

MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL at 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 6th OCTOBER 2014

Present: Cllr March (Chair)
Councillors Russell, Cheesman, Stevens, Isaacs, Davis, Stanton and Lawrence

In attendance: Lucy Noakes (Clerk)
No public

Declarations of Interest:

Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct were invited. None were declared.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Hughes – visiting a bereaved friend. This reason was proposed as acceptable for compassionate reasons by the Chair and all voted in favour of acceptance.

2. PUBLIC SESSION: *(Members of the public have the right to speak for up to three minutes at the Chairpersons discretion on issues concerning the Parish providing the Clerk has prior notification).*
None.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the meeting on 1st September 2014 and planning meeting 16th September 2014
The minutes of the Parish council meeting dated 1st September 2014 had been circulated to Council members prior to the meeting for reading. It was suggested by Cllr Stanton that the words ‘per annum’ should be added under section 7.3 when referring to the cost of the civic amenities vehicle. Cllr March made an alteration and initialled this appropriately. It was proposed by the Chair that following this alteration the minutes should be accepted as a true statement of the meeting.
Unanimous.

The minutes of the planning meeting 16th September were taken as read, proposed for acceptance by the Chair and voted as carried.

4. Matters Arising

Stickers on wheelie bins

It was thought that these had all now been delivered. The spares will be kept by the Clerk at the Parish office to be handed out as required.

Gap in fencing behind the VH

Cllr Isaacs will try and carry out this work as soon as he can.

Play area

The clerk has been emailing and telephoning Play dale since June about the pod climber, which does not seem to have lasted as long as expected. She also contacted Play dale following the RoSPA report to ask for quotations and mending the gate springs as they do not close properly. She has not had a satisfactory response. It was suggested that the clerk photograph these problems and send a copy to Play dale saying that if we do not get a satisfactory result we will let RoSPA know and we will not recommend them to other councils.

5. PLANNING

i)

Planning Application No:	14/503679/HEDGE
Proposal:	Retrospective - Hedgerow Removal Notice - To provide a gateway for access off Furnace Lane and our land opposite (Crouches Farm) to save heavy equipment having to access through the centre of Horsmonden

Location:	Land At Kirkin's Farm Furnace Lane Horsmonden Tonbridge Kent
Recommendation:	Approval
Proposed:	Cllr Isaacs seconded Cllr Davis, unanimous.
Comments:	In a rural community and for safety reasons, this provides reasonable access without having to come through the centre of the village.

ii) Applications Granted and Refused.

Applications Granted

TW/14/01273 – Nevergood yard, Brick Kiln Lane, Horsmonden

TW/14/01060 – Edwinton, Furnace Lane, Horsmonden

iii) Other planning matters – discussion only

Cllr March had been informed that although additional staff had been employed, it would be at least the end of December before the back log of applications would be cleared in the Borough Council's planning dept. The back log was due to the amalgamation of the three districts and the implementation of the new computerised system.

6. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE

6.1 Parish Council Accounts to 5th October 2014

The Clerk presented the accounts up to 5th October 2014, as shown below, to those present.

Cllr Russell explained that the Finance committee had met to monitor the council's current year's budget. The Clerk had managed to get a refund of £3217.09 on the business rates which had been charged on the public conveniences over the last few years. She may also be able to also get a refund for the last year which has been paid at the higher rate.

TWBC had now paid a grant of £4000 towards the refurbishment of the toilets.

It had been noted by the Finance Committee that the water bills for the public conveniences was much higher than last year. These are based on metered water usage. It was suggested that two councillors listen from the outside of the men's toilets to see if the urinal was flushing all the time, as this is supposed to be activated by a presence in the loos, so is on whenever anyone enters. The Clerk should ring S E Water to see if they can come and check the meter and take another reading. The clerk is to change the timer for the locks on the doors, so that they will shut at 6pm when the clocks change.

Cllr Russell proposed acceptance of the accounts, seconded by Cllr Stevens. Unanimous.

The Chair checked, agreed and signed the balance presented by the clerk, against the balance shown in the latest Bank statement.

It was suggested that the clerk add Planting at the Public conveniences to the next agenda, so that the costs could be established and agreed. Cllr Davis to look into this.

Horsmonden Parish Council Accounts as at 5th October 2014

	Balances
Current account b/fwd 01.09.2014	£ 12,184.25
Deposit account b/fwd 01.09.2014	£ 60,000.00
Interest received (Deposit Account)	£ 0.47

Item	Ref	Receipts	Payments
Horsmonden Village Hall - hire for computer courses	401461		£ 100.75
EDF Energy - electricity public conveniences	D/D		£ 103.00
EDF Energy - -electricity bill for VG box supply	D/D		£ 30.00
BT office telephone & broadband	D/D		£ 240.20

Mrs L D Noakes - September salary	S/O		£ 796.09
HM Revenue and Customs - Tax and NI L Noakes	401462		£ 32.29
Mrs L Noakes - refund stationery and postage	401463		£ 6.76
Mr C J Couchman - clock and play area	401464		£ 83.08
Mr S Jones - scavenging - Sept	401465		£ 61.52
Blachere imlluminations - christmas lighting	401466		£ 194.34
SSE contracting - street lighting maintenance Aug	401467		£ 71.26
SSE Contracting - street lighting maintenance Sept	401468		£ 71.26
Interdirect - domain name hosting	401469		£ 180.00
St Margarets Church , Horsmonden - S137 donation	401470		£ 600.00
Ready call - s137 donation	401471		£ 50.00
Arrow locks and glass - reissue cheque lost	401472		£ 75.00
Bank charges to cancel cheque 401329	B/C		£ 12.00
Reissue of payment to J Ralph Stevens for sign	401473		£ 90.00
Cornfords Builders - repairs to institute tiles and soffit board	401474		£ 456.00
E.on - energy provision to 30.09.2014	401475		£ 323.36
Interest on current account		£ 5.76	
Refund of business rates on toilets since 2011		£ 3,217.09	
Grant towards toilet refurbishment - TWBC		£ 4,000.00	
Second half of precept - TWBC		£ 31,622.50	
refund of cheque cancellation fee		£ 12.00	
Interest on current account		£ 5.43	

Current Account as at 05.10.14 £ 47,470.12
Deposit Account as at 05.10.14 £ 60,000.47

TOTAL BANK: £ 107,470.59

6.2 Parish Council Bank Accounts.

The Clerk confirmed that the Deposit account was now up and running with HSBC and asked the Council to confirm their wishes with regards to setting up a Business High interest deposit bond, which had been suggested previously.

After a discussion about the Councils current financial position, Cllr Russell confirmed that the Council wished to transfer £60,000 into a bond with HSBC for a period of 2 years, and this proposal was made in the knowledge that the monies can be withdrawn at any time by paying a penalty of £100. This was seconded by Cllr Davis, carried.

A further proposal was made by Cllr March that the monies should be removed after 1 year if a higher rate of interest could be found (taking into account the penalty payment of £100)Unanimous.

6.3 Tree works Village Green and Fromandez Drive.

Mr Tweddle had examined the maple on the Green which needed removing, and the trees on Fromandez Drive, which needed the lower limbs removing to enable easier access for mowing. It was advised by the clerk that Mr Tweddle would charge £120 to remove the maple on the Green, £85 to remove lower branches from the trees on Fromandez Drive to a height of 2m, so that moving could be made easier, and £120 to remove the diseased limb on the Ash at Fromandez Drive, and at the same time check the remaining crown for any problems. Cllr Stevens proposed acceptance of these quotations assuming all rubbish removed from sites. Seconded, Cllr Stanton. Unanimous.

7 HIGHWAYS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

7.1 Highways issues – footpaths, trees, roads, signs, verges, markings

Cllr Stevens remarked that a lot of pot holes had been marked up by the Kent Highways engineers, so hopefully there would be an improvement, if these were filled soon.

Cllr March had copied the clerk in on an email from Mr Lloyd, who had been commenting on how hedges in general were being allowed to grow out and cover verges and pavements. The Clerk was to write and explain how the Parish Council follows up over grown hedges, and the procedure that KHS will then follow if the hedge is not cut back.

The Clerk had been corresponding with Earl Bourner about the low branches overhanging the Brenchley Road. Clerk to chase this up.

Cllr Stevens asked if the Clerk could remind parishioners about trying to avoid parking on the roads if snow was imminent, as parked cars make it v difficult to remove the snow with the snow plough.

7.2 Public Rights of Way

In the process of following up the complaint about noise late at night near Limes Cottage, it had come to light that the footpath between the Village Green and Back Lane was not a registered PROW (Public Right Of Way). The Clerk had been in contact with the Community Safety Unit (CSU) at TWBC who were investigating the noise complaint and would, as part of their procedure look into the possibility of monitoring equipment at this site. At the last meeting the PC had agreed to look into the costs of hiring a CCTV camera to put up for one month at Limes Cottage. However the clerk had not been successful in managing to find a company who would hire out equipment to them for this purpose, as most companies wished to sell the equipment. As the CSU would have to look at this as part of their investigations, and the PC could not easily hire equipment it was suggested that the Council allow the CSU to follow up the need for dealing with this situation by putting up CCTV equipment, as a way of trying to prevent the problem from reoccurring.

The PC were concerned that the footpath is not a registered PROW and discussed at some length the reasons for applying for this footpath to be registered, as it was felt that the many parishioners who use the footpath would expect their rights to be protected.

It was proposed by Councillor Lawrence that the Parish Council take steps to register the footpath from the Village Green to Back Lane as a PROW (Public Right Of Way) subject to the cost being below £150, the reason being that the Parish Council have discovered that they need to correct an anomaly that has recently come to light, in that this is not registered as a PROW. This was seconded by Cllr Davis and voted for unanimously.

7.3 Street lighting

The Clerk reported that column 4 at Fromandez Drive was currently not working and that this was owing to a UK Power networks problem. UKPN are currently looking into this matter.

Cllr March raised the issue that Village Vision survey had recorded that fact that some parishioners felt that additional street lighting was required in some places in the village. Cllr March will speak to Kent Tutt and Nick may when she next meets with them to try and identify which areas of the Parish this relates to.

It was suggested that it would be useful to try and find out the costs of a new lighting column if possible. Clerk to investigate.

8. ADMINISTRATION

8.1 The Institute – plaque installation and Plans for the front of the building.

The Clerk was in the process of trying to obtain suitable quotations for insertion of the William Lambert plaque at the front of the building.

The Clerk is also obtaining quotations for an outside tap and replacement of the internal stop cocks with lever valves.

The Social Club will be discussing plans for the front of the building at their next meeting.

It was requested that the clerk write to the business centre and ask them to remove their large bin from in front of the building as this is no longer used. It was also suggested that they are asked not to park in front of the building as it makes deliveries difficult, and means there is no parking for those using the Institute itself.

8.2 Village Hall – land adjacent to and parking

Mr Hammond had contacted the parish council with a suggestion that the low wall could be removed and parking could be maintained though a shared arrangement with himself as the owner of the adjacent property.

The Village Hall committee had considered this proposal at their last meeting and had decided that they would prefer to leave the situation as it is, as it is not a practical proposal. It was proposed by Cllr Isaacs that the PC dismiss the idea as it is not practical for running the Village Hall. Seconded Cllr Stanton, unanimous.

Clerk to write to Mr Hammond and thank him for his interesting proposal, and let him know that the committee appreciated him bringing the idea to them.

8.3 TWBC transfer of discretionary services - civic amenities vehicle

The Council discussed plans for transfer of the provision of the civic amenities vehicle form TWBC to local parishes. This had been a service which the public felt was important when the Village Vision survey was carried out.

It was proposed by Cllr March that the Parish should start the amenity vehicle service at 9.30am and have it for 1 ½ hours, at a proposed cost of £1500 annually to the Parish. However it was stressed that in order for this to work it must fit in with the plans of other parishes, as the PC would not be able to run the service on its own. Unanimous. Cllr March will take these plans forward to future meetings. It is likely that the PC will find out in mid November whether this will be compatible with other parishes and work as a service.

8.4 Computer courses.

The Clerk is trying to organise another computer course with Future Vision PC. Cllr Stanton said that her husband helps run the buddy system at Cranbrook Library and could volunteer to help with future courses if it would be useful.

8.5 Music Festival 12th -14th June 2015

It was confirmed by the Clerk that the PC held a total of £4696.15 in the Music Festival fund, including all the income from last year.

It had been suggested that there could be a Pet show included, however there were some problems with insurance of this event. It was suggested that the Clerk might contact Paws in the Park to ask how their insurance worked and find out if they have to see each individual's pet insurance as suggested by Zurich.

8.6 Restoration of the Milestone on Benchley Road 40 yards east of Milestone Cottage.

The clerk would try to obtain some quotations from the company who cleaned the war memorial; however they were still very busy at present.

8.7 Conservation area map

Mark Stevenson at TBC was still dealing with this for the Parish Council

8.8 Village Vision

Cllr March said that she would shortly be meeting with Kent Tutt and Nick May to look at providing a youth shelter. She asked if the PC would be prepared to look at the possibility of having a shelter on the Village Green. Cllr Lawrence proposed that the PC supported the idea of a youth shelter on

the village green in principal and would look at designs and location. Seconded Cllr Isaacs.
Unanimous.

It was understood that Steven Noad from KCC Highways department would be meeting with the traffic group to see what practical measures could be taken to make things safer.

8.9 Emergency Planning

The group had met and had made some alterations to the first half of their draft document. They will meet again in November. It was requested that the Clerk reserve a place at the Resilience and Emergency Planning meeting in Cllr Stanton's name at present.

9. CORRESPONDENCE/UPDATES

9.1 Chairman's update (no decisions)

Cllr March reported that 4500 bulbs had been planted on the Village Green on the previous Sunday. The planting session had not been so well attended this year, despite advertisements.

9.2 Meetings attended (updates and feedback from meetings attended and held by council members –no decisions)

Nothing to report this time.

The meeting ended at 10.25pm