

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2013 AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr R Sawtell in the Chair, Cllrs G Thomas, D Heaton, L Leonard, T Stanbridge and Mrs S Goodwin, Clerk.

IN ATTENDANCE: Borough Cllr B Mortimer was in attendance until Item 8.2. Two members of the public were in attendance until the end of the open session. One member of the public was in attendance until Item 8. One member of the public was in attendance for the whole meeting.

OPEN SESSION:

In the open session, prior to the start of the meeting, Simon Taylor and Steve Jones of Hunton Wanderers Cricket Club outlined the progress so far on the Sport England application form for a new cricket pavilion. To date the sections of the form completed include: the need for the pavilion, the impact on the sport, the sports development plan and community involvement. The sections on sustainability and the income and expenditure forecast are still being worked on. Mr Taylor confirmed that planning permission is required for a new pavilion, as well as approval of building regulations. The fees would be 50% of the usual cost as the planning application will be in the Parish Council's name.

The window for submitting applications closes in mid December and the result will be announced early in 2014. If the application is successful, the only other obligation to the Parish Council will be sustainability. The pavilion will remain the property of the Council.

Members agreed to informally meet with Mr Taylor and Mr Jones on 17th October 2013 to agree the key points of the application. Mr Jones agreed to email an electronic version of the application form for Members to read. An item will be placed on the Parish Council agenda for the next meeting on 11th November 2013 to formally agree and sign off the application form.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs R Porter and S Wyles. County Cllr P Stockell and Borough Cllrs D Collins and J Wilson had also sent their apologies.

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

2.1 Declaration of Interests

Cllr Heaton declared an interest in items 9.6.2 and 9.6.3 as they had been included as agenda items at his request.

2.2 Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

3. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8TH JULY 2013

The minutes of the meeting on 8th July 2013 had been previously distributed. The Chairman signed off the official copy of the minutes.

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

Item 6.1 – Letters of thanks have been written to Annette Trought and Philip Nichols for all their work organising and compering the Hunton Fete.

Item 6.4 – A letter has been written to the Headteacher at Hunton Primary School, asking that parents be reminded to park at the Village Hall and use the new footpath to walk to the school to

aid traffic congestion. PCSO Chainey has been asked to carry out regular patrols near the school at drop off and pick up times. MBC could not specify what times their operatives would be collecting waste from West Street in Hunton and therefore cannot adjust their times to avoid the school drop off time in the morning. Members **Agreed** that the new Headteacher at the school be invited to attend the next Parish Council meeting to meet Members and outline her plans for the school. ACTION: CLERK

Item 6.5 – A letter has been written to the landowner to ask that vegetation is cut back along the public footpath from the end of The Square to Grove Lane.

Item 7.5 – Cllr Fran Wilson's letter regarding open spaces has been sent to the Parish Plan Steering Committee for consideration.

Item 7.6 – Information on the KALC Community Awards Scheme has been obtained.

Item 7.8 – Cllr Stanbridge reviewed the Southern Water Consultation on its Draft Water Resources Management Plan, but considered that the plan did not have a direct impact on the parish, so a response was not sent.

Item 9.7 – Geraldine Brown is meeting with MBC on 9th September to discuss the Parish Services Scheme funding agreement that parishes are being asked to sign.

Item 9.8 – The Clerk cannot contact the administrator of the KCC Rural Bus Shelter Grant as he is on leave until 16th September at the earliest, but has spoken to someone at Littlethorpe Bus Shelters who provide wooden shelters and have installed a few in Kent. Prices start at £4,380 plus transport and installation. The maximum grant which can be obtained from KCC is £2,000.

5. POLICE BUSINESS

PCSO Richard Chainey has been on leave and was unable to attend the meeting. The latest crime figures have not been provided, the Clerk agreed to forward them when obtained.

6. HIGHWAY & FOOTPATH MATTERS

6.1 Footpath – Bensted Close to Village Hall

The Chairman reported that the outstanding element of the footpath work is the hedge cutting. A quote has been obtained by the Parish Council from a contractor who has previously provided a quote. This has been sent to David Munn at KCC, who will also obtain two quotes from the KCC list of approved contractors. KCC will manage and fund the hedge cutting, but if the contractor selected is the one put forward by the Parish Council, the Parish Council will pay the contractor directly and obtain reimbursement from KCC.

6.2 Gateways

The Chairman reported that Andy Padgham is meeting with County Cllr Stockell at the West Street site on 12th September to discuss the outstanding work on the Gateways.

6.3 West Street Problems

County Cllr Stockell has been asked about the possibility of funding marker posts on the verge near the playing field on West Street to stop vehicles driving over the verge. The channel outside The Beast House has been repaired by Kent Highways.

7. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

7.1 King George V Playing Field

7.1.1 Update

The Chairman of the King George V Playing Field Management Committee, Danny Peacock, reported that the following was discussed at the last committee meeting:

- Two more keys need to be cut, which will require a letter of approval from the Parish Council.
- There is still a problem with rabbits, but someone has been identified to sort it out.
- Now the hedge has been cut, a mirror is no longer required at the entrance to the playing field.

- The football and cricket clubs have had problems with tree branches hanging over the pitches. Some of the branches will be cut down.
- An individual has asked to use the playing field for 'bootcamp' fitness and another is already using the field for this purpose. The committee is happy to provide permission, providing certain criteria are met, including not using the equipment in the children's play area. Signs are to be placed near the play area, specifying that use is for children only.
- The annual play area report was good, with only relatively minor improvements suggested.

7.1.2 Play Area Annual Inspection Report

Members noted the contents of the annual play area inspection report, produced by Craigdene Limited. The suggested improvements are not major and Mr Peacock confirmed that someone will sort out any issues.

7.2 Hunton Parish Plan

The Chair of the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee was unable to attend the meeting. Cllr Heaton reported that Speedwatch is going well. The funding bid for the Community Orchard has been submitted, a joint application of six parishes. The orchard is being mown on a regular basis to keep the nettles down and a working party is meeting on 28th September to cut back the hedging and trees.

The committee is to consider drawing up a list of open spaces in the parish which should be safeguarded from future development through protection within the MBC Local Plan.

7.3 DCLG Consultation – Greater Flexibilities for Change of Use

The DCLG has issued a consultation containing proposals which are intended to support the Government's priorities for making better use of existing buildings, supporting the high street and rural communities, providing new housing, developing more free schools and contributing to the provision of child care for working families.

The consultation seeks views on five proposals for permitted development rights to allow:

- shops and financial and professional services to change use to a dwelling house;
- existing buildings used for agricultural purposes of up to 150 square metres to change to residential use;
- retail uses to change to banks and building societies only;
- premises used as offices, hotels, residential and non-residential institutions, and leisure and assembly to be able to change use to nurseries providing childcare;
- a building used for agricultural purposes of up to 500 square metres to be used as a new state funded school or a nursery providing childcare.

Members agreed that a response should be provided on the second proposal – the change of existing buildings used for agricultural purposes of up to 150sqm to change to residential use. Members consider the criteria to be too open which could result in a considerable number of old barns, stores and stables being turned into houses in inappropriate places. The proposal is effectively an extension of brownfield sites.

ACTION: CLERK

7.4 Kent Downs AONB Management Plan Consultation

It is statutorily required that the plan is reviewed and formally adopted. It is not a new plan, it is the revision of a plan which all of the local authorities have already adopted, so while there are important updates and changes, the plan remains fundamentally the same.

Members agreed to not provide a response to the consultation.

8. MATTERS OF REPORT

8.1 County and Borough Councillors

8.1.1 County Councillor

County Cllr Stockell was unable to attend the meeting.

8.1.2 **Borough Councillors**

Borough Cllr Mortimer spoke about the Little Clockhouse planning application. He has been speaking with residents about the application and also with Jon Lawrence, the MBC Planning Officer. Cllr Mortimer has asked if an ecology report could be prepared and has also asked Mr Lawrence not to put the application on the Planning Committee agenda for 19th September as he would not be available to speak, although he will lobby other Members. Cllr Mortimer feels that Mr Lawrence is likely to recommend approval of the application. Cllr Mortimer considers that, bearing in mind the Localism agenda, MBC should be on the side of the residents. There was some discussion on the application. Cllr Mortimer advised that members of the MBC Planning Committee be lobbied and Borough Cllrs Collins and Wilson and County Cllr Stockell are urged to speak the meeting.

Cllr Mortimer reported that five caravans had arrived in Coxheath, using the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. This does not require change of use, as long as one of the owners belongs to the Caravan Club. Parish councils should be aware.

Cllr Mortimer stated that an Extraordinary Council meeting had been held at MBC last week regarding the Council being misguided by officers regarding the housing supply. Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council had employed a leading barrister who considers that the basis on which the housing supply is calculated is incorrect. The barrister for MBC does not believe the figures to be incorrect. There will be an update to full council on 18th September.

Cllr Mortimer advised that the proposed site allocations for new housing which came out of the MBC Call for Sites process will go to MBC Cabinet for approval in October, not September.

8.2 **Chairman**

The Chairman did not have anything to report.

8.3 **Individual Councillors**

Cllr Wyles requested, in his absence, that the Parish Council supports and attends the launch of Huntonwatch at 8:15pm on 19th September at the Village Club.

Cllr Thomas advised that he and several others had met the Leader of MBC, Cllr Garland regarding the housing numbers.

8.4 **Clerk**

NALC is publishing a new book, 'Local Councils Explained', on 4th October. The book costs £39.99 plus P&P if pre-ordered through KALC.

Members **Agreed** that the Clerk should pre-order a copy of the publication. **ACTION: CLERK**

9. **FINANCE**

9.1 **Budget Monitoring Report**

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st August 2013 was **Noted**.

9.2 **Income Received**

Members **Noted** the following income received since the last meeting:

Village Hall Committee – Solar panels FIT receipt £2,233.69

Cllr Stanbridge reviewed and signed the bank reconciliation.

Following a request at the last meeting, the Clerk spoke with NatWest regarding the interest rate on the Business Reserve Account to see if it is worth transferring funds from the Current Account to earn more interest. The Current Account earns 0% and the Business Reserve Account earns 0.05% interest.

9.3 **Payments Made**

Members **Approved** the following payments made since the last meeting:

SO – S Goodwin – Salary & Office Allowance – July	£393.27
DD – ICO – Data protection registration fee	£35.00
SO – S Goodwin – Salary & Office Allowance – August	£393.27

9.4 **Cheques for Signature**

Members **Agreed** that the following payment be approved and the cheque was signed by Cllrs Sawtell and Heaton:

1125 – Robert Cox Country Services – Maintenance (KGF)	£565.00
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NatWest has not sent through a new cheque book, so cheques could not be written for other items of expenditure. Members **Agreed** that once the new cheque book has been received, cheques will be written for the following and signed by two Members outside of the meeting for:

Craigdene Limited – Annual inspection of the children’s play area	£84.00
CPRE – Membership subscription	£29.00
KPFA – Membership subscription (KGF)	£20.00
Commercial Services Trading Ltd – First half grounds maintenance (KGF)	£446.98

9.5 **Annual Review of Insurance**

Members **Noted** receipt of the insurance renewal from Aviva through Came & Co at a cost of £1,958.43, compared to last year’s premium of £1,977.99. This will be the last year of a three year long term agreement. Came & Co has offered the opportunity of signing up to a new long term agreement to 30th September 2016 (ie a year early) and reducing the renewal premium by 5% to £1,860.51.

Members **Agreed** that the insurance policy should be renewed with Aviva through Came & Co, but the decision to enter into a new three year agreement should be decided at an Extraordinary Meeting, once quotations from other insurance companies had been obtained.

The Parish Council bought a mower in March 2007 at a cost of £950 which has never been listed in the schedule of insured assets on the insurance policy. Members **Agreed** that the mower should be insured at a value of £1,500.

9.6 **Funding Requests**

9.6.1 **Boards to advertise village activities**

A request had been received from a parishioner for the purchase of nine pub style boards to advertise the various activities taking place in the village during the year. The boards are likely to be of wooden construction, perhaps made by a local carpenter in the village. A quote has not been obtained as yet, but it is likely to be under £1,000.

Members **Agreed** to the idea in principle, but also agreed that care would need to be taken as to the placement of the boards in the village.

9.6.2 **Strimmer for the footpath, churchyard and orchard**

A request had been received from Cllr Heaton for the purchase of a strimmer as not all areas of the footpath, churchyard and orchard can be cut back using only a mower. The strimmer would be used by volunteers. The cost would be approximately £300 plus the cost of protective equipment. Members **Agreed** to fund the purchase of the strimmer.

9.6.3 **Seats near the play area**

A request had been received from Cllr Heaton for the purchase of more seats adjacent to the play

area as the only seats on the playing field are at the top end of the cricket pitch and parents need somewhere to sit while their children are using the play area.

Members **Agreed** with the idea in principle and suggested that Cllr Heaton provides costings for the seats. It may be possible to apply for a Community Grant.

9.7 Revised NJC Pay Scales 2013/14

The NJC pay scales, on which the Clerk's salary is based, have increased for the first time since 2009/10. The Society of Local Council Clerks has recommended that Clerks ask that their salary is increased in line with the new pay scales and be backdated to 1st April 2013, which is the date the new pay rates take effect. The change in rates would increase the Clerk's salary by £188 per annum and the backdated pay to 1st April 2013 calculates as £17.70.

Members **Approved** the increase in salary and two Members signed the standing order instruction. Members **Approved** the payment of the backdated salary.

10. PLANNING

10.1 Planning Decisions

Members **Noted** the following decisions received from Maidstone Borough Council:

10.1.1 1 Brickyard Cottages, Redwall Lane, Linton – MA/13/0784

Single storey rear extension.

Parish Council recommendation: Approve.

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Granted.

10.1.2 1 Pennywood Cottages, Lughorse Lane – MA/13/1093

Proposed single storey extension to north elevation, two storey extension to west elevation and gable roof over entrance porch on south elevation.

Parish Council recommendation: Do not wish to object.

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Granted.

10.1.3 2 Foremans Barn, Foremans Barn Road – MA/13/1013

Removal of condition 1 of MA/07/2199 in relation to 2 Foremans Barn (formerly Unit 1) to allow use as permanent residential accommodation.

Parish Council recommendation: Approve.

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Refused.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

There being no further matters to be discussed the meeting closed at 10:08pm.