

**MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**HELD IN HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 19<sup>th</sup> MAY 2014**

**REFRESHMENTS FROM 7.00PM MEETING STARTING AT 7.30P.M.**

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

**In attendance:** Lucy Noakes (Clerk)  
15 members of the public  
Cllr McDermott (TWBC)

**Declarations of Interest:** Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct were invited. None were received.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr King (KCC)

Mrs Stanton, Mr. Dicketts, Diana Morton, Mike Clemson, Nick May, Ken Tutt.

**2. PUBLIC SESSION.**

This took place after the Guest speakers had spoken.

**3. GUEST SPEAKERS – PCSO Laura Carey and Peter Rolington - Neighbourhood Watch**

**PCSO Laura Carey – Local Crime**

PCSO Carey had prepared an annual report on local crime, which she delivered to the audience. She listed levels of crime, in Horsmonden for each category and these levels were favourable when compared to other rural villages and local areas.

PCSO Carey reminded those present that non urgent crimes should be reported to 101.

**Peter Rolington – Chairman of West Kent Neighbourhood Watch**

Mr Rolington introduced himself to those present as he is also editor of E-watch, the computerised newsletter which tells everyone about local crimes which have recently taken place and warns about local scams. Mr Rolington told parishioners that Horsmonden is in the safest part of the County, which is one of the safest Counties in the Country.

Mr Rolington is also the Chairman of Crime Stoppers. He reminded everyone that the Crime stoppers number is 0800555111 and it is the number to call if you have any information about a crime which has been reported.

Mr Rolington confirmed that more information about Neighbourhood Watch or E-watch could be provided by him if those interested wished to contact him, or the Clerk.

Mr Rolington reported the most prevalent crime in this area is theft from sheds, as many residents have larger gardens and hence are likely to have expensive tools for maintenance. These are an easy target for thieves. He said that a lot of crimes could be prevented if tools and valuables are marked by their owners as it makes them more difficult for thieves to re sell. Selector DNA products can be provided by Mr Rolington to mark tools and equipment.

Mr Coatsworth asked about ‘Farm watch’. This has apparently been superseded by ‘Country eye, which can send and receive information to smart phones and other devices to keep farmers up to date.

Mr Rolington said that they were in regular contact with the Crime Support Unit in Tunbridge wells, to exchange information.

PCSO Cary reminded everyone that the Police mobile unit is now operational again and the dates, times and venues are available on the Police website. She will also try to email the Clerk with posters to put up so that people will know the times/venues in advance.

PCSO Carey said that if the village had an event which they wanted the police to be present at, the Police Mobile unit was a good choice for this, as they would not be called away. It was suggested that the mobile policing unit could be parked where the Citizens Advice Van currently parks, when it calls at the village.

Thanks were given to Mr Rolington and PCSO Carey for coming to the meeting.

## 2. **PUBLIC SESSION.**

A member of the public mentioned that hedges now need to be cut back and asked if the Council could consider cutting back the trees on Fromandez Drive. Cllr March said that the council would write to parishioners who did not cut back hedges in a reasonable time and that they would look at the trees on Fromandez Dive for pruning back.

She reported that she had put pressure on KHS to repaint the white lines on the Lamberhurst side of the crossroads, as they were wearing off. This work had been completed in the last couple of weeks.

Mr Mills said his hedge on the Lamberhurst Road would be cut back soon.

He also said that the shop had upgraded its CCTV and that this now covers a lot of the crossroads. He explained that if anyone needed footage of a near miss or accident, he would be willing to try and find a recording of this on his camera, provided it was reported to him as soon as possible after the event. This could provide evidence for the traffic calming group.

Cllr March said that Alex King is already chasing Steven Noad at KHS for an answer to the questions asked some time ago by the Highways group led by Mr Dicketts. Cllr Mac Dermott said he would also pursue this for the village.

Cllr Stevens said that in some areas Highways had started strimming around the marker posts, but this had not commenced in Horsmonden yet.

Mr Kerrigan mentioned the drains on the Lamberhurst Road and asked if they had been cleared now.

The Clerk said that the problems with the drains near Heath Stores and Gun Back Lane had been fixed, but she was still awaiting a clear timetable of drainage cleansing from KHS. Mr Morton said that he had seen the drainage team clearing the Lamberhurst Road drains about one month ago .Clerk to check on this and report any ongoing problems to Highways.

Cllr March and the Clerk read aloud a report on Village Vision provided by Nick May and Ken Tutt, reporting on the progress so far with various groups and urging people to get involved if they wanted the aims of the Village vision to come to fruition. Cllr March said that Nick and Ken were sorry that they had not been able to make it to the meeting; however she took the opportunity to thank them publicly for all they have done with Village Vision, as the PC was hugely grateful for all the hard work, effort and time which they had put into this project.

## 4. **MINUTES OF THE 2013 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th May 2013 were recommended for approval by Cllr Davis, seconded by Cllr Stevens, vote carried, and duly signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council.

## 5. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr March began by thanking the members of the Council for the time and effort they had put in and the support they had provided for the Chair over the past year. She also publicly thanked Mr

Couchman for his continued diligence in checking of the play area and winding the clock, as well as Mr Jones for his huge efforts in litter picking for the village. Cllr March also thanked the Clerk for her dedication over the last year. She presented a token of her appreciation for each of the aforementioned persons.

The Chair went through the power point presentation which had previously been prepared by the Clerk for the meeting, and explained items as she went.

Cllr March highlighted the following points:

Public toilets:

The Council have been precepting monies over the past few years to pay for the upgrade which has now been finished. Cllr March explained that 2014/15 was the final year in precepting of the upgrade of the toilets, as this would settle the final contractor's fees. She explained the council's reasoning in deciding to upgrade the toilets, in that they felt they were a necessary expenditure being so close the Green which is used for so many village events, and that it was important to include a disabled and baby change facility. The toilets are to be officially re-opened at 9.30am on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014.

Emergency Planning

Following the severe flooding earlier in the year, Cllr March explained that an emergency planning group had now been set up by the council. The group had already met on one occasion and hoped to draft a protocol which could be followed in emergency situations to enable the village to assist the emergency services, or to help itself whilst waiting for emergency assistance.

Cllr March went on to say that Horsmonden's Parishioners make it a very friendly place to live and said that other parishes had commented on how friendly a place it was to visit.

Cllr Davis gave thanks to the Chair for her great efforts and enthusiasm over the past year, as well as her unmatched experience and leadership qualities.

## 6. **PRECEPT AND ACCOUNTS**

The accounts for 2013-2014 (Account Summary attached at Appendix 1) and the Precept for the year 2014-2015 (attached at Appendix 2) were presented to the meeting by Cllr Russell.

Cllr Russell mentioned in particular the toilet conversion and the new Christmas lighting, which were items that the Council had spent quite a lot on over the past year. He pointed out that although the new Christmas lights now stay on 24 hours a day, they are very low energy LED's and therefore are much more cost efficient than the previous lights.

Cllr Russell also mentioned that the Clerks hours of employment had now been increased by the Council, to incorporate some of the overtime which the clerk was doing. This had resulted in an increase in salary, but meant that hopefully less overtime would need to be calculated and paid over the next year.

He also mentioned the Village Celebration Fund, which precepted monies towards a 3 day event on the Green each year, with free events for everyone. Each year profits from the event are ploughed back in, so that the amount which needs to be precepted is kept as low as possible. The Clerk pointed out that the precepted amount of £1500 in 2014/15 represented less than £1.00 per parishioner for the event.

It was pointed out that the Parish has at least £1.4 million's worth of assets and that the Parish Council up keep and administrate these each year, using precepted monies. The Social club had

carried out a lot of works inside the Institute Building themselves, which had saved the Council money, and was evidence of their continued motivation and enthusiasm.

Cllr Stevens requested that parishioners try to keep an eye on the newly refurbished toilets and let the Clerk or the police know about any problems. The toilets are cleaned three times a week by a contracting company, paid by the Parish Council. The Council are considering CCTV at the entrance to the toilets and will be looking at this further over the next year or so. It was suggested that the Council could also potentially look at noise deterrents which come on automatically when the door s lock at night, to prevent people from wanting to be present, once they are locked up for the evening, as this could deter vandals. Cllr March warned that she had heard that noise deterrents can be harmful to smaller children. The Council will ask the CSU at TWBC about these suggestions.

It was proposed by Caroline Davis and seconded by Andrew Mills that Appendix 1, showing the Account Summary, be accepted. Carried by those present.

Pam Payne proposed that Appendix 2, the Precept for 2014/15 be accepted by the Parish. This was seconded by David Coatsworth and carried by those present.

Ken Mills stood up and thanked the Council members and Cllr March for all their work throughout the year.

Cllr March thanked everyone for attending the meeting and Mrs. Russell and Mrs. Holloway for serving the refreshments.

The Meeting ended at 9.05pm.