

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 29th November 2017 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall.

The Chairman welcomed all present and stated that the meeting was being recorded.

Public Discussion

A resident queried the clearance taking place on the Pilgrims Way. The Clerk explained that a large area of woodland had been cleared and the stop notice, which had been placed on the site, had been ignored. As a result, Maidstone Borough Council had obtained a High Court Injunction, which will be in place indefinitely. Since this has happened, work has stopped but a planning application has now been submitted for a 4-bed chalet bungalow. Cllr J Sams stated that this proposed development is in the AONB and the application had been called in to the Planning Committee. The Clerk stated that as many residents as possible need to comment on the application.

1 Present

Cllr E Powell, Cllr G Dean, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr T Griffiths, Cllr M Allardyce, Cllr V Foster, Cllr J Sams, Lenham Representative Cllr M Ballard, RFO Mr M Cuerden and the Clerk, Mrs A Broadhurst.
11 Members of the Public

2 Apologies for absence

Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Moore, Community Warden M Sherwood

3 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 25th October 2017 - The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Allardyce, seconded by Cllr Griffiths; with all in favour.

4 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

No changes to the Register of Interests were declared.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

No Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

5 Planning

5.1 The current planning applications were noted.

5.2 The approved applications were noted.

5.3 The withdrawn applications were noted.

5.4 Other Planning Matters:

There were no further matters to discuss.

6 Communications

7.1 Recommendations from the Communications Committee:

There were no recommendations.

7.2 Other Communication Matters:

There were no matters to discuss.

7 Environmental

7.1 Environmental Minutes: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean and seconded by Cllr Allardyce; with 3 in favour (Councillors who are members of the Committee)

7.2 Recommendations from the Environmental Committee:

- Replacement of bench on Glebe Field: It was noted that the bench on the Glebe Field had been vandalised and the Amenity Manager asked that Councillors approve its replacement. The Clerk stated that she had looked into recyclable plastic benches that look like wood, as this will be very low maintenance, however, the Company that would supply it have suggested that the Parish Council look to a local company to fit the bench, as their charge would be as much as the bench. After brief discussion it was suggested that, whoever the Contractor is for the field in the new financial year, they may be able to quote for fitting. It was then proposed by Cllr Allardyce that the Parish Council should purchase a replacement bench in the near future. This was seconded by Cllr J Sams, with all in favour.

7.3

Other Environmental Matters:

Cllr Dean reported that Harrietsham in Bloom have planted 1,000 tulip bulbs on the A20 by The Hollies development and thanked them for all of their hard work.

Cllr J Sams reported on the replacement bins that have now been installed in the village, but added that the ones on the village green are still outstanding. One is to be moved down by Harrietsham School and the others are all supposed to be repainted. A post has also not been removed by Quasted Way. Cllr J Sams will chase the outstanding items. **ACTION: Cllr J Sams**

Cllr Stanley commented that there are 6 bins near Glebe Field and one could be moved to the alleyway by the Booth Field, as there is no longer a bin in this area. It was noted that the field is privately owned, and the Trustees would need to give permission. They had requested that any replacement bin be on the verge outside of the field, which had meant that it is easily accessible for MBC to empty. This would not be the case in the alley (leading to Church Lane from St Welcomes Way).

8 Finance

8.1

The Income/expenditure finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean and seconded by Cllr Stanley; with all in favour.

8.2

Confirmation of cash book to bank statements reconciliation: It was noted that the reconciliation had not been completed at the recent F&GP meeting and, after brief discussion, it was agreed to refer this back to the F&GP committee to be addressed at the next meeting. All Councillors were in favour with this course of action. **ACTION: F&GP Cttee**

8.3

F&GP Minutes: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, this was seconded by Cllr Stanley (only Councillors present at the meeting).

8.4

Other Financial Matters:

- Noticeboard: The Clerk stated that this was a separate agenda item, to be discussed later in the meeting.

- Grant Donations:

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from a resident which requested that Councillors consider the content before discussing the grant donations. The Clerk then read out the following synopsis:

The email raised concerns with regards to the democratic process that was undermined at the most recent Village Hall AGM and highlighted that certain elected Trustees became representatives of village clubs as they wouldn't be re-elected at the meeting. The resident felt that there had been collusion with a number of village clubs adding representatives, resulting in the number of Trustees increasing from 12 to 21.

The resident stated that the sudden expansion of the committee, and the late inclusion of certain individuals would ensure that the subsequent vote on several positions would be decided by this expanded group of people. The result of this being the strengthening of the old management's position despite residents voting to have them removed.

The resident has asked that, if any of the clubs/groups involved in this undermining of the democratic process have recently applied for a grant, that the application not be considered as they had colluded with the previous village hall management and worked against the will of the people of Harrietsham. They added that the Parish Council should consider not entertaining requests for grants from any of the groups in the future, until such time as they reverse their decision to support such undemocratic action. The resident has then listed a number of organisations in the village.

The resident understands that the Parish Council wants to support local community groups, but adds that some residents feel that the council needs to take a stand on this behaviour. They asked that the Parish Council defers making any grant decisions until Councillors have given proper consideration to the content of the email.

Cllr Powell stated that there were two separate issues, one being VHT related and the other being the requested grant applications. He added that the grants needed to be considered on their own merits. Cllr Griffiths stated that the awarding of grants should be based on the group's need and not consider who the committee members are. Cllr Allardyce commented that the Parish Council should be impartial and transparent with decisions made. Cllr J Sams reminded all present that there are tests for awarding grants. Cllr Stanley stated that, by awarding grants, the Parish Council is providing financial assistance for all members of the groups. Cllr J Sams then proposed that each grant application be looked at on its own merit. This was seconded by Cllr Foster, with all in favour.

It was noted that three donations had been discussed at the F&GP meeting and further applications had been received since:

- Harrietsham Fish Scheme - £500
Proposed by Cllr Griffiths, seconded by Cllr J Sams, with all in favour.
- Harrietsham Baby & Toddler Group - £160
The Clerk reminded all present that a small grant had previously been awarded to this group earlier in this financial year and that this application was to help fund Christmas activities. Proposed by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Foster, with all in favour.
- Harrietsham Summer Fun Club (for 2018/19) - £500
It was noted that only 40% of the children attending the club either lived in Harrietsham or attended Harrietsham School. Cllr Dean queried why Harrietsham residents were funding 100% of the grant requested. Cllr Griffiths commented that the club is useful to many families and that the funds are to help run the club, which could be attended by more Harrietsham children next year. Cllr J Sams reported that this has always been an issue with the club, even when the Parish Council were running a summer playscheme, children from outside the village were required to make the scheme viable. Cllr Dean raised concerns that the Harrietsham precept was supporting other Parishes. Cllr Powell queried whether the club would be viable if the 60% of children from outside the village did not attend and the general view was that this was not something that Councillors could predict. Cllr Stanley commented that he did not want to see the club fail. After further discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Griffiths to approve the grant for £500, this was seconded by Cllr Allardyce; with 5 in favour and 2 abstentions (Cllrs Dean and Powell). The RFO then queried when Councillors wished to pay the grant as the organisers had requested the money as soon as possible. Cllr Foster stated that there was a surplus of funds left over from this year's club and all Councillors agreed that the grant should be paid in the new financial year.
- Harrietsham Big Lunch (for 2018/19) - £200
Cllr Griffiths proposed that the organisers be reimbursed for expenditure up to a total of £200. This was seconded by Cllr Foster, with all in favour.
- Friday Coffee Morning (for 2018/19) - £830 (approximate)
The Clerk reminded all present that this grant paid for the hiring of the Booth Hall for the coffee morning, so it was only an approximate figure as hall hire rates could increase at some point. It was proposed by Cllr J Sams to pay for the hall hire for the forthcoming financial year. This was seconded by Cllr Griffiths, with all in favour.
- Short Mat Bowls Club - £500
This grant is to purchase shirts with embroidered logos for the players. Proposed by Cllr Stanley, seconded by Cllr Griffiths; with all in favour.

9 Highways

Cllr J Sams reported that she is chasing resurfacing works that are outstanding. An A20 improvements meeting is to be held on the 12th December and it was decided that it was not appropriate for Lenham Parish Council to be present, as the meeting was to discuss the dedicated Harrietsham scheme.

- Church Road Footpath: Cllr J Sams reported that Cllr T Sams was hoping to meet with the Clerk to see if anything can be done regarding the letter that needs to be sent to Kent Highways to progress this project.

10 Street Name for Benaiah, Church Lane Development Site

The Clerk reported that the developer had suggested Churchfields as a possible name for the new road. All Councillors were in favour of this choice.

11 Lenham Parish Council

Cllr Griffiths reported that a recent fatality on the A20 had overshadowed the meeting and Lenham Parish Council would appreciate Harrietsham's assistance with road safety improvements. The Parish Council would like to see the speed limit lowered and it was noted that the problem will only get worse with further developments exiting onto the busy A20. Cllr Stanley queried with Lenham's representative whether the Parish Council had received the crossroads assessment from KCC and Cllr Ballard confirmed that this is still outstanding. It was also noted that the Parish Council are investigating the ownership of the parking area in the Square, as it is thought that drivers could challenge parking tickets that are issued.

12 Replacement of Noticeboard at Village Hall

As Cllr Moore was not present the Clerk reminded all Councillors that the Village Hall Trust had requested that the Parish Council purchase a noticeboard that matched theirs, at a cost of £648.00 (+ vat). A similar one is available from furniture@work for £253.00 (+ vat). Cllr Moore had informed the Trust that the one they had chosen was too expensive and they have stated that they must approve any alternative board that the Council

chooses. It was proposed by Cllr Stanley that the Trust be informed that the Parish Council wish to purchase the noticeboard at a cost of £253. This was seconded by Cllr Foster, with all in favour. The Clerk confirmed that Cllr Moore would be able to pass on this proposal at the forthcoming Village Hall Trust meeting on the 13th December.

ACTION: Cllr Moore

13 Service Contract for Sewage Pump (Serving Village Hall and Medical Centre)

As Cllr Moore was not present, the Clerk reported that the Village Hall Trust have looked into having a service contract for the sewage pumps, following the recent pump failure. The cost is £200 which includes 1 hour on site (£75 per hour thereafter). The Parish Council was being asked to fund 50% of the cost. Councillors stated that they agreed in principle, however they requested clarification of whether both pumps would be covered by this contract. Cllr Moore to clarify this at the next meeting.

ACTION: Cllr J Moore

14 Speedwatch

Cllr J Sams reported that a meeting has been arranged with the Speedwatch Organisers for the 15th January, to meet with volunteers and to look at the equipment that the Parish Council already has. It was noted that volunteers have come forward from Harrietsham, Lenham, Platts Heath and Lenham Heath. Cllr J Sams also reminded all present that the equipment was jointly owned by Harrietsham and Lenham Parish Councils.

15 Use of the Glebe Field for Parking for the VHT Music Event (Sunday 14th July 2018)

The Clerk reported that a request had been received for use of the field for parking at next year's music event and that the Parish Council had been asked to consider parking until 11.00pm rather than 9.00pm. It was noted that there is now a policy in place with regards to the use of Glebe Field and that it was pointless having this if it is going to be ignored. It was also felt that it was unfair to expect a member of the Parish Council to come out that time of night to secure the field. It was noted that the usual caveats would be in place for the use (use of the field be withdrawn in the event of bad weather and that any damage must be reinstated). It was proposed by Cllr Dean that the request be approved but only until 9.00pm. This was seconded by Cllr J Sams, with all in favour.

16 Use of the Glebe Field for a Helicopter Charter (Saturday 4th August 2018)

The Clerk reported that a request had been received to allow a helicopter to land on the field for a wedding being held at St John the Baptist Church. The company will provide all the relevant paperwork (risk assessments, insurance documents etc). The helicopter will land and shut down so that photos can be taken and the helicopter will be on the ground for approximately an hour. The area will be marshalled by staff members with high-vis jackets who will ensure that the area is safe at all times. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council will not need to do anything on the day. Cllr Dean proposed that the request be agreed but added that a donation of £50 should be made to the Parish Council. All Councillors were in favour.

17 Invitation to the Mayor to the January Parish Council Meeting

It was agreed by all present that the Mayor should be invited to the meeting to be held on the 31st January 2018 and that the Clerk should arrange refreshments.

ACTION: Clerk

18 Annual Parish Meeting Venue

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from the Booking Clerk asking for confirmation of hall hire dates for 2018. A list had been sent back confirming all dates, except the April Annual Parish Meeting as this had been held in the Church earlier this year (due to the hall being unavailable). It was noted that there had been positive comments from residents who had attended and all Councillors agreed that the meeting should be held in the Church again in 2018. There was brief discussion regarding a speaker for the evening and Cllr Allardyce suggested the speaker who had attended the Hollingbourne Annual Meeting.

19 Future Events

Every Saturday - 'Get Active' on the Glebe Field from 9am

20 Items for Future Consideration

Parking Around Harrietsham School - Cllr Griffiths

There was discussion regarding listing The Roebuck as a Community Asset and it was noted that Cllr Allardyce had previously agreed to progress with this. It was agreed that this should be discussed further in a future Planning Meeting.

ACTION: Cllr Allardyce / Planning Cttee.

21 Date of next meeting

Full Parish Council Meeting - **Wednesday 31st January 2018 from 7.30pm** in the Booth Hall

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