

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD AT HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL

ON MONDAY, 5 JUNE 2023 AT 7:30PM

Present:

Cllrs March, Davis, Russell, Richards, Larkin, Sheppard, Currie and Baxter-Smith

In attendance:

Lucy Noakes (Clerk)

Anna Blyth (Assistant Clerk)

4 members of the public

1. Apologies for Absence and declarations of interest

Cllr Jenkinson – Cllr Larkin proposed acceptance of the reasons for absence; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.

Cllr Richards declared an interest in item 5a Planning (application no. 22/02959/FULL) and did not take part in any discussions or decisions relating to this item.

2. Public Session (no decisions)

One member of the public had requested to speak at the meeting to introduce the recently formed Bassett's Farm Forum to the Parish Council (relating to planning application 23/00044/HYBRID).

The member of the public gave a brief summary of the groups aims and objectives and also asked the Council three questions:

- Do you support our approach?
- Will you write to Borough Planning and facilitate a meeting with us?
- Would you ask the Borough Council to provide the reasons the limit of built development changed for Bassetts Farm HO3 in the Local Plan development between 2019 and 2021?

The Chair thanked the member of the public and suggested that item 5b. be brought forward for discussion next.

5b. Bassett's Farm Development: Introduction from Bassett's Farm Forum Group (BFFG)

Cllr Currie proposed that item 5b. be brought forward for discussion after the public session; seconded Cllr Richards. Unanimous.

The Clerk had circulated the correspondence prepared by the Bassett's Farm Forum to Cllrs prior to the meeting and read out the three questions written by the group to Councillors again.

The Clerk confirmed that she had already dealt with point three and was currently awaiting a response from TWBC.

It was agreed by all Councillors that they are broadly supportive of the Bassett's Farm Forum however, Cllr Richards did comment that he did not agree with one objection within the correspondence received - *"An urban density and terracing inappropriate for a rural setting"*. Cllr Richards commented that the housing needs survey highlighted a need for smaller housing so terraced housing should not be ruled as inappropriate.

The Parish Council agreed that they would be happy to try and facilitate a meeting between the Bassett's Farm Form and the TWBC Planning Officers. The Clerk confirmed that she will arrange this.

Cllr Currie proposed the following statement:

The PC support the Bassett's Farm Forum proposals in principal, in an unbiased and appropriate way. Seconded by Cllr Sheppard. Carried.

Cllr Richards, Chair of the Planning Committee, abstained.

3. Minutes of Parish Council Meetings

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2 May 2023 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by Cllr Larkin, seconded Cllr Davis and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 16 May 2023 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by Cllr Sheppard, seconded Cllr Richards and voted for unanimously by those present at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

The Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 25 May 2023 had been circulated beforehand by the Clerk. They were agreed for accuracy and proposed for acceptance by Cllr Russell, seconded Cllr Richards 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 4 June 2023 as attached (Appendix 1)

The Clerk showed a copy of the list of payments up to and including 4 June 2023 as a total of £19,548.64. Cllr Richards proposed approval of the schedule of payments; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.

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

APPENDIX 1

Time: 12:32

Current Bank A/c

List of Payments made between 02/05/2023 and 04/06/2023

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
02/05/2023	Lloyds Bank PLC	DD	78.81		credit card invoices May
04/05/2023	Microshade VSM	SO	184.06		May emails & data
05/05/2023	Air ambulance Charity	BACS	200.00		grant from PC
05/05/2023	BHIB Ltd	BACS	2,052.02		Annual Insurance premium
05/05/2023	Microshade VSM	BACS	13.10		shortfall Apr& May
10/05/2023	Microshade VSM	SO	190.61		June emails & Data
10/05/2023	EDF Energy	DD	352.00		Electricity Toilets May
10/05/2023	EDF Energy	DD	28.88		Electricity VG boxes May
10/05/2023	EDF Energy	DD	-28.88		Electricity VG boxes May
10/05/2023	EDF Energy	DD	28.00		Electricity VG Boxes May
17/05/2023	EE - BT	DD	60.38		May Phones
19/05/2023	Horsmonden Village Choir	BACS	200.00		Grant paid
19/05/2023	Arron Services Ltd	BACS	84.00		Norton subscriptions
22/05/2023	B&CE Holdings	DD	180.45		Staff pensions May
22/05/2023	SSE	DD	423.05		street lighting Apr-May
23/05/2023	P&F Cleaning services LTD	DD	476.66		toilet and shelter May
24/05/2023	The Living Forest	BACS	279.00		Tree works FD
24/05/2023	Anna Blyth	BACS	3.95		Refund for refreshments APM
24/05/2023	B&K Electrical contractors	BACS	125.40		Electrical work PublicToilets
24/05/2023	EJP Fire Protection Ltd	BACS	96.00		Emergency lights & alarm SC
24/05/2023	Society Of Local Council Clerk	BACS	6.00		Shortfall payment for subs
24/05/2023	HMRC	BACS	359.75		Tax & NI staff salaries
24/05/2023	M Power Accounting Services	BACS	330.00		Annual payroll payment
24/05/2023	PJ Electrical Ltd	BACS	172.80		Testing VG boxes
24/05/2023	Kent Association of Local Coun	BACS	44.40		FOI training Clerk
24/05/2023	Kent Association of Local Coun	BACS	44.40		Social media training clir
24/05/2023	Microshade VSM	BACS	9.06		Shortfal lMay /June new clir
25/05/2023	Anna Blyth	BACS	1,010.58		Staff salary May
25/05/2023	Mrs L Noakes	BACS	1,404.94		Staff salary May
26/05/2023	Horsmonden Sports Club	BACS	3,500.00		UKSPF grant
26/05/2023	PJ Electrical Ltd	BACS	154.01		Repairs to VG box
26/05/2023	Locum Looks	BACS	211.44		Installing 3 lock switches
30/05/2023	Castle Water	DD	5.78		May water toilets
31/05/2023	Lloyds Bank PLC	DD	15.59		Credit card 17 May 2023
31/05/2023	GDPR-INFO LTD	BACS	420.00		DPO annual charges
31/05/2023	Charles Blokhram Plumbing & Hea	BACS	5,746.80		New Boiler VH
31/05/2023	Applause Rural Touring	BACS	275.00		Applause entertain S festival
31/05/2023	Capel Groundcare	BACS	727.51		May Groundcare - SIDs Play area
31/05/2023	Mr J Couchman	BACS	83.09		May clock and play area
Total Payments			19,548.64		

b. **Confirm bank balances and Bank Reconciliation as at 31 May 2023**

The bank balance at 31 May 2023 was displayed with a total at £63,195.76. This was confirmed as correct against the current bank balance and signed by the Chair.

c. **Discuss and agree changes to Parish Council banking arrangements following maturity of account with Hampshire Trust in June**

The Clerk confirmed that the Finance Committee had already discussed this item at their recent meeting, where it was proposed that based on the investigations from various providers the committee recommend to Full Council the reinvestment of £75,000 into a 1-year Halifax savings account and to transfer the remaining investment upon maturity from Hampshire Trust to the Council's current account with Unity Trust. It was agreed that the Clerk would make further investigations to ensure that Halifax are flexible within the year and find out the penalty if a withdrawal occurred within this time.

The Clerk advised that having investigated the options with Halifax further, she had found out that their savings accounts are not available for business customers. She also suggested that the Council consider not going for a fixed term of 1 year as banks can refuse access within that period and it therefore might be better to consider an account with a shorter notice period for withdrawals. It was noted that this would mean a lower interest rate. The Clerk advised that the best option she had found was with United Trust Bank with a 40-day notice period.

After discussion, Cllr Russell proposed that on the maturity of the investment with Hampshire Trust, £75,000 is invested in a 40-day notice account with United Trust Bank, with the remaining balance to go into the Unity Trust bank account; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.

d. **Discuss/agree quotations for feasibility studies for Horsmonden Village Hall**

The Clerk had circulated four quotations received from architects for producing feasibility studies for the existing village hall to see if it would be possible to make room for larger storage, a small meeting room and a larger parish office.

Each quotation was discussed by Cllrs with feedback being given from members of the New Village Hall Working Party, who had met with each of the architects.

The Clerk suggested that the PC explore options under s106 funding from the proposed site at Brenchley Road as if this money is not being used for a new village hall then it could potentially pay for refurbishment works at the existing site.

Cllr Larkin queried whether a new village hall would be required if the new Sports Club goes ahead and the works at St Margaret's Church, which will also be a space for functions.

After a lengthy discussion between Councillors, it was agreed that it would be helpful to see some detailed drawings of what could be achieved at the existing site especially as the results of the recent new village hall survey indicated that parishioners are still keen to keep the existing hall due to its central location in the village.

Cllr Baxter-Smith agreed that he would draw up a "scope of works" document that can be sent to all architects that have quoted to ensure that each quotation includes everything that is required and the PC can compare on a like for like basis.

e. **Discuss/agree quotations for structural engineer's survey of clock tower at The Institute**

The Clerk advised that she had been unable to get a quotation for this in time for the meeting and asked Cllrs for any recommendations they may have for Structural Engineers. Cllr Baxter-Smith advised that he may be able to provide some contacts and will investigate.

f. **Consider quotations for repairs and changes to street lights**

Following the recent street lighting survey, the Clerk had circulated to Cllrs a quotation from PSR Lighting for them to carry out the works recommended in their report. The quotation was broken down as follows:

x8 column realigns - £850
x18 isolator switches - £1,080
x2 columns requiring earth upgrade – free of charge

Cllr Richards proposed that the PC carry out the works at the costs detailed subject to receiving PSR's full risk assessment; seconded Cllr Baxter-Smith. Unanimous.

The Clerk asked Cllr Russell to confirm which funds should be used for this. Cllr Russell suggested using the funds that were not used for the Kings Coronation.

g. **Consider application for KCC Members grant for wild flower area at Fromandez Drive**

The Clerk advised that KCC need to approve any wildflower bulbs/seeds prior to planting however, Paul Woodhatch (KCC) has confirmed that the yellow rattle already planted at Fromandez Drive is acceptable.

In order to submit the KCC Members grant forms, the Clerk advised that she needs to know which bulbs/seeds the PC would like planted. Cllr Larkin advised that she will do some more research and let the Clerk know so that the forms can be completed and submitted to KCC for approval.

5. Planning

a. Planning applications

Planning Application:	23/00539/LBC
Proposal:	<u>Listed Building Consent: Installation of wood burning stove, further installation of flue system to run externally above flashing,</u>
Location:	Bainden Barn, School House Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8BT
Recommendation	Approval
Proposal	Cllr Richards; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.
Comments	Propose acceptance subject to the Conservation Architect's approval. All works should be carried out in line with Horsmonden Parish Councils Sustainability Policy.

Cllr Richards left the meeting at 8.45pm

Planning Application:	22/02959/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Demolition of the existing clubhouse and cricket nets. Construction of a new double storey clubhouse and three lane cricket net facility</u>

Location:	Horsmonden Sports Club, Maidstone Road, Horsmonden Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8NE
Recommendation	Approval
Proposal	Cllr Baxter-Smith; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous for those present.
Comments	Recommend approval on the condition that sustainability is scrutinised by the Borough Council and made part of the conditions of the planning application. The PC do not approve of the LPG tank and would expect to see renewables used as required by the Horsmonden Neighbourhood Plan. All works should be carried out in line with Horsmonden Parish Councils Sustainability policy.

Cllr Richards returned to the meeting at 9.15pm.

Planning Application:	23/00831/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Removal of Conditions 2 & 3 of Planning Permission 75/00680 (Site for caravans for fruit and hop-picking machine workers) - Removal of restriction for the use of caravans to specific time period; and removal of occupation restriction to fruit and hop-picking machine workers</u>
Location:	Grovehurst Grange, Haymans Hill, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8BX
Recommendation	Refusal
Proposal	Cllr Currie; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.
Comments	Recommend refusal as previous comments still apply with the additional observation that the PC feel that if this was to be accepted it would set a precedent.

Planning Application:	23/01168/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Variation of Condition 1 of Planning Permission 22/01519/REM - Amend approved drawings to alter the design of external materials of plot 4</u>
Location:	The Cottage, Brenchley Road, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8DN
Recommendation	Approval
Proposal	Cllr Russell; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.
Comments	Recommend acceptance as a minor change to the existing approved plans. All works should be carried out inline with Horsmonden Parish Councils Sustainability policy.

Planning Application:	23/01033/FULL
Proposal:	<u>Erection of single storey extension, conversion of existing log store to create boot room</u>

Location:	Hazel Street Farmhouse, Spelmonden Road, Horsmonden Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8EF
Recommendation	Approval
Proposal	Cllr Davis; seconded Cllr Sheppard. Unanimous.
Comments	Recommend acceptance on the grounds that it is a reasonable improvement to the property. All works should be carried out in line with Horsmonden Parish Councils Sustainability policy.

Planning Application:	23/01125/FULL
Proposal:	Erection of timber framed garage building
Location:	The Oast Great Baynden, School House Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 8BW
Recommendation	No comment.
Proposal	Cllr Richards; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.
Comments	The PC makes no comment due to there being no elevations or floorplans included in the submission.

6. Parish Council Decisions/Administration

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

The Clerk mentioned that a parishioner had recently complained about the pavement leading to Sprivers on Lamberhurst Road. The vegetation is now encroaching on to the pavement which makes the pavement even narrower and this unfortunately resulted in a dog being hit by a car over the weekend. The Clerk confirmed that this has now been reported to KHS via the portal and also directly to the Highways Officer.

Cllr Russell commented that the grass verge on Goudhurst Rd just before the Orchard Way turning is very overgrown and needs attention. The Clerk confirmed that this will be reported to KHS.

Cllr Larkin advised that the grass at the junction of Gun Back Lane is also very overgrown and it is becoming difficult to see oncoming traffic when pulling out. Cllr Richards confirmed that he would mention this to the landlords at The Gun and Spitroast pub and ask them to cut the grass back.

b. HIPS – update and agreement

The Assistant Clerk provided a brief update regarding HIPs specifically relating to Item 1 Lamberhurst Road after a parishioner had reported more speed related issues at this location. It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk would approach KHS and ask if they will consider funding an ATC in between the junction of Spelmonden Road and Marle Place Road.

b. Consider School Liaison officer

Cllr Baxter-Smith agreed that he was happy to be the School Liaison Officer moving forward.

- c. **Revise/agree the following policies/ procedures/ documents as outlined in Standing Orders para 5j, with changes where necessary:**
- **Terms of reference for Planning committee**
 - **Terms of reference for Finance and Risk Assessment Committee**
 - **Terms of reference for Personnel committee**
 - **Parish Council Standing Orders (reviewed Dec 2022)**
 - **Parish Council Financial Regulations (reviewed Dec 2022)**
 - **Parish Council Internal Financial Controls**
 - **Protocol on Consultation Meetings with Developers**
 - **Asset Register as at 31st March 2023**
 - **Parish Council complaints procedure**
 - **Information available from HPC (obligations under Freedom of Information legislation)**
 - **HPC Data Protection Policy & Website Privacy Notice (DPO appointed 2.5.23, ICO membership renewed 01.01.2023)**
 - **Parish Council Social Media Policy**
 - **Parish Council Meeting schedule 2023**

The Clerk explained to Cllrs that, as per the PCs Standing orders item 5j, all policies and procedures as listed should be reviewed annually by the PC at their Annual Parish Council Meeting (APCM).

The Clerk suggested to the PC that they revise the wording of Standing Orders item 5j to state that only core policies are reviewed at each APCM with a wording added to say that all other policies and procedures will be reviewed every two years on a rolling basis. The Clerk had made the suggested alterations under item 5j and had circulated the draft to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

Cllr Russell proposed that item 5j of the Standing Orders be amended to reflect only the core policies as set out in the draft; seconded Cllr Richards. Unanimous.

In view of this, only the following core policies required approval at the meeting:

- **Parish Council Financial Regulations**
Cllr Russell proposed acceptance of the Parish Council Financial Regulations without change from the review in December 2022; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.
- **Parish Council Internal Financial Controls**
Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the Parish Councils Internal Financial Controls without change from the review in December 2022; seconded Cllr Currie. Unanimous.
- **Asset Register as at 31st March 2023**
Cllr Baxter-Smith proposed acceptance of the Asset Register as at 31st March 2023; seconded Cllr Russell. Unanimous.
- **Parish Council Meeting schedule 2023**
Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the 2023 Meeting Schedule; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.

d. Revise procedure for Village Green booking deposits (cheques not widely used anymore)

The Clerk advised that she had spoken with the auditor and also RBS who operate the PCs accountancy package regarding alternative ways to collect deposits. Unfortunately, they were not able to provide a suitable solution.

After discussion by Councillors, it was agreed that the PC will continue to collect cheques where possible and change the wording on the booking form as follows:

“The Parish Council will require a cash deposit from the organiser, prior to the event, based on £2 per person, up to a maximum of £500.00. The deposit will be refunded within one week of the event if no damage has occurred. Where damage is identified the deposit will be utilised to repair any damage and any balance refunded within six months of the event. Any damages not covered under such an arrangement may be pursued by the Council and potential legal action taken if they cannot be sufficiently recovered.”

Cllr Richards proposed acceptance of the changes to the booking form wording; seconded Cllr Davis. Unanimous.

e. Consider booking of Village Green for regular fitness classes

The Clerk had circulated to Cllrs a completed booking form, risk assessment and proof of insurance received from Mr Nathan Chapman, prior to the meeting. Deposit cheque is still awaited. Mr Chapman had asked the PC for permission to run a weekly group fitness class on the village green.

Cllr Russell proposed that the PC accept this booking for a group fitness class; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

f. Consider requesting changes to s106 agreement regarding TW18/01976/FULL Land at Gibbet Lane, Furnace Lane

The Clerk advised that she has been in discussion with TWBC regarding the wording on the existing s106 agreement and suggested that the PC might wish to try and get the developer to agree to alter the wording to include the potential refurbishment of the village hall as well as the new build option. This would give the PC more flexibility when looking at options for the future.

After a brief discussion, Cllr Richards proposed that the Clerk approach TWBC to ask if the developer would be agreeable to adding to the existing s106 wording so that the monies could also be claimed for “development or improvement of Village Hall facilities”; seconded Cllr Larkin. Unanimous.

g. Quarterly Play area inspection report

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

The Clerk advised that TWBC have confirmed that s106 funding can be used to carry out repairs at the play area.

7. CONSULTATIONS

a. Discuss final recommendations on boundaries for Tunbridge Wells Borough by the Boundary Review

The PC noted the recommendations but felt that the name suggested was not very inclusive of all villages as Brenchley & Matfield are not mentioned at all.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.20pm