

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7:30PM AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr G Thomas in the Chair, Cllrs A Trought, T Stanbridge, J Goddard and D Heaton and Mrs S Goodwin, Clerk.

IN ATTENDANCE: Borough Councillor Brian Mortimer was in attendance until the end of the Open Session. PCSO Day was in attendance until Item 7.2. 14 members of the public were in attendance. Ten people left after the Open Session, one left after Item 5, two left after Item 11.2 and one person left after Item 12.2.

OPEN SESSION:

In the open session, prior to the start of the meeting, discussion took place on the volume of farm vehicles on the roads. Clive Baxter of Amsbury Farm and James Dearing of Clock House Farm at Coxheath attended the meeting.

Mr Baxter confirmed that Fruition Packing has been leasing the buildings and packing fruit for Mr Baxter and other growers (including Clock House Farm) at Amsbury Farm since August 2016. Mr Baxter had been doing this for the last 30 years so Fruition is not doing anything new.

When asked about the increase in lorry movements, Mr Baxter could not quantify the number of lorry movements, but has records of tonnages and despatches. In August/ September 2015, 700 tonnes were despatched; for the same period in 2016, after Fruition had taken over the lease in August 2016, 560 tonnes were despatched. This would not mean a reduction in lorry movements, but there is less fruit on board the lorries. Based on the customers and the frequency of their lorries, Mr Baxter estimated that there could be up to 15 lorry movements per day. The perception of increased volumes of fruit being moved is unfounded as, although the grader can increase the volume of fruit put through, the packing side has not increased and there is extra capacity in the lorries for further volume if required.

In terms of fruit coming in, Amsbury Farm alone picks 700 tonnes and most of the fruit from other Amsbury Farm sites is transported by small tractor and trailer. The incoming fruit from other growers to Fruition will be transported on lorries, but records are not kept of the number of vehicles.

Cllr Trought disagreed that the increase in traffic was a perception as she and other residents had noticed an increase in traffic in the last six months. There was also an incident involving a lorry losing its load on Hunton Hill. Mr Baxter stated that neither he nor Fruition was responsible for this as it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure he closes the lorry correctly.

Borough Cllr Mortimer brought up the use of permitted development rights, which Highways will consider from a traffic point of view when a planning application is submitted, but Amsbury Farm had not gone through the system. The MBC Enforcement Officer looking into it had said that Fruition had identified that there would be an increase in traffic due to the increase in farming on the site – Mr Baxter disagreed that this had been said. He had re-read the Design & Access Statements submitted and the comments made for permitted development and believed that every statement was true. Cllr Mortimer stated that it will be a case of waiting for the Enforcement Officer to produce her report.

Cllr Thomas noted that the key point for the parish is the traffic. East Street has a weight limit, but it seems to be being disregarded; drivers should use Hunton Hill and a sign to the farm would improve things. Mr Baxter agreed that he would not want lorries to go the opposite way to Hunton Hill, but he does not own the entrance to the farm, the verge opposite the entrance or the triangle opposite Lughorse Lane so cannot put a sign up. Cllr Goddard pointed out that Claire Chewter (Highways Steward) is trying to establish who owns the verge opposite so a sign can perhaps be installed.

There is also an issue with the times the vehicles access the farm. Mr Baxter suggested that the Parish Council speaks to Fruition as they control the times and number of vehicles. Cllr Heaton advised that it is the driver's responsibility for routing the vehicle and strapping it and it is the responsibility of the owners of the transport companies to have safe working practices. Residents need to take a photograph of lorries with the number plate and operator and report to the police or transport commission as they are committing an offence if they are using the 7.5T restricted road; there is no point complaining to Mr Baxter. Mr Baxter invited the Parish Council to write to Fruition to request a visit to the site and to discuss timing and routing. The school would also be welcome (following the cement mixer accident outside the school). Members agreed that it would be useful to visit the site and for someone from Fruition to attend a Parish Council meeting in future.

James Dearing of Clock House Farm (CHF) was welcomed to the meeting. Concerns were expressed about the CHF buses due to the poor standard of driving; buses have been seen driving in the middle of the road and travelling far too fast. One resident with a motor bike said he had complained to CHF and was told that others had called; Mr Dearing said he had as many emails praising the driving. CHF has five blue buses, which are all numbered and they are tracked, so it is possible to see who was driving if someone complains. He encouraged residents to call if there are any issues (the number will be published in the Hunton Herald). The drivers are all established, not new drivers.

Cllr Thomas thanked Mr Baxter and Mr Dearing for attending the meeting and the Parish Council will follow up with Fruition, particularly when the Enforcement Officer's report is received.

A resident of West Street detailed an incident which had occurred recently where a car travelling at 60mph (the police had confirmed it would have been travelling this fast) on the wrong side of side of the road collided with her car and a neighbour's, writing off both vehicles. The police are not planning to prosecute the offender. The speed of traffic along West Street is well in excess of the 30mph speed limit almost continuously; there need to be limitations on the road as drivers are not taking any notice of the speed limits. Cllr Thomas agreed there is a problem and will speak to KCC to identify the best remedy, with the involvement of the police/PCSO. Another resident mentioned issues with school traffic, including nearly being hit by cars, abuse from parents and blocking entrances. Cllr Trought is the school liaison and has just had a two-hour meeting with the school, it is on the list of things to achieve.

Another parishioner raised the idea of a sheltered bus stop outside the Village Club as there is no shelter from the rain when waiting for a bus. There is already a bench outside the Club, so it may be possible to construct a canopy over the bench for protection. Cllr Thomas asked the resident to email his plans for the shelter for consideration.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

2. FILMING AND RECORDING

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

3. PARISH COUNCIL VACANCIES

Two vacancies currently exist on the Parish Council. One vacancy arose due to only six councillors being elected in May 2016 and can be filled by co-option. The second vacancy is due to the resignation of Steve Wyles which required the placement of a Notice of Casual Vacancy on the notice boards and website. MBC Registration Services did not receive a letter with ten signatures requesting an election for the casual vacancy, so this can also now be filled by co-option.

All Members **Agreed** that Helen Ward and Roger Lee should be co-opted as parish councillors. Mrs Ward signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form and joined the rest of the meeting as a Member. Mr Lee was unable to attend the meeting and will be asked to sign the Declaration prior to the next Parish Council meeting. ACTION: CLERK

Both parish councillors will complete a Co-option of Parish Councillor form and Notification of Disposable Pecuniary Interests form for submission to MBC.

4. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

4.1 Declaration of Interests

There were no councillor declarations.

4.2 Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

5. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20TH SEPTEMBER 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th September 2016 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 12.5 – The Parish Council’s insurance was taken out with Hiscox for one year.

7. POLICE & COMMUNITY WARDEN

7.1 Police

PCSO Megan Day gave the following crime report:

24/10/16 – West Street – Theft (fuel oil)

28/10/16 – West Street – Robbery

There were also four incidents of assault which occurred at the end of a charity ‘rave’ event at the Village Hall on 29th October. The event will be discussed at the next Village Hall Committee meeting on 15th November.

Cllr Trought asked PCSO Day why police action was not taken regarding the road traffic accident which involved two parked cars being written off on West Street. PCSO Day did not know, but agreed to look into it. Cllr Heaton mentioned a previous accident involving a cement mixer crashing into the school railings. PCSO Day advised that the accident was not reported at the time; the police were called four hours later, but she agreed to enquire about it.

7.2 Community Warden

Adam McKinley was unable to attend the meeting.

7.3

Huntonwatch

Steve Wyles of Huntonwatch has provided the update below:

The charity rave held at the Village Hall and playing fields attracted a large number of people and resulted in the police being called a total of six times (twice about the noise). In addition, there were two incidents of damage inside the hall from a booking the day before - one to a door and the other to a wall.

There is evidence of joy riders driving cars around the newly sown fields that border Bishops Lane and the footpath that links Bishops Lane to East Street. This appears to have happened on two separate occasions and late at night.

Huntonwatch is actively capturing details of traffic issues in and around the village. There have been a number of incidents in the last few months with the cement lorry crash at the school, the car in collision with two parked vehicles in West Street and a lorry from Amsbury losing part of its load of apples on Hunton Hill.

Due to the issues with the charity rave which involved the police being called out, Huntonwatch provided some recommendations going forward:

- Huntonwatch would be more than happy, if given details in advance, to provide the details of large gatherings such as this to the PCSO so that the police are aware and, if they see fit, have patrols in the area on standby.
- Huntonwatch would be happy to help with the CCTV monitoring and taking copies for police review in future as it currently puts too great a burden on one person at present.
- If it does not already exist, the hirer should be given a checklist to adhere to, including items such as: restrictions on the use of the field and car park; insurance needs (a copy of any required insurance certificate should be provided); use of waste bins; security arrangements for the event itself; and parking arrangements and 'policing'.

8.

LOCAL COMMUNITY

8.1

King George V Playing Field

Simon Taylor, Chairman of the King George V Playing Committee, reported on the last meeting held on 9th November:

HWCC is to consider changing electricity supplier to reduce costs for HWCC and the Bowls Club.

The cost of replacing the multi play equipment with a larger piece of equipment has been estimated at approximately £25k which is unaffordable at the moment. A quote is to be obtained for the resurfacing of the area under the multiplay and for the supply of a team swing. Funding sources will be considered.

The Visual Tree Assessment report has not been received yet, but indications are that several trees will need attention.

There will be £5,526 remaining in funds after the invoices have been paid at this meeting. A Unity Trust Bank account opening form was completed to open a bank account specifically for the Playing Field Committee, to separate it from the Parish Council.

The Village Hall hire terms and conditions will be reviewed to ensure they are adequate regarding the use of the field and car park when the hall is hired (particularly in view of the recent charity event which involved a large marquee being set up on the field, although there was no damage to the field as the ground was hard).

8.2

Hunton Village Hall Committee

Cllr Trought advised that there is a meeting the following week, so this item will be deferred until the next Parish Council meeting.

8.3

Hunton Primary School

Cllr Trought reported that she had a very successful and positive meeting with Peter Callway (interim Chair of Governors).

The school sign is being relocated, with agreement from the school, to a less visually intrusive

location. It has been uncoupled and the next phase will involve removal of the posts, then relocation so that the sign is two feet lower, placed at a slightly different angle and situated opposite a house which has trees in front of it.

Parking near the school was highlighted as a continuing issue.

8.4 **Tree & Pond Warden**

The Tree & Pond Warden, Mike Summersgill, was unable to attend the meeting.

9. **COUNTY & BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

9.1 **County Councillor**

County Cllr Stockell was unable to attend the meeting.

9.2 **Borough Councillors**

(This Item was moved to the Open Session)

Borough Cllr Mortimer reported that there are plans for a major expansion of Wares Farm on Redwall Lane in Linton. An exhibition, which Members may be interested in attending, is being held in Linton Village Hall on 28th November to provide more details on the development and answer any questions.

The remaining tarmac work on East Street will be completed in spring as it could not be completed due to parked cars on the road.

Borough Cllr Webb is at Linton Parish Council this evening and Borough Cllr Fermor is in London, both send their apologies.

10. **PARISH COUNCILLORS**

10.1 **Liaison with External Bodies**

Cllr Thomas' main liaison has been with the Maidstone Local Plan enquiry. The Inspector has been reviewing the Draft Local Plan for some months and has questions on a number of different subjects. Cllr Thomas has been involved in the liaison group which includes the Joint Parishes Group and other parish councils. There have been six weeks of discussion which has taken an immense amount of time. It is now a case of waiting to hear what the Inspector decides.

10.2 **Footpaths and Ditches**

10.2.1 **Update**

Cllr Heaton reported that there had been some enquiries about a ditch in Bishops Lane, but there is no silt in the ditch, just some vegetation which needs to be removed. Cllr Heaton **Agreed** to speak to the owners.

ACTION: CLLR HEATON

Cllr Heaton has notified David Munn in KCC PROW of a blocked off footpath on Amsbury Farm, but there has been no response yet, so he will contact him again.

ACTION: CLLR HEATON

10.2.2 **Permissive Footpath on West Street – Hedge and Verges Maintenance Contract**

The specification for the two-year contract for the maintenance of the hedge and verges near the permissive path on West Street was sent to Robert Cox, Tregoning's Trees and Aspen Tree Services. Robert Cox and Tregoning's Trees returned a quote before the deadline, but Aspen Tree Services did not.

Members **Agreed** that Robert Cox should be awarded the contract based on the quotes provided.

ACTION: CLERK

10.2.3 **Extension of Permissive Footpath to Lughorse Lane**

The owner of the land between the playing field and Lughorse Lane has decided not to allow a permissive footpath to pass over her land. Members agreed that this was disappointing as the path would have improved safety for villagers. Members **Agreed** that the landowner should be

contacted again to see if there is any way the Parish Council can address her concerns.

ACTION: CLERK

Members discussed other steps which could be taken, such as speaking to a planning consultant or locating the path on the other side of West Street.

10.3 Highways

Cllr Goddard reported that he had attended the Parish Seminar run by Matthew Balfour (KCC Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport). In 2016/17, the total expenditure budget for KCC is £2.1bn, of which £38m is budgeted for Highways, split half and half between Highways Management and Highways Maintenance. For next year's budget an additional £1.4m needs to be found due to a reduction in grant funding and additional spending demands of £536k. KCC is planning to save £2.2m which will result in nearly £800k in savings contributing to other KCC services. Parish councils were engaged in a discussion on this, although some declined to give an opinion. A total of £3m has been spent on repairing potholes.

In terms of highways issues in the parish:

- The potholes in Grove Lane have been reported to Highways through the parish portal;
- Claire Chewter (Highways Steward) will follow up the drain clearance on East Street;
- A 28-day job order has been raised to repaint the lines outside the school;
- The railings have been replaced outside the school;
- A dished channel will be installed near the school, funded by the Parish Council;
- Cllr Goddard will contact KCC to find out more about the Lorry Watch scheme;
- Cllr Goddard will contact Claire Chewter with a list of the locations of the existing 7.5T signs. Claire has asked the Parish Council to give suggested locations for 7.5T signs.

10.4 Speedwatch

Cllr Ward reported that the Speedwatch team has been out six times since the last meeting – four times in the late afternoon/evening, once in the late morning and once in the early morning. It has been found that the percentage of vehicles speeding is higher when there are less cars parked on West Street. Between 11:15am and 12:15pm there were fewer vehicles, but the percentage speeding was quite high and the average speed was higher. While setting up between 7am and 7:45am every single vehicle was speeding. Speeds of 48mph have been recorded recently. There will be no more early morning/evening sessions until spring as it is too dark. There is one mid-morning session planned for November.

The team could do with more volunteers. There are two new members, but their training is not yet complete.

The 20mph speed limit outside the school is to remain advisory according to KCC, so this speed limit will not become enforceable.

Steve Wyles (Huntonwatch) has been compiling a database of highways issues to assist in discussions with KCC. The information will be published in the Hunton Herald.

Members **Agreed** that a meeting should be set up with KCC to discuss highways issues.

ACTION: CLLR THOMAS/CLLR GODDARD/CLLR WARD

10.5 Hunton Parish Plan/Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Trought advised that the Hunton Parish Plan meetings now take place twice a year, compared to five times previously, as the work streams are embedded and do not require management, just reporting. Eventually the Hunton Parish Plan will convert to the Neighbourhood Plan, which will be revisited at the beginning of next year.

10.6 Communication & Events

Cllr Trought reported that the Village Club lunches have resumed and are well attended. The Club is fundraising for a new kitchen.

There was a very successful village walk on 5th November.

The Christmas Market will be held on 10th December.

Other events coming up include an 80s Night, Quiz Night and a Gardening Club supper.

Wine tasting will be held on 26th November.

An Applause event will take place at the Village Hall on 29th November.

There will be karaoke at the Club on New Year's Eve.

Cllr Heaton suggested that Cllr Ward takes over Communications & Events from Cllr Trought as Cllr Trought is becoming more involved with the school. Members **Agreed**.

Cllr Thomas thanked Cllr Heaton for laying a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council at the church service on Remembrance Sunday.

10.7 Planning Issues and Consultations

All issues have already been covered during the meeting.

10.8 Utilities

Cllr Stanbridge reported that a response had been received from South East Water in reply to his letter regarding the frequency of the repairs to water mains on Hunton Hill and the number of road closures. Cllr Stanbridge **Agreed** to draft a further letter stating that it is a formal complaint. ACTION: CLLR STANBRIDGE

Cllr Heaton advised that an electrical supply is being put into The Chances, but the supplier has not closed Lughorse Lane properly, resulting in traffic using the verges. Cllr Heaton **Agreed** to take photographs of the damage and Cllr Stanbridge **Agreed** to write to the supplier to ask that the verges be reinstated. ACTION: CLLR HEATON/CLLR STANBRIDGE

11. OTHER PARISH MATTERS

11.1 Flooding

Cllr Thomas and Cllr Heaton are representing the parish on the Joint Parishes Flood Group, which is based around Yalding, Collier Street, East Farleigh and Hunton. The group was formed due to the Environment Agency (EA) dropping plans to hold back waters in the rivers Teise and Beult. The other alternative was a 3-metre barrier to the east of Hunton Bridge, but there are no plans for this either. The EA has held exhibitions in several places, but these have consisted of much talk, but no action. The EA is planning to raise the Leigh Barrier by ½ metre at some point. It is necessary to find out how many houses in Hunton could be flooded as the EA thinks only one, which is completely incorrect. Individual households are to be given a grant of £5,500 to assist with flood prevention. The KCC promises of financial assistance have come to nothing. Helen Grant MP has attended some of the meetings.

11.2 Traffic from Clock House Farm, Coxheath

This item was discussed in the Open Session.

11.3 KALC Community Awards Scheme 2017

Members **Agreed** not to adopt the Scheme in Hunton in 2017.

11.4 KALC Emergency Planning & Resilience Conference

Members **Agreed** that it would be worthwhile attending this conference on 14th December. Cllr Heaton agreed to attend the conference on behalf of the Parish Council.

ACTION: CLLR HEATON

11.5 Parish Council Meeting Dates 2017

Members **Agreed** the following dates for the Parish Council meetings in 2017:

Monday 16th January 2017

Monday 20th March 2017

Monday 8th May 2017 (Annual Meeting)

Monday 22nd May 2017 (Annual Parish Meeting)

Monday 17th July 2017

Monday 18th September 2017

Monday 20th November 2017

11.6 Clerk's Report

The Clerk attended the KALC Finance Conference which had been very useful. An invitation has been received for the KALC AGM to be held on 19th November. No Members expressed a wish to attend.

12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 KCC – Highways & Transportation Survey 2016

KCC is seeking feedback on the highways and transportation service it delivers to the community to allow it to make informed decisions on future operations and priorities based upon what matters most to residents and elected members.

Cllr Goddard **Agreed** to complete the survey.

ACTION: CLLR GODDARD

12.2 KCC – Draft Budget Proposals 2017/18

KCC is consulting on its draft budget and council tax proposals for 2017/18.

Members **Agreed** that a response should be made to state that the KCC Highways budget is being cut by more than necessary (based on information obtained by Cllr Goddard at the Parish Seminar).

ACTION: CLERK

13. FINANCE

13.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st October 2016 was **Noted**.

Members **Approved** the following changes to the budget:

- Deletion of the £12,500 expenditure budget for kerbing on West Street;
- Deletion of the £833 income budget for County Cllr Stockell's contribution towards the kerbing;
- Addition of £3,163 expenditure budget for the installation of a dished channel outside the school.

13.2 Income Received

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

Cllr Trought reviewed and signed the bank reconciliation.

Village Hall Committee – FIT receipts	£667.26
MBC – Parish Services Scheme grant – Second half	£937.00

The NatWest current account has been closed and the balance of £11,792.29 paid into the Unity Trust Bank current account.

13.3 Payments Made

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

SO – Sharon Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – September	£431.61
Unity Trust Bank – Service charges	£18.00
SO – Sharon Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – October	£431.61

13.4 Cheques for Signature

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

300167 – E.ON – Street lighting electricity	£9.60
300168 – KALC – Finance Conference	£72.00

300169 – MBC – Bin emptying (July/August/September) (KGV)	£449.28
300170 – Passmores – Timber to box in pipework on cricket pavilion	£195.25
300171 – Robert Cox – Cutting back beech hedge near the Bowls Club (KGV)	£125.00
300172 – PKF Littlejohn LLP – Audit of the Annual Return	£360.00
300173 – King George’s Field Hunton – To open a separate KGF bank account	£500.00

13.5 Annual Return & Audit 2015/16

Members **Noted** that, following the audit of the 2015/16 Annual Return, PKF Littlejohn LLP has given Hunton Parish Council a ‘clean’ certificate. The statutory ‘Notice of conclusion of the audit and right to inspect the Annual Return’ has been displayed for the requisite 14 days and the audited Annual Return is displayed on the parish website.

14. PLANNING

14.1 Planning Application

The following planning application was considered and recommendation made:

14.1.1 Riverside Cottage, Vicarage Road, Yalding – 16/505750/FULL

Convert garage into single bedroom annexe.

Parish Council recommendation: Refuse as it would create another dwelling in the countryside.

14.2 Planning Decisions

The following decisions received from Maidstone Borough Council were **Noted**:

14.2.1 The Bishops Cottage, Bishops Lane - 16/506813/FULL

Erection of a single storey rear garden room.

Parish Council recommendation: Approve.

Maidstone Borough Council recommendation: Refused planning permission.

14.2.2 The Bishops Cottage, Bishops Lane - 16/506814/LBC

Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single storey rear garden room.

Parish Council recommendation: Approve.

Maidstone Borough Council recommendation: Refused listed building consent.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Council Meeting is on **Monday 16th January 2017** at Hunton Village Hall.

There being no further matters to be discussed the meeting closed at 10:45pm.