticeboard will be required at the office, which could make the one on the green (by the Mace shop) obsolete. It may then be possible to move this down to The Hollies. Councillors agreed that this may be an acceptable arrangement and agreed that this item should be deferred until the move takes place.

**22 Correspondence** - The Clerk reported that all correspondence had been circulated.

**23 Future Events**

'Miss Holiday Swing' Evening - 27<sup>th</sup> February 7.30pm (Village Hall).  
Community Litterpick - 12<sup>th</sup> March.  
Scrub Bash on Teers Meadow - 19<sup>th</sup> March (10am start).

The Clerk reported that there is to be a Joint Parish Group meeting to discuss the Local Plan at the Tudor Marriott Park Hotel on 2<sup>nd</sup> March at 7.30pm. Cllrs Dean & Trussler offered to attend.

**24 Items for Future Consideration**

No further items to add

**25 Date of Next Meeting** - Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

Cllr Kay then informed all present that Agenda Item 26 would be discussed as a Closed Confidential Session, as agreed in Agenda Item 5. Therefore, the meeting would now adjourn for 15 minutes of public discussion.

*Meeting adjourned at 8.45pm*

Public Discussion:

A resident gave background of an accident which had occurred historically in East Street. Some vehicles were unable to be diverted along the A20 or along Church Road as both routes have a low bridge. The police had had to use radios in order to safely direct vehicles along East Street, as the width of the road was reduced causing an issue with larger vehicles. The resident added that he did not feel that Kent Police would like the 'Unsuitable HGV' signs being used in the area.

A resident raised concerns at the mess along the A20 being caused by larger vehicles accessing the Crest Nicholson site (The Hollies). Cllr J Sams stated that she has asked Crest Nicholson to complete the outstanding

work required, which also includes the landscaping still required, and has copied in the Kent Highways Representative overseeing the site.

A resident queried whether there is to be a litterpick in honour of the Queen's birthday and Cllr J Sams said that this scheme is being organised by the Borough Council and she has submitted some areas that could be included in Harrietsham.

A resident queried the ongoing costs of purchasing the defibrillator units. The Lenham Representative stated that the unit stays with the patient when they are transferred to hospital as the unit monitors the heart so that the doctors have as much information as possible. Cllr Kay stated that the units would need servicing every two years but would need to look into the other ongoing costs associated with the purchase. **ACTION: Cllr Kay**

A resident asked if the Church is to have the beacon lit for the Queen's Beacon Lighting celebration in April. Cllr Dean stated that Cllr Morris would probably know more about this as he is a member of The Friends of St Johns.

A resident thanked Audrey Joy for all of the litterpicking she completes around the village and thanks was echoed by Councillors.

Cllr Kay then thanked all members of the public for attending the meeting and asked that they leave the meeting so that the Councillors could address Agenda Item 26.

***Minutes of Agenda Item 26 - Complaints Received by the Parish Council will be filed with a sign copy of these minutes.***