

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14TH JANUARY 2013 AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr R Sawtell in the Chair, Cllrs D Heaton, L Leonard, R Porter and S Wyles and Mrs S Goodwin, Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: David Smith of KCC was in attendance until Item 6.2. Mrs M Carpenter and Mr D Peacock were in attendance until Item 8. Mrs A Trought arrived during Item 6.1 and was in attendance until Item 8. County Cllr P Stockell, Borough Cllrs B Mortimer and D Collins, and Mr A Bishop were in attendance until Item 8.2.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs G Thomas and T Stanbridge, and Borough Cllr J Wilson.

2. **COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS**

2.1 **Dispensations**

All Members completed a Dispensation Request Form to apply for dispensation to allow them to participate and vote on setting the budget and precept (Item 9.9). Dispensation was granted by the Council for all Members, including Cllrs G Thomas and T Stanbridge in their absence. The dispensation lasts for four years.

2.2 **Declaration of Interests**

All Members declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Item 9.9 as residents of the parish.

3. **MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 12TH NOVEMBER 2012 AND THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 17TH DECEMBER 2012**

The minutes of the meetings on 12th November 2012 and 17th December 2012 had been previously distributed. The Chairman signed off the official copy of the minutes for both meetings.

4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES NOT INCLUDED IN THE AGENDA**

Item 9.1 – The Clerk sent a letter to the Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee, copied to the Treasurer, stating that the FIT payments generated from the solar panels on the Village Hall roof must be passed on to the Parish Council. Mr Alan Bishop, Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee stated that he was happy with this arrangement, but there had not been a meeting of the Committee since the letter was received. Approximately £1,500 is due from FIT payments since March 2012.

Item 9.5 – A cheque for £120 was sent to Yalding Parish Council as a contribution towards the Yalding Parish Playscheme 2013.

Item 9.6 – Two cheques, each for £50, were sent to the Tree Warden Scheme and the Pond Warden Scheme. The Clerk sent a letter to the current Tree and Pond Warden, Anne Bishop, to establish whether she wishes to continue in the role. A reply has not been received as yet. Mr Bishop advised that Mrs Bishop would like to continue in the role and would contact the Clerk to confirm this.

Item 5 from 10th September 2012 meeting – PCSO Watts offered to contact other parishes to see if they would like to work with Hunton in setting up a Community Emergency Response Team. PCSO Watts was not at the meeting to provide an update. Cllr Heaton agreed to report back to the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee, but has not done so as yet.

POLICE BUSINESS

5. PCSO Watts was unable to attend the meeting and had not provided a crime report.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to contact PCSO Watts to establish her feelings on the running of the Hunton Christmas Market in terms of the amount of traffic, parking, complaints received and any improvements which could be made.

ACTION: CLERK

6. HIGHWAY AND FOOTWAY MATTERS

6.1 Footpath – Bensted Close to Village Hall

This item was discussed after Item 2 to allow Mr David Smith of KCC to leave early.

The Chairman stated that the Parish Council had been told before Christmas that the bridges are available and that the hedge cutting had been done, but it is still too high in the middle. The Chairman was concerned as Mr Anthony Frampton from the Tregothnan Estate said that he has not received the legal agreement from KCC and that no work on the footpath can be undertaken on Tregothnan Estate land until it has been received.

The Chairman invited Mr Smith of KCC to provide an update on the footpath. Mr Smith stated that there are two landowners whose land the footpath will cross – Mr David Hubble and the Tregothnan Estate. The agreements have been processed slightly differently with each landowner. KCC has a permissive path agreement with Mr Hubble, which means that the footpath will cross his land, dedicated on a permissive basis. The agreement will continue forever, subject to six months notice from either party, although KCC would not invoke this clause. The only change would be if Mr Hubble invoked the clause or the land use changes. The agreement also lists the schedule of works, including the bridge over the ditch, surfacing, etc. The maintenance of the path rests with KCC. The agreement was put in place with Mr Hubble in 2012, who has received all the necessary documentation.

The agreement with the Tregothnan Estate, a larger landowner, is a Section 31(6) deposit, making reference to the Highways Act 1980. Large estates are able to make a statutory deposit to show which routes over their land they recognise as being rights of way. KCC has updated the statutory deposit to include the permissive footpath. A separate agreement is not required as it is included within the statutory deposit. The two bridges to be installed at each end of the footpath are over one metre in width. The bridges have been constructed and are ready to go on site. In November 2012 there was an objection to the footpath which has been dealt with by KCC. Mr Smith thanked Members for their comments on the draft response to the complainant.

The hedge needs to be finished off so it is at the correct height.

Previously it was planned to install the bridges and put down the surfacing at the same time. The work has now been split so the hedge work will be finished and bridges installed, then when ground conditions improve the contractors will lay the surfacing.

The footpath is one of 50 projects on the KCC capital programme and will be completed in the financial year ended 31st March 2013.

Cllr Heaton asked about the Tregothnan Estate statutory deposit. Mr Smith stated that when a statutory deposit is made it lasts for a period of time. The Tregothnan Estate renews the deposit when it expires, but it can be updated when necessary. Mr Smith clarified that the footpath has been marked on the statutory deposit and therefore the footpath works cannot be halted by the Tregothnan Estate.

Cllr Wyles asked whether Mr Smith was aware of the frustrations of the village and wanted to know why the bridges built previously had been diverted elsewhere, whether the issues would be resolved with the Tregothnan Estate and whether the footpath is not seen by KCC as high priority. Mr Smith said that the footpath was seen as a high priority.

Cllr Heaton asked whether Members could see the bridges which have been constructed. Mr Smith agreed that he could take Members to Penshurst to see the bridges.

The Chairman reiterated that confidence is low and, although it was agreed that weather conditions are not good, it would be useful to meet with the contractors to determine the schedule. The contractors have not turned up on many occasions previously. Mr Smith said that he could arrange for the contractors to meet with Members. The Chairman asked whether KCC is in a position to have the work done now or whether other projects would take precedence. Mr Smith assured Members that other projects would not pull rank and his priority is to deliver the remainder of the capital project.

County Cllr Stockell stated that the footpath had to be completed by the end of the financial year.

Borough Cllr Mortimer asked what would happen regarding maintenance once the footpath had opened. Mr Smith advised that the footpath would be maintained by KCC and the Parish Council has offered to help with hedge cutting and keeping the grass down.

Mr Smith raised a separate issue, stating that on 12th December 2012 a new Definitive Map was produced for Kent, which shows all public rights of way. KCC knows that there are errors on the map, some are straightforward drafting errors, others are due to the legal status of the document which cannot be changed. Mr Smith advised that changes will be made to the Definitive Map regarding a path off Lughorse Lane in Hunton and that a new copy would be sent to the Parish Council in February. The Parish Council may also be consulted regarding the amendments to the map sheets.

The Chairman thanked Mr Smith for attending the meeting.

6.2 Gateways

The East Street Gateway is complete, but the following elements of the Gateways on West Street are outstanding:

- There is no 'Hunton' nameplate on the new 30mph Gateway posts at either end.
- Two 30mph roundels need to be added to the carriageway.

The Clerk reported that, despite several requests, no response has been received from Kent Highways. County Cllr Stockell has chased up Ben Hilden at KCC and the paintwork will be done when the weather improves.

6.3 West Street Problems

6.3.1 Ditch & Road Verge

The Clerk had spoken to Richard Dixon of KHS regarding several issues and reported the following:

- KHS have agreed to extend the white lining down to Bensted Close from the Village Hall, but it will be in the new financial year when funding is available. White lining is not being carried out at present in any case as the roads are too wet.
- KHS is chasing the work to be done on the blocked culvert in front of the Village Hall, to rod it and insert road pins to ensure rubbish is not caught in the culvert. Mr Bishop advised that this work appears to have been done. The Clerk agreed to check. ACTION: CLERK
- KHS is hoping to carry out a long stretch of patching work from Church Cottage towards Bensted Close.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted Drainage at KCC to report the blocked drains on West Street near the school. Drains are cleared on a scheduled cleansing programme, but the programme is now on a six month cycle rather than three months.

The Chairman asked Mr Bishop about the hedge on West Street near the Village Hall where the ditch had been re-dug. Mr Bishop stated that the whole hedge was leaning inwards. There is a 50 yard gap in the hedge which could be filled with plants. The Medway Valley Countryside Partnership has provided the plants to Mr Bishop, but cannot provide the labour which would be approximately two hours for four people. Members agreed that a working party should be put together within the next few weeks to put in the plants.

6.3.2 20mph Speed Limit Outside Hunton School

The 20mph signage has now been put in place near Bensted Close on West Street, with the following being outstanding:

- The existing 'keep clear' markings on the road have not been renewed.
- There is a sign missing on one side of the road near Grove Lane.

County Cllr Stockell advised that the road markings would be done soon and asked whether the 20mph scheme is working. Members agreed that it does not work in school times and needs policing. Cllr Stockell advised that it should be policed as it is experimental.

6.4 KCC 7.5 Tonne Weight Restriction Experimental Order 2012

This item was discussed after Item 8.1.

Members discussed the content of the Experimental Order and asked the Clerk to respond to KCC as follows:

- Lughorse Lane is mentioned, but is not actually marked in red on the map;
- Hunton Road is included from its junction with East Street to its junction with Pattenden Lane. The restriction should continue up East Street and George Street, looping up Redwall Lane to meet the bottom of Hunton Hill, otherwise Redwall Lane/East Street will become a rat run;
- Hunton Hill should be included up to Heath Road.

Members **Agreed** that if the above elements are included within the Experimental Order then the Parish Council will support it. ACTION: CLERK

6.5 DCLG Consultation – Examining Speed Limits for HGVs over 7.5 Tonnes on Single Carriageway Roads

Cllrs Heaton and Wyles agreed to look at the consultation and provide a response if necessary.

ACTION: CLLR HEATON AND CLLR WYLES

7. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

7.1 King George V Playing Field

The Chairman and Secretary of the King George V Playing Field Management Committee were both present at the meeting. The Secretary, Mrs Margaret Carpenter, reported that there had not been a Committee meeting since the Parish Council Extraordinary Meeting in December 2012. Mrs Carpenter thanked Annette Trought, Cllr Heaton, the Parish Plan Steering Committee and the Parish Council for all the support given regarding the new play equipment to be installed in the play area. Mrs Carpenter has been assured by Playdale Playgrounds Ltd that the work will start next week, being two days work. The spoil which is dug out will be piled in a corner of the field, which members of the King George V Playing Field Management Committee will move elsewhere.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Carpenter for her work on this project.

7.2 Hunton Parish Plan

This item was discussed before Item 7.1.

The Chair of the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee, Mrs Annette Trought, was present at the meeting to provide a report. The Parish Plan Steering Committee had met the previous week, summarised as follows:

- The footpath sits at the heart of all plans of the Committee;
- Community SpeedWatch – grant funding has been provided, so the equipment will be purchased this year. A group of people has been trained, and the location agreed, so once the equipment has been purchased SpeedWatch can commence;
- Village shop – a small group will trial a pop up shop. Permission has been given for the first to be held outside the church near Easter. The products for sale will be items people have made, farm produce, etc.
- Community orchard – the group met last week. A questionnaire was sent out, with a good response rate. Bids are being put together for the end of March. The group has been looking at an orchard in Lenham. The orchard in Hunton should be unique and suit Hunton through heritage and bio-diversity;
- Sustainability and bio-diversity – not too much done in this area;
- Litter picking – there will be three litter picks a year;
- Christmas lights – thanks to Alan Bishop for putting up the lights, perhaps the amount will be increased in 2013;
- Christmas Fair – this was a fantastic event.

Mrs Trought also stated that the Committee is pulling together a formal update from the various working groups for the March edition of the Hunton Herald so the village can see what has been achieved.

The Hunton Fete will be held on 22nd June in 2013.

7.3 SpeedWatch

The Council had submitted an application for a KCC grant for SpeedWatch equipment, following a request from the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee, and was awarded £1,800. The Clerk received the official notification of approval of the grant on 10th January 2013 and has completed the online acceptance form. KCC aims to make the payment by BACS within one month of the date it receives the completed acceptance form, so the funds should be available to purchase the SpeedWatch equipment in early February 2013.

7.4 Hunton Christmas Market

The Chairman reported that Mrs Ann Sawtell is writing an article in the Hunton Herald about the Christmas Market. The lights were funded by the Hunton Herald. Some of the profits from the Christmas Market will be kept back, but a contribution will be made to the church. Mrs Sawtell would like to organise another Christmas Market in 2013, which will probably be on the second Saturday in December.

Cllr Wyles said that he had been to a number of Christmas markets, but the Hunton market was much better by far than anything he had seen before. Cllr Wyles proposed that a letter of thanks be sent to Mrs Sawtell, thanking her for all her hard work, which all Members agreed.

ACTION: CLERK

8. MATTERS OF REPORT

8.1 County and Borough Councillors

8.1.1 County Councillor

County Cllr Stockell reported that KCC has completed the budget for 2013/14. There will be no council tax increase and grants are protected. Considerable investment is being made in Highways.

Cllr Stockell asked whether the Parish Council required anything from KCC other than the matters already discussed. The Chairman stated that there were potholes that he needed to make Richard Dixon of KHS aware of. Cllr Stockell also agreed to chase up the KCC grant monies for the play equipment and SpeedWatch equipment.

Cllr Porter advised that a speed restriction sign had been smashed down. Cllr Stockell stated that signs will be put in for the Experimental Order.

8.1.2 Borough Councillors

Borough Cllr Collins outlined a letter he had written to the Parish Council regarding complaints about an increase in traffic using Water Lane in Hunton due to a commercial business being operated from a property. On investigation it was found that no planning laws have been broken. Cllr Collins has visited the property himself and was satisfied that there was no infringement of the commercial planning permission which had been granted for the property.

Borough Cllr Mortimer stated that MBC Cabinet has agreed to continue with the Parish Services Scheme, despite the problems there have been in putting the Scheme over to the parishes and issues over certain areas of expenditure. County Cllr Stockell added that she attended the Cabinet meeting and had secured funding for parishes for lighting. Cllr Stockell said that a lot of the smaller parishes would lose out with the Parish Services Scheme, but the larger parishes would be alright.

8.2 Chairman

The Chairman did not have anything to report.

8.3 Individual Councillors

The Councillors did not have anything to report.

8.4 Clerk

There is a Parish Conference on 9th February 2013, organised by MBC. The Chairman and Clerk agreed to attend.

9. FINANCE

9.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st December 2012 was noted.

9.2 Income Received

The following income has been received since the last meeting:

NatWest – Bank Interest	£0.31
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Cllr Porter reviewed and signed the bank reconciliation.

9.3 Payments Made

Members approved the following payments made since the last meeting:

SO – S Goodwin – Salary & Office Allowance – November	£380.80
1086 – Hunton Wanderers CC – Contribution to Pitch Marker (KGF)	£200.00
1087 – Yalding Parish Council – Contribution to Yalding Parish Playscheme	£120.00
1088 – Kent Tree Wardens – Contribution to Scheme	£50.00
1089 – Kent Pond Wardens – Contribution to Scheme	£50.00
1090 – Playdale Playgrounds Limited – Deposit for Play Equipment (KGF)	£572.41
SO – S Goodwin – Salary & Office Allowance – December	£380.80

9.4 Cheques for Signature

Members **Agreed** that the following payments be approved and the cheques were signed:

1091 – Colin Langridge – Hedge Cutting (KGF)	£60.00
1092 – South East Water – Cricket Field Water Charges (KGF)	£145.32
1093 – E.ON – Street Light Electricity	£6.99
1094 – KALC – Finance Event	£72.00
1095 – KCC – 2 nd Half Grounds Maintenance (KGF)	£569.63
1096 – MBC – Bin Emptying – September/October/November/December (KGF)	£374.40
1097 – Fields In Trust – Membership Subscription	£25.00
1098 – S Goodwin – Expenses September to January	£114.76

9.5 Victim Support

Members considered a request from Victim Support to make a contribution. Members **Agreed** that a contribution should not be made on this occasion.

9.6 Help a Maidstone Child

Members considered a request from Help a Maidstone Child to make a contribution. Members **Agreed** that a contribution should not be made on this occasion.

9.7 Grounds Maintenance 2013

Members considered the quotation received from KCC Landscape Services for the maintenance of the King George V Field for 2013/14. Members **Agreed** to accept the quotation of £744.96 for 16 cuts.

9.8 Parish Services Scheme

The Chairman reported that the initial MBC Parish Services Scheme estimate received for the Parish Council for 2013/14 was £974. A further £75 has subsequently been added by MBC for street lighting to bring the total to £1,049. The Clerk has also asked that a cost be included for the notice boards, but a revised estimate has not been received as yet.

9.9 2013/14 Budget and Parish Precept

Members had received the budget papers produced by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Members accepted the budget, subject to including income from the FIT receipts generated by the solar panels on the Village Hall roof. Members **Agreed** that the Precept should be increased to £17,000 from £15,000 last year, due to the replacement of the MBC Concurrent Functions Scheme with the Parish Services Scheme, resulting in an estimated £2,800 shortfall in income from last year. This precept creates a tax of £56.82 per property. The Chairman signed and dated the MBC Parish Precept Requirement 2013/14 form for the Clerk to submit to MBC.

ACTION: CLERK

10. PLANNING

10.1 Planning Application

The following application was considered:

10.1.1 Smithfield House, West Street – MA/12/2207

Erection of a replacement dwelling.

This planning application could not be discussed at the meeting as the planning documents received from MBC related to another property entirely. Members asked the Clerk to inform MBC and ask for an extension on responding.

10.2 Planning Decisions

No planning decisions have been received from Maidstone Borough Council.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Council Meeting is on Monday 11th March 2013 at 8:00pm at Hunton Village Hall.

There being no further matters to be discussed the meeting closed at 10:35pm.