

MINUTES OF HORSMONDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL at 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 1st SEPTEMBER 2014

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

In attendance: Lucy Noakes (Clerk)
3 members of the public

Declarations of Interest:

Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct were invited. Cllr Isaacs declared an interest in item 7.1 on the agenda as he had quoted for the works. He did not take part in the discussion of this or vote on this item.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Hughes – away. This reason was proposed as acceptable under the circumstances 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).*

Mr Hammond had asked to speak about his proposal regarding the area in front of the Village Hall. Mr Hammond is the owner of the land adjacent to the Village hall and was proposing that the low wall between the Village Hall car park and his own and entrance could be removed and levelled. The car park could then be extended to include his land and would provide two extra car parking spaces at the front of the hall (seven in total). Mr Hammond was proposing that he would cover the costs of the works involved and would request that he be allowed flexible use of one car parking space, in return for the Village hall having use of the one new spaces plus their existing five.

The Parish Council asked Mr Hammond what his intentions for the site were and he said that he was gauging ideas and opinions from the Parish Council and neighbours of the site, at this stage.

Cllr Russell will take this idea to the Village Hall committee to discuss at their next meeting. It was suggested that the Parish Council might be able to let Mr Hammond know the response at their November Meeting.

Mr Kerrigan had asked to speak about the future of Discretionary services. TWBC 5 year plan mentioned moving the provision of Discretionary services to parish level. Mr Kerrigan was concerned about this as Parish Councils are not designed and do not have the ability to run waste management services. He was particularly concerned about the cost at parish level and also the risks associated with such a change. Mr Kerrigan mentioned the possibility of increased fly tipping if the service was withdrawn and asked if TWBC would be providing extra fly tipping removal services if this was the case, or whether the parish would be expected to provide this. He was also concerned about what would happen if other parishes decided not to keep the service, as it would be difficult for one parish to run this on its own. Cllr March will be attending the Parish Chairpersons meeting on 2nd October and will report back on these issues.

Mrs Verrell had asked to address the Council as she was still experiencing issues with noise and disturbance on the footpath between the Green and Back Lane, late at night. Mrs Verrell said that regularly on a Friday and Saturday night, there were people using the footpath past her house who are noisy and use unpleasant language, to such an extent that it was disturbing her family at night. Cllr March explained that the footpath was not officially owned by anyone, but that it had been used historically on a regular basis by parishioners as a cut through for very many years. As PCSO Carey was present, it was suggested that she might ask if there could be a police presence whenever possible on a Friday and Saturday evening. PCSO Carey said she could certainly ask her five area Sergeants if this is possible, but could not guarantee anything as it would be very much dependent upon resources available.

PCSO Carey reiterated that it was important for Mrs. Verrell to report incidents to the police every time they happened so that the police could keep a log as to how regularly they were happening.

Cllr Davis suggested that it might be possible to put a CCTV camera in the area to monitor and potentially catch people who were acting in this way. It was suggested that the clerk would find out the cost for providing a CCTV camera for one month on a trial basis and bring this to the next meeting.

PCSO Carey gave a report on the crime figures for the past three months from 1st June 2014 to 31st August 2014. There had been 13 crimes in total in the parish.

PCSO Carey was shortly to deliver letters to all the homes around the green regarding the forthcoming Horsefair.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting on 7th July 2014 and planning meetings 22nd July and 19th August 2014

The minutes of the Parish council meeting dated 7th July 2014 were circulated to Council members prior to the meeting for reading. It was proposed by the Chair that these should be accepted as a true statement of the meeting. Unanimous.

The minutes of the planning meeting 22nd July were taken as read, proposed for acceptance by the Chair and voted as carried.

The minutes of the planning meeting 19th August 2014 were taken as read, proposed for acceptance by the Chair and voted as carried.

4. **Matters Arising**

Stickers on wheelie bins

Cllr March asked if all the wheelie bin stickers had now been distributed, as previously requested. It was thought there were still a few to be delivered and hopefully this would be completed shortly. The clerk still has a small supply which it was agreed should be kept in case anyone needed replacements for their bin.

Gap in fencing behind the VH

Cllr Isaacs said that he was happy to fill this in free of charge when he had time. He will photograph once done so that the Clerk can let TCHG know this had been done.

7.3 **TWBC – transfer of discretionary services - civic amenities vehicle and Christmas lighting grant/Christmas lights – plans for 2014.**

It was proposed by Cllr March that this item be brought forward for discussion. Unanimous.

Civic amenities vehicle was the first issue to be considered. At present it arrives at 8.30am and stays until 10.45 every Sunday. It is not meant to accept trade refuse however there is a problem with policing the vehicle as there is only one man on duty each week. It was noted that the vehicle already arrives half an hour later than previously, owing to a complaint about noise of the vehicle at 8am on a Sunday.

At present the cost of providing the vehicle for Horsmonden is £3000. This could potentially be reduced if the vehicle came for a shorter period each week. Parishioners had displayed a strong preference to keep the vehicle, in the Village Vision statement; however the future provision of the vehicle could be reliant upon other parishes also wishing to continue the service.

Other issues related to the vehicle were its location and the need for more recycling. The PC had tried to find an alternative site for the vehicle, however something central could not be suggested. The school had been approached; however there were issues with the public having access to the school site and also with broken glass and litter on a site for children. It was suggested that the vehicle could be used for green waste only on one week and for other household items on the alternate week, to try and aid recycling efforts; however this would again, need to fit with other parishes.

Cllr March to see if the cost of the vehicle would be lowered to £1000 if reduced to one hour each Sunday and negotiate with other parishes about the provision.

The Christmas lighting grant was another discretionary service which TWBC are considering cutting. It was however considered by the Council that this would not make a vast difference to their costs as they had precepted an amount to cover the cost of new Christmas lighting over the next few years and this was now all low energy lighting.

Cllr Davis proposed that for Christmas 2014 the Council should replace the failed bulbs and keep the lighting the same as last year, covering the North, South and West sides of the Green. Next year the Council should consider adding something to the East side of the Green and hire a cherry picker to sort out the existing lighting in the trees. This was seconded by Cllr Stevens, unanimous.

Cllr Davis will distribute the small lights purchased last year, to Heath Stores, The Social Club and other organisations around the Green as these did not seem very successful last year, when handed out to parishioners.

5. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE

5.1 Parish Council Accounts to 31st August 2014

The Clerk presented the accounts up to 31st August 2014, as shown below, to those present
The Chair checked, agreed and signed the balance presented by the clerk, against the balance shown in the latest Bank statement. Cllr March then proposed the account for acceptance. Unanimous.

Horsmonden Parish Council Accounts as at 31st August 2014

Balances

Current account b/fwd 07.07.2014	£ 25,933.43	
Deposit account b/fwd 07.07.2014	£ 63,841.25	
Interest received (Deposit Account)	£ 35.61	

Item	Ref	Receipts	Payments
Mr F A Bell - post contract services for Public conveniences	401440		£ 1,250.00
Cornford Builders - Architects certificate 4 payment	401442		£ 12,313.36
Mrs L D Noakes - July salary	S/O		£ 796.09
HM Revenue and Taxes - Tax and NI LD Noakes	401443		£ 32.29
Kent County Council - peat testing	401444		£ 80.71
E.on - energy provision to 30.06.2014	401445		£ 319.84
SSE Contracting Ltd - July street lighting maintenance	401446		£ 71.26
Playsafety Ltd - RoSPA report	401447		£ 78.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP - external audit	401448		£ 360.00
HM Revenue and Taxes - Tax and NI LD Noakes	401449		£ 32.29
Mr C J Couchman - clock and play area July	401450		£ 83.08
Mr S Jones - scavenging July	401451		£ 61.52
Mr S Yeoman - plumbing toilets	401452		£ 35.00
K Fletcher - circus skills workshop -VG	401453		£ 220.00
The Stone Shop - cleaning war memorial	401454		£ 696.00
Mrs L Noakes - August salary	S/O		£ 796.09
Horsmonden parish Council - new deposit account	401456		£ 60,000.00
New deposit account with HSBC		60,000.00	
Mr S Jones -Scavenging Aug	401457		£ 76.90
Mr Couchman clock and play area Aug	401458		£ 103.85
Gillet and Johnston (Croydon) LTD	401459		£ 226.80
Music festival balance of takings		£ 3.86	
Interest on current account		£ 3.18	

Current Account as at 31.08.14	£ 12,184.25
Deposit Account as at 31.08.14	£ 60,000.00

**TOTAL
BANK: £ 72,184.25**

The Clerk raised the issue of repairing Councillor Stevens Fire extinguisher, as this had been lent to the Parish Council in good faith by Cllr Stevens for the Music Festival. Unfortunately due to an act of vandalism, it had been stolen and set off during the event and although recovered, it was now empty. The police had managed to trace the person involved who had, through restorative justice, written a letter of apology to Cllr Stevens and the Parish Council, which the Clerk read aloud. Unfortunately the fire extinguisher had not been repaired as part of this. It was suggested by Cllr March that Cllr Stevens should arrange for the extinguisher to be refilled and present his invoice to the Parish Council for refunding.

The Clerk had received a request for funding of the Street Cruizer. It was suggested that the Clerk respond to ask if the Street cruiser would be available to come to Horsmonden for a period of 6-8 weeks if the Parish Council were able to assist with funding.

5.2 Parish Council Bank accounts.

The Clerk had now transferred all funds from the Co-op deposit account to the Current account and had closed the deposit account. The application had been sent to HSBC to open a new deposit account with an amount of £60,000. The Clerk was awaiting confirmation that this had been done.

6 HIGHWAYS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

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

- Cllr Stevens reported that the broken sign was still outside the school gates. Clerk to remind Highways
- At the top of Hayman's Hill near to the large gate entrance there is a poplar tree with large branches across the road. KHS should get landowner to remove this.
- Marker posts outside Churn Siding – already reported.
- Potholes at side of road near entrance on the N side of Churn Lane, just prior to Poplars.
- Hedge opposite the Morton's on Lamberhurst Road is over hanging the pavement.
- Low branches between Horsmonden and Brenchley are creating a hazard for buses and lorries and need removal. (This used to be done by open top bus owned by KHS).

The Clerk had received an invitation for the council to join the Transport Accessibility Group who regularly meet in Hawkhurst. However, it was considered that much of the same discussion is covered at Public Transport Forums. It was suggested that a representative (preferably from the Transport Action Group in Horsmonden) go along to Public Transport Forums as often as possible. Cllr March will be attending the next meeting, however Clerk to ask if Mr Dicketts may be able to attend as Chair for the Horsmonden Traffic Action Group.

The Clerk had received information about East Facing slips on M25 near junction 5. A quick discussion resulted in the Council making 'no comments' on this matter.

Mr Jolley the tree warden had obtained a quotation for a specially made tree guard for the small Acer tree located on the East side of the Village Green. The tree guard would have to be specifically manufactured at a cost of £360, as the tree is badly leaning. It was proposed by Cllr Stevens and seconded by Cllr Isaacs that instead, the tree should be removed, as it would never completely straighten, and instead one or two native trees should be planted in its place. Unanimous. The Clerk also suggested that it would be a good opportunity for her to ask Jamie Tweedle, the tree surgeon, for a quotation to prune the trees on Fromandez Drive and check the other trees on the Green.

Request to consider a mirror on street light opposite entrance to Tennis Courts

After a discussion by the Council, Cllr Davis and the Clerk had been making enquiries about the best way forward for this. Cllr Davis proposed that the mirror be fixed on the current lighting pole, seconded Cllr Stevens, carried. It was requested by Cllr March that Cllr Davis should carry out a risk assessment before going ahead with this job and that a safety check should be carried out on the pole after the installation of the mirror. The risk assessment should be retained by the Clerk on the street lighting file.

7. ADMINISTRATION

7.1 The Institute – plaque, front of building, apex.

The Clerk had obtained two quotations for the remedial works to be carried out to the barge board and tiles on the right side apex at the Institute. It was proposed from the Chair that the Council accept the quotation of £380 by Cornford's as it was the lowest quotation for the job. Carried. Clerk to ask Cornford's to remove the old fire alarms on the front of the building.

Clerk still to obtain quotes for removal of internal stop cocks and provision of outside lockable water tap.

7.2 Horsefair.

The Clerk had received the booking form and deposit, but no insurance as yet.

Cllr March made a proposal to accept the booking on the understanding that there would be sight of the insurance cover, and supply of a urinal as per last year's event. Unanimous

It was suggested that the clerk remind the organisers, that provision should be made for the urinal, water supply for the horses, key pick up and litter disposal.

7.3 TWBC – transfer of discretionary services - civic amenities vehicle and Christmas lighting grant/Christmas lights – plans for 2014.

Already discussed .

7.4 RoSPA report for the Parish Play area.

The report had been satisfactory, however it was noted that the gates were not shutting properly. It was proposed from the chair that the Clerk ask Play dale to come and repair the gates appropriately. Unanimous.

7.5 Village Vision

A youth shelter had been suggested at the Sports Ground, but no decision made on this yet .Cllr Isaacs to report back at a future meeting.

There was a Highways meeting scheduled for 10th September, with Highways officer Steven Noad to attend.

7.6 Emergency Planning

The group had met and made progress on producing a draft plan. It was hoped that this could be further worked on and simplified where possible. Clerk to obtain a list of licensed mobile homes which would be needed by the group to identify at risk homes.

7.7 Conservation area map

The map had been slightly modified to show a 'You are here' marker. Cllr Davis had received agreement that he could apply for this to be provided under the Heritage Grant scheme. He would fill in a grant form with the aid of the Clerk.

7.8 Does the PC wish to plant spring bulbs on the green again this autumn?

Mrs Parker had asked the Council if they wished to organise another bulb planting this season. It was proposed by Cllr Davis and seconded by Cllr Russell that the Clerk should ask Mrs Parker if she would be willing to organise this on behalf of the Council and purchase the same number of bulbs as last year.

Unanimous.

Clerk to liaise with Mrs Parker and ask if she can suggest where the next batch of bulbs could be planted. A suitable date could then be advertised in Parish News, website and on boards.

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

It was suggested that the Clerk approach the Milestone Society to see what was needed to restore the stone. It may be possible to get a Heritage Grant for this.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 Comments on Kent Minerals & Waste Local Plan (MWLP) 2013-30 Notification of Publication: Submission Document Consultation - 31 July to 12 September 2014

The Council did not wish to make any comments on this.

8.2 The Kent teenage pregnancy strategy – consultation on the strategy before 8th September.

It as proposed by Cllr March that the Council should accept and support the thoughts outlined in this strategy. Unanimous.

8.3 DCLG Technical Consultation on planning – comments to DCLG by 26th September, or comments to be raised by KALC asap.

Cllr March had read the consultation and had concerns over points in sections 2, 3 and 5 as below:

Section 2 – Where there are permitted development rights to allow change of use from Business to residential, it could create a problem for ongoing businesses close by. The residents of the newly developed site will have residential rights which could cause restrictions on use for the ongoing businesses and cause frictions between residents and businesses.

Section 3 – Conditions protect rural environments and their character, for example light pollution. The Parish Council are keen to see that conditions remain which are sensitive to rural areas and environments.

Section 5 – Rural areas wish to stay rural for mental and emotional benefits of those in the areas. EIA thresholds help keep things looking rural, and protect the environment which is important for emotional and mental health reasons. The Government should look sensitively at rural areas, as rural parishioners expect protection of their rural community.

It was proposed by Cllr March that these points be reported back to DCLG. Unanimous.

9. CORRESPONDENCE/UPDATES

9.1 Chairman's update (no decisions)

Cllr March reported that several Horsmonden candidates had been shortlisted for the Love Where We Live Awards again this year. As the ceremony date was 14th October, it was suggested that the planning meeting be moved to the 21st October.

Cllr Russell and Stanton offered to attend on behalf of the Council, with Cllr Isaacs as first reserve.

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

Cllr Cheesman attended the Chief Commissioner of police meeting with Anne Barnes. There was nothing new to report from this meeting.

The meeting ended at 10.40pm