

## HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2017 AT 7:30PM AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

**PRESENT:** Cllr G Thomas in the Chair, Cllrs D Heaton, A Trought, J Goddard, T Stanbridge, R Lee and H Ward (from Item 6) and Mrs S Goodwin, Clerk.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Three members of the public were in attendance, two of whom left after Item 7.6.

#### **OPEN SESSION:**

Mike Summersgill advised that the permissive footpath is covered in mud from the tractors working in the neighbouring field. Members agreed that L J Betts Ltd would be contacted to ask them to clean the path.

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

All parish councillors were present at the meeting.  
Apologies had been received from Borough Councillors B Mortimer and R Webb.

#### **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. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017 had been previously distributed. The Chairman signed off the official copy of the minutes.

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

Item 13.3 – A response was submitted to the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner's Annual Policing Survey.

Item 13.4 – A response was submitted to the MBC Council Tax Reduction Scheme & Introduction of Universal Credit Consultation.

Item 14.1 – The street light on Bensted Close has been repaired.

Item 14.7 – The Parish Council's insurance was taken out with Ecclesiastical for one year.

#### **6. POLICE & COMMUNITY WARDEN**

##### **6.1 Police**

The following crime report has been provided by PCSO Alan Hunter and the e-watch website:

12-13/09/17 – Burglary – Grove Lane

13/09/17 – Burglary – Hilltop

13/09/17 – Arson – George Street

28/09/17 – Burglary – West Street

04-08/10/17 – Three reports of criminal damage – Redwall Lane

20/10/17 – Criminal damage – Vicarage Road

22-23/10/17 – Criminal damage – Redwall Lane

## 6.2 **Community Warden**

Adam McKinley was unable to attend the meeting, but had provided the following report:  
I have been working with the PCSO on local issues, have helped with a neighbour dispute and have one welfare case in the area. We are very busy as a community team and welcome any feedback.

## 6.3 **Huntonwatch**

Steve Wyles has provided the following report on Huntonwatch:

Huntonwatch has again been able to help a lost dog and its owner be reunited. When the loss was reported a note was sent to all members and a post put on the Hunton Facebook page and shared with other local Facebook groups. A lady found the dog caught up in barbed wire near Mill Lane, took it home to clean it up and the following day saw the Facebook post and contacted us. Half an hour later the dog and owner were reunited.

There have been several instances of late night joy riding across the crop fields in the village. The police have been informed and the rural division has increased patrols. On the afternoon of Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November, a vehicle was seen driving across crop fields and the driver and passenger are now being sought in connection with alleged criminal damage and assault.

A motor cyclist had regularly been using a footpath as a short cut between East Street and West Street. This had gone on for some weeks until photographs of the male rider were sent to the PCSO. We are glad to report that there have been no further instances.

## 7. **LOCAL COMMUNITY**

### 7.1 **King George V Playing Field**

Simon Taylor, Chairman of the King George V Playing Committee, provided a report on the last meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November:

Wildlife - rabbits are currently less of a problem on the field as numbers seemed to have fallen dramatically this autumn, however there are a few scrapes on the cricket outfield which will need attention next spring. We have engaged the services of Gwen Nabbs to deal with our recurrent mole problem and she has so far caught two moles, one in front of the pavilion and another behind the bowls green. She tells me that there is still some mole activity down by the field gate and that she will continue to set traps and monitor until this ceases.

Play area - we have received the annual safety inspection report on the play equipment and I am pleased to report that, in the main, the equipment remains in relatively good condition and is compliant with safety standards, although some minor work is required to the multiplay unit and the swings. Both applications for funding from the Kent County Playing Fields Association and the National Lottery Awards for All fund have been accepted, providing funding totalling £6,750, which will be used to replace the safety surfacing under the multiplay unit and also install a new nest swing, complete with safety surfacing, in the area between the multiplay and the hedge. We are hoping to have this work completed by Christmas. Upon completion we will then deal with the renovation work on the multiplay and the swings, ready for the spring.

New car park fencing - one of the safety items noted in the play equipment inspection report is that the fence rails between the play area and car park need replacement and we have received a quotation from Tate Fencing for the installation of a two-rail post and rail fence to match the fence installed in 2015, complete with a similar pedestrian gate, for £979 plus VAT for the fence and £212 plus VAT for the gate. I am currently waiting for alternative quotes, but the likelihood is that we will go ahead with the Tate Fencing quote.

Signage - we have agreed that we should install additional signage in the car park to the effect that cars are parked at owners' risk and we are also considering additional CCTV signage.

Maintenance – David Heaton has backfilled the holes in the car park. We are still trying to source some angle iron to brace some of the posts holding the safety netting by the bowls club hedge; a few of these are quite loose, although we don't believe that they have rotted. We are also planning the installation of some stock fencing on the road side of the field to protect the recently planted hedge and the ditch. Robert Cox has regularly visited to trim the perimeter of the recreation ground and the hedges and we are about to ask him to visit to have a general tidy up around the field perimeters, mainly cutting down nettles before the winter.

Future considerations - we need to consider dismantling the old pavilion which is currently being used just for storage by the cricket club. Whilst the club is in generally good health, it cannot afford the cost of employing a professional contractor to dismantle the building. Equally the building is the property of the Parish Council and technically it is demolition and therefore the Council's responsibility. I think what is needed is some co-operation between the parties involved to make this final part of the pavilion project a reality.

Cllr Thomas asked what would happen to the container near the cricket pavilion. Mr Taylor advised that a skip would need to be hired and the container could then be cleared, ideally from late March onwards. Members **Agreed** that the hire of the skip should be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

ACTION: ALL MEMBERS

## 7.2 **Hunton Village Hall Committee**

Cllr Trought, Chair of the Hunton Village Hall Committee, provided the following report on the last meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November:

The Christmas lights have been permanently erected on the outside of the Village Hall, thanks to Phil (the handyman) and all those who helped on 18<sup>th</sup> November. There is an issue with the timer to be rectified, but after that only maintenance will be required to the lights in future. A grant of £1,000 has been received from KCC through County Councillor Paulina Stockell for the boiler.

The kitchen roof will be mended during the Christmas break.

The Christmas Fair will be held between 3pm and 6pm on 9<sup>th</sup> December, Santa will be there.

Mike Summersgill, Treasurer, added the following:

The Village Hall has a new cleaner, whose first job was cleaning up after a party when the hall was left in a mess.

The Village Hall sign is showing its age and could do with being replaced.

There is a Latin music evening on the coming weekend.

A family play, 'Wind in the Willows', will be held on 29<sup>th</sup> December.

## 7.3 **Hunton Primary School**

Cllr Trought has established a good dialogue with Stewart Murdoch, who is now the permanent Head Teacher at the school, and Ed Ming, the Assistant Head Teacher.

The school Christmas Fair will be held on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

The school children are completing five Christmas trees, to be paraded to church. Mr Murdoch has asked if the Parish Council will consider a goodwill donation to cover the cost of the trees. There will be a lantern parade along the road to Hunton Engineering, a 'festival of lights'.

Consideration of staggered leaving times for children will be discussed to alleviate the number of cars parked outside the school.

The school would like to establish a walking bus for 'Walk to School Week' next year, which will require the permissive footpath to be in good condition.

Members **Agreed** that Cllr Trought should discuss the level of donation with Mr Murdoch; £20 was preliminarily agreed.

ACTION: CLLR TROUGHT

## 7.4 **Tree & Pond Warden**

The Tree & Pond Warden, Mike Summersgill, advised that the remedial work on the Turkey Oak has not been carried out by Tantons Tree Surgeons as the outfield was too soft for the machinery when they attended on 28<sup>th</sup> September. Mr Summersgill is still trying to establish a date with Tantons. Cllr Heaton suggested that Tantons should be given a time limit to do the work, otherwise another contractor would need to be considered.

The ponds are extremely low for November, but they are also low nationally.

## 7.5 **Hunton Village Club**

Cllr Trought reported that the Committee has been unable to find anyone to take over as Chairman from Phil Nichols, despite advertising in the Hunton Herald, on Facebook and approaching people directly. Mr Nichols has stayed on for an extra year, but is now also leaving the Committee. Another member has also stood down.

A Committee meeting was held last week and the AGM is at 7pm on 1<sup>st</sup> December. If the Committee remains without a Chairman, it will not be properly constituted and the Club will lose

the license. Once lost, it is difficult to get the license back. The Committee is considering other ways a properly constituted Committee can be delivered.

Many events are happening at the Club. The darts, community events and yoga keep it going financially.

Cllr Heaton queried whether the Club is licensed or whether the license is attached to a person. If it is a case of getting a licensee, the Chairman could be a titular head, who would not need to be too involved and the role could be split.

Cllr Trought advised that the Chairman's role can be split into three: the titular Chairman (licensee); Chair of the Committee; and the numerous jobs which need to be done at the Club. Certain jobs at the Club do require specialist knowledge which would entail training courses. Cllr Trought asked that Members attend the AGM on 1<sup>st</sup> December and ask others to attend to provide ideas and support.

## **7.6 TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY WORKING PARTY**

Cllr Ward reported that the second meeting of the Traffic and Road Safety Working Party (TRSWP) had been held.

Time was spent discussing the 7.5T weight limited areas. Cllr Goddard has arranged for 'unsuitable for HGVs' signage to be installed by KCC Highways.

Cllrs Ward and Goddard spoke with Fruition about additional signage at the top and bottom of Hunton Hill to direct lorry drivers, which Fruition is willing to pay for. It will be necessary to find out who owns these verges.

There was some focus on diversions. Cllr Goddard will ask KCC Highways to ensure that the parish is informed in advance of diversion routes.

Cllr Trought will speak with the school about the possibility of staggering leaving times to alleviate the parking near the school.

The TRSWP has identified traffic hotspots and dangerous areas. Cllr Lee has put together a map showing all the current road signs, to allow the Working Party to establish whether it is possible to improve signage near hot spots or where additional signage could be useful. Additional signage could be used to try and prevent the 'rat run' between Amsbury Farm and Wares Farm and a 30mph or 40mph speed limit could be considered on East Street as there are no pavements and narrow sections of road (particularly in view of the additional traffic expected from new developments).

Hopefully some funding will be available from Wares Farm. Cllr Thomas advised that £10,000 has been set aside for the Monitoring Committee, but it will be spent on salaries. Cllr Heaton reported that Wares Farm is carrying out a traffic survey and there is a plan for construction traffic during the development (no left turns are allowed from the site). Cllr Heaton agreed to send a copy of the plan to Cllr Ward.

**ACTION: CLLR HEATON**

## **8. COUNTY & BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

### **8.1 County Councillor**

County Cllr Stockell was unable to attend the meeting.

### **8.2 Borough Councillors**

Borough Cllrs Mortimer, Webb and Fermor were unable to attend the meeting.

## **9. PARISH COUNCILLORS**

### **9.1 Liaison with External Bodies**

Cllr Thomas is meeting regularly with a group, which includes the Chairmen of other parish councils, to try and prevent planning problems. The group has had little success as MBC Planning does not act responsibly. One example is the planning application to build 65 houses at Vicarage Road in Yalding. Over 300 individuals objected to the application, but the Planning Officer stated it was 160 in the report to Planning Committee. It was raised at the meeting, but the borough councillors did not query all the objections, merely discussing how the site could connect to sewerage and the electrical system, which is irrelevant to planning. MBC did not listen to anyone who complained and the application was approved.

Cllr Thomas and other members of the Parish Council attended a ceremony to lay a memorial stone at the school to honour Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Drummond Borton, on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of him receiving the Victoria Cross for his actions during World War I. Three members of Lieutenant Colonel Borton's family attended the ceremony and the Parish Council provided food and drinks at the Club afterwards.

## **9.2 Footpaths and Ditches**

Cllr Heaton advised that another layer of gravel should be added to the footpath when it has been cleaned. Cllr Ward queried who should maintain the footpath. KCC should maintain it, but the Parish Council has done some maintenance.

Cllr Lee reported that the footpath over the River Beult is now closed until August 2018. The closure date keeps being extended.

## **9.3 Highways**

Cllr Goddard reported that Claire Chewter of KCC Highways has raised a 28 day job to move the 7.5T weight restriction sign to the exit of Amsbury Farm.

Two 'unsuitable for HGV' signs are to be installed in East Street and Green Lane, Marden. KCC highways has not provided a costing yet. Marden Parish Council has been contacted.

## **9.4 Speedwatch**

Cllr Ward reported that one Speedwatch session had been held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October between 4:45pm and 5:45pm, opposite the school. Six vehicles (8.5% of all vehicles recorded) were found to be speeding, the highest recorded at 40mph. All were first time speeders, so no letters were issued. Another session had to be cancelled due to lack of volunteers. The volunteers are all very busy, so there will need to be a drive to recruit in the New Year.

## **9.5 Hunton Parish Plan/Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Trought reported that the Neighbourhood Plan is on hold indefinitely. Cllr Thomas noted that a number of parishes have produced Neighbourhood Plans, including Coxheath, Headcorn, Loose and Lenham, but MBC ignores them so there seems little point in producing one.

In terms of the Hunton Parish Plan Steering Committee, a new picnic table has been installed in the Community Orchard, generously donated by Hunton Engineering. Cllr Trought met Charlie, who is studying conservation at Kent University, to help on his project on Little Owls. Charlie is looking to locate boxes and is interested in working with Hunton. He would be interested in presenting at lunches and other events as he is funded by presentations.

## **9.6 Communication & Events**

Cllr Ward reported that the following events had taken place:

September - Beer Festival

- East Street v West Street cricket match
- The Runaways at the village hall

October - Harvest Supper

- Walk and lunch
- Village Lunches (last one to be held on 30<sup>th</sup> November)
- Club Quiz Night
- WI talk "Our Man in Hamburg"

November - Gardening Club talk and supper

- Karaoke at the Club
- Indoor boot fair (Pre-school)

Events coming up include:

25/11/17 - Sonrisa "A Taste of Latin" at the village hall

01/12/17 - School Christmas Fair

09/12/17 - Hunton Christmas Fair

17/12/17 - Carol Service

29/12/17 - Wind in the Willows puppet show

27/01/18 - Wine Tasting

## 9.7 **Planning Issues and Consultations**

Cllr Thomas had attended the Wares Farm Monitoring Group meeting which was attended by too many people. Brendan Wright (KCC Highways) attended, but did not have much to say. Traffic issues which will be attended to are: Linton crossroads; improvement of the exit from Redwall Lane on to the A229; improvement of visibility currently restricted hedging; and amendment to the exit from site on to Redwall Lane to prevent traffic turning left towards Hunton. No consideration has been given to private vehicles or light goods vehicles.

## 9.8 **Utilities**

Cllr Stanbridge has spoken to Jeremy Dufour of South East Water about the water mains replacement on Hunton Hill. It is not possible to take up Clive Baxter's offer of using his land on the east side of Hunton Hill to install the main as there are badger sets, power lines and trees would have to be removed from the orchard. Land on the west side of Hunton Hill is not viable either. Mr Dufour is looking to push the project into 2018 and take advantage of the school holidays to reduce the impact on the surrounding community. He will attend another Parish Council meeting when the options have been considered. Cllr Stanbridge advised Mr Dufour that 16 weeks is too long for the project, Mr Dufour felt there could be some leeway to reduce it. Unfortunately, there are quite a few collars on the mains from previous leaks and it is not possible to pipe burst collars. There is also a lot of ragstone in the area.

## 10. **OTHER PARISH MATTERS**

### 10.1 **Flooding**

Cllr Thomas reported that the Leigh Barrier will be raised by ½m. Work has been done to prevent Tonbridge from being flooded, but this will result in Yalding having more water and will suffer worse than in previous flood events. Dredging is being considered. The Environment Agency has sent surveyors to houses which might be flooded to see what they may need (such as sandbags). Suggestions from the Yalding Flood Group appear to be falling on deaf ears. Cllr Heaton advised that the Internal Drainage Board is co-ordinating work to expedite dredging and is producing maps, looking at more natural flood management. Peter Hall's scheme at Marden is the blueprint for this. Dredging is coming to the fore more and is not a difficult scheme to implement.

### 10.2 **KALC Community Awards Scheme 2018**

KCC launched the 2018 KALC Community Awards Scheme in October, with Member councils having the option of adopting the awards scheme in their local area. The Scheme acknowledges and gives recognition to those that have made a significant contribution to their local community.

Members **Agreed** to adopt the KALC Community Awards Scheme locally and selected a recipient for the award.

### 10.3 **Parish Council Meeting Dates 2018**

Members **Agreed** the following dates for the Parish Council meetings in 2018:

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018 (Annual Meeting)

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018 (Annual Parish Meeting)

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018

### 10.4 **Clerk's Report**

The Clerk advised that the annual maintenance of the CCTV system will take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> December and will take half a day.

## 11. CONSULTATIONS

### 11.1 Boundary Commission – 2018 Boundary Review

The UK Parliament has decided to reduce the number of parliamentary constituencies, and therefore MPs, from 650 to 600. In England, the number of constituencies will reduce from 533 to 501. The Boundary Commission for England is currently conducting a review of parliamentary constituencies and is seeking views on their proposals.

Members commented on the review:

- Hunton will be situated in the Mid Kent & Ticehurst constituency, a different constituency to Maidstone Borough Council. It will be a very rural constituency, but the Borough Council will be urban.
- The Mid Kent & Ticehurst constituency covers a very large area.
- Hunton is closer to Maidstone (Maidstone constituency) than large villages Cranbrook and Tenterden (Mid Kent & Ticehurst constituency).

Members **Agreed** that the response to the consultation should request that the constituency line is moved to allow Hunton to remain part of the Maidstone constituency. ACTION: CLERK

### 11.2 KCC – Highways & Transportation Survey 2017

KCC is seeking the views and opinions of Parish & Town Councils on how the highway services are being delivered as well as quality of customer service provided by KCC's Highways & Transportation staff.

Cllr Thomas commented that the KCC Highways responses to planning applications are generally wholly inadequate.

Cllrs Goddard & Lee **Agreed** to complete the survey. ACTION: CLLR GODDARD/CLLR LEE

## 12. FINANCE

### 12.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017 was **Noted**.

### 12.2 Income Received

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

HMRC – VAT recovered for 2015/16 and 2016/17	£4,252.83
Hunton Village Hall Committee – FIT receipts	£735.42

Cllr Stanbridge reviewed and signed the bank reconciliation.

### 12.3 Payments Made

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

Unity Trust Bank – Service charge	£18.00
SO – Sharon Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – September	£435.54
SO – Sharon Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – October	£435.54

### 12.4 Cheques for Signature

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

300218 – E.ON – Street lighting electricity	£10.50
300219 – Hunton Village Club – Refreshments after VC memorial stone laying service	£132.30
300220 – Robert Cox – Maintenance of permissive footpath hedge and verges	£495.00
300221 – Q-Tec Solutions Ltd – Replacement of street lamp bulb	£129.60
300222 – Sharon Goodwin – Travel expenses/postage	£36.03

A request for funding from the Heart of Kent Hospice was declined.

The order form for the new nest swing and resurfacing in the play area was signed by Cllr Thomas.

**13. PLANNING**

**13.1 Planning Decisions**

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

**13.1.1 Bridge House, East Street – 17/504970/LBC**

Listed Building Consent for demolition of existing garage and erection of larger lean to garage.

Parish Council recommendation: No objection

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Permitted

**14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next full Council Meeting is on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018** at Hunton Village Hall.

**There being no further matters to discuss the meeting closed at 10:10pm.**