

MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL at 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 1st MARCH 2010

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

In attendance: Lucy Noakes (Clerk)
4 members of the public
Cllr King (KCC)
Paul Cummins – TWBC Monitoring Officer
Barbara Varney – Chairperson of the Local Standards Board

Declarations of Interest:

Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct were invited. Cllrs March and Hughes declared an interest in planning application TW/10/00515/LBC and took no part in the discussion or decision making process regarding this application. Cllr March also declared an interest in application TW/10/00418/HOUSE/CW1 and took no part in the discussion or decision making process regarding this application.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

TWBC Cllr Slade
TWBC Cllr Callow
Cllr Cheesman (ill health).

2. PUBLIC SESSION

Guest Speakers Paul Cummins (Monitoring Officer) and Barbara Varney (Chair person of the Local Standards Board)

Barbara Varney explained to the Council that each Borough Council must have a Standards Committee, chaired by an independent person and that the Standards Board's job was to investigate complaints made against Parish and Borough Councillors, under the Standards Board Code of Conduct.

Allegations against Parish or Borough Councillors are often dealt with and settled before they become a formal complaint, but once the complaint has gone to the Standards Board it must be dealt with formally. The resulting outcome recommended by the Monitoring Officer maybe include some training for the Councillor, or mediation and can result in removal from position in extreme circumstances. The Standards Board aims to have a sensible approach to these matters and settle disagreements as fairly as possible.

Councillor Hughes asked Paul Cummins if there was any way that the Parish Council could obtain legal advice from his team of legal professionals. Unfortunately this is not possible as the legal advisors are only insured to offer advice to the Borough Council.

The Parish Council was advised to check that it had a suitable procedure in place for dealing with its own complaints.

Flooding on the Brenchley Road

Mr Payne and Mr Hersey who live on the Brenchley Road addressed the Council about the flooding problem which seems to occur outside their houses whenever there is heavy rainfall.

Mr Payne had taken some photographs of the area on the previous Sunday when there had been heavy rainfall and it was evident that the lack of drainage in that vicinity was causing water to flow

onto the front ways of the houses. Mr Payne said that it had become such a problem that when heavy rainfall is forecast they feel they must remain in their properties to protect them in case of flooding. Mr Hersey and Mr Payne went on to say that the problem seems to have got much worse a few years ago when a company (possibly EDF) came and dug up the road. This seems to have broken or disturbed the culvert which was taking water across the road and into the drainage system on the other side. The residents feel that if this culvert was reinstated then a lot of the water could be diverted away from their side of the road and the problem would be minimised. A further problem mentioned was that there does not appear to be any proper drainage on the left hand side of the road going out towards Brenchley, for quite some distance.

Alex King was present at the meeting and following a discussion with the Parish Council on this matter, he suggested that the Clerk forward to him the photographs from Mr Payne so that KHS could be asked to rectify the situation.

Cllr King also went on to say that following the huge number of potholes which have appeared in Kent's roads, KCC have now committed another £1million towards filling these. Cllr King also said that KCC was hoping to carry out a Review in the spring of all the services offered by KHS including salt bins etc and that hopefully they could rectify problems which have come to light this winter (for example people stealing the salt out of the salt bins provided for road use).

The Clerk asked Cllr King if there was any way KHS could come and fill a whole road of pot holes instead of having to report each one individually. Cllr King said that if the Clerk forwarded a copy of her email to him, he would see if this could be done.

Cllr King went on to give some background information about KCC. He said that KCC need to save £200million over the next 3 years which equated to approximately 8-10% of the County's budget. However, he said that this should not be viewed as something to panic about, as the Council were merely looking at ways of doing things differently and making savings in the way they provide their services. The Council have identified approximately 2 thirds of this saving and they are now reviewing things to see if they can do them more cheaply in order to save the remaining third. About 700 non front-line jobs were likely to be lost.

KCC have announced their budget and will make their savings known in the summer. Cllr King was asked about public sector pensions and pay and said that in the past public sector pensions may have been treated more favourably than those in the private sector and that this would be likely to change. He said that there would be no pay increases this year or next and that pay rises after that were likely to be based more on performance related pay and the incremental pay rise system was likely to be removed, he felt.

Mr Lawrence had previously requested to address the Council on the development of 15 homes at Gibbet Lane; however, he had been unable to attend the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting – 1st February

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1st February 2010 were taken as read and proposed for approval by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Clemson. Carried.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising reported at the meeting.

5. PLANNING
5.1 Planning Applications

Planning Application No:	TW/10/00235/HOUSE
Proposal:	Single storey rear extension
Location:	Church Cottage , Brick Kiln Lane, Horsmonden
Recommendation:	Refusal
Proposed:	Cllr Stevens, seconded Cllr Fletcher. Unanimous
Comments:	The proposed extension is out of character and unsympathetic with the original building.

Planning Application No:	TW/10/00240/LBC
Proposal:	Listed Building Consent: Single storey rear extension
Location:	Church Cottage , Brick Kiln Lane, Horsmonden
Recommendation:	Refusal
Proposed:	Cllr Stevens, seconded Cllr March. Unanimous.
Comments:	The proposed extension is detrimental to the listed building

Planning Application No:	TW/10/00515/LBC
Proposal:	Listed building Consent: Removal of two modern windows from kitchen, reinstatement of door in former structural opening and replacement of one window with new oak window to match existing old windows.
Location:	Drum and Monkey House, Grovehurst lane, Horsmonden.
Recommendation:	Approval
Proposed:	Cllr Holloway, seconded Cllr Parker. Unanimous.
Comments:	The Parish Council approve the proposal to remove the modern windows and replace with a design more appropriate to the period of the property.

Planning Application No:	TW/10/00418/HOUSE
Proposal:	Single story front extension
Location:	Winster House, 13 Oliver's Court, Horsmonden
Recommendation:	Refusal
Proposed:	Cllr Clemson, seconded Cllr Stevens, carried.
Comments:	The Parish Council feels that the proposal is totally out of character with the original design of the house.

Planning Application No:	TW/10/00546/FUL/CLC
Proposal:	Change of use of redundant barn to residential use including retention and conversion of storage building.
Location:	Spelmonden Farm, Spelmonden Road Goudhurst Cranbrook
Recommendation:	Approval

Proposed:	Cllr March, seconded Cllr Clemson, unanimous.
Comments:	Suitable conversion of a redundant agricultural building, subject to the conservation architects requirements.

5.2 **Report of Permissions Granted and Refused**

Permissions Granted.

TW/10/00016/HOUSE – 2 Grovehurst Cottages, Grovehurst lane, Horsmonden
 TW/10/00029/HOUSE – Lake Cottage, Furnace Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge
 TW/10/02460/FUL/ - Parkfield, Grovehurst lane, Horsmonden

Permissions Refused.

None.

Appeals Lodged

TW/09/02330/FUL – Stiles Oast Maidstone Road, Horsmonden

Appeal by Jeremy Deakin against an Enforcement Notice issued by Tunbridge wells Borough Council against the unauthorised change of use of the Land form agricultural land to land for the stationing of a caravan for residential occupation at TN12 8AY

Other Planning Matters

Councillor Stevens commented on the procedures adopted by TWBC planning, as he believes that the Borough Council are meant to discuss and consult with the PC when their own opinion on a planning matter does not agree with that of the Parish Council. This has not been done in recent years, although it is believed to be part of the parish Charter. Clerk to email Jim Kehoe about this and see if it is mentioned in the Parish Charter.

6. **FINANCE**

6.1 **Parish Council Accounts to 28th February 2010**

The following accounts in respect of the period up to 28th February 2010 were presented to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Clemson and seconded by Cllr Fletcher to accept the accounts as shown. Unanimous

Horsmonden Parish Council Accounts as at 28th February 2010

	Balances
Current account b/fwd 01.02.10	£ 1,793.55
Deposit account b/fwd 01.02.10	£ 45,016.66
Interest received (Deposit Account)	

Item	Ref	Receipts	Payments
Mrs L Noakes February salary	S/O		£ 608.61
HM Inspector of Taxes (tax & NI Mrs L Noakes)	400709		£ 52.46
Mr S Jones - February scavenging	400710		£ 60.36
Mr C J Couchman	400711		£ 78.92
EDF Energy customers Plc - VG Box	400712		£ 124.59
Dukes Contractors Ltd Landscaping 09/10	400713		£ 3,748.58
specialist hygiene services - feb cleaning	400714		£ 168.02
Actions with Communités in Rural Kent subscription	400715		£ 35.00

EDF Customers PLC - Public conveniences	400716		£ 97.59
CANCELLED CHQ 400689 - CHQ LOST	400689		-£ 78.92
Mr CJ Couchman - replacement cheque for Dec.09	400717		£ 78.92
Donations form Parishioners towards Bernard Fowlers remembrance bench	01.02.10	£ 337.17	
Donations from the Historical society for Bernard Fowlers bench	04.02.10	£50.00	
Interest on current account	05.02.10	£0.21	

Current Account as at 28.02.10 £ 2,206.80
Deposit Account as at 28.02.10 £ 40,016.66

**TOTAL
BANK: £ 42,223.46**

7. HIGHWAYS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

7.1 Highways and street lighting problems to be reported

Some Highways issues had already been discussed in the Public session and Alex King had also addressed the Council about Highways issues during this part of the meeting.

The following items were mentioned for the Clerk to report to Highways/ask Highways about

- Why were there suddenly so many new repeat speed restriction signs in the area?
- Large pot hole going towards Brenchley from the entrance to Sprivers (this was very big and needed reporting urgently).
- The Culvert in Churn Lane appears to have collapsed (just along from Poplars Farm entrance)
- Drainage outside Freestons is still not finished (KHS have replaced the drain cover but there is still no pipe to take the water away.)

7.2 Colts Hill Working Group - 12th March 2010

Neil Robins will be attending this meeting.

Alex King commented that the key issue is getting the balance correct between the wishes of those people who live at Colts Hill against the wishes of those who use the road to get to their destination. He said that the meeting on 12th March will consist of a working party with Parish Council's present to put forward any suggestions they may have.

7.3 Road works – Spelmonden Road - EDF Energy replacing overhead lines for 8 days.

Clerk to clarify exactly which piece is to be closed.

7.4 Village Green - posts and benches

It was proposed from the Chair to go ahead with the order of 100 recycled plastic posts on the basis of finding competitive quotes from two further companies if possible, with the final decision being taken by the Chair and vice chair, based on price and quality. Unanimous.

The Chair proposed that the Clerk go ahead with the purchase of two recycled plastic benches from Solway recycling as quoted. Unanimous.

7.5 Village Green - gate

The Chairman reported that owing to an immediate need to maintain security for the village green and make safe and fill in the large holes which had appeared where the posts went into the ground, the decision had been taken as a matter of urgency to put up a gate.

The Council had received a letter from Mr Kellas asking the Council to remove the gate as it was in his opinion, not in fitting, and also asking whether planning permission had been sought by the Council. Councillor Robins said that it was the Councils belief that planning permission would not be required for the gate.

The Councils opinion of the gate was that it was strong, practical and fit for purpose.

The Chairman made a retrospective proposal that the gate be erected on the entrance to the Green for reasons of safety and security. Carried.

8. PARISH COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

8.1 Local Housing– Update form Clerk and meeting to be arranged with Cascade and Moat Homes.

Representatives to be appointed. Clerk to update members on parking problem at Gunlands.

The Clerk had received a request form Cascade for the Council to meet with them and discuss the local housing need and Cascades project at Gibbet Lane. It was decided that the Council could meet with Cascade on 19th March at 2pm in the Methodist Church Hall, if possible. Councillors Clemson, March and Robins to meet with Cascade and others.

The Clerk had received a phone call from TWBC to say that a disabled resident who lives at Gunlands had been asking for a disabled parking space as it parking was so difficult that often a vehicle arriving at her house to collect her, would have to wait at the end of her road, which made getting out very difficult for her. Cllr Robins said that Gunlands had historical parking problems because of the design of the housing in that road and the width of the road. This problem was now exasperated by residents owning more than one car in the majority of cases.

It was the opinion of the Council that if parking restriction were to be enforced in Gunlands in order to make access for emergency vehicles, this would make it very difficult for residents of Gunlands as well as those of surrounding roads.

8.2 Public conveniences. Update of information.

Cllr March had spoken to Councillors from Frittenden and Benenden and it had been noted that the deals offered to these parishes were very different to that offered to HPC. The Clerk had emailed these parishes to find out more but had not yet had a response. Some Councils had been offered paid legal advice and others offered the Freehold of their loos as well as TWBC paying for new facilities to be installed.

Councillors Parker and March are to liaise with TWBC to try and find a better solution for Horsmonden, as the terms of the lease offered did not seem favourable.

8.3 Village Hall - lease and rear fencing, guttering

The clerk had discussed some minor changes to the lease with Colin Russell who had been looking at it for the Village Hall Committee. The Clerk will make the changes in red and email to Cllrs March, Parker and Robins and if they are happy, the new lease can then be circulated to the VH Committee again for approval.

The Clerk had received a phone call from Mrs Jones who lives behind the Village Hall, about the fencing. She will examine her plans to see if she owns the fence or not. The Clerk had explained that if the PC end up being responsible for the fence, they may only replace with chain link. Mrs Jones was not very happy with this as she would prefer close boarded fencing.

Cllr Stevens mentioned that whilst Julian Newton had been appointed to replace the piece of guttering which had fallen down. It would seem beneficial to replace all the old iron work guttering at the same time. It was suggested that the Clerk get a quotation form Julian to replace all iron work guttering with plastic, so that the whole job could be carried out at once.

8.4 Millennium plaque

Councillor March had been trying to get some quotations for the area surrounding the plaque and noticeboards. She will continue with this.

The e plaque and noticeboards are to be positioned near the area of dropped kerb opposite Heath Stores.

8.5 Horsefair 2010 – suggested meeting with CI Wilson. Representatives to be appointed

CI Wilson had requested a meeting with the Council regarding the Horsefair in 2010. Unfortunately members of the Council were unable to make the times and date offered by CI Wilson, however, they suggested either Friday 16th or 23rd April. The Council feel that a KHS officer who is briefed on the history of the event should be present, and the Council would be interested to know if KHS are aware of the road usage and are insured for such usage. Clerk to liaise Cllrs Robins, March and Clemson to attend.

8.6 Village Green booking – Plant sale 15th May 2010 to be held by the Gardening Society.

The Chairman proposed acceptance of this usage of the Green for a plant sale. Unanimous.

8.7 Social Club – letter from Ewen Kellas regarding plans for the kitchen.

The Clerk had received a letter from Mr Kellas about the Social club's proposals to put in a kitchen at the Institute Building. The Club have stated that they hope that the kitchen can be provided solely from club funds and they are now appointing an architect to help them with phase one of the plans.

The Council congratulate the Club on being so successful and would like to see the plans once drawn up, in order to provide their consent as owners of the building.

8.8 Parish Plans – update.

Cllrs March and Robins have a meeting planned at Swigs Hole at 7.30pm on 8th March to discuss the idea of a parish plan, with the volunteers Ken Tutt and Nick May.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 TWBC – Draft Sustainable Community Strategy – do the PC wish to give an opinion?

The Council did not wish to comment on this.

9.2 KALC Meeting 18th March 2010 – Area Committee meeting at Vestry Hall Cranbrook – any attendees?

Cllr Cheesman usually attended these meetings, but as he is currently incapacitated, he is unlikely to attend. No other member was available.

9.3 KALC – Planning Information day 2010 – Saturday 13th March at Lenham Community Hall – do any members wish to attend?

Cllr Holloway expressed an interest but was unable to attend on the date given.

9.4 Kent CAN – www.kentcan.org – is the PC interested in joining?

The Council was not interested in joining at present.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (DISCUSSION ONLY)

The Clerk had received a letter from Kent Audit detailing how they wish to carry out the next audit of the PC. The Council members were happy with this.

Cllr Parker asked if the PC could put a small bin in the play area. Clerk to investigate bins it was also mentioned that there had been several incidences of dog fouling in the play area. Clerk to investigate putting up a sign in the play area.

Councillor March spoke briefly about the Orchard Survey which she had been asked to fill in behalf of the Council. It was thought that the survey was not appropriate for Horsmonden. The survey would not be completed therefore.

The meeting closed at 11.14pm

Next Meeting Dates

Monday March 1st 2010 - Parish Council Meeting
Monday April 12th 2010 - Parish Council Meeting
Monday 19th April 2010 – Planning Committee
Monday May 10th 2010 - Annual Parish Meeting
Monday May 17th 2010 - Annual meeting of the Parish Council
Monday June 14th 2010 – Parish Council Meeting
Monday June 28th 2010 – Planning Committee
Monday July 12th 2010– Parish Council Meeting
Monday August 16th 2010 Planning Committee
Monday September 6th 2010 – Parish Council Meeting
Monday October 4th 2010 – Parish Council Meeting
Monday November 1st 2010– Parish Council Meeting
Monday December 6th 2010 – Parish Council Meeting
Monday December 13th 2010 Finance Committee and Risk Assessment