

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 12TH JANUARY 2015
AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Borough Cllrs Collins and Wilson were in attendance until Item 5. Borough Cllr Mortimer left after Item 11.1.2. Eight members of the public were in attendance, two entered during Item 4. Five left after Item 4, one left after Item 10.6 and one left after Item 11.1.2

Before the start of the meeting the Chairman expressed, on behalf of all members of the Parish Council, their immense sadness at the passing of Les Leonard, who had been a parish councillor for many years. Les will be remembered as a great character and is greatly missed by everyone.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr T Stanbridge.

2. FILMING AND RECORDING

No members of the public expressed a wish to film, record or photograph the meeting.

3. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

3.1 Declaration of Interests

There were no councillor declarations.

3.2 Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY

Following the placement of the Notice of Casual Vacancy on the notice boards and website, MBC Registration Services advised that they did not receive a letter with ten signatures requesting an election for the casual vacancy. A notice was subsequently placed on the notice boards and in the Hunton Herald advertising the co-option of the vacancy. Five individuals have shown an interest in the vacancy, with one being unable to attend the meeting for interview or provide a written statement.

Members Agreed in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting while the four candidates were interviewed by reason of the personal information to be discussed.

The four candidates were interviewed.

The meeting was reopened to members of the press and public.

Members **Agreed** that Annette Trought be co-opted as Parish Councillor, who then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form and joined the rest of the meeting as a Member.

5. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10TH NOVEMBER 2014

The minutes of the meeting on 10th November 2014 had been previously distributed. The Chairman signed off the official copy of the minutes.

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

Item 10.4.2 – The Chairman of KALC Maidstone Area Committee was made aware of the issues the Parish Council had with the Housing Needs Survey conducted by ACRK. The Committee had subsequently recorded in their meeting minutes that parishes had been made aware of Hunton's experience.

Item 12.1 – No comments were made on the DCLG Consultation on Planning & Travellers.

7. **POLICE BUSINESS**

7.1 **Police**

PCSO Matthew Judges has taken over from PCSO Hunter, who has moved on to another role within Kent Police. PCSO Judges has been provided with all the Parish Council meeting dates, but was unable to attend this meeting. The following crime report has been provided:

28/11/14 Theft

08/01/15 Burglary other than dwelling

Cllr Wyles reported that PCSO Judges uses a car and has been keeping an eye on the Village Hall. The Pre-school sheds were broken into at the weekend and there has also been a recent break in at Buston Manor Farm.

7.2 **Neighbourhood Watch**

Cllr Wyles reported that Huntonwatch has been quiet lately and there are no new members. When a blue flashing light was seen outside the Peace Cottages recently, Huntonwatch was able to provide support.

8. **ALLOCATION OF ROLES TO PARISH COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Porter proposed that each Member has a primary responsibility for a particular parish matter, with another Member having secondary responsibility for the same role. This would provide more focus and momentum in between meetings to ensure that action is taken and alleviate some of the onus from the Clerk. Members **Agreed** to the following responsibilities:

- Footpaths and ditches – Cllr Heaton (primary) and Cllr Porter (secondary)
- Road conditions and speed limits – Cllr Porter (primary) and Cllr Heaton (secondary)
- Planning issues and consultations – Cllr Thomas (primary) and Cllr Sawtell (secondary)
- Liaison with KALC, MBC and other external bodies – Cllr Sawtell (primary) and Cllr Thomas (secondary)
- Policing, Huntonwatch and the school – Cllr Wyles (primary) and Cllr Trought (secondary)
- Hunton Parish Plan, events and communications – Cllr Trought (primary) and Cllr Wyles (secondary)
- Utilities (broadband, water, electricity) – Cllr Stanbridge

9. **HIGHWAY & FOOTPATH MATTERS**

9.1 **Footpath – Bensted Close to Village Hall**

David Munn at KCC has informed the Clerk that KCC is not allowed to use herbicides, so KCC cannot deal with the grass growing through the permissive footpath. Mr Munn has suggested that the Parish Council employs someone to carry out the work locally and KCC will reimburse the costs. Cllr Heaton knows of a contractor in Marden, but there needs to be 24 hours of dry weather conditions and the grass needs to be growing, so this work will ideally be carried out in March. Cllr Heaton also **Agreed** to look at the puddles near the Bensted Close end of the footpath as it may be possible to drain the water into the ditch. **ACTION: CLLR HEATON**

9.2 **West Street Problems**

The spend of £833 for six marker posts on West Street alongside the recreation field has been approved by County Cllr Stockell, but the work has not been carried out yet.

Cllr Porter reported the following:

- Bus stop – Cllr Stockell has been contacted for support in changing the location of the bus stop.
- Kerbing – the cost of kerbing on the road near the Village Hall will be over £25,000. KCC would like the Parish Council to contribute £15,000, but Cllr Porter has lobbied Cllr Stockell for a £12,500 contribution each from the Parish Council and KCC, with possible funding from Cllr Stockell's fund to reduce Parish Council contribution to £10,000. It was suggested that legal action could be taken against KCC as the hedge is being pushed in, damaging Parish Council property. Cllr Porter **Agreed** to discuss this with Terry Martin at KALC and KCC. ACTION: CLLR PORTER
- Parking near the school – nothing further has been heard from Cllr Stockell.
- Flooding – there is a blocked culvert causing flooding in West Street opposite The Barn and The Gudgeon Farmhouse. Cllr Sawtell has been corresponding with the landowner, MBC and KCC and all parties are involved in sorting out the issue.

9.3 **Speedwatch**

There has not been any Speedwatch activity since the last meeting

9.4 **Hunton Footpaths Network**

The two overgrown footpaths reported to the Parish Council by a resident, have been allocated to the PROW Area Officer, Kate Cullen by David Munn.

Mike Summersgill has said he would be willing to include the monitoring of the footpaths in his role as Tree & Pond Warden.

Cllr Heaton, who now has Parish Council responsibility for footpaths, **Agreed** to liaise with Mike Summersgill. The Clerk was asked to provide details of the overgrown footpaths to Cllr Heaton. ACTION: CLLR HEATON; CLERK

9.5 **KCC Highways Survey 2014**

Members **Agreed** on a response to the survey and asked the Clerk to complete and submit the survey to KCC. ACTION: CLERK

10. **RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT MATTERS**

10.1 **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:

- Car park – the repair works are holding up well, but in spring one load will be added to the slight dents in the surface. The French drain seems to be working well as the car park is not flooding.
- Health and safety – no further action is required at the current time on the MBC monthly play area inspection reports. The minor actions recommended in the annual inspection report will be undertaken in the spring.
- Finance – approximately £6,000 remains in funds. The Village Hall Committee has not discussed a contribution by the Committee towards the waste system costs as yet. Costs identified for the Playing Field Committee for next year will include the cutting of the poplar trees, minor car park maintenance and possibly a contribution towards improving the toilet block at the Bowls Club. A contribution of £5,800 from the Parish Council for 2015/16 (the same as 2014/15) would be most welcome.
- New cricket pavilion – two contractors have been appointed to supply the base and building, following approval by the Parish Council and ratification by Sport England. The Building Inspector is likely to give building regulations approval by the end of January. The foundations should be complete by the end of January, and the building should be constructed by the end of February/beginning of March.
- Other – the Vice Captain of the Bowls Club, Lawrie Thomas, sadly passed away before

Christmas. The Committee agreed that Lawrie's wife can scatter his ashes under the trees at the bottom of the green.

10.2 **Hunton Parish Plan**

The Chair of the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee, Cllr Trought, reported that the last meeting was held in November. The most important work at the moment is the Housing Needs Survey. The detail of the proposals has been agreed and there will be more to report after a further meeting next week. Timescales still need to be set.

The Community Orchard tree planting event took place on 7th December, when 23 trees were planted. All the criteria for Heritage Funding have been met. There is more work to be done on the Orchard, such as putting up chestnut fencing.

Cllr Trought is to attend a training session on Neighbourhood Planning soon. The first phase of the Neighbourhood Plan process has involved proposals on who should be commissioned to deliver the Plan. A decision has been made to use an independent provider.

10.3 **Village Hall Improvements**

Cllrs Thomas, Heaton and Wyles met on 8th January to consider the three quotations received for improvements to the security measures outside the Village Hall, subject to the specification provided by the Parish Council. The councillors recommended that, as a first phase, CCTV should be installed by Q-Tec Solutions, with the possibility of a gate to the car park in future if problems remain. Cllr Porter reviewed the Q-Tec financial information obtained from Companies House and confirmed that all is in order.

Members **Agreed** that Q-Tec Solutions be selected as the contractor to carry out the CCTV installation work and asked the Clerk to inform Q-Tec. ACTION: CLERK

Cllr Thomas **Agreed** to contact Q-Tec to ask if Members could visit one of their local installations as suggested by the Chairman. ACTION: CLLR THOMAS

The Chair of the Village Hall Committee, Christina Harrison, had provided the following update report prior to the meeting:

- The Village Hall Committee is grateful to the Parish Councillors for their support over the past year and for a payment of £4,800 as a contribution towards the refurbishment of the Hall. The overall decoration has made a huge difference to the Hall bookings, with advance bookings showing a total of £3,500, held in a separate savings account. There is a £4,000 working cash balance.
- The end of year balance is likely to be approximately £7,500, reflecting a reduction of £2,000 on the previous year, but this is after paying some £5,000 towards the refurbishment of the Hall.
- A Statement of Account will be submitted to the Parish Council at their next meeting in March when a full bank statement has been received and the accounts can be reconciled.
- Other than capital expenditure: electricity is up by £1,000 (higher tariff till April 2014 and three months of 2013 were un-invoiced), Playgroup revenue is up by 20-25%, but events income is down by 20-25% due to lower attendance and less events.
- The Hall is fully booked from mid June to mid September and bookings are already being taken for 2016.

10.4 **Hunton Primary School**

Cllr Wyles reported that he has regular meetings with the Chair of Governors, Herschel Santineer, the next one being on 2nd February. Cllr Wyles is receiving weekly copies of the school newsletter, which is forwarded to all Members. Cllr Wyles confirmed that Mr Santineer is looking into the water on the road outside the school.

10.5 **KALC Community Awards Scheme 2015**

Following the adoption of the KALC Community Awards Scheme at the last Parish Council meeting a piece was included in the Hunton Herald, inviting nominations from parishioners.

One nomination was received. Cllr Porter **Agreed** to speak with the nominee to ensure the individual was happy to receive the award. ACTION: CLLR PORTER

10.6 Conservation Area Status

Cllr Thomas explained that, following planning applications on George Street, it had been suggested that the Parish Council look into obtaining conservation area status due to the important buildings in that area. Borough Cllr Mortimer advised that the Conservation Officer at MBC should be contacted as he would carry out the assessment.

Members **Agreed** that the Clerk should write to the Conservation Officer to advise that the Parish Council would like the parish to be considered as a conservation area, either as a whole or in part, and to request a meeting to discuss it. ACTION: CLERK

11. MATTERS OF REPORT

11.1 County and Borough Councillors

11.1.1 County Councillor

County Cllr Stockell was not at the meeting.

11.1.2 Borough Councillors

Borough Cllr Mortimer expressed his sadness at the loss of Les Leonard.

Cllr Mortimer reported in November MBC Full Council made a decision to replace the Cabinet system in May with the Committee system it used to have. The Committee system will not be exactly as it was previously and there will probably be a Leader, but with fewer powers.

Three years ago MBC received £1.3million to provide 15 pitches for travellers. It has not done this, so the money has had to be given back to the Government. MBC can reapply, but will only receive half the amount. Cllr Mortimer mentioned this as it affects rural areas.

The Draft Local Plan has been a drawn out process under the Cabinet system, but will hopefully move on when MBC returns to the Committee system.

11.2 Chairman

The Chairman did not have anything to report.

11.3 Individual Councillors

None of the parish councillors had anything to report.

11.4 Clerk

The Clerk did not have anything to report.

12. FINANCE

12.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st December 2014 was **Noted**.

12.2 Income Received

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

MBC – Parish Services Scheme funding – 2 nd half	£937.00
UTB – Bank interest	£12.86

Cllr Porter reviewed and signed the bank reconciliation.

12.3 **Payments Made**

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

SO – S Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – November	£396.81
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12.4 **Cheques for Signature**

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

300023 – Colin Langridge – Hedge cutting (KGF)	£64.80
300024 – MBC – Bin emptying – November (KGF)	£74.88
300025 – Robert Cox – Maintenance (KGF)	£105.00
– Footpath maintenance (KGF)	£482.85
300026 – Commercial Services Trading Ltd – 2 nd half grounds maintenance (KGF)	£458.15
300027 – SE Water – Cricket field water charges (KGF)	£181.68
300028 – E.ON – Street lighting	£6.99
300029 – Fields in Trust – Annual membership subscription	£50.00
300030 – Toms Tree Ties – Materials for Community Orchard (Loan)	£61.31
300031 – Pippa Palmar – Trees for Community Orchard (Loan)	£28.00
300032 – Bourne Amenity – Compost for Community Orchard (Loan)	£66.00
300033 – Hague Construction – Concrete and plant hire for new cricket pavilion	£1,764.53
300034 – S Goodwin – Expenses/Travel/Postage (November to January)	£67.51

12.5 **Grounds Maintenance 2015**

Members considered the quotation received from KCC Landscape Services for the maintenance of the King George V Field for 2015. Members **Agreed** to accept the quotation of £782.67 (excluding VAT) for 16 cuts compared to £763.58 last year for the same number of cuts (a 2.5% increase). **ACTION: CLERK**

12.6 **Yalding Parish Playscheme 2015**

Members considered a request from Yalding Parish Council for a small donation towards the 2015 Playscheme. Members **Agreed** that a contribution of £140 should be made and cheque 300035 was signed by Cllrs Porter and Wyles. **ACTION: CLERK**
Cllr Trought **Agreed** to put a notice in the Hunton Herald stating that the Parish Council has contributed to the Scheme and to encourage children in Hunton to attend.

ACTION: CLLR TROUGHT

12.7 **2015/16 Budget and Parish Precept**

Members had received the budget papers produced by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Members accepted the budget, subject to removing the Medway Valley Partnership budget of £1,055 and increasing the Open Spaces budget allocation to £700. Members **Agreed** that the Precept should be set at £20,000, which creates a tax of £65.04 per property. The Chairman and Clerk signed the MBC Parish Precept Requirement 2015/16 form for submission to MBC. **ACTION: CLERK**

13. **PLANNING**

13.1 **Planning Decisions**

13.1.1 **Durrants House, West Street – 14/500434/FULL**

Listed Building Consent for proposed refurbishment of ancillary annexe and extension. Revised scheme.

Parish Council recommendation: No comment.

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Granted planning permission.

13.1.2 Durrants House, West Street – 14/500433/FULL

Proposed refurbishment of ancillary annexe and extension. Revised scheme.

Parish Council recommendation: No comment.

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Granted planning permission.

13.1.3 Old Savage Farmhouse, East Street - 14/503785/FULL

Replacement of an existing grass tennis court with a hard tennis court surface and erection of associated 2.7m high fencing.

Parish Council recommendation: No objection.

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Granted planning permission.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Council Meeting is on **Monday 9th March 2015** at 8:00pm at Hunton Village Hall.

There being no further matters to be discussed the meeting closed at 11:10pm.