

**MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL at 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 7<sup>TH</sup>**  
**SEPTEMBER 2015**

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

**In attendance:** Lucy Noakes (Clerk)  
1 member of the public.

**Declarations of Interest:**

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

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr McDermott.

**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*).**

Mr Stubbings addressed the council on the subject of air traffic flying over the village to and from Gatwick Airport.

Mr Stubbings wished to draw to the council's attention the fact that aircraft noise had substantially increased in the village over the last few years. He had particularly noticed an increase in noise over the last few weeks which seemed to be related to aircraft moving in a particular pattern over Horsmonden. The aircraft he had noticed were not light aircraft, helicopters or aircraft to and from Headcorn, but seemed to be going to and from Gatwick Airport in particular patterns. At present when take-off at Gatwick is reversed and to the east, Horsmonden seems to be on the direct take off path. The noise from these aircraft is very intrusive.

Mr Stubbings said that it was his understanding that the Airport Authorities and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) are under no obligation to consult communities like ours on changes to flight paths. He went on to say this was not about the issue of the potential second runway at Gatwick, although this could certainly make things worse, it seemed to be more about a shift in the landing flight concentration, eastwards towards Tunbridge wells and perhaps even further east. Gatwick now had a policy being trialled, of 'concentrated' flight paths rather than 'dispersed' flight paths which meant that rather than taking off and dispersing over a wide geographic area, minimising the noise impact over any particular place, aircraft are in a concentrated corridor. Maps show this corridor to the east from Gatwick, dangerously close to Paddock Wood and Horsmonden.

Mr Stubbings feels that this presents a threat to rural tranquillity. He was of the opinion that members of the council should keep themselves informed of the situation and make representations when and if necessary. He thought that a good way of staying informed might be to join the 'High Weald Councils Aviation Action Group' (HWCAAG), a non political association of interested and concerned Parish Councils in the High Weald area, so that the council can benefit from a flow of information and make their voice heard when appropriate and so that they can seek to ensure that there is adequate consultation on key issues as they affect the village, before it is too late.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION AND CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR**

#### **Cllr Russell reported the following back to the Council from the interview panel:**

There were six candidates expressing an interest in being co-opted to serve on the Council. They were Nicholas Leppard, Wendy Garnet, Valerie Holloway, Linda Jenkinson, Matt Richards, and Mark Austin. The candidates were interviewed in that order over two evenings, using a standard list of questions to ensure fair process. Subsequent to the interviews, Mark Austin withdrew having reconsidered the time commitment involved in Parish Council work.

The Panel met again on 24<sup>th</sup> August to consider the candidates and formulate their recommendation to the Council. Once again we found it difficult to differentiate between the candidates as they all had something positive to offer the Council. However, after much discussion we reached a decision to recommend Linda Jenkinson and Wendy Garnet for co-option onto the Council.

Linda has a work background in the public sector prior to her retirement involving management, committee work and team work. She has served on the committees of various village organisations in the past and has good organisational skills. The Panel feel that she will be able to put her background and skills to good use for the benefit of the Council and the Village. These will be expanded by her willingness to attend training courses on issues specific to Parishes.

Wendy has a professional background in which she has had to interpret legislation and apply it in different situations. She has good communication skills and has experience of teamwork. Liaising with other professions has enabled her to see issues from a wide perspective and to form balanced judgements. Having three young children, the Panel feel that she will be able to bring to the Council the views and aspirations of other families in a similar age group and will provide a link, formal or informal, with the village school.

The Panel recognises that the other candidates have something to offer the village and some are already giving of their time and energy to provide valuable support to various groups. Whilst recommending the two candidates mentioned above for co-option we feel that the Council should informally commend the other candidates for their interest and encourage them to continue to serve our community.

#### **The proposal from Councillor Russell was :**

That the Parish Council expresses it's thanks to all the candidates for their applications, and co-opts Linda Jenkinson and Wendy Garnet to fill the two current vacancies on the Council. The council would also encourage the unsuccessful candidates to continue their valued present involvement in Village activities. This was seconded by Cllr Davies and voted for unanimously.

The Clerk witnessed Cllr Jenkinson signing her declaration of acceptance and gave Cllr Jenkinson a registration of interest form for completion and return.

### **9.9 Gatwick Airport Noise problems**

It was proposed by the Chair and voted for unanimously that item 9.9 be brought forward for discussion as Mr Stubbings was present to hear the discussion at this point.

The Council discussed the points raised by Mr Stubbings and the various levels of membership of the HWCAAG. It was generally felt that the council should monitor the situation and stay alerted to any changes going on so that they could make the necessary representations should the need arise.

However membership level s 1& 2 of HWCAAG were not thought to be appropriate.

Cllr March proposed from the Chair that the council join HWCAAG at level 3 membership as a watching brief and that Mr Stubbings keep the Council informed and up to date with this, so that they can remain aware of the situation. Unanimous.

4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015 and Planning Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015 and Planning meeting 19<sup>th</sup> August 2015**

The minutes of the meeting of 6th July 2015 were proposed for acceptance as read by the Chair and the vote was carried. The minutes for the planning meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> July were proposed for acceptance by the Chair and the vote was carried. The minutes of the planning meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> August were proposed as read by the Chair and the vote was carried.

5. **MATTERS ARISING. (No decisions taken)**

**Water bills**

*Cllr Russell* had been monitoring the meter and the usage seemed to be fairly even each quarter. However the usage overall still appears quite high considering the sanitary ware installed and connected and given the usage of the toilets. *Cllr Russell* will continue to monitor.

**Conservation Area Map**

Cllr Davis displayed to the Council the finished map, which now requires mounting and covering in toughened glass or something similar. *Clerk* to look into suppliers of hard wood plinths. Cllr Stevens to ask Mr Gallagher about limestone plinths.

**Buses to Paddockwood.**

Nothing more to report at present.

**Public Rights of Way**

The *Clerk* was still waiting to hear back from KCC on this matter

**The Institute**

*Cllr Isaacs* would write a specification based on the engineers report, which the clerk could use to send out tender requests. The rest was dealt with elsewhere in the meeting.

**Street Cruizer**

The council felt the previous sessions were so successful that they should run more. *Clerk* to ask if they can have two more session during the half term holidays running form 2pm til 5pm . Also to ask Eddie Walsh about the Christmas holidays – is it popular then or not?

**Christmas Lighting**

Cllr Davis has purchased the extra set. Add Christmas lights to October agenda for discussion.

**Love Where we Live Awards.**

Mr Couchman had been selected for the finals in his category.

**New street light on Village Green**

*The Clerk* was awaiting the quotations for the trenching of the electricity cable to power the light.

**Dog Excrement**

*Cllr Stanton* offered to run a ‘Bag and Flag’ day in October to draw publicity to the problem. *The clerk* will find out if TWBC will empty any extra bins which the Council could fund in problem areas.

6. **PLANNING**

Planning Application No:	TW/15/506686/FULL
Proposal:	<b>Hard surfaced tennis court</b>
Location:	Park Farmhouse Smallbridge Road Horsmonden Tonbridge Kent TN12 8EP
Recommendation:	Approval
Proposed:	Cllr Hughes, seconded Cllr Stevens. Unanimous.
Comments:	Approval. Acceptable enhancement to the property.

Planning Application No:	TW/15/506691/LBC
Proposal:	<b>Listed Building Consent for hard surfaced tennis court</b>
Location:	Park Farmhouse Smallbridge Road Horsmonden Tonbridge Kent TN12 8EP
Recommendation:	Approval
Proposed:	Cllr Hughes, seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous
Comments:	Approval. Acceptable enhancement to the property.
Planning Application No:	TW/15/506798/FULL
Proposal:	<b>Replace 4 windows</b>
Location:	5 Heath Court The Heath Horsmonden Tonbridge Kent TN12 8JE
Recommendation:	Approval.
Proposed:	Cllr Russell, seconded Cllr Stanton. Unanimous.
Comments:	Approval. Reasonable replacement to existing windows.
Planning Application No:	TW/15/506800/LBC
Proposal:	<b>Listed Building Consent - Replace 4 windows</b>
Location:	5 Heath Court The Heath Horsmonden Tonbridge Kent TN12 8JE
Recommendation:	Refusal.
Proposed:	Cllr Hughes, seconded Cllr Isaacs, unanimous.
Comments:	Refusal. The Parish Council consider the replacement windows should be timber framed given the age and listing of the building, and the applicant does not make this clear.

## 6.2 **Mouse Trap Farm -TW/15/501929**

Horsmonden Parish Council was not a full consultee on this planning matter, as most of the land pertaining to the application was outside the parish. However as a small portion was in Horsmonden, the planning officer had asked if the Council had an opinion. After a discussion, the following proposal and comments were voted upon:

Horsmonden Parish Council have continued to report that this site has not been used purely for agricultural use and they are concerned that it will become mainly for industrial use. They have concerns about noise pollution and light pollution, as well as the access on a blind bend on what is an unclassified, unrestricted road.'

These comments were proposed from the Chair and voted for unanimously.

## 6.3 **Report of Permissions Granted and Refused**

None.

## 6.4 **Other Planning matters can be raised, but no decisions.**

None.

## 7. **PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE**

### 7.1 **Parish Council Accounts to 6th September 2015**

The Clerk presented the accounts including cheques drawn, up to 5th September, as shown below, to those present. Cllr March proposed acceptance from the chair Unanimous.

**Horsmonden Parish Council Accounts as at 6th September 2015**

Current account b/fwd 06.07.2015  
 Deposit account b/fwd 06.07.2015  
 Interest received (Deposit Account)

**Balances**

£ 55,725.69  
 £ 60,004.37

Item	Ref	Receipts	Payments
Blachere Illuminations - Christmas lighting	401649		£ 841.00
Southern Water Dec- June 2014 - parish toilets drainage	401650		£ 450.15
Kent County Council - PEAT tisting - VH and Institute	401651		£ 86.69
Mrs L D Noakes - July salary	S/O		£ 880.70
Brenchely Drives - Front area of Institute	401552		£ 4,224.00
Viking Direct - stationery	401553		£ 50.66
Mr C J Couchman - clock and play area July	401554		£ 103.85
HM Revenue and Customs - Tax and NI L Noakes	401555		£ 68.97
Specialist Hygiene services- July cleaning	401556		£ 187.20
SSE Contracting Ltd - street lighting maintenance July	401557		£ 71.26
Mr M S Sexon - computer engineer	401558		£ 70.00
Mrs L D Noakes August salary	S/O		£880.90
Mr C J Couchman - August clock and play area	401559		£ 83.08
Specialist Hygiene Services - cleaning toilets August	401560		£ 187.20
Playsafety Ltd -Safety Inspection of play area	401561		£ 78.00
Kent County Council - legal fees July - Lease	401562		£ 21.60
Blachere Illuminations - Christmas lighting - VAT	401563		£ 168.20
SSE Contracting Ltd - street lighting maintenance Aug	401564		£ 71.26
Payment for festival banner- Firefly Properties		£ 55.00	
Donation for shelter anonymous		£ 2,000.00	
Payment for festival banner - Heathleigh physio		£ 55.00	
interest paid on current account		£ 2.68	
Payment for festival banner - Zane Cheesman		£ 55.00	
interest paid on current account		£ 2.22	

Current Account as at 06.09.15 £ 49,370.87

Deposit Account as at 06.09.15 £ 60,004.37

**TOTAL BANK: £ 109,375.24**

**7.2 Nomination of authorised account persons on Bank Account (change in banking regulations requirement)**

The Clerk had received notification from the Co-op bank that they had now changed their Administration of bank accounts and in order that she could continue to ask for information on the bank account she now need to become authorised by the signatories as an ‘authorised account person’. This would enable to her to ask for balances over the telephone and alter direct debit amounts etc, but would not allow her to sign cheques or carry out any internet banking.

Cllr March proposed from the Chair that two signatories sign the form to allow this, as the clerk needed to be able to access balances in order to maintain the accounts. Unanimous.

### **7.3 External/internal audit – budget monitoring meeting**

Councillor Russell reported that the Finance Committee had met informally to carry out a budget monitoring exercise as at 30th June. Two items of concern were identified, namely the electricity supply charge for street lighting and the water and sewerage costs for the Public Conveniences. Following subsequent investigation by the Clerk it was apparent that there had been an error in the electricity bill resulting in a significant overcharge. This is being corrected and a refund will be made.

The costs for the Public Conveniences continue to be over budget, and the water consumption will continue to be monitored. Councillor Russell proposed that the Council note that the budget monitoring exercise had taken place and approve the virement of the budget provision for business rates (no longer payable) on the Public Conveniences to the water and sewerage heading. Seconded Cllr Davis, Unanimous.

The Clerk had received contact in July from the External auditor, PKF Little John, regarding the calculation of the Council's asset values. Following this it transpired that the Council's asset values had been incorrectly calculated and stated over the last few years. The clerk had received some very helpful advice KALC and from the finance expert, David Buckett, who she had asked to provide an alternative quotation for the council's internal auditing for 2015/16.

It was proposed from the Chair that Mr Buckett be appointed internal auditor to the Parish Council for 2015/16 at the cost of £450 plus mileage of £46.80 for two visits, as although his services were more expensive than KCC audit who had carried out the previous few years audit, it was felt that he would be able to offer valuable advice and experience to assist with ensuring the accuracy of the council's finances. Unanimous.

## **8. HIGHWAYS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

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

The following highways matters were reported at the meeting:

- Pot hole on opposite side of road to Poplars Farm, Churn Lane.

Cllr March had been informed about an overhanging tree which seems to be coming from the school playing field. It was suggested that this should be monitored.

Cllr Stevens said that once his work load had eased he would try to have a look at the drains and over hanging trees around the village if possible.

He reported that some of the verges had been re-cut following the clerks complaint about the verge cutting to Earl Bourner, Those which had been re-cut had been done properly.

The Clerk asked if any more salt bags were required for the winter. Cllr Stevens said that he had plenty in his yard and that no more was needed.

### **8.2 Tree report**

He Clerk had spoken to Mr Tweddle the tree surgeon about the beech tree on the green which appeared to be dead. He confirmed that the likely hood was that it was dead, but there was a slim chance of it recovering in the Spring. He said it appeared sturdy and there was no rush to take it out before springtime therefore. He believed that it could have a fungal infection, so if removed, the council should not replace it with another beech tree in the same place.

## **9. ADMINISTRATION**

### **9.1 Play area – RoSPA report.**

The Clerk had forwarded a copy of the RoSPA report to member of the council. Everything was fine apart from a chain connector on one of the swing seats. The clerk produced a quotation from

Playdale to replace the chain connectors of the swing seats at a price of £228.91 plus VAT. Most of this was for the fitting of the connectors which was considered to be expensive; however the consensus was that these parts should be fitted by a playdale expert as soon as possible. Cllr Hughes proposed that the clerk ask Playdale to go ahead and fit the connectors as soon as possible. Seconded, Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

## **9.2 The Institute –plans for the front of the building.**

The Clerk was asked to chase Highway s about the tarmac which was needed between the road and the new block paving, as this was now difficult for those in wheelchairs to access the club, and would cause a large puddle in wet weather.

Cllrs March and Stevens had found a lantern to go on the outside of the building to light up the front door area. They would ask the club to have this installed by their electrician when he next comes. Cllr Stevens was still obtaining quotations form Pam at Essex lighting for the clock tower.

## **9.3 Village Vision - including quotations for Shelters and positioning of shelter.**

No more information on the positioning of the shelter.

An update for Village Vision was required, this would need to be drafted by members of the Parish Council with the help of volunteers.

## **9.4 Parking around Green Road and outside the Institute Building**

The Clerk had received an opinion from TWBC Planning conservation officer Debbie Maltby, that putting any parking on the Green would be likely to cause harm to the significance of the Horsmonden Conservation area. It was also the opinion of councillors that not many parking spaces could be gained by using the north side of the green for parking. The consensus was that this idea had been explored by the council but was not a viable option.

## **9.5 Emergency Planning – using the Village Hall as a Welfare Centre**

The Village Hall committee were going to discuss the option of using the hall as a Welfare and emergency centre at their meeting in September. Cllr Stanton to pass to the clerk another copy of the group's letter to parishioners, to ensure that everyone is happy with this.

## **9.6 Horsefair 2015**

The Clerk had received everything she need for the booking apart from the insurance documents, but Park insurance had assured her they would email of copy of this through once available. The key to the green should be collected by the police on Friday morning.

The Clerk and Cllr March had received a copy of a Memorandum of Understanding from Dawn Gabriel at TWBC. This document had not been mentioned in the last meeting with the police and TWBC officers and had only just been sent through by email. It was considered that there was not enough time for the council to read and consider the contents of the document before the event took place. The Council had been approached with a similar document on a previous occasion which they had decided not to sign.

It was proposed by Cllr Hughes that the Council should accept the booking of the Village Green for the Horsefair event, subject to the insurance being in place by 3pm on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September. Seconded Councillor Stevens, unanimous.

## **9.7 Adding information to HPC website**

The clerk had been approached by someone wanting to add information to the PC website. It was reiterated that only Parish Council information could be put on the website.

The Chair raised the idea of adding photographs of each member of the council to the website. It was suggested that Cllr Russell ask John Sheppard if he would be willing to photograph the councillors prior to the next PC meeting so that these could then be put on the website.

**9.8 Parish Council stance on voting for reason of absence.**

The problems associated with the recording of reasons for absence had been raised at the last meeting. The reason for recording such information is in order to justify the six month rule, whereby a councillor is automatically disqualified if they are absent for more than six months consecutively without a reason which is considered 'justifiable' by those councillors present.

However this could involve recording information about a person's state of health, or about a councillor's holiday plans, both of which could put sensitive information into the public forum. It was proposed from the Chair that the council no longer record a reason for absence under the apologies section of the meetings. Unanimous

**9.9 Gatwick Airport Noise problems**

Dealt with earlier in the meeting.

**10. CONSULTATIONS**

**10.1 Kent County Council Minerals & Waste Local Plan 2013-30 - Proposed Modifications Consultation**

[http://consult.kent.gov.uk/portal/mwcs/mwlp-submission/proposed\\_mods](http://consult.kent.gov.uk/portal/mwcs/mwlp-submission/proposed_mods) consultation ends 12th October

The Chair suggested that this be left for a decision at the October meeting as there was still time before the consultation ended.

**10.2 Changes to where Sexual Health Services are delivered in Kent**

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/sexualhealth/consultationHome> - consultation ends 11th September

The council had no comment on this consultation.

**10.3 Kent Environment Strategy – consultation ends 25<sup>th</sup> September.**

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/KESconsultation/consultationHome>

It was proposed from the Chair that the council would support the strategy set out in the documents. Unanimous.

**11. CORRESPONDENCE/UPDATES**

**11.1 Chairman's update (no decisions)**

The Chair asked the clerk to circulate the Heritage and Conservation document from TWBC website. It was commented that there was a need to publicise the increase of ragwort on the verges and the danger this poses for grazing animals.

The Chair had received information from TWBC to say that the Civic Amenities vehicle will be cut to a fortnightly service as from next year, and will be alternate landfill and brown bin collections. She asked the Clerk to add this to the agenda for the October meeting.

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

The Chair and councillor Hughes had attended the Horsefair meeting, details of which were dealt with earlier in the meeting.

**The meeting ended at 10.30pm**