

**MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL at 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2018**

**Present:** Cllr March (Chair)

Councillors Russell, Davis, Stevens, Jenkinson, Larkin, Sheppard, and Richards.

**In attendance:** Lucy Noakes (Clerk and RFO)

21 members of the public

**Declarations of Interest:**

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

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr McDermott (TWBC) - at another PC meeting.

**2. PUBLIC SESSION (no decisions): 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.**

Several young members of the parish had asked to speak about the Community Garden scheme proposed under item 7.3 of the agenda. They explained how the scheme would work and how it would be of benefit to both younger and older members of the community.

Two parishioners had also asked to speak about the ongoing traffic issues experienced at the crossroads. One parishioner asked if KHS was aware of the cause of the multiple accidents at the crossroads, and wondered if they had been able to access information gathered by the police about the incidents. Another parishioner pointed out that there seemed to be about one instance a week of a vehicle being driven straight across the crossroads without pausing at the junction. She called for KHS to consider doing something much more visual at the crossroads. The parishioner pointed out that although double yellow lines were being considered as part of a solution, to stop people parking on the junction, this decision should be looked at very carefully as it could have a detrimental effect on the centre of a village and might drive custom away from the village shop by limiting the available parking.

The Chair proposed moving item 7.3 Community Garden Scheme, forward for discussion at this point. Seconded Cllr Sheppard, unanimous.

**7.3 Community Garden Scheme.**

The Clerk had circulated details of the scheme, provided by Hilary Marshall, to members of the Council prior to the meeting. It was requested that the Clerk find out if there might be a possibility of water run off from St Margaret's flats being directed into water butts, which the members of the scheme could use.

It was proposed by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Jenkinson that the Council grant funds of £1573 to the scheme to allow them to get started with their plans. Unanimous.

It was proposed from the Chair that item 7.1 Traffic Solutions be moved forward for discussion at this point. Seconded Cllr Russell, unanimous.

**7.1 Traffic Solutions. Look at recent problems and potential ways forward as put forward by KCC**

Cllr Davis made the following points:

- The PC had now paid the fee for the new gateway installations and it was hoped that this and the moving out of the speed limit on the Brenchley Road, as the final part of the PC's project, would go ahead over the next few weeks.

- The PC had been carrying out analysis of the SID (Speed Indicator Device) data on a regular basis and this was publicly available on the website for viewing.

- The PC had considered purchasing a second SID, as it appeared to slow traffic in the area in which it was located, however it had been agreed at the May meeting to postpone the purchase of this until the new TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) was in place in the Brenchley Road, so that all locations could be utilised for the SIDs. This was not specifically linked to the crossroads; however, it was a positive traffic calming feature.

- KHS had been very proactive with trying to find a solution, following the recent spate of further accidents. They had put a lot of resources into considering what could be done and had come forward with a number of proposals.

- KHS specialist Street lighting team had looked at the possibility of additional street lighting at the junction, however there was nowhere else suitable to put additional lighting at present.

- KHS had also looked at vehicle activated illuminated signs, as a possibility, but this type of additional signage was not suitable for the approach to the junction for technical reasons. The Clerk was still corresponding with KHS about the possibility of further signage, as whilst vehicle activated illuminated signs could not be input, it was believed that other potential options might still be explored

- KHS had suggested that they might be able to install a red surfacing on all areas of the junction with granite sets demarking the edge of this area on all four points. A similar thing had been installed at the crossroads in Benenden earlier in the year, however it was too early to tell if this had resulted in a positive outcome, as yet.

- KHS had also suggested that double yellow lines might be installed on all four corners of the junction to aid sight lines, if it was considered this would help.

- The PC had been asked to give an opinion on the latter two options.

- Kate and Andy Mills had kindly gone ahead with the removal of part of their hedge on the junction and it was hoped that this would have a positive effect on the visibility of the STOP sign and aid sight lines at the junctions. The PC thanked the Mills' for carrying out this work.

Other points raised were the possibility of permanently illuminating the STOP sign at this junction, and or adding something to the existing give way sign if possible.

Bearing all of this in mind, Cllr Davis proposed the following:

The Parish Council has no objection to the use of red surfacing and granite sets, in fact they would encourage it. They would like KHS to pursue improved signage, including a vehicular activated flashing sign added to the current advanced warning sign located 100m from the junction on the Lamberhurst Road, as well as permanent illumination of the STOP sign, on the approach from the Lamberhurst direction. The view of the Parish Councillors was that they would not support the implementation of double yellow lines at the junction. This was seconded by Cllr Stevens and voted for unanimously.

It was also suggested that the Clerk ascertain the costs of purchasing another SID (possibly the larger type which can display a message as well as speed?) as well as the costs of employing a company to maintain the SIDs on behalf of the Council as the larger SIDs are much heavier to lift and move. Cllr Davies also suggested that the Council pursue the idea of a bespoke sign with KHS as if the correct signage does not exist, there may be an opportunity to get such a sign designed.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Agree the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018 & Planning Committee Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018.**

Cllr Stevens proposed acceptance of the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018, seconded Cllr Richards, unanimous.

Cllr Russell proposed acceptance of the minutes of the Planning Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018, seconded Cllr Richards, unanimous for those present.

At this point it was proposed by Cllr Richards that item 7.2 Neighbourhood Planning be brought forward for the benefit of those listening, seconded Cllr Russell, unanimous.

**7.2 Neighbourhood Planning. Plans and proposals moving forward.**

Cllr Jenkinson updated the Council about the recent events, following the end of Feria's current part of the contract. Some of the group had met with Jim Boot, another planning consultant, who had provided a proposal to assist with the plan going forward. The proposal had been forwarded to members of the Council for consideration, should the group decide that they would like to move forward working with Mr Boot.

The opinion of group members so far was that they had found Mr Boot's approach workable and he seemed able to offer the kind of assistance that they required to continue with the project.

It was proposed by Cllr Larkin and seconded by Cllr Sheppard, that the PC should accept Jim Boot's proposal to assist the group with the next stages of the NH Plan, at a cost of £3290, should the group decide that they wished to work with this consultant. Unanimous.

**4. MATTERS ARISING (no decisions)**

**Public Rights of Way**

The Clerk had now heard from KCC that their proposal to make the pathway between Back Lane and the Village Green into a Public Right of Way, had been accepted by them and it would be added to the Definitive map, in due course. Cllr March asked if the Clerk could go back to KCC and ask what width the pathway had been defined as having, as this would be useful for future to ensure future maintenance of the pathway.

**Public Toilets.**

The Clerk was still corresponding with SHS with regards to signing the new contract with them as there was a lot of detail which needed to be included in this to ensure future cleaning was carried out correctly.

Unfortunately, there had been further problems in the loos this month, with wet tissue paper being thrown at the walls and ceilings, the disabled door lock being forced open and small fires being lit from tissue paper in the loos. These issues had been reported to the local police, however with no evidence available, no further action could be taken against anyone. It was suggested that the Clerk look into various CCTV options.

**5. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE**

**5.1 Agree Parish Council accounts to 2<sup>nd</sup> December and settlement of invoices for this period (see appendix 1)**

Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the accounts as presented below. Seconded Cllr Russell, unanimous.

**Horsmonden Parish Council Accounts as at 2nd December 2018**

	<b>Balances</b>
Current account with Co-operative Bank PLC b/fwd. 05.11.2018 (assuming all debits and credits have cleared the account)	£ 118,773.39
Deposit account with HSBC b/fwd. 05.11.2018 (assuming all credits and debits have cleared the account)	£ 291.01
interest on HSBC account	<input type="text"/>

Item	Ref	Receipts	Payments
Castle water - supply of water to public toilets	D/D		£ 17.36
Mrs J Stanton - November Salary	S/O Flexi		£ 478.30
Mrs L Noakes - November Salary plus overtime	S/O Flexi		£ 1,403.96
HM Revenue and Customs - Tax & NI November	402139		£ 455.44
Mr C J Couchman - November clock and play area	402140		£ 83.08
Tunbridge Wells & District Citizens Advice Bureau	402141		£ 250.00
Cheque void	402142		
Viking - stationery	402143		£ 68.00
Mr T Simms - play area spring, top soil and seed etc.	402144		£ 150.90
<b>Information commissioner -Annual registration fee</b>	<b>402145</b>		<b>£ 40.00</b>
Kent County Council - supply and install gateways	402147		8,764.18
PSR Lighting and Signs LTD - September street lighting	402148		£ 89.00
PSR Lighting and Signs LTD - October street lighting	402149		£ 89.00
PSR Lighting and Signs LTD - November street lighting	402150		£ 89.00
TWBC s 106 monies for play area		£ 4,833.22	
VAT refund 31st March -31st September 2018		£ 4,673.19	

Current Account with Co-operative Bank PLC as at 02.12.18 £ 116,301.58  
(assuming all credits and debits have cleared the account)

All Accounts with HSBC as at 02.12.18 £ 291.01  
(assuming all credits and debits have cleared the account)

**TOTAL  
BANK: £ 116,592.59**

*Please note that in addition to this the Council holds a long-term investment of £70,000 with HSBC.*

- 5.2 Chair to reconcile accounts with bank statement for period up to and including 4<sup>th</sup> November 2018**  
The Chair and Clerk verified these accounts by checking the bank statements provided by Cooperative Bank.
- 5.3 Chair to reconcile accounts with bank statement for period up to and including 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018**  
This item had already been dealt with at the previous meeting.
- 5.4 Internal auditors half yearly report.**  
The Clerk had forwarded a copy of the Internal Auditor's interim report to the Council members for information. It as proposed by Cllr Russell that the Council noted the Interim report and that the issue of Reserves raised by the Auditor, be discussed by the Finance Committee at their meeting next week. Seconded Cllr Sheppard, unanimous.
- 5.5 Quotations to repair parking area kerb stones outside the Village hall**  
The Clerk had provided details of four different quotations from three companies to replace the kerbstones at the edge of the parking areas outside the Village Hall with granite sets. It was proposed by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Richards that quotation number four be accepted at the cost of £1196.80 plus VAT, as this was the most cost-effective quote which fully complied with the requirements of the Council, carried. The Clerk was able to reveal that the successful tender was with Dukes Contractors.
- 5.6 Quotations for installing the posts around Fromandez Drive.**  
The Clerk had provided details of three quotations for the installation of the recycled posts around the green area at Fromandez Drive. After consideration it was proposed by Cllr Jenkinson that the third quote be accepted at a cost of £1260plus VAT, as the most cost-effective quote. This was seconded by Cllr White and voted for unanimously. The Clerk was able to advise that this quote had been provided by Dukes Contractors.

## **5.7 Quotations for full risk assessment of Parish Council owned buildings.**

The Clerk had provided a schedule of quotes from three different companies who had quoted to carry out a full risk assessment of the parish owned buildings. It was proposed by Cllr Richards, and seconded by Cllr White that the third quotation should be accepted as this offered the best value for money it was felt. This was voted for Unanimously. The company voted for were Watson Wild and Baker Ltd.

## **5.8 Costs of installing Rialtas system and training for accounting with effect from 1.4.2019**

The Clerk and Cllr Russell had paid a visit to Goudhurst Parish Council offices during the previous week to examine the Rialtas accounting system provided by RBS (Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd). The system provides a purpose-built accounting solution for Parish Councils and has been used by Goudhurst, Brencley and Matfield and other local parishes successfully for years. Both the Clerk and Cllr Russell were of the opinion that it would be a suitable solution for the Parish Council accounting, as the Excel spreadsheets currently used by the Clerk were becoming too large and cumbersome and were widely open to manual errors being made. It was also recommended by the Internal Auditor, Mr Buckett. Cllr Russell commented that the Rialtas system was based on a coding structure so this would need to be worked on for implementation, however he felt it was a good solution and would provide useful reports for the Council. It was proposed by Cllr Russell that the PC purchase the Rialtas Accounting system for accounts as recommended by the Internal Auditor at the initial set up cost of £641 plus VAT for the first year. Seconded Cllr Jenkinson, unanimous.

## **5.9 BT quote for new contract for Broadband, telephone and mobile**

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk had been corresponding with BT to negotiate a new contract now that the current one was coming to an end.

The new proposal would provide the same service only with faster broadband for the price of £46.90 per month instead of £60.90 per month. It was proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Larkin that the Council should go ahead as soon as possible with the new service. Unanimous.

## **5.10 Quotes for drinking fountain.**

The Council had been bequeathed a sum of £5000 by the Late Susan Lloyd and one idea had been to provide a drinking fountain for the community using these funds.

The Clerk had forwarded to the Council members details of several drinking fountains which were available and also provided a bottle filler and dog fountain/bowl. It was suggested that the Clerk try to obtain details of plumbing costs associated with the fountain, and also details about the filters, batteries required and reaction to frost.

It was also suggested by Cllr White that others ideas should be raised and considered by the Council, and it was suggested that these should be brought to the next meeting.

It was suggested that the Council could ask the opinion of those present at the next Annual Parish Meeting to see which project they would support if several ideas could be worked on by that time.

## **6. HIGHWAYS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

### **6.1 Highways issues – footpaths, trees, roads, signs, verges, and markings**

The following Highways matters were reported for action:

- Pot holes in School House Lane, near to Ash Farm.
- The hedge at Freestones had now grown out to cover the kerbstones and marker posts. The top of the hedge curves outwards making it v difficult for high vehicle to pass without moving into the centre of the road.
- The hedges at Rectory Park required cutting back.
- The Clerk was asked if she could contact the developer of the site next to Kirkin's Close as the plastic barriers were not properly secured and had fallen over on occasions and also works vehicles were often parked on the corner of Kirkin's Close limiting sight lines for those pulling out.
- The sharp bend sign on School House Lane where the road bends to the left was now buried in bamboo which was over grown.
- There was a pot hole opposite the old Catholic Church on the south bound carriage way coming into the village.

### **6.2 Public rights of Way. Footpath between the Village Green and Back Lane**

Already dealt with under Matters Arising.

**6.3 Grounds Maintenance**

Nothing to report.

**6.4 Street lighting**

The Clerk would obtain a quote for the next meeting to replace the 17 Cosmo lights which the Council owned and which had not yet been converted to LED style lighting.

**7. ADMINISTRATION**

**7.1 Traffic Solutions. Look at recent problems and potential ways forward as put forward by KCC**

Already dealt with elsewhere in the meeting.

**7.2 NH Planning. Plans and proposals moving forward.**

Already dealt with elsewhere in the meeting.

**7.3 Community garden scheme**

Already dealt with elsewhere in the meeting.

**7.4 Data Protection Officer's report**

The Clerk had forwarded the DPO's report to the Council members for their information. It had been recommended that the Councillors stop using their personal email addresses and use email addresses provided by the Council's domain provider. It was also recommended that tablets or laptops should be provided for Council members for the duration of their membership and then be handed back and wiped clean once they resigned. It was suggested that the Clerk contact Jane Clarke and Jane Fineman at TWBC as they had just dealt with the purchase of laptops or tablets for use by the Borough Council members.

The Clerk would also make enquires about new IT facilities for herself and the Assistant Clerk as they would require encryption facilities and their current laptops could not provide this.

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk would be starting to sort through and dispose appropriately of old paper work in the office, over the coming weeks.

**7.5 Reorganisation of office and purchase additional furniture**

Once the Clerk and Assistant Clerk had sorted through old paper work, it was hoped that the large metal cupboard which was located in the office would be dispensed with, leaving room for another desk and pedestal for the Assistant Clerk as there was currently insufficient room for both clerks to operate at once. It was proposed by Cllr Russell, that room allowing, new office equipment and furniture be purchased for the Assistant Clerk, at the cost of £107 plus VAT for the Desk and £118 plus VAT for mobile pedestal. Seconded by Cllr Stevens, unanimous.

**7.6 Listing Gun and Spit Roast Inn as asset of community value.**

It was suggested that this be dealt with next time, as there had been no time to prepare the forms.

**7.7 Listing Manchester House, the Heath Stores as asset of community value.**

It was proposed by Cllr Stevens, and seconded by Cllr Sheppard that the Council should also try to list Heath Stores as an asset of Community Value.

**7.8 Gatwick Plans and the PC's future involvement with HWCAAGS**

The PC were only observers at the HWCAAG's meetings as they were not full voting members. As there had been no further noise issues relating to aircraft reported in the Parish, it was suggested that the Council did not need to attend any HWCAAG meetings at present. It was suggested that Cllr Larkin continue to read the minutes of the HWCAAG meetings and inform the Council if anything of interest should arise.

**7.9 The Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group – invitation to join the HPLHG**

The Clerk had received a letter from The Hop Pickers Line Heritage Group asking them if they would like to become members of the group and send a member along. The Parish Council had looked at this before and unfortunately a lot of the land which used to be part of the old Hop Pickers Line in Horsmonden was now privately owned making it very difficult to continue the project in the village. It was noted that the NH

planning Group were looking at the old line along with the work they were carrying out and it was suggested that the Clerk ask Diana Morton if the NH planning Group would like to stay in touch with the HPLHG.

**8. UPDATES (no decisions)**

**8.1 Updates and meetings attended (updates and feedback from meetings attended and held by council members**

Cllr March reported that it was the Parish Chairman's meeting next week. The NE Quadrant group were planning to engage a consultant and were asking each parish to contribute £5000 towards this. It was suggested that this should be brought forward to the January meeting for a decision. There was some scepticism about the benefits of the scheme as it was felt that some of the work was already being carried out by NH planning groups and that TWBC might take little notice of the NE Quadrant Group as they had no legal standing. Other members felt it was important to stay in the loop in order to protect the interests of Horsmonden. The NH planning group should be kept up to date, if the PC decided to contribute towards this group.

Cllr Jenkinson attended the KALC AGM on 17th November., this had included a debated motion as to whether KALC should take action to support the "20's Plenty for Kent" proposal to "Make KCC a 20mph Local Authority" The motion was supported and carried by those present. Another motion debated at the meeting was whether KALC should lobby Kent Police to delegate enforcement powers to local authorities and/or trained civilians to deliver more frequent and less costly enforcement of speed limits. Again, the motion was supported and carried by those present.

Cllr Richards and Jenkinson attended Tunbridge Wells Area Committee Meeting on Tuesday 27th November, where a presentation had taken place by Internal Auditor, Mr. Buckett regarding Parish Council reserves.

**The meeting ended at 10.30pm**