

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 12TH MAY 2014
AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Borough Cllr D Collins was in attendance. Three members of the public were in attendance – one left before Item 13 and two left before Item 14.

1. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1.1 Chairman

Cllr Sawtell was nominated by Cllr Thomas and seconded by all other Members. There being no other nominations and all Members being in agreement, Cllr Sawtell was duly elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year. Cllr Sawtell was unable to attend the meeting, so the Clerk, as Proper Officer, agreed to ask Cllr Sawtell to complete the Declaration of Acceptance of Office prior to the next Council meeting. ACTION: CLERK

Members agreed that succession planning should be considered for the future.

1.2 Vice-Chairman

There being no other nominations and all Members being in agreement, Cllr Thomas was duly elected as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year and completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, witnessed by the Proper Officer.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr R Sawtell. Borough Cllr J Wilson had also sent his apologies.

3. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

3.1 Declaration of Interests

There were no councillor declarations.

3.2 Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10TH MARCH 2014 AND THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14TH APRIL 2014

The minutes of the meetings on 10th March 2014 and 14th April 2014 had been previously distributed. The Chairman signed off the official copy of both sets of minutes.

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

Item 7.7 – An email was sent to support Sevenoaks Town Council in their application to the DCLG.

Item 8.4.2 – The Council's complaint regarding the handling of planning application 12/0152 by MBC Planning was dismissed by MBC. Members **Agreed** that the MBC Complaints Policy should be checked and that a meeting should be arranged with the Chief Executive and separately with Catherine Slade of Planning to discuss the complaint. ACTION: CLERK

Item 9.1 from 13th January meeting – The FIT payments will continue to be received by the Village Hall Committee, to then be passed on to the Parish Council. Members **Agreed** that the communication of FIT payments should be formalised and, in the absence of any proper records so far, the Village Hall bank statements should be obtained and all FIT receipts verified.

ACTION: CLERK

Item 9.5 - A spokesperson from the Maidstone Community First Responders team has been invited to attend a Parish Council meeting to provide more details on the scheme, but a response has not yet been received.

Item 10.2 – A letter was written to the Planning Inspectorate regarding the appeal against the decision on planning application 12/0152.

6. POLICE BUSINESS

6.1 Police

PCSO Alan Hunter was unable to attend the meeting, but had provided the following crime figures:

11/03/14 Criminal damage to window
22/03/14 Theft of vehicle
25/03/14 Burglary at a dwelling and theft
22/04/14 Criminal damage to fencing

6.2 Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr Wyles reported that Huntonwatch attended the Pop-up Shop and had recruited seven more members. There are 115 properties (approximately 40% of the village) in the scheme, with all areas of the village covered.

Huntonwatch will have a stand at the Summer Fete to hopefully attract more members and hand out supplies.

More people are reporting email scams, such as emails purporting to be from banks asking for personal details. The next newsletter will focus on scams.

7. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Members **Agreed** to the following Committee arrangements for the forthcoming year:

- Planning Committee – a minimum of three Councillors as available.

8. COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Members **Agreed** to the following appointments for the forthcoming year:

KCC Highways – Cllr Thomas, Cllr Sawtell and Cllr Porter

KALC Area Committee – Cllr Sawtell

KCC Local Committee – Cllr Leonard

Policing matters – Cllr Wyles and Cllr Stanbridge

Hunton Primary School – Cllr Wyles

Representative Trustees of the King George V Playing Field – Cllr Sawtell and Cllr Heaton

Parish Plan Steering Committee – Cllr Heaton, Cllr Stanbridge, Cllr Wyles, Cllr Porter and Cllr Thomas

Representative of Hunton PC as a member organisation of CAB – Cllr Sawtell

Cllr Sawtell confirmed his appointments prior to the meeting.

9. APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Members **Agreed** to appoint Kevin Funnell as the Internal Auditor for the forthcoming year.

10. HIGHWAY & FOOTPATH MATTERS

10.1 Footpath – Bensted Close to Village Hall

David Munn at KCC has been contacted regarding the puddles which collect on the footpath.

There is no recourse on the contractors as they built the footpath according to the specification of works and had the grading of the path been specified to remove the possibility of puddles, the footpath would have been much more expensive and lengthened the duration of the works. The material used is porous and water would normally filter away through it, with any puddles vanishing within an hour or two of the rain stopping. The problem last winter, which happened in many places, was that the ground was saturated and there was nowhere for the water to go. Mr Munn advised that if it is a persistent problem, he could consider putting extra material in the low points of the path. Members **Agreed** to monitor the footpath.

10.2 **West Street Problems**

A request has been made to County Cllr Stockell and Andy Padgham of KCC Highways for further reflector posts alongside the recreation field on West Street. They are needed in particular 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. Mr Padgham said that any further posts will have to be funded through Cllr Stockell's Member Fund if she agrees it, no reply has been received from Cllr Stockell as yet. Members **Agreed** that six more posts should be requested. ACTION: CLERK

Cllr Wyles requested that KCC be asked to cut the vegetation near the Hunton Gateway at the bottom of Hunton Hill as the Gateway is barely visible. ACTION: CLERK

Cllr Thomas has received a complaint about the bus stop at the junction of East Street and West Street as it is dangerous for the children getting off buses from Maidstone to Hunton who need to cross the road to Lughorse Lane. Members **Agreed** that KCC should be contacted about the concerns on the position of the bus stop. ACTION: CLERK

10.3 **Speedwatch**

Guy Oliver was unable to attend the meeting to provide an update on Speedwatch.

Cllr Wyles reported that the Speedwatch team has been out twice since the last meeting – once near the school and once outside the Village Hall. Drivers travelling at considerably more than the speed limit are being noted, but the police are not sending any letters to the drivers. Drivers travelling more than 45mph in a 30mph limit and drivers who are noted more than once should be sent a letter. Cllr Wyles has written to the Kent Police Speedwatch Co-ordinator, Guy Rollinson, but his response avoided the awkward questions being asked. Speedwatch is about education of drivers and the opportunity is being missed due to a lack of police action. There will be one or two more Speedwatch sessions before the next Parish Council meeting to see what happens before taking action as a Parish Council to contact the police.

11. **RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT MATTERS**

11.1 **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:

- Two new keys have been cut for the Village Hall door and gate.
- Simon Taylor showed the plans for the new cricket pavilion.
- The signage for the car park and play area will be obtained and put up in the next week.
- Health and safety is all fine.
- The grant of £5,800 from the Parish Council has been agreed for 2014/15.
- Two quotes have been received for the topping of the poplar trees, but more clarification is required before a decision is made.
- Margaret Carpenter would like to resign as Secretary, but will hopefully remain as a member of the Committee. Sharon Goodwin is to take over as Secretary after the AGM in July.
- Scalpings for the car park will cost £2,000 plus spray and gritting costs. It has been agreed in principle to go ahead, but the cost of hiring machinery and volunteer help to do the work still needs to be ascertained.

- Children have been climbing on the football changing room roof. The frame leaning against the wall has been removed to prevent this happening.
- Steve Jones is meeting someone to deal with the large molehills on the field.
- The rabbits are being kept under control

Cllr Heaton commented that he will obtain quotes for graded scalping which come with additive tar to make them stick.

11.2 **Hunton Parish Plan**

11.2.1 **Update**

The Chair of the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee, Annette Trought, was unable to attend the meeting.

Cllr Heaton reported the following from the last meeting:

- The Pop-up Shops have been successful.
- Volunteers are being sought to help out at the Summer Fete.
- The Committee has agreed to action the Housing Needs Survey on behalf of the Parish council.

11.2.2 **Loan to the Orchard Group**

A bid has been submitted by the Orchard Group for heritage tree stock from the Tree Council to supplement the stock which will be available via the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee's successful bid application via Kent Orchards for Everyone project. The maximum the Tree Council will fund is £525 which will need to be paid out by the Committee and then claimed from the Tree Council.

This particular funding stream requires that local children will benefit from the development of an orchard – the local pre-school and school have been approached and are on board to support the bid.

The orchard will be launched at the Summer Fete. There will be a wild flower section where school children can plant a plug. The Orchard Group has some funds available for the launch, but insufficient for tree stock.

Members **Agreed** that the Parish Council should provide a temporary loan to the Orchard Group, to be repaid when the funding is received from the Tree Council.

11.2.3 **Contribution Towards the Improvement of the Footpath Hedgerow**

Medway Valley Partnership has provided a proposal to the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee to improve the hedgerow near the new footpath. The cost will be £1,055 excluding VAT.

Members **Agreed** to fund the cost of the work.

11.3 **Cricket Pavilion**

Simon Taylor, Chairman of Hunton Wanderers Cricket Club, outlined the draft plan for the new cricket pavilion. The plan is based on quotations received last summer. The tractor shed has been removed to improve the look of the pavilion and save money, but the size of the main building has not been compromised at all. The drawing will form the basis of the planning application, so the Cricket Club would like the Parish Council to approve the plan to take forward as the planning application. Borough Cllr Collins stated that the planning application should go through in 8 weeks. Following the receipt of planning approval, a building regulations application will be submitted and then it will be necessary to go out to tender for the work. Members **Approved** the draft plan of the cricket pavilion.

12. MATTERS OF REPORT

12.1 County and Borough Councillors

12.1.1 County Councillor

County Cllr Stockell was unable to attend the meeting.

12.1.2 Borough Councillors

Borough Cllr Collins informed Members that MBC Planning is behind on assessing plans within the 8 week period due to a loss of some staff members and several large developments, such as those in Marden, taking a long time to determine. Two new members of staff have been taken on and MBC is interviewing for two more, so the situation should improve.

12.2 Chairman

The Chairman reported that local parishes had met to discuss the MBC Draft Local Plan and firm letters had been produced.

KALC had also organised a meeting with the Leader of MBC, Cllr Stephen Paine and Rob Jarman, Head of Planning, but it was felt that the meeting was a waste of time.

There has been a meeting at Linton Parish Council regarding gypsy sites, which was also not very satisfactory.

12.3 Individual Councillors

The parish councillors did not have anything to report.

12.4 Clerk

The Clerk did not have anything to report.

13. FINANCE

13.1 Statement of Internal Control

Members reviewed the Statement of Internal Control produced by the Clerk and agreed that it could be signed and included with the year end accounts. The Statement was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

13.2 Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit

In carrying out the Council's Annual Review, Members **Agreed** that:

- the Internal Auditor is independent of the Council, has no involvement in the financial decision making and is competent to carry out an effective audit of the Council's system of internal control;
- the review and scope of the internal audit adequately assesses the Council's internal controls and management of risk;
- they understand the importance of the relationship between the internal audit and the Council;
- adequate preparations are made for the audit procedure; and
- reports received from the Internal and External Auditor are actioned when necessary.

13.3 Annual Review of Accounts and Audit 2013/14

Members **Noted** the report of the Internal Auditor which had not raised any issues.

13.3.1 Council's Accounts

Members **Agreed** that the Council's Statement of Accounts should be approved. The Statement of Accounts was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk. The Chairman also signed the year end cash book.

13.3.2 Annual Return – Statement of Accounts

Members **Agreed** that the Statement of Accounts contained on page 2 of the Annual Return to Littlejohn LLP should be approved. Page 2 of the Annual Return was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

13.3.3 Annual Return – Annual Governance Statement

Members considered the Annual Governance Statement contained on page 3 of the Annual Return and determined that the statements numbered 1 to 8 could all be answered “Yes” and statement number 9 should be answered “N/A”. Members **Agreed** that the Annual Governance Statement be approved. Page 3 of the Annual Return was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

13.4 Budget Monitoring Report

Members considered a report showing the budget and actual figures for 2013/14, the preliminary budget for 2014/15 as discussed at the January 2014 Parish Council meeting; and receipts and payments for April 2014.

The Clerk pointed out that the budget for 2014/15 has been adjusted to include the precept and increase in Open Spaces budget agreed at the meeting in January 2014 and to reflect an adjusted Parish Services Scheme funding amount due to lighting not being included in 2014/15.

Members **Noted** the report and **Approved** the changes to the budget for 2014/15.

13.5 Income Received

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

NatWest – Business Reserve Account – Bank interest	£0.29
MBC – Precept	£17,000.00
MBC – Local council tax support	£1,061.00
Village Hall Committee – FIT receipt (quarter to 30/09/13)	£726.90

Cllr Porter reviewed and signed the bank reconciliation.

13.6 Payments Made

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

1151 – Robert Cox – Tree maintenance (KGF)	£270.00
1152 – Iden Signs – Signage (KGF)	£123.60
SO – S Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – March	£396.81
SO – S Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – April	£396.81

13.7 Cheques for Signature

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

1153 – E.ON – Street lighting	£6.85
1154 – Robert Cox – Maintenance (KGF)	£105.00
1155 – KALC – Annual membership subscription	£272.11
1156 – KCPFA – Annual membership subscription	£20.00
1157 – NALC – LCR subscription	£17.00
1158 – Kevin Funnell – Internal audit	£75.00
1159 – MBC – Bin emptying – February/March/April (KGF)	£299.52
1160 - S Goodwin – Travel/Postage/Stationery & office expenses	£112.16

13.8 Parish Services Scheme

Members considered the MBC Parish Services Scheme funding agreement for 1st April 2014 to

31st March 2015 and **Agreed** that it be signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

13.9 Play Area Furniture

The Clerk provided Members with costings of various picnic tables and a memorial bench to be dedicated to Vikki Stancombe, the previous Clerk. As there was a lot of information to consider, Cllr Porter **Agreed** to review it and come back to the Parish Council with suggestions.

ACTION: CLLR PORTER

14.1 PLANNING

14.1 Planning Decisions

No planning decisions have been received from Maidstone Borough Council.

14.2 Planning Applications

14.2.1 Elphicks Farm, Water Lane – MA/14/0544

Construction of a driveway from Water Lane to existing storage building and orchards, construction of post and rail fencing to side of driveway, erection of 5 bar gate and fencing to entrance.

Parish Council recommendation: Do not wish to object/comment.

14.2.2 Durrants House, West Street – MA/14/0556

An application for the construction of a timber building to house a wood pellet boiler and hopper to serve the main house and annexe.

Parish Council recommendation: Approve, but do not request the application is reported to MBC Planning Committee.

14.2.3 Durrants House, West Street – MA/14/0589

Proposed refurbishment of ancillary annexe and extension.

Parish Council recommendation: Approve, but do not request the application is reported to MBC Planning Committee.

14.2.4 The Woodyard, East Street – MA/14/0635

An application for minor material amendments to application MA/13/0170 (Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to provide one dwelling and detached garage) through variation of condition 12 of that permission involving changes to the size and appearance of the dwelling.

Parish Council recommendation: Approve, but do not request the application is reported to MBC Planning Committee.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Council Meeting is on **Monday 14th July 2014** at 8:00pm at Hunton Village Hall.

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