

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 10TH MARCH 2014
AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Borough Cllrs D Collins and B Mortimer were in attendance. PCSO Hunter was in attendance until Item 7.4. Ten members of the public were in attendance.

Please note that items in the minutes are recorded in the same order as the agenda, but items were moved around during the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**
Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr D Heaton. County Cllr P Stockell had also sent her apologies.
2. **COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS**
 - 2.1 **Declaration of Interests**
There were no councillor declarations.
 - 2.2 **Dispensations**
There were no requests for dispensations.
3. **MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13TH JANUARY 2014**
The minutes of the meeting on 13th January 2014 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 7.4 – The Clerk of the Joint Parishes Group was advised that Hunton Parish Council would like to join the group.
Item 7.5 - Cllr Wyles has had limited success ascertaining the responsibilities or various organisations following flooding as most are still trying to work out those responsibilities themselves. Responsibility for potholes and collapsed roads is clearly Kent Highways, but there is no budget for roads other than main roads until the new financial year. The Chairman commented that Yalding Parish Council has done some work on the drains on behalf of Hunton. A community group found a culvert blocked on West Street and informed Kent Highways.
Item 7.6 – A letter was written to MBC regarding the proposed designation of Yalding and Coxheath as Rural Service Centres.
Item 9.1 – Cllr Heaton to discuss receipt of FIT payments direct to the Parish Council with members of the Village Hall Committee.
Item 9.7 – The signed MBC Parish Precept form was sent to MBC.
5. **POLICE BUSINESS**
 - 5.1 **Police**
PCSO Alan Hunter introduced himself to Members and explained that he has been working in the Maidstone area since September 2013, having worked in Medway for the previous five years. There have been no reported crimes in Hunton for the last two months, similarly for East

Farleigh. Coxheath has suffered a couple of burglaries where doors have been kicked in. Burglaries are also on the rise in other areas. Huntonwatch is working well and Cllr Wyles has been provided with SmartWater.

5.2 Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr Wyles reported that police crime reports are received by Huntonwatch as part of the Maidstone Neighbourhood Watch Association and reiterated the burglaries in Coxheath. There have been two incidents of fly tipping in Hunton on Barn Hill and Hunton Hill and a salt bin on Barn Hill has been emptied. Since Huntonwatch started the crime reports have reduced. All areas of Hunton are now covered by Huntonwatch as one third of the properties in Hunton have membership. Six people with 4x4 vehicles have now volunteered to be called upon to assist in times of snow or flood.

A third newsletter has been issued – advice from police includes being more vigilant following flooding as opportunists can take advantage of the conditions. Parishioners should also ensure garden sheds are kept locked now Spring is on the way.

6. HIGHWAY & FOOTPATH MATTERS

6.1 Footpath – Bensted Close to Village Hall

Cllr Leonard reported that he had received complaints from parishioners about the large puddles on the footpath. Members **Agreed** that the Clerk should contact David Munn at KCC to see if there is anything that can be done. ACTION: CLERK

Members **Agreed** that a gate should not be installed in the gateway to David Hubble's land at this time.

6.2 Gateways

The gateway on West Street has been installed by KCC. Some parishioners have questioned whether the gateway is in the correct place as they consider the view of traffic coming out of East Street to be obscured. Members did not think the gateway obstructed the view and agreed that the gateway should remain in the current location.

6.3 West Street Problems

Three reflector posts have been installed by KCC alongside the recreation field on West Street. Members **Agreed** that more reflector posts should be requested from KCC, particularly where the road drains into the ditch, as the drain is blocked by traffic going onto the verge and the water runs down West Street rather than the ditch. ACTION: CLERK

Cllr Wyles had a meeting at Hunton Primary School regarding the parking issues near the school. KCC will not sanction double yellow lines due to a lack of funding and no accident history in that area. PCSO Hunter's sergeant will not support a police presence in that location. KCC does not support the use of a convex mirror opposite the Bishops Lane/West Street junction as they can distort distances and the school would also not support this. The school would not be prepared to provide a marshal. If individuals wish to stick notices on cars parked dangerously there is nothing to stop them.

6.4 Speedwatch

Guy Oliver was invited to attend the meeting to provide an update on Speedwatch, but had other commitments. Members **Agreed** that now the Parish Council has the Speedwatch kit it must be used and asked that Mr Oliver be contacted to determine whether he wishes to continue with Speedwatch now he has stood down from the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee.

ACTION: CLERK

6.5 Annual Parish Meeting

Members discussed the invitation list and format of the Annual Parish Meeting, to be held on 19th May 2014 (note: the date has been changed from 26th May as it is a bank holiday).

Members **Agreed** that the APM should start earlier than previous years, at 7pm for refreshments,

with a start time of 7:30pm. Members suggested that members of the public sit round tables in a less formal seating arrangement and that speakers be grouped, for example sports, interest groups. It was also suggested that formal business such as signing of last year's minutes be left to the end. Members made some amendments to the invitation list.

7. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

7.1 King George V Playing Field

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

- The trees will be trimmed when the weather has improved.
- Signs for the car park and play area have been ordered.
- There is nothing to be done regarding health and safety.
- A quote for £1,800 has been obtained for resurfacing the car park using scalping, with additional cost for spraying and gritting on top. The Committee is considering ways to fund the work.
- Following the death of Mr Paul Matthewson, Club President of Hunton Wanderers Cricket Club, Mrs Matthewson has asked that his ashes be interred near the cricket field and a tree or shrub planted in his memory, according to his wishes. The Committee is happy to agree to the request, but would need to know the type of tree and exact location.
- Margaret Carpenter is resigning as Secretary of the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Carpenter on behalf of the Parish Council for all her hard work for the Committee and the Parish Council.

7.2 Cricket Ground

Members considered the request from Mrs Lesley Matthewson, Paul Matthewson's widow, to fulfil her husband's wishes that his ashes be interred near the cricket ground beside a newly planted tree or shrub. Members **Agreed** that consent be given for this to take place, subject to the requirements of the King George V Playing Field Management Committee.

7.3 Hunton Parish Plan

The Chair of the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee, Annette Trought, reported the following:

- There has been more progress on the community orchard. The exact figure is not known, but some money is available for trees and publicity. The Committee is working with Pippa Palmar, project manager. The community orchard will be launched at the Hunton Fete. Money is available from the Heritage Lottery Fund, providing certain criteria are met. The Committee needs to capture the views of the older members of the parish; information will then be recorded and put on the Kent orchards website to provide an archive in perpetuity.
- Some Committee members have joined the Village Club Committee.
- A number of dates have been obtained for the pop up shop – the next being 22nd March in the Village Club and 19th April outside the church. All produce is local, so money stays in the village.

The Chairman queried whether the Parish Plan Steering Committee would be carrying out a Housing Needs Survey in the village. Members **Agreed** that it was up to the Parish Council to take the lead and Mrs Trought agreed that when a survey is developed it will be up to the Parish Plan Steering Committee to act on it.

7.4 Land near Bensted Close

The Chairman advised that a draft development plan has been received from Mr Hubble for his land near Bensted Close. Members **Agreed** that there was no point in discussing the plan until it is submitted to MBC and the Parish Council is formally consulted.

7.5 **MBC Draft Local Plan**

The MBC Draft Local Plan consultation will take place from 21st March 2014.

The Chairman noted that the only part of the plan that would specifically affect Hunton is the proposal in the Gypsy & Traveller Allocations section to develop four permanent pitches on The Chances site at Lughorse Lane. The current resident has temporary permission and has previously said she would object to further caravans. Borough Cllr Collins advised that the Draft Local Plan was produced from officers input only. Cllr Collins had requested at a MBC Planning Development & Transport Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) meeting that The Chances be deleted from the Plan and it was agreed, only for Cabinet to include it. Cllr Collins will write in during the six week consultation, stating that the development of this site goes against the Planning Inspector's decision and advised the Parish Council to write in with reasons for rejecting the site. Mr Damian Regan offered assistance in writing a letter and also felt it would be worthwhile writing to MBC Planning Enforcement as planning conditions are not being complied with.

ACTION: CLERK

Borough Cllr Mortimer also considers the decision to include The Chances in the Draft Local Plan is wrong and that the decision of the Planning Inspector should be upheld – the current residents were only allowed to stay as they had nowhere else to go until a permanent site was found. Further development of this site would harm the view in a Special Landscape Area, which no amount of landscaping would improve.

Cllr Thomas commented that MBC has stated that 102 travellers' sites are required. This number came out before the Government issued the 'Planning policy for traveller sites' which changed the definition of gypsies and travellers in that they must lead a nomadic life. MBC did not go back and redo the report; if they had many less sites would be required.

Cllr Sawtell reported that all south Maidstone parishes had been invited to attend a meeting hosted by Coxheath Parish Council who wanted to object to the housing target of 19,600 properties, due to the methodology for calculating the figure. Support has been obtained from ten parishes. A letter will be sent to Alison Broom, Chief Executive of MBC and Chris Garland, Leader of MBC on behalf of the parishes objecting. Paul Carter, Leader of KCC is also objecting. Cllr Collins stated that the figure of 19,600 houses was not negotiable as it is the projected need of the Borough.

7.6 **Rural Service Centres**

Cllr Mortimer advised that the MBC Cabinet had agreed with the recommendation of MBC O&S that Coxheath and Yalding be reclassified as larger villages, rather than Rural Service Centres in the Draft Local Plan. Coxheath and Yalding parish councils had both objected to the villages being termed as RSCs. There are still 450 houses suggested for development in Coxheath in the Draft Local Plan. The Coxheath Neighbourhood Plan has not been taken into account at all in the Draft Local Plan.

7.7 **Sevenoaks Town Council Submission under the Sustainable Communities Act**

On 11th February, Sevenoaks Town Council submitted an application to the DCLG for a proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act for a return of a system to provide a percentage of the Business (Non-Domestic) Rates to town and parish councils to be used for the benefit of economic growth in the locality.

Members **Agreed** to support the Sevenoaks Town Council application to the DCLG.

ACTION: CLERK

7.8 **MBC Green Spaces Map**

A letter has been received from the MBC Parks & Leisure Manager asking that Members check a map of Hunton parish showing the green spaces and to provide details of any incorrect information, if any. Members **Agreed** that the green spaces shown on the map are correct.

7.9 **Kent Minerals & Waste Local Plan Consultation**

Members **Agreed** that they had no comments to make on the Kent Minerals & Waste Local Plan.

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

The Borough Councillors did not have any further reports to make, other than items discussed elsewhere on the agenda.

8.2 Chairman

The Chairman reported that he and Cllr Thomas had attended the meeting at Coxheath on the MBC Draft Local Plan. The wording had been agreed on a letter to Chris Garland, Leader of MBC.

8.3 Individual Councillors

Cllr Leonard advised that he was considering stepping down as parish councillor at the next meeting. The Chairman thanked Cllr Leonard for all his hard work.

8.4 Clerk

8.4.1 Marden Neighbourhood Plan

A letter has been received from the Marden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The Group is in the process of producing a Neighbourhood Plan and would like to know if the Parish Council has any views on the impacts, positive and negative, which the considerable planned development in Marden, both residential and industrial/commercial, is likely to have on Hunton parish.

Members **Agreed** that this should be discussed at the next Planning Committee meeting on 24th March.

8.4.2 Little Clock House Complaint

A questionnaire was returned to the Head of Policy & Communications and a request made for the complaint to be progressed to Stage 2. MBC has replied to say that a Stage 2 review will be undertaken and a response should be sent by 19th March.

Members **Agreed** that the planning officer's report did not provide a balanced view and that an email should be sent to the Head of Policy & Communications. ACTION: CLERK

9. FINANCE

9.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The Budget Monitoring Report to 28th February 2014 was **Noted**.

9.2 Income Received

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

KCC – Reimbursement of footpath hedge cutting costs	£2,400.00
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Cllr Porter reviewed and signed the bank reconciliation.

The Chairman advised that a cheque for £726.90 has been received for FIT payments for one quarter, with a further two quarters payments still to be received.

9.3 **Payments Made**

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

SO – S Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – January	£396.81
SO – S Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – February	£396.81

9.4 **Cheques for Signature**

Members **Agreed** that the following payments be approved and the cheques were signed by Cllrs Thomas and Porter:

1145 – MBC – Bin emptying – October, November, December, January (KGF)	£299.52
1146 – ACRK – Membership subscription	£35.00
1147 – AON UK Limited – Insurance (KGF)	£158.31
1148 – S Goodwin – Travel/Postage/Stationery & office expenses	£52.48
1149 – C Langridge – Hedge cutting (KGF)	£63.60
1150 – R Sawtell – Chairman’s Allowance	£54.00

9.5 **Maidstone Community First Responders**

A letter has been received from Maidstone Community First Responders asking whether the Parish Council would consider providing some funding towards the cost of new first responder kit for the team. Liz Lovatt responds to 999 calls in Coxheath, Hunton and East Farleigh. Community First Responders are volunteer members of the community who respond to emergency calls through the 999 system in conjunction with the South East Coast Ambulance Service.

Members **Agreed** that a member of the team be invited to provide more details on the scheme at a future meeting. ACTION: CLERK

9.6 **Picnic Tables**

Cllr Porter has been asked by people who use the play equipment if the Parish Council could fund a couple of picnic tables for people to use while children are playing.

Members **Agreed** that the Clerk should look into the cost of oak wood picnic tables and also a bench to be dedicated to Vikki Stancombe, the previous Clerk. ACTION: CLERK

10. **PLANNING**

10.1 **Planning Decisions**

10.1.1 **The Woodyard, East Street – MA/13/0170**

Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to provide one dwelling and detached garage.

Parish Council recommendation: Approve, and request the application is reported to MBC Planning Committee should the Case Officer wish to refuse the application.

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Granted planning permission.

10.2 **Little Clock House**

The applicants have appealed against the MBC decision to refuse the planning application. Any written representations must be received by the Planning Inspectorate by 8th April.

Cllr Mortimer advised Members to write to the Planning Inspectorate by the due date. The appeal is being considered at an informal hearing and the Parish Council can put forward a representative to speak at the hearing.

Residents local to the site advised that they would be submitting letters to the Planning Inspectorate, compiling a petition and encouraging support through an entry in the Hunton Herald. Support from the Parish Council would be appreciated.

Cllr Thomas had spoken to Tom Foxhall at English Heritage, who would be happy to help, but

the MBC Conservation Officer should ask him to visit.

Cllr Collins advised that the MBC Planning Officer assigned to fight the appeal is Catherine Slade.

Members **Agreed** to write a letter to the Planning inspectorate.

ACTION: CLERK

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Council Meeting is on **Monday 12th May 2014** at 8:00pm at Hunton Village Hall.

There being no further matters to be discussed the meeting closed at 11:00pm.