

# MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

## HELD AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL

### ON MONDAY, 2 MARCH 2023 AT 7:30PM

#### **Present:**

Cllrs March, Davis, Jenkinson, Russell, Richards, Larkin, Sheppard and Currie

In attendance:

Lucy Noakes (Clerk)

Anna Blyth (Assistant Clerk)

2 members of the public

#### **1. Apologies for Absence and declarations of interest**

Cllr Steve McMillan sent his apologies prior to the meeting.

#### **2. Public Session (no decisions)**

A member of the public had requested to speak in the public session and present their ideas to the PC regarding the opportunity to have a Community Fridge in Horsmonden. A short presentation was given which included a You Tube video demonstrating the benefits of a Community Fridge. The resident confirmed that she owns the fridge already and has access to some funding but is looking for the support of the Parish Council for this venture. She is very keen to involve local children with additional needs in this project and use it as an opportunity to teach them important life skills.

The Chair thanked the resident for her detailed presentation and gave Councillors the opportunity to ask questions:

- *Cllr Russell asked if a permanent location would be required for the Community Fridge.*  
It was confirmed that ideally the fridge would have a permanent location in the village such as at the Social Club or the Village Hall but there is also an option to put the fridge on wheels so it could be moved. Cllr Russell commented that the Social Club is within the conservation area so may require planning permission.
- *Cllr Currie asked for some more information regarding where the food will come from.*  
It was confirmed that the food comes from various sources including supermarkets and garden allotments. It was confirmed that there would be plenty of food available for this project.
- *Cllr Richards asked about the teaching aspect and also about training in food safety.*  
It was confirmed that teaching side is an aim for the future and would not be looked into until the Community Fridge has been successfully up and running for a period of time. In respect of food safety, training would be provided for volunteers.
- *Cllr Jenkinson asked what funding is already available.*  
It was confirmed that the National Lottery could be approached as well as Hubbub who have their own grants available.

- *Cllr Jenkinson also asked if CCTV would be required.*  
It was confirmed that there is a Community Fridge in the centre of Hawkhurst and there is no CCTV in place.
- *Cllr Larkin asked if the Community Fridge would be for everyday use.*  
It was confirmed that the fridge would be available for everyday use if this was agreeable and there were enough volunteers to support it.
- *Cllr Davis raised questions regarding food safety and the types of foods that would be stored in the Community Fridge.*  
It was confirmed that all sorts of fresh produce can be stored in the fridge including fruit, vegetables and meat. Once a venue has been decided Environmental Health will visit and carry out a site assessment.
- *The Clerk asked if the fridge could be kept outside.*  
This will be looked into .
- *The Assistant Clerk asked if the Community Fridge will remain unlocked 24/7.*  
It was confirmed that the fridge does not have a lock and the plan would be that it is available to the community 24/7.
- *The Chair asked the resident to clarify what kind of support is required from the PC.*  
It was confirmed that any support from the PC would be appreciated in particular help with the annual running costs for the fridge.
- *The Chair also asked who would arrange the insurance for this project.*  
This needs to be looked into in more detail and confirmed back to the PC.

Overall, Cllrs were supportive of the proposal and it was agreed that this item would be added to the PCs April meeting agenda for further discussion. In the meantime, should any further questions arise the Clerk will pass them on to the resident by email.

### **3. Minutes of Parish Council Meetings**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6 February 2023 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by Cllr Currie, seconded Cllr Richards and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 21 February 2023 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by Cllr Currie, seconded Cllr Russell and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Finance Committee Meeting held on 24 February 2023 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by Cllr Russell; seconded Cllr Davis and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

## 4. Parish Council Finance

### a. Agree payments listing up to and including 2 March 2023 as attached (Appendix 1)

The Clerk showed a copy of the list of payments up to and including 2 March 2023 as a total of £8,058.17. Cllr Russell proposed approval of the schedule of payments; seconded Cllr Richards. Unanimous.

Cllrs Davis and Russell agreed to release and authorise payments from the bank this month.

### APPENDIX 1

**List of Payments made between 06/02/2023 and 01/03/2023**

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
10/02/2023	EDF Energy	DD	352.00		Feb energy contract toilets
10/02/2023	EDF Energy	DD	28.00		Feb Energy box
13/02/2023	Mastercraft Roofign services	BACS	990.00		VH flat roof repairs
13/02/2023	Arron Services Ltd	BACS	780.00		Service contract computers
13/02/2023	Arron Services Ltd	BACS	330.00		purchase and set up laptop
13/02/2023	Society Of Local Council Clerk	BACS	171.00		Renew AsstClerk Membership
13/02/2023	Society Of Local Council Clerk	BACS	242.00		Renew Clerk Membership
13/02/2023	Unipar Servcies LLP	BACS	237.60		Repair & service speed watch eq
13/02/2023	The Living Forest	BACS	441.60		Tree report
17/02/2023	EE - BT	DD	54.16		February Mobile phones
22/02/2023	B&CE Holdings	DD	107.52		Staff pension March
24/02/2023	Mrs L Noakes	BACS	1,350.32		March staff salary
24/02/2023	Anna Blyth	BACS	996.08		March staff salary
24/02/2023	HMRC	BACS	314.06		Tax & NI March
24/02/2023	Mrs L Noakes	BACS	-1,350.32		Reverse for correction
24/02/2023	Mrs A Blyth	BACS	-996.08		Reverse for correction
24/02/2023	Mrs L Noakes	BACS	1,350.32		February Salary
24/02/2023	Mrs A Blyth	BACS	996.08		February salary
28/02/2023	Mr J Couchman	BACS	83.09		Clock and play area March
28/02/2023	P&F Cleaning services LTD	SO	476.66		February toilet cleaning
01/03/2023	Kent Association of Local Coun	BACS	60.00		Climate change conf- training
01/03/2023	Microshade VSM	SO	184.06		March emails and data
01/03/2023	Kent Association of Local Coun	BACS	144.00		Planning conference x 2
01/03/2023	Capel Groundcare	BACS	542.16		Repairs to play area
01/03/2023	Capel Groundcare	BACS	60.00		Play area insp Feb
01/03/2023	Marten Group	BACS	113.86		PAT testing June 22
<b>Total Payments</b>			<b>8,058.17</b>		

### b. Confirm bank balances and Bank Reconciliation as at 28 February 2023

The bank balance at 28 February 2023 was displayed with a total at £29,711.49. This was confirmed as correct against the current bank balance and signed by the Chair.

c. **Costs for disconnecting/replacement hand dryer/alternatives – public toilets**

The Clerk had circulated to Cllrs a quotation to replace the vandalised hand dryer in the disabled toilet prior to the meeting. After a discussion between Cllrs, Cllr Larkin proposed that the hand dryer in the disabled facility is not replaced for the time being; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous. It was suggested that the Clerk arranges to put a sign up in the disabled toilet to explain to parishioners that there is no longer a hand dryer due to continuous vandalism.

d. **Agree costs for Speedwatch equipment services and repairs**

The Clerk advised that the service and repairs had already been carried out but retrospective agreement was required from the PC.

Cllr Davis proposed acceptance of the costs totalling £198 plus VAT; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.

e. **Tree report and quotation for suggested works**

The Clerk had circulated a Tree Safety Report received from The Living Forest to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllrs noted the contents of the report and acknowledged the recommended safety works to the trees on the Village Green and at Fromandez Drive.

Cllr Richards proposed that the quotation for all recommended works totalling £930 is accepted; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.

It was noted that as these works are to be carried out in a conservation area, The Living Forest will need to submit a notification to TWBC prior to starting work.

f. **Agree renewal of Arron Services annual contract for computer servicing and maintenance**

The Clerk advised that the annual contract for computer servicing and maintenance had already been renewed with Arron Services.

Cllr Davis proposed acceptance of the renewal quotation totalling £650 plus VAT; seconded Cllr Jenkinson. Unanimous.

g. **Agree costs of additional laptop for new parish councillor**

The Clerk advised that she had ordered and paid for a new laptop for the new Parish Councillor once co-opted, as there is no laptop to pass on from Cllr Stevens. This purchase had already been agreed by the Chair and the Vice Chair as the amount falls within their power of expenditure.

Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the costs totalling £275 plus VAT; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.

h. **Renewal of Contract for maintenance of SIDs (Speed Indicator Device's)**

The Clerk had circulated the renewal contract from Capel Groundcare for the maintenance of SIDs to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

Cllr Russell proposed acceptance of the renewal cost totalling £2,678 plus VAT; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.

i. **Renewal of Street Lighting maintenance contract**

The Clerk had circulated renewal options from PSR Lighting to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The first option was to renew the existing street light maintenance contract at £112.50 a month (increased from £89 per month for 2022/23 period) and the second option was to move on to “pay as you go” scheme where the call out fee is £225 each time.

The Clerk advised that electrical testing of the street lights is due as this was last carried out in 2018. The cost for this is £28.50 per street light. In addition to this, PSR have also recommended that an annual inspection is carried out to check inventory and condition of the street lights. This is a one-off charge of £625.

The Chair commented that she felt the monthly cost is too much considering the PC do not regularly call out PSR for repairs. If the PC moved on to a “pay as you go” option then PSR could be called out 2 or 3 times a year to carry out any repairs necessary and this would still be cheaper than the annual contract.

Cllr Sheppard proposed that the PC go ahead with the annual inspection (£650 plus VAT) and the 5-year electrical testing (£28.50 per street light) and move to a “pay as you go” contract with a view to reviewing 3 times a year; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.

j. **Quotation for redrafting of play area lease with Horsmonden Kindergarten Trust**

The Clerk had circulated a quotation received from Wellers Solicitors for the redrafting of the play area lease to Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllr Russell mentioned that this cost could be met by one of the Council’s Ear Marked Reserves .

Cllr Russell proposed acceptance of the quotation totalling £1,000 plus VAT; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.

k. **Request for grant Tunbridge Wells Citizens Advice Bureau**

The Clerk had circulated a grant request from Tunbridge Wells Citizens Advice Bureau to Cllrs prior to the meeting. It was agreed that this is a valuable service for parishioners.

Cllr Jenkinson proposed that the PC grant £250 to Tunbridge Wells Citizens Advice Bureau; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

l. **Discuss the potential for early renewal of Parish Council energy contracts**

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council energy contracts do not expire until October 2023 so there is no need to review these yet.

m. **Renewal of KALC membership**

The Clerk had circulated the annual renewal fee for the PC’s KALC membership to Cllrs prior to the meeting, ahead of the 1<sup>st</sup> April renewal date.

Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the renewal quote totalling £809.53 plus VAT; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

n. **Discuss/agree costs for electrical works and emergency lighting repairs at the Institute Building**

The Clerk had circulated a quotation received from EJP for emergency lighting repairs at the Institute Building to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Clerk advised that she has been contacted by the Chair of the Social Club committee stating that they may be able to obtain a cheaper quotation for parts and labour from another electrician.

There was a discussion between Cllrs regarding this and it was noted that Cllrs appreciate the Social Club trying to save money however, as Landlords of the building, the PC have a responsibility to ensure that the emergency lights are tested and certificated by a competent company. The PC use EJP for all of their buildings and have been satisfied with their works in the past .It was agreed that the Clerk will ask the Chair of the Social Club to forward any alternative quotations for the PCs consideration. It should also be checked as to whether EJP need to visit six monthly or annually.

## 5. Planning

### a. Planning applications

<b>Planning Application:</b>	TW/23/00336/FULL
<b>Proposal:</b>	<a href="#"><u>Retrospective application for retention of Pole Barn addition at the rear of existing stables and associated hard landscaping</u></a>
<b>Location:</b>	1 Great Baiden Cottages, School House Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8BW
<b>Recommendation</b>	Acceptance
<b>Proposal</b>	Cllr Richards; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.
<b>Comments</b>	Propose acceptance with the condition that the pole barn addition remains ancillary to the main property 1 Great Baiden Cottages.

<b>Planning Application:</b>	TW/23/00390/FULL
<b>Proposal:</b>	<a href="#"><u>Replacement of existing outbuilding with garage/studio</u></a>
<b>Location:</b>	Orchard Oast, School House Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8BN
<b>Recommendation</b>	Acceptance
<b>Proposal</b>	Cllr Russell; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.
<b>Comments</b>	Propose acceptance as a reasonable replacement to the existing building subject to the condition that it remains ancillary to the main dwelling Orchard Oast, School House Lane. All works should be carried out in line with Horsmonden Parish Council's Sustainability policy.

### b. Horsmonden Neighbourhood Plan – Agree wording of the Foreword

The Clerk had circulated the draft wording for the Foreword to Cllrs prior to the meeting. This was prepared by Cllr March and Diana Morton (HNP Steering Group) and reviewed by Jim Boot. Cllr Davis proposed acceptance of the draft wording for the Foreword; seconded Cllr Richards. Unanimous.

The Clerk suggested that 5 copies of the plan are printed and held at the Parish Office for any parishioners to access if they wish. The Clerk will check with Jim Boot to see whether the Foreword gets bound in with the full plan or remains separate.

### c. Update from Votalia on Bockingfold Solar Farm

The Clerk had circulated to Cllrs a response from Votalia regarding the potential for an EV charging point at the Sports Club. The response received was positive and Cllrs suggested that the Clerk contacts Martin Dace to make him aware of the update.

## 6. Parish Council Decisions/Administration

### a. Parish Highways/ footpath/ street lighting/ landscaping and tree works/issues

The Clerk had circulated to Cllrs an email received from a parishioner regarding the footpath / private road leading down Old Back Lane, which is in a terrible state of repair. The parishioner has advised that a private company connected to historic railways may be responsible for the upkeep of part of this footpath / private road. The Chair advised that she believed that the private company are only responsible for the section underneath the bridge but this will require further investigation. The Clerk advised that the Footpaths Officer at KCC has already been contacted regarding this and his reply is awaited.

Cllr Russell asked for an update regarding street light 21 and whether or not the resident was planning to install a part night photocell. The Clerk advised that the resident is discussing this with neighbours to see if they have any objections.

Cllr Larkin mentioned that Lamberhurst Road was closed again due to electrical works.

### d. HIPS – consider additional HIPs for discussion with KHS

The Clerk advised that there is a Teams meeting scheduled on the 6<sup>th</sup> March with Tim Grigg (KCC) to discuss the current HIPs. Cllr Davis, Cllr Russell and the Assistant Clerk will attend and feedback to full Council at the next meeting. The Clerk mentioned that there have been four other requests raised by parishioners that might want to be discussed at the meeting / considered for HIPs list:

- 1) Speeding traffic on Goudhurst Road – Cllr Davis advised that when Speedwatch is back up and running they will focus on this area.
- 2) Request for speed bumps on Lamberhurst Road – This will be raised at the meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> March.
- 3) Horse signs on Lamberhurst Road (near Spelmonden triangle) – This will be raised at the meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> March.
- 4) Maidstone Road speed restriction (extension of the 30mph zone) – This will be raised at the meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> March.

Cllr Russell mentioned that costs are still awaited from KCC regarding the ATC (Automatic Traffic Count) on Maidstone Road and also the results from the ATC on Green Road, which have not yet been received. These will both be requested at the meeting.

### e. Update on the proposed changes at Kipping's Cross/A21 roundabout and junction

The Chair confirmed that the only response she has seen so far regarding this was from Greg Clark MP, who had asked for this plan to be retracted. The Clerk advised that no reply had been received from National Highways or the Department of Transport following the letter sent by the PC. This item remains ongoing.

### f. Agree process for co-option of new Parish Councillor

The Clerk advised that this position was currently being advertised and expires on the 31<sup>st</sup> March. It was agreed that Cllrs March, Russell, Currie, Jenkinson and Larkin were all happy to be involved in the interview process. Cllr Currie advised that he would be happy to speak with any interested parties regarding his experience as the newest Cllr if required.

**g. Horsmonden Sports Club's application for UKSPF Community Grants Programme**

The Clerk had circulated the latest application form from the Sports Club for the UKSPF Community Grant, which the PC will need to apply for on behalf of the Sports Club. The Clerk asked Cllr Russell the best way to deal with the grant money once received as it will need to come into the PCs bank account and then be transferred back out to the Sports Club. Cllr Russell did not feel that this was a problem.

Cllr Davis proposed that the PC apply for a UKSPF Grant of £3,500 on behalf of the Sports Club for CCTV equipment; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.

**h. Booking's for Horsmonden Village Green – What Goes on Here? 22 April 2023, Coronation 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023, Summer Festival 8-11 June 2023**

The Clerk asked the PC to consider 3 new Village Green booking requests from HoVEC.

In respect of What Goes on Here? there was a brief discussion between Cllrs regarding the PCs participation in this event. The Clerk advised that Martin Drinkwater (Speedwatch) had asked to join the PCs table and it had been suggested that the PC and Neighbourhood planning group and situated next to each other.

The Chair advised that the event for the Coronation is still at the planning stages but it is thought there will be a Social Club Beer Festival on the 6<sup>th</sup> May and then a HoVEC event on the 7<sup>th</sup> May which will consist of a Dog Show and a community picnic.

In respect of the Summer Festival, details regarding this event are still awaited from HoVEC.

Cllr Russell proposed acceptance of all 3 booking requests subject to receipt of the necessary paperwork; seconded Cllr Richards. Unanimous

**i. Parish Council presence at What Goes on Here? 22<sup>nd</sup> April**

It was agreed that the PC will need one large table and a couple of chairs for their stand, which can be taken from the village hall. Cllr Davis confirmed that he would be able to supply a 3m x 3m gazebo again this year. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk will arrange for the boards that were used last year to be updated.

Cllr Jenkinson suggested that the PC provide a gift for children such seeds for planting, to help promote the PCs support of the Kent Plan Bee Project. Cllr Russell advised that he will contact Cally Fiddimore from the Kent High Weald Project to see if she is able to offer any ideas.

Cllr Larkin suggested that instead of seeds, the PC could provide instructions on how to make a bug house for children.

**j. Consider decorations for the King's Coronation**

The Clerk had circulated a link to Cllrs with street light decorations for the Coronation. The Clerk advised that a Coronation flag had already been ordered for the Social Club.

Cllr Russell proposed that the PC order 12 coronation street light signs to decorate the street lights around the Village Green for this event; seconded Cllr Jenkinson. Carried.

**k. Play area quarterly inspection. Updates / quotation on surfacing and equipment**

The Clerk had circulated the latest quarterly play area inspection report to Cllrs prior to the meeting and the PC noted the contents of the report accordingly.



Cllr Davis proposed acceptance of the latest report; seconded Cllr Richards. Unanimous.

The Clerk advised that a specialist company had been out to inspect the play area surface and a quotation was awaited for them to carry out repairs to the areas where the surface had sunk causing a “dip” or a “spongy” feeling under foot. The Clerk advised that a quotation had also been requested to replace the entire surface of the play area as it is coming close to the end of its life span.

The Clerk confirmed that the bollard at the gate had now been replaced by Capel Groundcare.

**i. Correspondence about a Community Fridge**

It was agreed that this item will be brought back for discussion at the next meeting in April but in the meantime, there are a couple of questions that the PC would like clarified:

- 1) How much funding is expected from the PC?
- 2) Will the fridge work outside, in all weather conditions?

The Chair commented that the PC do not have funds available this year but could be supportive to this initiative in other ways.

**m. Discuss Clerks / Assistant Clerk’s holiday usage**

It was noted that the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk both have over one week’s holiday left to take before the end of March 2023. The Clerk asked for the PCs consideration to allow one week each to be carried over into next year’s holiday entitlement.

Cllr Jenkinson proposed acceptance to the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk carrying over one week’s holiday each; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.

**n. Consider Village Litter picking**

The Clerk had received an email from Angie Jenkins asking if the PC had any plans to carry out another community litter pick. The Chair advised that, due to insurance purposes, a litter pick can only be organised by the PC if it falls with the 30mph zone and historically this area has not been considered a problem. At present, there are no plans for the PC to organise another litter pick.

**o. Suggestions for bench (now removed from Community Garden)**

The Clerk confirmed that the primary school no longer need the bench and it is currently being stored in Cllr Larkin’s yard until the PC can find it a new home.

Cllr March confirmed that she will give a donation of £20 to the PC for the bench and arrange collection from Cllr Larkin. The Assistant Clerk will forward the PCs BACS details to Cllr March for payment.

**p. Request to put up temporary signage in various places in the village for South East Open Studios (2-18 June 23)**

The Clerk had circulated to Cllrs an email received from a local artist asking for permission to put up some temporary signage to advertise her taking part in the South East Open Studios. After discussion, it was agreed that the PC had no objections to this in respect of PC owned land (the Village Green and Fromandez Drive) however, signs must not block traffic sight lines or prevent mowing. In respect of areas not owned by the PC, the local artist should approach land owners for permission before putting up signage.

## 7. CONSULTATIONS

- a. **KCC Community Service Consultation** [www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation)  
**Ends 26<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

Cllr March agreed to complete this consultation on behalf of the PC.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.14pm**