

MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL at 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 12th APRIL 2010

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

In attendance: Lucy Noakes (Clerk)
5 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

TWBC Cllr Slade
Cllr Parker (unwell child).

2. PUBLIC SESSION

The meeting commenced with Cllr Robins declaring a minutes silence as a mark of respect for Lord Cornwallis who had recently passed away. Fiennes Cornwallis had served as Chairman to the Parish Council for many years as well as contributing in many other ways to the local community

Sean Lawrence had requested to speak to the Council about the planned development of 15 homes in Gibbet Lane. Mr Lawrence said that there seemed to be a number of difficulties with the plans and the suggested solutions were becoming complicated, which to him would indicate that this is the wrong place for such a development. Cllr Robins went on to explain the procedures which the Parish Council had been involved in when trying to decide upon a suitable site. The Parish Council and Borough Council in joint discussion had identified several sites as being suitable for this type of development, although all of these had individual problems associated with them. The most suitable site had been that located next to Kirkins Close off the Maidstone Road, but the Council had been unable to pursue this as the owners had not replied to the Borough Council's letters. The site in Gibbet Lane was one of the other sites identified, but had got problems associated with access.

Cllr Robins explained that the current application had been put in by a private development company who had purchased an option on the site, and was nothing to do with the Parish Council. However, the Council would try and enter into negotiations with the developer wherever possible to try and ensure that the mix and style of dwelling being built was suitable for the need identified in the Housing Needs survey carried out.

Mr Lawrence said that he felt that development of this site would lead to an increase in the volume and speed of the traffic in the lane, which would not only make it dangerous for pedestrians, but also spoil the peace and quiet of the lane and could lead to a decline in the wildlife. There had been a suggestion that the hedge should be removed between the orchard and the lane in order to widen the access, but Mr. Lawrence said that he believed this would again be unwise as it would remove a habitat for wildlife, as well as widen the road and therefore encourage people to travel faster down the lane.

Mr Lawrence said that he believed that the hedgerow and orchard beyond provide a varied habitat for wildlife including birds, bats and many other creatures and that if the hedge was removed there

would be a loss of biodiversity, as well as character. Mr Lawrence went on to explain that Gibbet Lane is of historical interest and that any change in the lane would lead to loss of its historical character and interest to the village.

It was suggested that if the new development was built behind the current Kirkins close development and led onto the same entrance as the existing Kirkins close, this would be much safer and less visible.

Cllr Robins explained that members of the Council had met on the previous Friday with members from Cascade Housing, the private developer, to discuss the site. It had been suggested by Cascade that they may withdraw the current planning application in order to allow time for a public consultation to be held on this matter in June, before going ahead with a further planning application. Apparently TWBC would not be able to make any decision on the current application until the biodiversity surveys had been carried out; however it had become clear from the developer that their intentions were not to remove the hedge now anyway.

Mr Seal also addressed the council about his concerns if the Sunday amenities vehicle were to be discontinued, as he believed it would lead to a large increase in fly tipping in the area. Cllr Robins explained that the Council were against any removal of the service, although they understood from TWBC that the length of time for which the service is situated in Horsmonden each week may be reduced and that the Borough Council may plan to change the day which the lorry comes to Saturday instead of Sunday. Cllr Robins assured Mr Seal that the Parish Council would continue to put the pressure on TWBC to retain the service.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting – 1st March 2010

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

The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 22nd March 2010 were taken as read and proposed for approval by Cllr Stevens, seconded by Cllr March. Carried.

4. MATTERS ARISING
Millennium Plinth

Cllr March reported that she has been in contact with Livingstone Foundation for the exact measurement so the plaque. Once these are known Cllr Robins will try to draw up a plan.

Public conveniences

The Borough Council have still not been forthcoming with a date to discuss the terms of the lease further. It had been noticed by Cllr Hughes that there were no spools on the toilet paper holders and on one occasion no toilet paper in one of the loos. One of the timer locks has been broken and replaced with an ordinary lock. The Council does not know who has replaced this. One of the cisterns also appeared to be broken. Clerk to investigate who has changed the lock and ask TWBC for a date for discussion.

Lime Spreading on Village Green

Clerk to chase Peter Bourne as Bourne's do not seem to be responding.

5. PLANNING

5.1 Planning Applications

Planning Application No:	TW/10/01077/HOUSE/TA1
Proposal:	Single Storey extensions, roof conversion with five dormers and removal of existing conservatory
Location:	Trastamara, Yew Tree Green Road, Horsmonden, Kent
Recommendation:	Approval.
Proposed:	Cllr Hughes, seconded Cllr Stevens. Unanimous.
Comments:	Suitable enhancement to the building.

5.2 Report of Permissions Granted and Refused

Permissions Granted.

TW/10/00596/HOUSE – Corner Cottage, Hayman’s Hill. Horsmonden, Tonbridge.

TW/10/00377/FUL – Highlands Farm Oast, Marle Place Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge.

TW/10/00418/HOUSE – 13 Oliver’s Court, Horsmonden Tonbridge

Permissions Refused.

TW/10/00235/HOUSE – Church Cottage, Brick Kiln Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge

TW/10/00240/LBC - Church Cottage, Brick Kiln Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge

Other Planning Matters

Councillor Stevens commented on the reply from TWBC about the curtilage listing of properties as he still believes that the listed curtilage should include the building and all of its grounds. Clerk to investigate.

6. FINANCE

6.1 Parish Council Accounts to 31st March 2010

The following accounts in respect of the period up to 31st March 2010 were presented to the meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Clemson and seconded by Cllr Hughes to accept the accounts as shown.

Unanimous

Horsmonden Parish Council Accounts as at 31st March 2010

	Balances
Current account b/fwd 28.02.10	£ 2,206.80
Deposit account b/fwd 28.02.10	£ 40,016.66
Interest received (Deposit Account)	

Item	Ref	Receipts	Payments
Horsmonden Village Hall (hire for 2009/10)	400718		£ 432.00
EDF Energy 1 Ltd - unmetered festive lights	400719		£ 45.86
Horsmonden Methodist Church Hall	400720		£ 10.00
SE Water Ltd - public conveniences	400721		£ 46.14
Specialist Hygiene Services - Up to 31st March 2010	400722		£ 168.02
J Ralph Stevens Ltd - making and fitting VG gates	400723		£ 373.75
Mrs L Noakes March salary	S/O		£ 608.61
HM Inspector of Taxes (tax & NI Mrs L Noakes)	400724		£ 52.46
Mr S Jones - scavenging March	400725		£ 60.36
Mr C J Couchman - March clock and play	400726		£ 78.92
Viking Direct - stationery	400727		£ 51.02
Mr R Dicketts - refund for speedwatch battery	400728		£ 4.35
Southern Electric Ltd - Jan, Feb, March maintenance	400729		£ 389.79
cheque void	400730		
Horsmonden Methodist Church - hire 09.04.10	400731		£ 10.00
Southern Electric Contracting Ltd - repair of light 12 Furnace Lane	400732		£ 174.06
Refund form Allianz Cornhill - Toilets cancellation of ins.		£68.73	
Interest on current account		£0.28	
Donation from Mrs Bird towards VG Seats		£350.00	

Current Account as at 31.03.10	£ 120.47
Deposit Account as at 31.03.10	£ 40,016.66

**TOTAL
BANK: £ 40,137.13**

7. HIGHWAYS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

7.1 Highways and street lighting problems to be reported

The Clerk presented a template for a sign which Highways were proposing to erect on the Lamberhurst Road near to the entrance to Marle Place road, to warn drivers of the possibility of oncoming large vehicles from the AGA. The most appropriate sign which Highways have available for use is that saying 'wide vehicles- and showing a tractor Cllr March proposed that this would be appropriate in the absence of anything more suitable. Seconded Cllr Clemson. Unanimous.

The Clerk also requested feedback on the bad weather services so that she could pass the comments onto TWBC as they were carrying out a review. The following points were mentioned:

- Lack of salt in salt bins
- In preference to filling the bins with salt , could they be filled with sharp sand and grit
- The need to stop people from stealing the contents of the salt bins
- Road into Paddock wood was not cleared. More priority should be given to roads where there are major shops and leading to railway stations, not just the main roads There should be more clearing of the pavements
- There should be clearer guidelines as to whose priority it is to clear the snow.
- Why was Tunbridge wells not cleared when we had snow before Christmas, when Tonbridge High street was cleared. These both come under KCC – so why treated differently?
- Parking on roads makes it difficult to clear them.

Cllr Stevens mentioned the following items to be chased with Highways:

- The speed limit on the Maidstone Road between Freestons and Bassett's Oast needs to be clarified as it appears that there is a stretch for about a quarter of a mile which reverts to 60mph when there are two junctions in this area.
- Chase the drainage issue in Churn Lane where the culvert has collapsed.
- Chase drainage issue o/s Freestons
- Railings at Gafford's Bridge are only fixed in the centre on RHS(on the Horsmonden side of the bridge going towards Collier street).This could present a hazard is caught by a vehicle.

7.2 Ongoing problems with Highways department in the method for reporting and dealing with problems already reported.

It was suggested that the Clerk should send a strong letter of complaint to Highways regarding the way works are carried out.

7.3 Village Church sign o/s Heath Stores.

The Clerk explained that she had been in contact with Highways about replacing the sign for the Parish Church o/s Heath Stores as this had gone missing. She had been told by Highways that this type of sign was no longer provided by Highways and that it may be possible for the Council to apply for a brown tourist style sign at their own expense.

It was suggested that the Clerk should ask Alex King what the County Councils policy now is with this type of sign and what other categories are in this cost cutting measure. The Clerk should also enquire as to who now owns the post.

7.4 Position of 30mph speed limit sign on Brenchley Road entry to the village

The Clerk had been informed that at the recent Speedwatch meeting, the police had said that there wasn't enough room for them to set up a radar trap to monitor the speed between the 30mph sign to the sharp bend coming into Horsmonden from the Brenchley direction. They had suggested that the 30mph sign should be moved 200 yards nearer to the Brenchley end of the village.

Space in this direction had also been a deciding factor when KCC were looking to find a suitable location for an interactive speed sign last year and it had been mentioned that although a suitable site could not be found at that time, if the 30mph sign were to move, this could be looked at again.

Cllr Robins proposed that the council contact KHS and ask if they can look at the positioning of the 30mph sign with a view to moving the sign at least 100 metres further out towards Brenchley.

7.5 Colts Hill Working Group - report back form NR

Cllr Robins reported that all the proposals for the Colt's hill area will now be taken into account before any decisions would be made and that the decision to close Crittenden Road at one end had now been withdrawn. There had been various proposals put forward about the whole road layout, but these would be discussed further at the next working party meeting.

7.6 Grounds Maintenance contract for 2010/2011 – quotation form Dukes.

It was proposed from the Chair that the Parish Council continue to use Dukes for the next year for grounds Maintenance at the increased cost of a further 3.5%. However it was suggested that quotes should be obtained from at least two other companies before next year's renewal of the contract.

8. PARISH COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

8.1 Retrospective agreement to VG booking for crosses on the Green

Permission for this event had already been given.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 TWBC – Live it well – the draft mental health strategy for Kent and Medway – Do we wish to comment?

Cllr March commented that although in the document the Council are saying they wish to change all signage for mental health patients so as not to label them as such, they persistently refer to 'mental health issues' throughout the document which seems contradictory. Cllr March to email the Clerk regarding this point so that the Clerk can send he comments to the relevant persons.

9.2 Kent Men of the Trees competition 2010

After a discussion about this it was proposed by Cllr March that this should not be pursued by the Council at present. Seconded Cllr Clemson. Unanimous.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (DISCUSSION ONLY)

Mr Naylor asked if the Council would be applying for the Peoples Millions this year. It was suggested that the Clerk would look into this as the Council were not sure they were eligible to apply.

Cllr Stevens mentioned that he would be looking into trying to sell the palettes of rubber tiles and old swings from the old play area, at auction.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

Next Meeting Dates

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