

MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL at 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2009

Present: Cllr Robins (Chair)
Councillors Clemson, March, Fletcher, Stevens, and Kerrigan.

In attendance: Lucy Noakes (Clerk)
2 members of the public

Declarations of Interest:

Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct were invited.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr King (KCC)

Cllr Callow (TWBC)

Cllrs Parker, Fletcher, Hughes and Cheesman – owing to inclement weather

2. PUBLIC SESSION

Mr Jones wished to address the Council about problems he had encountered at the local Primary School. He explained that he had mentioned large holes in the perimeter fencing of the school to the Headteacher, Mr Hayes in the summer, and noted that pieces of heras fencing had now been placed where the holes were apparent. However, he felt that this was inadequate from a child safety point of view. Mr Jones said that he would prefer to see monies raised by the school used to provide a new perimeter fence, which he felt was needed more than a new kitchen or computer suite.

Mr Jones also asked the Council if they knew anything of a rumour which was circulating the village regarding the Headteacher saying that he was living with his mother at Horsmonden in order to make sure his daughter received a place at the primary school. Cllr Robbins explained that this relates to the reason for Cllr Hughes' resignation from the School Board, which was discussed at the last Parish Council meeting under point 8.2. The Chair explained that as the Parish Council no longer had a member on the School Board of Governors they were unable to place any influence on events which occur at the school.

It was also explained that whilst the Parish Council sympathises with the apparent situation and could support a complaint made to KCC by a Parishioner, they were unable to take any action as a Parish Council. Cllr Kerrigan offered his support to Mr Jones if he wished to make a complaint to KCC.

It was suggested from the Chair that the Parish Council draft a letter to KCC explaining they felt that the way the School Governors are arranged at the primary school does not support an independent view from that of the Head teacher, as most of the Governors are either teachers or parents.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5th January 2009 were taken as read and proposed for approval by Cllr Clemson, seconded by Cllr Kerrigan. Unanimous.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Cllr Stevens said that he had some brackets suitable for putting around the roofline of the Institute and he would discuss further with Cllr Robbins as to when these could be fixed into position

Clerk to send all the necessary attachments by email so that Cllr Robbins can put the ICO information on to the website.

5. PLANNING

5.1 Planning Applications

Planning Application No:	TW/09/00001/FUL/SEP
Proposal:	Single storey rear extension
Location:	Rowan Cottage, School House Lane, Horsmonden , Tonbridge
Recommendation:	Approval.
Proposed:	Cllr Stevens, seconded Cllr Clemson. Unanimous.

Planning Application No:	TW/09/00031/REM/TA1
Proposal:	Reserved matters(appearance landscaping ,scale):demolition of existing residential dwelling and construction of two, two –storey residential dwellings and formation of one new access to the site(TW/05/01727 refers)
Location:	Mentmore, Brenchley Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge
Recommendation:	Approval.
Proposed:	Cllr Clemson, seconded Cllr Stevens. Carried.

Planning Application No:	TW/08/04185/FUL/CLC
Proposal:	Retrospective – Conservatory to rear elevation
Location:	Winster House, 13 Oliver’s Court, Horsmonden, Tonbridge
Recommendation:	Approval
Proposed:	Cllr March, seconded Cllr Clemson. Unanimous.

5.2 Report of Permissions Granted and Refused

It was decided that the reading of these would be left until the planning meeting which was to take place on 4th February 2009

5.3 Other Planning Matters

It was decided that these matters would be better dealt with at the planning meeting scheduled for 4th February 2009

6. FINANCE

6.1 Parish Council Accounts to date

The following accounts in respect of the period up to 2nd February 2009 were presented to the meeting and it was proposed by Cllr Clemson and seconded by Cllr March to accept the accounts. Unanimous.

Horsmonden Parish Council Accounts as at 1st February 2009

	Balances
Current account b/fwd 05.01.09	£ 9,899.10
Deposit account b/fwd 05.01.09	£ 66,186.86
Interest received (Deposit Account)	

Item	Ref	Receipts	Payments
Mid Kent windows for VH windows	400579		£ 1,037.45
Les Bateup - for mowing the VG (14 cuts)	400580		£ 238.00
EDF Energy - cell and relay col.44	400581		£ 24.81
EDF Energy Jan street light maintenance	400582		£ 140.56
EDF Energy Feb Street light maintenance contract	400583		£ 140.56
EDF Energy street lighting supply (1.10.08-02.01.09)	400584		£ 287.18
Thomson , Snell and Passmore solicitors (Institute Trust)	400585		£ 1,035.00
BT Payment services - neighbourhood watch line	400586		£ 41.94
BT Payment services - PC line	400587		£ 100.02
Mrs L Noakes - January salary	S/O		£ 540.72
Inland revenue - tax and NI Mrs Noakes December 08	400588		£ 22.38
Inland revenue - tax and NI Mrs Noakes Jan 09	400589		£ 28.54
Mrs. L Noakes (car usage and petrol)	400590		£ 8.51
Mr. CJ Couchman - January clock and play area	400591		£ 95.75
Mr. S Jones - January scavenging	400592		£ 73.05
payment from Farmers market for electricity	13.01.09	£22.04	
Interest Current account	05.01.09	£ 1.04	

Current Account as at 01.02.09	£ 6,107.71
Deposit Account as at 01.02 .09	£ 66,186.86

TOTAL	£
BANK:	<u>72,294.57</u>

6.2 Quotations for new Parish Council Notice board

The Clerk had obtained three different quotations for the new Parish Council notice board. After consideration it was proposed from the Chair that the Council approve the quotation for a green notice board costing £1581.61 from Sign of the Times. Clerk to order this as soon as possible.

6.3 Village Hall fencing

It had been noticed by members of the Village Hall committee that the side fence needed reparation. The Village Hall Committee will obtain quotations in respect of this to be discussed at next month's Parish Council meeting.

It was also mentioned that next month's agenda should include items for the retrospective agreement to 5 new replacement windows for the Village Hall.

The Clerk was asked to check with TWBC licensing department about the current licensing agreement for the village hall as this could affect where Parish Council meetings take place.

6.4 Pollarding the trees on the village green.

The Clerk had obtained a quotation from Jamie Tweddle to pollard 4 of the lime trees on the Village green at £145 each. It was proposed from the Chair that the Clerk ask Mr Tweddle to pollard all 8 limes, as it was felt that the green would look better if all trees were done at once. This was agreed unanimously. It was suggested that the Clerk may ask for a discount as 4 of the limes had been pollarded more recently and would not have as much growth as the others, although it was agreed that the Clerk should agree to go ahead with the job at £1160 for all 8 trees if necessary.

7. HIGHWAYS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

7.1 Highways

Cllr Stevens reported that the trees marked by Jacobs some time ago had still not been actioned upon. Cllr Stevens also reported that the drains and gulleys still needed unblocking and the marker posts still needed attention at many sites. The Clerk reported that she had been in contact with Highways department several times during the month regarding the drains and gully clearance, and this had also been reported to Lynn Day (Alex King's secretary) to chase.

It was requested that the Clerk ask the owners of Birch Cottage to trim back the high conifer hedge to the edge of the boundary as it is beginning to cover the street light at the end of Green Lane.

It was requested that the clerk report the following jobs to Highways department:

- some of the pipe work has come out of its holdings at either end, on the Horsmonden side of Gafford's Bridge on the RHS going towards Claygate.
- The reflective sign on Gafford's bridge going towards Horsmonden is obscured by vegetation.
- On School House Lane, the surface of the lane needs resurfacing from Rowan Cottage to Northiam Farm
- On Churn Lane, there are lines on the road creating an uneven surface near to the Pitlands entrance.
- On Spelmonden Road, the road needs resurfacing between Diamond Fields and Rectory Park.

7.2 Street lighting – new contract for March 09. Loss of street light 10.

It was proposed from the Chair and agreed unanimously that the Council awards the new street light maintenance contract to Southern Electric Company at the agreed charge of £110.58 net monthly, which does not include painting the columns or electrical testing certificates. Unanimous.

It was suggested that the contract be awarded for one year initially, but assuming renewal for a further 4 years (to make up a 5 year contract) if the performance was acceptable. Clerk to ask if SEC can guarantee a price for the 5 year contract.

The Clerk explained that street light 10 had been knocked out of the ground on 25th January 2009 and that parishioners had reported a road traffic accident at this location on the evening of 25th January. The Clerk is pursuing this matter with the local police and the insurance company as it is likely that only the lamp head will be retrievable from the accident and the rest of the column will need replacing.

8. PARISH COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

8.1 Village Green booking form for Gardening Society on 9th May 2009

There was a proposal from the Chair to allow this event to go ahead on the Village Green, and the Council voted in favour of this unanimously. Clerk to inform the Gardening Society.

8.2 Parish Council representative for the School Board of Governors

The Clerk had received a letter from Grant Leslie (Chairman of the school Board) to say that the Governors would prefer not to re-appoint a Parish Council representative to replace Stuart Hughes following his resignation from the School Board, whilst discussions regarding the library continue. The Councillors were keen to point out to the members of the Board that Stuart Hughes' resignation from the Board had nothing to do with the library issue, and was more specifically related to issues regarding the schools admissions policy. It was agreed that the Clerk should write a reply to the Chair of the School Board explaining this and pointing out that members of the Parish Council have received several complaints from Parishioners regarding the admissions policy specifically because it could result in the exclusion of local children. It was requested that the Clerk should copy this email to Alex King (KCC) and the Cabinet member for Education at KCC.

Cllr Kerrigan informed the Council that he had been in contact with Alex King to ask advice and express the Council's concerns over this matter. Cllr Kerrigan to report to Cllr King that the Parish Council had received another complaint from a Parishioner regarding admissions to the Primary school.

8.3 Millennium Fund

The Clerk had written to all of the owners who had properties which will be mentioned on the plaque, as well as all those people who had come up with suggestions for ways of spending the millennium monies. There had only been a few responses, all of which were very positive. Cllr March to inform the engraver to go ahead with the work for the plaque.

8.4 LGRF & Parish Play area

There had been little progress in this matter as the Clerk was still awaiting an up to date survey which was being arranged by Richard Williams. Cllr Robbins said that he had received an email from Richard Williams saying that he would forward a CAD drawing from the surveyors as soon as possible.

8.5 Housing needs project and rural housing meeting 23/02/09

Cllr Robbins reported that he would attend the meeting on 23rd February, as he wished to discuss the Rural Housing process with planning.

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact TWBC planning and try to arrange a public meeting for March 2009 to inform the public about the Housing needs Project so far.

8.6 Public conveniences

Cllr March had been trying to organise a private cleaner who could clean the public conveniences at Horsmonden and Brenchley, as this would cost TWBC less than their current contract and would show that the Parish was willing to help where necessary. However, given the timescales involved it was difficult to achieve and could not be guaranteed.

It was agreed that the Clerk should email Richard Powell as a matter of urgency to explain that Horsmonden Parish Council are interested in further discussions regarding the loos, but have no plans to propose at present, given the short timescale. Clerk to also ask whether the monies set aside by TWBC for making the loos compliant with disabled facilities would be passed over the Parish Councils to carry out the work if the loos were handed over, or whether the disabled facilities would be put in by TWBC beforehand. It was suggested that the Clerk copy this email to Marcella Callow, Sally Slade and all the TWBC cabinet members also.

8.7 Refuse collection over the Christmas period

Cllr Stevens suggested that the Parish Council ask Julie Mellor at TWBC to arrange for green bins only to be collected over the Xmas period for two consecutive weeks, rather than having the alternate brown bin system during this period, as many people had been left with too much household waste to dispose of during this period.

It was also requested that the Clerk report to Julie Mellor that the Parish Council were pleased to hear that the new contract incorporates the collection of plastics and tins as an extension of the door step collection, and ask whether the Sunday Amenities vehicle would be included in the new contract.

8.8 Library closure

The Clerk read aloud a letter of reply received from Cllr Carter (KCC) regarding the issue of the Library closure.

It was requested that the Clerk write back saying that whilst the Parish Council fully understand what he is saying about the School and it being their decision as to what activities take place on the premises, the Parish Council do not feel that Cllr Carter has addressed the Council's concerns about the verification of information which is being relied upon to make decisions within KCC. The Parish Council feel strongly that KCC should ensure that the correct measures are in place at KCC to ensure that all information being relied upon to make decisions should be verified for its source and veracity, and would like confirmation from KCC that such measures are in place.

It was also requested that the Clerk email Paul Carter's response to Alex King (KCC) together with the Parish Council's response.

8.9 Institute & Horsmonden Social Club

The Clerk informed the Council that she had now received a letter from the Secretary of State informing the Council that they may go ahead with the disposal of the land by way of a trust. The Trust Deeds and lease are also ready to be signed by the appropriate parties. The Clerk queried whether it would now be appropriate for the Community Care Project to be listed as one of the main Trustees as they no longer seemed to have any involvement in the building. It was suggested instead that the organisers of the Coffee mornings or Women's Institute may be more appropriate. Clerk to try and track down these people.

Cllr Robbins to contact those who were originally interested and see if they still wish to be a party to this.

8.10 Parish Planning

The Clerk had received communications from ACRK regarding parish planning and had a conversation with Cllr Callow about this. It is something which the Council had looked into some years ago, but had not pursued at that time.

Cllr March explained that this did not have to be something which the Parish Council necessarily undertook, it could be led by any members of the community and would be useful at looking at what the village hoped to achieve in the next five years or so.

It was suggested that the Clerk write to all village institutions inviting them to send two representatives to a meeting, and perhaps get Victoria Lawson from ACRK to attend to explain what it is about.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 Actions with Communities in Rural Kent – village of the year 2009

The Clerk had received details from ACRK about entering the village of the year competition. This was not something which the Councillors wished to enter into at this time.

9.2 Destination signs – KCC request for information

The Clerk had received a form from KCC about destination signs and explaining that if the Council wanted to have some new signs these could be subsidised by KCC and would cost £50 each. The Councillors could not think of anywhere which needed a new sign of this type at present.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (DISCUSSION ONLY)

Cllr Kerrigan asked the Clerk to find out when the next Police forum at Cranbrook was to take place at the Council had not recently had any notifications about these.

It was requested by Cllr Stevens that the Clerk try to ascertain from Cranbrook Police whether PC Jamie Woodhams was likely to be replaced, as he had moved on from this area.

It was pointed out by members of the Village hall Committee that in response to the Police's request for a room free of charge in which to operate a Parish forum, it should be explained that unfortunately the Village Hall can only be hired out for a fee, as it has costs to cover and therefore has to charge each user on the same basis (including the Parish Council).

The meeting closed at 10.32pm

Next Meeting Dates

Monday March 2nd 2009 - Parish Council Meeting

Monday April 6th 2009 - Parish Council Meeting

Monday May 11th 2009 - Annual Parish Meeting & Annual meeting of the Parish Council

Monday May 18th 2009 – Planning Committee

Monday June 8th 2009 – Parish Council Meeting
Monday June 22nd 2009 – Planning Committee
Monday July 13th 2009 – Parish Council Meeting