

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL
ON WEDNESDAY, 10 JANUARY 2024 AT 7:30PM**

Present:

CLLrs March, Davis, Russell, Sheppard, Richards, Larkin, Jenkinson, Currie and Baxter-Smith

In attendance:

Lucy Noakes (Clerk)

Anna Blyth (Assistant Clerk)

CLLr Sarah Hamilton (KCC) – part of the meeting

1 member of the public

1. Apologies for Absence and declarations of interest

None.

2. Public Session (no decisions)

No speakers.

3. Minutes of Parish Council Meetings

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4 December 2023 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by CLLr Richards, seconded CLLr Jenkinson and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 19 December 2023 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by CLLr Currie, seconded CLLr Davis and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

4. Parish Council Finance

a. Agree payments listing up to 9 January 2024 as attached (Appendix 1)

The Clerk showed a copy of the list of payments up to and including 9 January 2024 as a total of £11,512.95. CLLr Richards proposed approval of the schedule of payments; seconded CLLr Russell. Unanimous.

CLLrs Jenkinson and Davis agreed to release and authorise payments from the bank this month.

APPENDIX 1

Date:	Horsmonden Parish Council Current Year			Page 1	
08/01/2024	Current Bank A/c				
Time: 17:25	List of Payments made between 05/12/2023 and 09/01/2024				
Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
11/12/2023	Microshade VSM	SO	195.14		Emails and Data December
15/12/2023	British Gas Lite	DD	13.67		Oct-Nov VG boxes
15/12/2023	British Gas Lite	DD	109.66		Oct-Nov toilets electricity
17/12/2023	Lloyds Bank PLC	DD	-31.99		Credit Card November
18/12/2023	Mr R Larkin	BACS	50.00		Moving the beacon
18/12/2023	Envirocure Ltd	BACS	631.20		Monthly control tasks VH
18/12/2023	Envirocure Ltd	BACS	660.00		Monthly control tasks Institut
18/12/2023	Envirocure Ltd	BACS	374.40		Monthly control tasks Toilets
18/12/2023	EJP Fire Protection Ltd	BACS	755.10		emergency lights Institute
18/12/2023	Old Barn Audio Ltd	BACS	96.00		Maintenance of audio equipm
18/12/2023	AAC Studio- Architects & Desig	BACS	623.76		feasibility study of VH
18/12/2023	HMRC	BACS	680.46		NI and tax December
18/12/2023	EE - BT	DD	60.38		Dec broadband & phones
19/12/2023	British Telecom	DD	147.85		Dec-Feb BT broadband and phone
20/12/2023	Business Stream	DD	41.55		Waste Water Toilets
21/12/2023	SSE	DD	236.39		Nov electricity Street lights
22/12/2023	Anna Blyth	BACS	1,140.25		Salary plus overtime
22/12/2023	Mrs L Noakes	BACS	1,725.26		Salary plus overtime
22/12/2023	Capel Groundcare	BACS	667.51		Dec groundcare and SIDS
22/12/2023	Capel Groundcare	BACS	63.00		additional leaf clearance
22/12/2023	B&K Electrical contractors	BACS	1,044.00		Replace fuse boards in VH
22/12/2023	B&K Electrical contractors	BACS	76.80		New light tubes in Toilets
27/12/2023	Castle Water	DD	5.80		Water usage toilets
27/12/2023	P&F Cleaning services LTD	SO	476.66		December cleaning
29/12/2023	Mr J Couchman	BACS	103.87		Clock and play area December
31/12/2023	Unity Trust Bank	DD	30.15		Service charges
02/01/2024	Lloyds Bank PLC	DD	9.95		credit card December
03/01/2024	Clearview Windows	BACS	350.00		Gutter cleaning
03/01/2024	Information Commissioners Offi	DD	35.00		Annual payment for ICO
08/01/2024	Clearview Windows	BACS	60.00		Wash down play equipment
08/01/2024	Clearview Windows	BACS	50.00		wash noticeboards and benches
08/01/2024	Viking	BACS	98.97		Stationery
08/01/2024	Mastercraft Roofing LTD	BACS	932.16		Repairs to VH roof
Total Payments			11,512.95		

b. Bank Reconciliation as at 31 December 2023

The bank balance at 31 December 2023 was displayed with a total at £61,507.81.

This was confirmed as correct against the respective bank balances and signed by the Chair.

c. The Institute Building: Additional Quotations to include scaffolding for works to clock tower

The Clerk had circulated three quotations for scaffolding to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

After a brief discussion, Cllr Richards proposed that the PC accept the quotation from Southern Scaffolding totalling £2,840 plus VAT as this was the most competitive price received; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

Cllr Russell reminded Cllrs that there is no budget in the 2023/24 financial year for this work however, there is £5,000 currently held in EMR that could be used if necessary.

d. The Institute Building: Quotation to remove, store and reinstall clock mechanism

The Clerk had approached three companies to quote for removing, storing and then reinstalling the clock after work is complete. The Clerk advised that two quotations had been received but the third company had confirmed that they no longer carry out this type of work and had therefore not provided a quotation.

After discussion, Cllr Currie proposed that the PC accept the quotation provided by Gillet & Johnson totalling £4,225.00 plus VAT as their price was the most competitive and they have prior experience with the clock; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.

The Chair suggested that if there is the budget available the PC should consider having the clock cleaned whilst it is in storage. The Clerk confirmed that she would seek the opinion of Gillet & Johnson regarding this and report back. Cllr Russell also suggested that the plaque situated beneath the clock could be cleaned if the budget allows as it cannot be read clearly anymore.

e. Consider quotation for providing a detailed specification for Village Hall refurbishment

The Clerk had circulated a quote totalling £1,200 including VAT from the village hall architect for preparation of an outline construction specification to assist the Quantity Surveyors in their preparation of a cost estimate. It was agreed that the PC do not have the level of expertise to prepare this and therefore further input from the architect will be required.

Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the cost as detailed; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.

f. Consider quotations for providing an estimated cost to carry out Village Hall refurbishment

The Clerk had circulated three quotations to Cllrs prior to the meeting. In the interests of fair tendering, the names of the companies who had been approached were not revealed to Cllrs and were referred to as company 1, 2 and 3 only.

Cllr Davis proposed that the PC accept the quotation offered by Company C – which was Spider Projects - totalling £1,250 plus VAT as this was the most competitive price; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

g. Consider costs for water testing regimes for all parish owned buildings

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk had circulated costs for Envirocure to continue with water testing at all parish council owned buildings for a further year. As the new contract had already started in December 2023, the Clerk asked for retrospective agreement of the costs:

Village Hall- £526 plus VAT

The Institute - £550 plus VAT

Public Conveniences - £312 plus VAT

Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the costs as detailed; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

h. Retrospective agreement of urgent repairs to emergency lights at the Institute Building

The Clerk had circulated to Cllrs a copy of the invoice received from EJP following completion of urgent repairs to the emergency lighting at the Institute Building.

Cllr Currie proposed acceptance of the cost of repairs totalling £629.25 plus VAT; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

i. **Consider / agree costs for provision of computer hardware service contract (renews 1 March 24)**

The Clerk had received a quote from Arron Services for renewal of the PCs service contract for laptops owned by Council. The contract is due to renew on 1st March 2024 and the total cost was invited at £650 plus VAT.

Cllr Richards highlighted that the quote states 8 Cllr laptops when it should include 9, which might increase the quote by a further £25 plus VAT.

Cllr Currie proposed acceptance of the renewal cost as detailed; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

j. **Consider transfer of Traffic Solutions fund from EMR (Ear Marked Reserves) to General Reserves**

Cllr Russell informed the Council that there is currently £6,803.19 held in EMRs allocated to traffic solutions. He confirmed that the Finance Committee had recommended in their meeting on 29 November 2023 that this should be transferred back to General Reserves as the PC do not have a specific traffic solutions project in mind at present.

Cllr Russell proposed that £6,803.19 be transferred from EMR into General Reserves; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.

5. Planning

a. Planning applications

Planning Application:	TW/23/03350/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Variation of Condition 1 of Planning Permission 23/01168/FULL - Plot 3 - Utility wing extended, velux rooflights added, ground floor reconfiguring of layout, juliette balcony added on main rear elevation, addition of window & door & reconfiguration to garage plans, title to Plan 22C altered to remove plot 3 reference</u>
Location:	The Cottage, Brenchley Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8DN
Recommendation	Approval
Proposal	Cllr Davis; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.
Comments	Propose acceptance on the basis that the modifications are minimal. All works should be carried out in line with Horsmonden Parish Councils Sustainability policy.

b. Consider scope of works from Planning Consultant and estimated / quoted fees

The Clerk had circulated the scope of works prepared by Planning Consultant, Alison Eardley to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllrs discussed the benefits of appointing a Planning Consultant to assist the Horsmonden Development Advisory Group and agreed that the content of the scope of works was acceptable as well as the fee quoted, which was £1,190 plus VAT for two days work (based on meetings being held via Zoom). It was noted and agreed that there would be an additional charge of £30 plus VAT if travel to attend face-to-face meetings was required.

Cllr Richards proposed that the PC appoint Alison Eardley as Planning Consultant to assist the Horsmonden Development Advisory Group and accept the fees as quoted; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

c. Consider Terms of Reference for Horsmonden Development Group

The Clerk had prepared a Terms of Reference for the Horsmonden Development Advisory Group and had circulated to members prior to the meeting for their review. There were two minor alterations suggested to the wording, which had been highlighted in red for consideration by the full Council.

It was agreed that the Horsmonden Development Advisory Group would consist of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Parish Council plus at three additional members of the Council and up to three members of the public. Cllrs Baxter-Smith, Currie and Russell agreed to be the three additional members of the Council and one member of the public had already requested to join. The Clerk confirmed that an advert would be posted via the PC website/Facebook pages and Parish News to invite any other members of the public who might be interested in joining the group.

Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the Terms of Reference for the Horsmonden Development Group including the two minor alterations highlighted; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

d. Consider potential meeting with TWBC officer

Cllr Larkin proposed that a meeting is arranged with the Horsmonden Development Advisory Group and TWBC to discuss the points raised in the paper prepared by the Bassetts Farm Forum; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

The Clerk will approach TWBC and also Alison Eardley (Planning Consultant) to arrange a suitable date for the meeting to take place. It was agreed that, ideally, the meeting would be face-to face. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that the meeting would be open to the public with an agenda issued and minutes taken.

e. Review the PC's S106 requirements

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk had prepared a draft spreadsheet of possible S106 requirements for Cllrs to review. After discussion, the following points were noted:

- The last tab should be amended to read "Ecological Enhancements" which could include Hedgehog Highways.
- Cllr Richards suggested that x2 paddle tennis courts are included for the Sports Ground, which would cost in the region of £200k.
- Estimates cannot be included for the refurbishment of the existing village hall at this stage.

It was agreed that the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk will continue to work on this document and update accordingly. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that Alison Eardley (Planning Consultant) will be supporting the PC and she may be able to offer some advice regarding S106.

The Clerk advised that a member of the public had put forward a suggestion for a possible S106 contribution to improve the footpath that connects the Sports Ground and Sports Club Building to the village via the Back Lane. It was agreed that the Clerk will look into the ownership of this footpath and also seek advice from Alison Eardley to see if this could be added as a planning condition linked to the proposed Bassetts Farm development.

f. Consider commenting on the Tree Preservation Order -0012/2023/TPO – Woodland To The Rear Of Oliver’s Court (known as Sandy Field Shaw), Horsmonden

The Clerk had circulated details of a tree preservation order at the back of Oliver’s Court to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk explained that the PC do not usually become involved in commenting on tree preservation orders, however this matter was raised by a parishioner who noticed that the trees had been cut down. TWBC have imposed a temporary tree preservation order whilst the matter is investigated which may become permanent if there are no objections. The Clerk asked Cllrs for their thoughts and there was overall agreement that the PC would like TWBC to uphold the tree preservation order. Cllr Larkin proposed the following comment to the Tree Officer:

“The Parish Council share parishioners concerns and urge TWBC to enforce this tree preservation order indefinitely”.

This proposal was seconded by Cllr Currie and voted for unanimously by those present at the meeting.

6. Parish Council Decisions/Administration

a. Parish Highways/footpath/street lighting/landscaping and tree works

The Clerk gave the following updates:

- After turning off the Christmas lights two street lights are now not working around the village green (no.40 and no.47). The Clerk is investigating to see what the problem is but it is likely that this is to do with the Christmas lights.
- Two blocked drains have been reported to Highways on Goudhurst Road.

It was also raised that the hedge at Stoney Bridge, Goudhurst Road needs cutting back so that the narrow road / bend warning signage can be seen more clearly when travelling from Horsmonden to Goudhurst. Cllrs felt that signage at this location is poor and could be improved to give drivers better warning of the approaching bridge. It was agreed that this should be added to the PCs HIPs.

Cllr Larkin raised that there is a large pothole at the Rectory Park junction with Spelmonden Road. Whilst repair work to the carriageway is being carried out in this location, it is not clear whether this includes the pothole. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk will investigate and report if necessary.

b. HIPs – update and discussion / agreement

The Assistant Clerk confirmed that the bend warning signage in Yew Tree Green Road has now been moved to the correct location.

c. Consider / agree to complete play area lease

The Clerk had circulated the latest and final version of the play area lease to Cllrs for their review prior to the meeting. The Clerk asked Cllrs to agree the content so that she can arrange for Solicitors to send out the originals for signing by both parties.

Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the play area lease as drafted; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

d. Consider plans for future Christmas Lights (removal, storage and installation)

The Clerk explained to Cllrs the problems that have been experienced over the last few weeks with Blachere Illuminations and the installation of the 2023 Christmas lights. The Clerk asked Cllrs to consider how they wished to move forward.

After discussion, it was agreed that as Blachere have not fulfilled the terms of the contract by only putting up 6 sets of lights instead of 8, the PC should be entitled to some compensation. This is in addition to other problems that have been experienced over the last year resulting in an overall poor service, which has been extremely frustrating and disappointing. It was agreed that because of this poor service and overall shoddiness of work the PC should be entitled to a 50% refund on what has already been paid and a reduction in the cost of take down, at the very least. If this is not agreeable then the PC may be forced to take further action.

Cllrs discussed other options for future Christmas lights. Cllr March suggested that the PC could look into laser lights, which would reduce the potential for issues with installation and would look very effective. Cllr Russell suggested that the PC could approach Carnival Lights who are used by Marden PC to see what they might be able to offer. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk will explore these options and report back at a future meeting.

7. Consultations

a. KCC consultation on Locality Model for Special Educational Needs Inclusion [Locality Model for Special Educational Needs Inclusion | Let's talk Kent](#) ends 24 January 2024

Cllr Larkin confirmed that she had already responded to this consultation on behalf of the PC.

b. KCC consultation on windmills in Kent [Windmills owned by KCC | Let's talk Kent](#) ends 29 January 2024

Cllr Larkin agreed to look at this consultation and respond on behalf of the PC.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm