

# Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall.

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

## Public Discussion

Community Warden: The Community Warden spoken about the 'Keep Warm Keep Well this Winter' campaign being run by KCC. He has information on the following topics:

- Flu Vaccinations
- Stay Well this Winter (NHS advice)
- Warm Homes (Applying help for heating and insulations costs - [warm.homes@kent.gov.uk](mailto:warm.homes@kent.gov.uk) / 0800 170 1174)
- Health Help Now (Medical services in the area)
- Norovirus
- Be a winter friend (Making time for elderly and vulnerable residents)
- Winter Home Safety Visits

Martin Sherwood stated that, if anyone has fire safety concerns, they can contact a Home Safety Advisor on 0800 923 7000 or via email: [home@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:home@kent.fire-uk.org). Martin can also be contacted directly for information on all of the above (07977 981993)

Police Report: PCSO Boyd reported that there had been five crimes since the last meeting. Three had been theft, one criminal damage and one damage other than a dwelling. Including these crimes, there had been 35 incidents reported to Police. There has been some ASB in the village, this is being addressed and a meeting has been arranged with the family involved. If residents see any suspicious activity they must report this immediately to 101.

A resident suggested that the agenda have more information for each item so that residents can offer information at the start of the meeting to assist Councillors when discussing and making decisions.

## 1 Present

Cllr E Powell, Cllr G Dean, Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Sams, Cllr M Allardyce, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr J Moore, RFO Mr M Cuerden, PCSO J Boyd, Community Warden M Sherwood, Lenham Parish Council Representative Cllr N Osborne and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst.

8 Members of the Public

## 2 Apologies for absence

Cllr S Morris

## 3 Decision to Discuss Agenda Item 23 Under Closed Session

Cllr Powell stated that Agenda Item 23 relates to staffing matters and proposed that these be discussed in a closed confidential session at the end of the meeting, after public discussion. All Councillors agreed with this.

## 4 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 26<sup>th</sup> October 2016 - The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Allardyce; with all in favour.

## 5 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

No changes were submitted.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

## 6 Planning

6.1 The current planning applications were noted.

6.2 The approved planning applications were noted.

6.3 Other Planning Matters:

- To move Planning meetings to Friday Morning: Cllr Dean reported that Planning Meetings had always been held on Friday morning, until recently, and proposed that the meetings be moved to

the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays of the month from January 2017. This was seconded by Cllr Allardyce with all in favour.

- Cllr Powell stated that, at a recent MBC Planning Committee meeting, the issues in West Street were to be investigated and this is to be discussed again at the meeting to be held next Thursday.

## 7 Communications

### 7.1 Recommendations from the Communications Committee:

There were no recommendations. Cllr Dean reported that the Parish Council website is in the process of being transferred to a new Wordpress site and does not appear to be to the standard of the one used currently by the Parish Council. The Clerk informed Cllr Allardyce that there is a Communications Training course being run by KALC in the New Year and that she would forward the details to him.

**ACTION: Clerk**

## 8 Environmental

8.1 Recommendations from the Environmental Committee: Cllr Dean reported that there are no recommendations.

### 8.2 Other Environmental Issues:

- Gate to the New Burial Ground: Cllr Dean reported that the gates to the new burial ground and the concrete fence post in Woodlands Walk are to be repaired the following day. It is hoped that the vandalized gates (at the Garden of Remembrance) will be replaced in the next 10 days.

It was also noted that the Cornus and Ribes on the Village Green have now been cut back.

## 9 Finance

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

9.2 The F&GP Minutes from the meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> November were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean and seconded by Cllr T Sams, with all F&GP committee members in favour.

9.3 Online Banking: Cllr Moore queried whether it was appropriate to only have one signature for the online banking transactions. The RFO explained the process that will be undertaken so that Councillors can easily monitor the transactions and added that he had spoken with the Internal Auditor who had been satisfied with the arrangements. It was proposed by Cllr T Sams that the Parish Council move to online banking. This was seconded by Cllr Moore, with all in favour.

9.4 Grants and Donations: Cllrs T & J Sams reported that their son occasionally attends the Tennis Club so did not intend to take part in any discussion or vote on this grant application. The Clerk suggested that this particular grant be dealt with separately and this was agreed by all Councillors. The following grants and donations had been recommended to Full Council by the F&GP Committee:

***Harrietsham Amateur Musical Society*** - that rather than offering a financial grant, the Parish Council should instead offer the free loan of equipment for their use at their own risk.

***Harrietsham History Society (S137)*** - that the Society be offered a grant of £500, as requested.

***Harrietsham Fish Scheme (S137)*** - that a grant of £500 be offered.

***St John The Baptist Parish Church (S137)*** - that the council offer a grant of £450.

***Messy Church (S137)*** - that a grant of £100 be offered (instead of the £400 requested), together with the suggestion that they could approach the other parishes for a contribution.

***Friday Coffee Morning (S137)*** - That the Council confirm that it will pay for the hall hire, as in previous years, for the period April 2017 - March 2018.

***Harrietsham in Bloom (S137)*** - be offered a grant of £500 in 2017/18.

***The Big Lunch 2017 (S137)*** - The Clerk reported that a late grant application had been submitted for £500 but that the Parish Council usually approves a grant of £150 (on receiving receipts from the organisers). The Clerk suggested that the same grant be given for 2017.

With no comments or queries raised by Councillors, Cllr Dean proposed that the above list of grants be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Moore, with all in favour.

***Harrietsham Tennis Club (Sport)*** - that a grant of £200 be offered, as requested.

Cllr Dean proposed that the Tennis Club grant be approved and this was seconded by Cllr Moore; with 5 in favour and 2 abstentions (TS & JS).

9.5 Play Equipment: It was noted that work is required to the play equipment on the Glebe Field and the F&GP Committee had proposed that approval be sought from Maidstone Borough Council to use s106 money to complete the work required. If approval is refused from the s106 department, then the work should go ahead using Parish Council funds. All Councillors were in agreement with this course of action.

## 10 Highways

Cllr J Sams reported that potholes are being repaired around the village and added that, hopefully, a better standard of repair will be completed. It was noted that there are currently several road closures around the village. Cllr Powell queried the trees that have been removed on the Church Road development site and the Clerk confirmed that the trees did not have TPOs; adding that she has asked Kent Highways to complete a visit to look at the trees on the Ashford side of the site as some are leaning over.

Cllr T Sams queried who is responsible for the street light on the boundary of the village hall car park, as it is not working. The Clerk offered to contact Kent Highways. **ACTION: Clerk**

Cllr Stanley queried whether there is to be a footpath along Church Road, once the new development is complete. The Clerk offered to check the planning application. **ACTION: Clerk**

## 11 Lenham Parish Council

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

- A new Councillor was co-opted
- There had been a report about Lenbus
- A feasibility study is being completed for Ham Lane
- The Parish Council as looking for more Speedwatch volunteers

Cllr Powell reported that the Ashford Road safety issues are to be discussed as there is a planning application that the Parish Council are opposed to for 82 homes; one of which is right on the corner of the junction which would hinder any alteration being completed. Cllr Stanley commented on the new fence which has recently been installed at Swadelands School. It was noted that the old fence has not been removed and Cllr Stanley queried whether it is to stay in situ. Cllr Osborne stated that he would look into this.

## 12 Playscheme 2017

Cllr J Sams reported that she had spoken with Jill Bishop, but that she is still very unwell. It is hoped that there can be further discussion soon, as Jill is recovering, with a report at the January meeting. Cllr J Sams also stated that she needs to find out whether there should be a person qualified to NVQ level 3 to obtain a grant from MBC. **ACTION: Cllr J Sams**

## 13 Road Name for Future Development

The Clerk reported that Dennis Clifton is moving away from the village in the very near future. He was a Councillor for approximately 16 years and Chairman of the Parish Council for many of them. A resident, who was a Councillor with him quite some years ago, has contacted the Clerk to ask if Dennis could be recognized in some way for the work that he completed during his time on the Parish Council. The Clerk added that some current Councillors, who served with Dennis Clifton would recall that, whilst working on the Neighbourhood Plan, members of the Parish Council had always joked that there would need to be a Clifton Close one day and the Clerk commented that now seems to be an appropriate time to discuss this! Mrs Broadhurst asked that Councillors consider that Clifton Close be used in one of the development areas (still awaiting road names), in recognition of the years that Dennis served as a Councillor and Chair of the Parish Council. Cllr T Sams commented that this was a very good idea as Dennis had made a huge contribution to the community whilst serving as both a Councillors and Chairman, he suggested an alternative, that the new Parish Office could have 'Clifton House' in the address. It was then proposed by Cllr T Sams that either Clifton House (for the Parish Office) or Clifton Close/Crescent (for a future development) be used. This was seconded by Cllr Stanley, with all in favour. **ACTION: Clerk**

## 14 Traffic and Parking Issues in West Street

Cllr Allardyce reported that, whilst the parking issues have reduced, there are notable pinch points in West Street, namely by the School, The Wheelwrights, Station Road, outside the Post Office and by the Green. The congestion by the school was highlighted by a company on the Station Road Industrial Estate who had stated the problem is worse at school drop off/pick up times. There is a high risk of scrapes and they suggested that either the traffic calming measures be removed or that the white lines be extended. It was noted that the proposed school expansion will only add to this issue. Cllr Allardyce stated that both the Fire Brigade and the bus company are aware of the congestion issues in West Street and have responded that Kent Highways and MBC need to find a permanent solution. Cllr J Sams stated that the white lines by the school are not in quite the right position, as they had been installed prior to the traffic calming measures. Cllr J Sams added that she has asked repeatedly for this to be resolved. **ACTION: Cllr J Sams**

Cllr Moore informed all present that, when the congestion issues in the road had been discussed with MBC, as part of planning applications, the response had been that 'the minor inconvenience caused is acceptable'. Cllr T Sams stated that everyone would agree with Cllr Allardyce's view of the situation and that it would be extremely helpful if residents could submit photos in support so that any complaints are not just from the Parish Council. Cllr Allardyce commented that he wants to stop a major incident occurring in the area. It was noted that the scaffolding company in the industrial estate had moved out and this has alleviated some of the issues. It was noted that, when photos had been supplied as part of a planning application which had gone to Planning Committee, the Councillors had not seen the photos before making a decision. Cllr Powell suggested that any

photos be used as part of the lobbying process in future to ensure that they have been seen before the meeting. It was agreed that a post should be added to Facebook asking residents to submit any photos that may assist the Parish Council.

**ACTION: Cllr Dean**

#### **15 Use of the Glebe Field for a Running Club**

Cllr T Sams stated that he sees lots of people jogging around the village and thought it might be good to have a 'park run' style event on the Glebe Field. He would like to try this on the first Saturday in the New Year (7<sup>th</sup> January 2017) from 9am. Cllr Moore commented that there is funding available to get women 'of a certain age' active and the grant covers for an Instructor who is first aid trained. After brief discussion, it was agreed by all present to give permission for the use of the field for this new initiative. Cllr Dean offered to advertise this on Facebook.

**ACTION: Cllr Dean**

#### **16 Public Discussion at the Meetings**

Cllr T Sams informed all present that other Parish Councils only have discussion at the beginning of their meetings, to allow for members of the public to offer information which will assist Councillors with making decisions during the course of the evening. He added that the meetings should be brought in line with Lenham Parish Council and not have the 15 minutes at the end. It was noted that, whilst Lenham only have 15 minutes at the beginning, this can be extended (at the Chairman's discretion) if there is a major issue in the village. Cllr Moore commented that this was linked to the comment made by a resident at the beginning of the meeting. The Clerk suggested that, if a Councillor wishes to add an item to the agenda, they should give extra description to be included (although this needs to be concise as space is sometimes limited in the noticeboard so the number of pages for the agenda needs to be controlled). With no further discussion, Cllr T Sams proposed that there be 15 minutes' discussion at the beginning of the meeting only from the January meeting, and that Standing Orders be amended accordingly. This was seconded by Cllr Moore, with all in favour.

#### **17 Recording of Parish Council Meetings**

Cllr T Sams stated that the amount of views of meetings on the internet varied between 15 and 148 (averaging approximately 50). This clearly shows that the recording is serving a purpose to allow residents who do not wish to come out on cold evenings to keep up to date with Council activity. Cllr T Sams thanked Jose Perafan for taking the trouble to record the meetings on the Council's behalf and uploading it onto YouTube. All Councillors voiced their gratitude. Concerns were raised regarding when the recording is live and the Clerk explained that the recording starts as the Chairman opens the meeting and will stop when the meeting is officially closed.

#### **18 Big Lunch 2017**

Cllr Dean asked whether any Councillors would be able to assist with organising the event in 2017. After brief discussion, it was agreed that all available Councillors would assist in the run up to the event and with setting up on the day.

#### **19 Correspondence**

The Clerk reminded Councillors that, during October a letter was received from the Chair of the Village Hall Trust asking the Parish Council to confirm that the Parish Office will be rented until December 2017, otherwise they would need us to vacate on the 4<sup>th</sup> December this year. The developer subsequently confirmed the early information given to the Chairman, that the new office would not be available until July 2017, at the earliest. At the last meeting of the Village Hall Trust, the Trustees have now voted to amend the rental license to allow a 3-month notice period to be given, so that the Parish Council will not need to rent for the full year if the Council does move mid-year as planned. The Village Hall Trust are intending to redraft the license, incorporating this new clause. This was noted by all Councillors.

#### **20 Future Events**

3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Tree Festival (St John the Baptist Church)  
7<sup>th</sup> January - Running Event on Glebe Field (from 9am)

#### **21 Items for Future Consideration**

No further items to be added to the agenda.

#### **22 Date of next meeting**

Full Parish Council Meeting - **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017 from 7.30pm** in the Booth Hall, with the Mayor of Maidstone in attendance.

With no further matters to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 8.45pm for public discussion

#### Public Discussion:

A resident commented that the contractor had done a fantastic job with the hedgecutting and added that the village looked nice recently.

A resident reported that the damaged street name sign in Church Road has still not been reinstated.

**ACTION: Clerk**

A resident stated that they were glad that the Parish Council intends to keep recording the meetings, as it is welcomed by residents who are unable to attend.

With regards to the use of the name 'Clifton' in the village, it was noted that a street name is more permanent than a house name.

A resident queried how the new Parish Office is to be funded and the RFO stated that there would need to be a rise to the precept. The resident stated that he had previously informed the Clerk that he would like to see this happen, as there are only a small number of volunteers working to improve the village for the benefit of all residents. A rise in precept is the only way to ensure that everyone contributes towards the village. Cllr Powell added that, with the cuts from Government, precept will be a real issue for Parishes in the coming years.

A resident thanked the Parish Council for the work that is continuing to try to tackle the issues in West Street. He reported that some of the problem is down to workmen from the CTRL site parking in the road and walking across to the building site.

A resident asked if there is anything that can be done about the volume of Christmas tree advertising signs in the village. The Clerk responded that she has contacted Kent Highways to find out whether approval has been given for the signs.

A resident thanked the Parish Council for the grants that had been awarded during the meeting.

***Minutes of Confidential Agenda Item 23 - Staffing Matters will be filed with a sign copy of these minutes.***