

**MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**HELD IN HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 P.M.**  
**ON MONDAY 10TH MAY 2010**

**Present:** Cllr Robins (Chair)  
Councillors Cheesman, Clemson, Hughes, March, Stevens, Parker and Fletcher.

**In attendance:** Lucy Noakes (Clerk)  
31 members of the public  
Cllr Callow (TWBC) – Had to leave the meeting at 8.45pm  
Cllr King (KCC) – Had to leave at 8.45pm

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

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Holloway  
Jennifer Naylor  
Cllr McDermott (TWBC)

2. **PUBLIC SESSION.**

Mrs Mills addressed those present about the planning application for a bungalow on the piece of land behind Vine Cottages, next to the Village Hall. The developers had indicated in the plans that the piece of wire fencing between the land and the village hall will be removed and Mrs Mills wondered if the Council knew anything about this as they own the fencing. Cllr Robins said that the Council had not been approached about this matter and had no intention of removing their fencing or the wall to which it was attached. The council intend to discuss the planning application at their Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

3. **GUEST SPEAKER PCSO Laura Carey**

PCSO Laura Carey presented the public and the Council with a report on local crime for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. She explained that most burglaries which took place in the area included the theft of garden equipment and bicycles. PCSO Carey went on to talk about the use of products such as Selector DNA which uses microdots to invisibly mark products , which can enable the owner to be identified if stolen and then picked up by the police.

PCSO Carey explained that there had been some anti social behaviour in the village by a group of youngsters, but that the main catalysts had been identified and spoken to regarding their behaviour.

Speeding was mentioned as an issue which many locals feel strongly about. Speedwatch activities have now resumed on a fairly regular basis and the police fully support these activities. Mr Dicketts, local Speedwatch coordinator, asked if local firms could be reminded by the police of their duty not to speed through the village, as both local taxis and the dustcart had all been seen exceeding the limit recently.

Mr Naylor reminded those present that all crimes should be reported to the police; otherwise the police will think that there is less crime in the area than there really is.

Thanks were extended to PCSO Carey for attending the meeting and providing this information to local residents.

4. **MINUTES OF THE 2009 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11th May 2009 were recommended for approval by Cllr Stevens, seconded by Cllr Fletcher, voted for unanimously and duly signed by the Chairman.

5. **MATTERS ARISING**

It was reported that the street lighting at Lamberts Place is on all night. This is the responsibility of Kent Highways services; however, the Clerk will report this to the appropriate persons.

Mr Kerrigan said that it was good to see more advertising for the Annual Parish Meeting this year, and it was noted that most members of the public present had come because they had seen the adverts up around the village.

6. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr Robins reported on various activities which the council had been involved in over the last year, as follows:

Play Area

The Council had been pleased to finally open the newly refurbished play area in July 2009 and to date this had been a great success and was widely used by the children of the village.

Public conveniences

The Council taken over the cleaning of the toilets in May, but were still negotiating with TWBC regarding the terms of the lease to be completed with them. It was however, the Parish Councils intention to continue to pursue this matter and keep the toilets open to the public.

Housing Needs

A possible site for social housing had been identified off Gibbet Lane; however, a private developer Cascade Housing, already had an option to purchase this land for development. Cascade were currently working on plans for a development of 15 homes in Gibbet Lane and it was reported that a public consultation was to be held in the Methodist Hall on 19<sup>th</sup> May between 2pm and 7pm regarding this matter. This would be an opportunity for all those interested to come along and view Cascade's plans and register any interest they may have in social housing on this site.

Councillor Robins said that although alternative sites had been investigated around the village for social housing, there had been problems associated with each of the other sites, and he could not therefore say what would happen if social housing plan was not successful on the Gibbet Lane site.

Village Green

A soil sample had been carried out by Bournes, on behalf of the Council earlier in the year and this had identified a lack of sufficient nutrients in the soil on the Green. Lime had now been spread on

the Green as part of the plan to add nutrients to the soil, but other dressings would need to follow over a three year period at least.

Cllr Robins said that the Council had managed to purchase 100 new posts manufactured from recycled materials and intended to replace all the posts around the Green in this way over a period of time. Posts made from these materials should be long-lasting and would look in fitting with the rest of the Green. Two new benches made from similar materials had also been purchased. One from funds raised to commemorate Bernard and Jean Fowler and one donated by Mrs Bird in memory of her late husband.

New gates had also been installed at the top end of the Green which made the entrance much more secure and were far safer than the previous entrance posts and chain which used to expose a large hole in the ground each time the entrance was opened up.

#### Institute Building

The Social club had raised funds to put a kitchen facility into the building and were currently obtaining quotations in respect of this.

The Clerk had obtained quotations for the repainting of the outside of the building including the clock tower, and this was likely to be carried out every 5 years or so together with the repainting of the Village Hall.

#### Path across Fromandez Drive

Contractors had been due to come and construct the pathway over the previous week, but unfortunately they had let KCC down and so the job had not been carried out. It was hoped that fresh contractors would shortly be instructed by KCC to carry out the task.

#### Changes within the Council

Unfortunately Cllr Kerrigan had resigned from the Council at the September Parish Council meeting, following a disagreement with other members of the Council over the Horsefair. Following this Valerie Holloway had been co-opted onto the Council in December 09.

#### Accounts/Precept 2010/11

The Village Hall maintenance had been set at £3000.00 which was to cover the repainting of the exterior and provide some monies for reserve on the Hall.

The Institute Maintenance had been set at £4200.00 to cover repainting the exterior and replacing some of the lead flashing on the roof

£2000 had been earmarked to cover the estimated maintenance of the Public conveniences, £1800 to cover the cleaning contract and £850 for estimated rates.

The Council had set aside £2000 in respect of the replacement of the old MBFU style lamps on the street lights, with new style lights as current legislation was making it more difficult to obtain parts and maintain these lamps.

£1000 had been added to the funds precepted for the Millennium Project, as there was unlikely to be enough money in the current funds set aside for this, to cover the installation.

Together with other costs, this meant that the precept had been set at £47783.08, representing a decrease of 0.26% from that raised for 2009/10.

### Parish Plans

Cllr Robins said that the Council had been investigating the idea of carrying out a Parish Plan.

This is a document setting out how the residents of the area wish to see the area develop over the next few years. The plan could cover a range of issues and would give parishioners a recognised voice. Councillor Robins explained that a Parish Plan documents the socio- economic and environmental issues of a community and its proposed remedies and solutions. Such a plan would be an evolving document, outlining how the community wishes to develop over the next ten years and would include a vision for the future, and an expression of the residents' views together with an action plan detailing how these developments can be achieved. Such a plan would hopefully outline how the parishioners, the Parish Council, Government at all levels and local service providers can act to deliver the plan addressing resident's wishes. For the plan to be effective it would need the input of as many villagers as possible.

### Christmas Lighting

Cllr Robins mentioned the Christmas Lights and said that it had been a great shame that the Council had been forced to take them down early in the last few years. Several suggestions were made from members of the public present and it was clear that local residents value having the Christmas lights up each year. Cllr Robins said that the Council were now looking into various alternatives for Christmas lighting.

## 7. **PRECEPT AND ACCOUNTS**

The accounts for 2009-2010 (Account Summary attached at Appendix 1) and the Precept for the year 2010-2011 (attached at Appendix 2) were presented to the meeting by Cllr Hughes who also gave an explanation as to how the final amounts had been arrived at by the Council. It was proposed by Isobel Kerrigan and seconded by Jan Botten, that the accounts be accepted and this was unanimously agreed by the members present and signed by the Chair and the Clerk accordingly.

Cllr Hughes was thanked for his support and help with regards to the Finance Committee. Cllr Hughes thanked the Clerk for her preparation of the Accounts.

## 8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllr Robins took the opportunity to explain that he intended to step down as Chairman to the Parish Council at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 17<sup>th</sup> May and he thanked members of the Council who had over the years helped him to achieve various tasks on the Council's behalf. He also thanked the Clerk for her support and services to the Council over the last few years. Cllr Clemson paid tribute to Cllr Robins for all his hard work over his years as Chairman, during which time he had been a tower of strength to the Council, providing knowledge and guidance for all.

Mrs Kerrigan asked if the CCTV equipment which the Council had was portable. Cllr Robins said that it was portable to a certain extent but needed a constant power supply and also had limited visibility in some situations. The Camera had been purchased using money from Neighbourhood watch. Kindergarten had also asked if they may be able to use it on a temporary basis to guard the

front of their building, however, its use for this sort of surveillance may be limited for the above mentioned reasons.

Mr Hughes addressed those present asking if anyone had noticed an increase in noise created by vehicles in the village over the last few years. He explained that he lives close to Noakes Cold Stores and that as from January there had been more frequent night shifts going on at the site creating a lot of noise, with refrigeration units often running all night.

Mr May said that there had been an increase in heavy traffic using the Maidstone Road and he believed this was because vehicles were using this road as a cut through from the A20 to the A21. It was remarked that some of the lorries passing through the village do not actually have any business in the village and are just passing through. It was suggested that this matter could be raised in the Parish Plan if it goes ahead.

Cllr Robins suggested that the Clerk might ask KCC if strips could be put across the road to monitor the number of vehicles passing through and perhaps give a suggestion as to how many were larger vehicles and where they were heading.

At the end of the meeting thanks were extended to Cllr March for her provision and preparation of all of the refreshments offered during the meeting.

The Meeting ended at 9.50pm.