

**MINUTES OF THE HUNTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2017  
AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:** Cllr D Heaton as Chairman, Cllrs T Stanbridge, J Goddard, A Trought, R Lee and H Ward and Mrs S Goodwin, Clerk. They were joined by at least 41 members of the public.

**1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed all those present at the meeting, introduced himself as the Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council and gave an explanation of how the evening would run.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Borough Councillor Brian Mortimer, Adam McKinley (Community Warden), Louise Horlock (Hunton & Linton Pre-School) and Steve & Sue Wyles (Huntonwatch).

**3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2016**

The minutes of the meeting had been circulated and it was agreed that the minutes be approved as an accurate record. The Chairman signed off the official copy.

**4. POLICE REPORT**

PCSO Jasmine Pay introduced herself as having been in post as a PCSO for 8 weeks and in a permanent position for just one week. She is planning to meet with local organisations and the school. Theft and burglary crime levels are increasing, so an evening is being planned in Coxheath on the subject of preventing theft. There will be various stands at the event.

**5. COMMUNITY WARDEN REPORT**

Community Warden Adam McKinley was unable to attend the meeting but had provided a written report, which was distributed at the meeting and is published as a separate document.

**6. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

County Cllr Stockell read out parts of her report, which was distributed at the meeting and is published as a separate document.

**7. REPORTS FROM BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

Borough Cllr Mortimer was unable to attend the meeting.

Borough Cllr Fermor noted that last year's Annual Parish Meeting had been her first parish council meeting as a borough councillor. During the year, Cllr Fermor has become fully trained in planning and is a substitute member on the Planning Committee, one of the reasons she wanted to become a councillor. She is also on the Policy & Resources Committee, which will review funding for parish councils this year, as well as agreeing the council's budget and looking at flooding, among other areas.

The Annual Meeting of the Council was held on 20<sup>th</sup> May, when Malcolm Greer was appointed Mayor and David Naghi was appointed as Deputy Mayor. The status quo remains as far as leadership is concerned, with Fran Wilson as Leader and Fay Gooch as Deputy Leader. Voting will take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> May for chairmen of committees.

The political structure at Maidstone Borough Council remains the same: 23 Conservatives; 22 Liberal Democrats; 4 Independents; 2 Labour; and 4 UKIP. There was a bye-election in Bearsted, but the seat remained Conservative.

Cllr Webb reported that Cllr Mortimer would have liked to have attended the Annual Parish Meeting but had been receiving chemotherapy treatment for cancer.

Cllr Webb has been trained for Coxheath Speedwatch and would be willing to help with Hunton Speedwatch. He also invited people to sponsor him in a sponsored walk he was undertaking.

**8. REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The Parish Council has prepared a summary report, including the receipts and payments figures for 2016/17, which was distributed at the meeting and is published as a separate document. The report was explained briefly by the Chairman.

Two new parish councillors, Helen Ward and Roger Lee, have been welcomed on to the Parish Council since the last Annual Parish Meeting.

The Chairman thanked all the parish councillors and the Clerk for all their work.

The Parish Council gave its first 'surgery' at Easter and would like to hold more.

The Chairman thanked Lesley and Roger Lee, and Lesley's family visiting from Australia, for providing the delicious food.

**9. QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS**

The Chairman invited residents to ask questions to parish, borough and county councillors:

**Q. To the Borough Councillors – have the rules on listed buildings changed? I have been told that I cannot make alterations to my house as the listing was done before 1932.**

A. It depends on the grading of the house. There is no longer a Conservation Officer at MBC. It could be related to the curtilage, rather than the house, for example a modern house in a listed curtilage cannot be changed. (Cllr David Heaton)

A. If you give me your email address I will look into it. (Borough Cllr Emily Fermor)

**Q. Has there been any progress on flooding?**

A. I attend the Joint Parishes Flood Group meetings with Cllr Gary Thomas. We mainly go to find out what is not happening. The Environment Agency has looked at various options through modelling and found that flood storage schemes are not viable (on the Beult or Teise). Arcadis (commissioned by Maidstone Borough Council) came to the same conclusion. The only option given is property level resilience. If that does not work for certain properties, there is community level resilience. In the long run, there need to be changes to how land is used regarding water running into rivers. It is better to keep the water on the land, for example through woodland planting. Nothing will be delivered quickly. Politicians make promises, then they disappear. (Cllr David Heaton)

**Q. I went to an Environment Agency exhibition at Linton village hall 2-3 years ago but have not heard anything further since.**

A. The Environment Agency will be having further exhibitions soon. There will be something in the Hunton Herald about it. (Cllr David Heaton)

**Q. Is there any update on the Wares Farm planning application? There has been further information from the applicants on the mitigation of traffic. Is it still going to Planning Committee?**

A. The application will go to Planning Committee, but no one knows if it will be approved or not. It will be a struggle for the Planning Committee to reject it. KCC will decide whether they are happy with the highways situation or not. (Borough Cllr Emily Fermor)

**Q. It is unacceptable, with all the resulting HGVs and employee traffic to and from the site. I get the feeling that whatever anyone says, and many are objecting, the application will still be approved which I don't understand.**

A. The Planning Committee is led by planning policies, the application cannot be turned down on other grounds (blocking out light for example). (Borough Cllr Richard Webb)

A. You can request s106 monies. (Borough Cllr Emily Fermor)

**Q. Is there an investigation into how planning decisions are made? Some very odd decisions are made.**

A. There is no investigation. (Borough Cllr Richard Webb)

**Q. Some of the decisions are inexplicable. Also, the planning situation at Amsbury Farm where the approval has been exceeded - what is happening with this?**

A. Brian Mortimer is looking at this. It is being considered by MBC Legal Services. (Borough Cllr Richard Webb)

**Q. Fruit is being imported from Europe. It should be packed near the motorway network. It doesn't make sense. At Wares Farm, 80% of fruit is imported.**

A. At Wares Farm, Berry Gardens is the tenant and Firmins is the owner. I think it will end up with Berry Gardens not using all of the site, as I think it wants to be a distribution company. (Cllr David Heaton)

A. In their own paperwork they turned down the Pattenden Lane site as it is too industrial. Wares Farm will dwarf what is happening at Amsbury Farm. A s106 bid assumes this is going to go ahead. It is just wrong to have a huge industrial unit in that location. (Cllr Annette Trought)

**Q. Who makes the decision?**

A. Maidstone Borough Council makes the planning decision. Kent County Council has input on highways. (Cllr David Heaton)

**Q. Is there another way the people in Hunton can put more pressure on?**

A. You can see who sits on the Planning Committee and lobby hard. (Borough Cllr Richard Webb)

A. You should lobby KCC Highways too. (Borough Cllr Emily Fermor)

A. A two-pronged approach. (County Cllr Paulina Stockell)

**Q. Will the planners at MBC struggle to refuse the application if KCC do not object on highways grounds?**

A. Yes. (Borough Cllr Emily Fermor)

A. They could object on other grounds, for example environmental grounds. (Borough Cllr Richard Webb)

**Q. KCC is a critical consultee then. I suggest that the Director of KCC Highways is invited to a parish council meeting to discuss the application.**

A. That is Roger Wilkin. You could also ask a Cabinet member, such as Matthew Balfour. (County Cllr Paulina Stockell)

**Q. You could join with other parishes to employ a specialist consultant to look at highways issues. How do we work with Lorrywatch in other parishes? Can we ask the police what they are going to do about it.**

A. No one polices it. (Cllr David Heaton)

A. Lorrywatch is all volunteer led. The information goes to Kent Police. If a UK lorry is seen twice, the company is contacted by the police. (Cllr Jonny Goddard)

A. It can affect the operators' licences. The Parish Council has asked the Police & Crime Commissioner what the police are doing, but no reply has been received yet. (Cllr David Heaton)

**Q. Are people aware of the West Street road closure next week? There will be access for residents.**

A. It will be in the Hunton Herald. (Cllr Helen Ward)

**Q. Isn't it a waste of time to microsurface Hunton Hill?**

A. No. There are leaks on the water main. South East Water is planning to replace the water main and has consulted with the Parish Council. This will resolve the problem on Hunton Hill and microsurfacing will be worthwhile. It is probably not worth doing it before the main is replaced. (Cllr Tony Stanbridge)

**Q. Will South East Water properly surface the area?**

**A.** They will just patch the road, but KCC Highways will microsurface after. (Cllr Tony Stanbridge)

**Q. Hunton Hill is broken. It should be a priority for KCC to completely dig it up and start again.**

**A.** That would be a huge expense and would make it more difficult to object to planning applications! KCC was asked to install a 'Go Slow' sign at Bensted Close, but they will not do anything unless there has been a fatality. (Cllr David Heaton)

The Chairman thanked everyone for their questions.

#### **REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

- 10.** Twenty local organisations reported on their activities over the last year. The reports, either written reports provided by members of the organisations, or verbal reports summarised by the Clerk, are published as a separate document.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 11.** No one had any other business to discuss.  
The Chairman thanked all the speakers for their reports and thanked Lesley Lee and her team for the food.

**There being no other business the meeting closed at 9:55pm.**