

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 12TH MARCH 2009
AT HUNTON PARISH HALL

PRESENT : Cllr R Sawtell in the Chair, Cllrs K Eatwell, D Heaton, L Leonard, R Porter, M Walter and Mrs V Stancombe, Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: PCSO Joanna Watts and one parishioner were present at the start of the meeting, Borough Cllrs B Mortimer and C Parr, Cllr M Arger, Chairman of Staplehurst Parish Council, and four parishioners were present throughout the meeting. A further parishioner joined the meeting at Item 10.

Prior to the start of the meeting a parishioner outlined plans for a Flower Festival to take place 2-4th October to raise funds for the restoration of the stained glass windows at the Church.

1. APOLOGIES

Were received and accepted from Cllr Thomas, County Cllr Stockell and Borough Cllr J Wilson.

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations made.

3. MINUTES of the FULL COUNCIL MEETING held on 15th JANUARY 2009

The Minutes of the meeting had been previously distributed and were unanimously **Agreed** to be an accurate record. The Chairman signed off the official copy.

4. POLICE BUSINESS

PCSO Joanna Watts reported one theft since the last meeting and drew the Council's attention to recent incidents of thefts of farm vehicles in the surrounding areas. The PCSO also reported there were plans for a Youth Centre Bus to visit Hunton and neighbouring parishes.

5. QUALITY COUNCIL

The Chairman of Staplehurst Parish Council, Cllr Arger, gave an overview of being a Quality Council and explained what the Council needed to do in order to fulfil the requirements.

6. HIGHWAY AND FOOTWAY MATTERS

6.1 Footpath – Benstead Close to Village Hall

Members **Noted** the original footpath proposal is listed in the KHS Forward Plan. The Chairman presented a report of a meeting held to investigate the possibility of a alternative route for the footpath inside the hedge. Following some discussion it was **Agreed** the alternative route could prove achievable and less costly and Cllr Parr offered to approach KHS on behalf of the Council to request that another scheme is drawn up for the new proposal.

6.2 Traffic Issues

6.2.1 West Street

Members **Noted** the speed survey equipment was installed on West Street on 20th February for approximately ten days but to date there had been no results forthcoming. The Clerk was asked to follow up with KHS. Members further **Noted** the Gateway signs had been requested. The speeding issue was discussed and the Chairman of Staplehurst Parish Council offered the loan of its Speedwatch equipment. Members **Noted** Speedwatch operators are required to be trained in its use and it was **Agreed** to identify some volunteers for the operation of the equipment.

ACTION: CLLR PORTER/CLERK

6.2.2 East Street

Members **Noted** the owner of Old School Farm has telephoned the Clerk to advise they were not happy to give permission for a sign to be erected on their land indicating the location of Amsbury Farm. Members considered a letter received from the owner of Stonewall Oasthouse requesting an "Armco" barrier to be installed at this location to protect the property from damage by vehicles. It was **Agreed** to have a site visit to establish if this was a suitable location for the barrier and this item would be discussed at the next meeting. Members further **Noted** receipt of a letter from the owner of Stonewall requesting a salt bin.

ACTION: CLLR SAWTELL

6.3 Street Lighting Maintenance

Members **Noted** following a Risk Assessment it was established the street light in Benstead Close has no maintenance contract. Following some discussion on whether the light was owned by the Council or Highways, the Clerk was asked to establish ownership and it was proposed by Cllr Eatwell, seconded by Cllr Porter “**that if it is established the street light at Bensted Close is owned by the Parish Council the quotation provided by Ringway for a maintenance contract at £47.83 per annum is accepted**”. This was **Agreed**.

ACTION: CLERK

7. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

7.1 King George’s Field Charity

Cllr Eatwell reported various issues were discussed at the Management Committee held in February including health and safety, hedge trimming of boundaries and the footpath project. Despite the Village Hall being rented out to another user on the day, the Fete will go ahead on 27th June and the Management Committee requested a float of £400 from the Council. The AGM is to be held on 3rd June.

7.2 Playing Field and Parish Council

Members **Noted** the Charity Commission has confirmed that no separate bank account is required for KGF but that the expenditure must be clearly identified in the Council’s accounts and KGF must submit an annual return to the Charity Commission showing income and expenditure. Members further **Noted** a reply is awaited from the Audit Commission regarding their acceptance of this arrangement.

7.3 Football Club Repairs

Members **Noted** the roof of the Changing Rooms is in need of repair at approximately £350 and the boiler split in the recent cold weather and has been replaced at a cost of £600. Members discussed providing financial assistance and whether this would be covered on the insurance policy. The Clerk was asked to establish if a claim could be made and the item was deferred to the next meeting.

ACTION: CLERK

8. PARISH PLAN

Members **Noted** the Working Party had not yet met and had nothing to report.

9. MATTERS OF REPORT

Reports were received as follows:

9.1 County and Borough Councillors

Cllr Stockell was unable to be present.

Cllr Mortimer reported the Council Tax increase has been set at 4.46% and there is going to be extra charges for parking and park and ride in Maidstone; there will be a Public Meeting on 24th March at Coxheath Village Hall to discuss the Coxheath Traffic Calming Scheme. Cllr Mortimer also reported his findings from a recent visit to Maidstone Hospital and the Webcam service for the public to be able to view Planning Committee meetings live at MBC.

Cllr Parr reported the possibility of getting a roundabout at the top of Hunton Hill; the junction with Dean Street and Forge Lane realigned; efforts to get a survey of HGVs carried out by KHS.

9.2 Chairman

The Chairman had nothing further to report.

9.3 Individual Councillors

Cllr Porter reported a large number of road signs were missing from around the Parish and Cllr Sawtell **Agreed** to make a list to pass to the Clerk to follow up with KHS.

9.4 Clerk

9.4.1 Annual Parish Meeting

Members reviewed the list of invitees and added the Friends of St Mary’s and the Pre-School Group.

10 FINANCE

10.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The budget monitoring report to 28th February 2009 was **Noted**.

10.2 Income received since the last meeting

Members **Noted** there had been no income received since the last meeting.

10.3 Confirmation of payments already made

It was proposed by Cllr Porter, seconded by Cllr Heaton “**that the following payments made since the last Meeting are approved**”. This was **Agreed**.

S/O - Mrs V Stancombe – Net salary for January	£281.16
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10.4 Cheques for signature

It was proposed by Cllr Heaton, seconded by Cllr Walter “**that the Council approve the following payments**”. This was **Agreed** and the cheques were signed:-

935 – KCC Landscape Services – 2 nd Half Grounds Maintenance	£480.46
936 – MBC Litterpicking January & February	£119.60
937 – Aon – KGV Insurance	£155.20
938 – EDF – Streetlighting	£6.89
939 – HMRC – PAYE	£173.37
940 – V Stancombe – Reimbursement of Expenses	£22.17

10.5 Interim Internal Audit

Members **Noted** the new Internal Auditor has confirmed an annual fee of £60 that will include an interim audit, year end audit and a written report. Members reviewed the report of the Interim Internal Audit carried out on 23rd January 2009 and **Noted** actions required.

10.5.1 Financial Regulations and Standing Orders

Following a review of the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders, it was proposed by Cllr Eatwell, seconded by Cllr Porter “**that the Council adopt the amended Financial Regulations and Standing Orders**”. This was **Agreed**.

10.5.2 Fidelity Guarantee

Following a risk assessment an increase in the amount of Fidelity Guarantee Insurance was considered and Cllr Heaton proposed, seconded by Cllr Walter “**that the amount of Fidelity Guarantee Insurance cover is increased from £8,000 to £25,000**”. This was **Agreed**.

10.5.3 Risk Assessment

Members **Approved** the comprehensive Risk Assessment document provided by the Clerk and it was **Agreed** to implement the actions required with immediate effect.

ACTION: COUNCILLORS/CLERK

10.5.4 Asset Register

Members considered and **Approved** the Asset Register prepared by the Clerk with the addition of the Village Hall.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting is on Thursday 14th May 2009 at **7.00 pm** at Hunton Parish Hall which will be the Annual Meeting of the Council followed by the Annual Parish Meeting.

There being no further business to be discussed the meeting closed at 9.35 pm.