

**MINUTES OF THE HUNTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 20TH MAY 2019
AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Cllr D Heaton as Chairman, Cllrs A Trought, G Thomas, T Stanbridge, J Goddard, R Lee and H Ward, and Mrs S Goodwin, Clerk. They were joined by at least 35 members of the public.

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all those present at the meeting and was pleased to see such a good turnout.

2. PRESENTATION ON LITTLE OWLS

Charlie Russell, from the University of Kent, was due to give a presentation on Little Owls but was unable to attend the meeting.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Paulina Stockell, Borough Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid, PCSO Martin Chivers, Adam McKinley (Community Warden), Mike Summersgill (Tree & Pond Warden), Ann Sawtell (Hunton Walking Group), Sue Gunton (Hunton Book Club) and Stewart Murdoch (Hunton CEP School).

4. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 21ST MAY 2018

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.

5. REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Twenty local organisations reported on their activities over the last year (including the three who could not attend, who provided reports prior to the meeting). The written reports provided to the Clerk are published as a separate document.

6. POLICE REPORT

PCSO Martin Chivers was unable to attend the meeting but had provided a report, which was distributed at the meeting.

The Chairman commented that it was a shame the PCSO could not attend, and it is hoped that he will attend next year as the PCSO did not attend the previous year either.

7. 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.

8. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR

County Cllr Stockell was unable to attend the meeting but had provided a written report, which was distributed at the meeting.

9. REPORTS FROM BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Borough Cllrs Webb, Parfitt-Reid and Fermor were unable to attend the meeting. No reports have been received.

10. OPEN SESSION

The Chairman invited residents to ask questions to the parish councillors.

Q. To Cllr Goddard – regarding the new HGV pilot scheme, will there be fines for lorries as not much happens now?

A. The initiative is between KCC, MPs, the Department of Transport and some local councillors. Enforcement is the key. KCC is looking to employ four full time enforcement officers in the long term and rely on the police in the short term. (Cllr Ward)

Q. The sign is in the wrong place on Green Lane, an error on the part of KCC. Are they going to put it right?

A. Yes. I am meeting with KCC this week and will progress it. (Cllr Goddard)

Q. Tovil tip is charging from June for certain materials such as hardcore, which are often fly tipped. KCC has said there is no link between charging and fly tipping. Is there any way we can monitor to see how fly tipping is affected by charging?

A. It was discussed at a Parish Council meeting a while ago. Medway do not charge but people outside the area cannot use the tip. Maidstone is charging to be in line with other councils. (Cllr Heaton)

A. KCC put it out to consultation. 85-90% of respondents were against charging, but KCC went ahead. What is the point of a consultation? (Cllr Thomas)

Q. Could you provide an update on two planning applications – north of Bensted Close and Durrants Farm?

A. Nothing is happening on the application for the land north of Bensted Close as it was thrown out in the MBC Call For Sites exercise three years ago. Cllrs Heaton and Thomas have met with the applicant for Durrants Farm and also with an MBC planning officer (who basically said that the development would not be visible, so it does not matter). The planning application was due to go to MBC Planning Committee but was pulled as the applicant had not considered affordable housing (he did not realise he had to). Nothing has happened since so it is in limbo. (Cllr Heaton)

A. We reinforced our objections. The Parish Council objected to the design and number of properties. It would be preferable to have dwellings than what is currently there, if there were less properties and the development was of a better design. (Cllr Thomas)

Q. Can you ask KCC what evidence they have that charging will not increase fly tipping?

A. Our County Councillor is unwell at present, so we have not had much contact with KCC. We could write to KCC and ask for evidence. (Cllr Heaton)

Q. Most fly tipping is on private land and so MBC do not do anything.

A. Gates must be kept secure on private land. (Cllr Heaton)

Q. Do MBC have figures for fly tipping in Hunton over the last year?

A. We could ask, under the Freedom of Information Act if nothing else. (Cllr Heaton)

Q. Why didn't the Parish Council lodge an objection to the Wilsons Yard planning application?

A. The Parish Council supported the replacement of industrial buildings with houses. The application was originally rejected by MBC and also the Planning Inspector. The applicant is now using permitted development rights – if you have an agricultural building, you can make it into a dwelling – this has been extended to industrial buildings. Who would buy houses with a corrugated iron roof? (Cllr Heaton)

A. The Government has said that agricultural/industrial buildings do not need planning permission if the fabric of the building is retained. (Cllr Thomas)

Q. A neighbour has a listed building – does this have no effect?

A. No. It is a retrograde step by the government (not local councils). The Parish Council did put a complaint in to the Planning Inspectorate about the original application as, in her rejection of the appeal, the Planning Inspector gave no consideration to the unsuitability of further industrial use, only the undesirability of building houses. She did not feel that the applicant had demonstrated that industrial use would not be appropriate for the site. (Cllr Thomas)

A. Durrants Farm is another industrial site. MBC planning officers recommended permission (although it was refused by MBC Planning Committee) which does not agree with the position on Wilsons Yard, as there was no requirement to show that industrial use was inappropriate. (Cllr Heaton)

Q. What is happening about the caravans on George Street?

A. The Parish Council is following it up with MBC Planning Enforcement. (Clerk)

Q. Is there any up to date information on the 2,000 houses planned for Marden?

A. The proposal is to build up to 2,000 houses in Marden – put forward as part of the MBC Call For Sites exercise for the update of the Local Plan. 2,000 residents marched against it at the weekend. Until it is

included in the Call For Sites nothing can be done. (Cllr Ward)

A. It is up to MBC to consider whether to include it or not as part of the Call For Sites. Borough Cllr Parfitt-Reid has said she would be surprised if it went ahead. (Cllr Heaton)

A. There is a target of 17,560 houses to be built in the Borough. Current government rules mean MBC will need to find 7,000 additional houses by 2034. There has been a lot of discussion about the lack of infrastructure if extra houses are to be built. The MBC reply is that they have no vision for infrastructure. Several government committees have said that the planning system should not work like this. (Cllr Thomas)

A. MBC sets the Local Plan, but the infrastructure is down to KCC/central government. The people responsible for infrastructure have no say in plans. There is no joined up thinking with other councils, such as Tonbridge & Malling, either. (Cllr Heaton)

Q. There are between 60,000 and 330,000 houses required by the government nationally. There is a lack of affordable housing. It is a national problem devolved to local councils.

A. The south- east suffers; the north does not have the same issue. (Cllr Thomas)

Q. From what I have heard this evening, the community is incredibly healthy. A big pressure on the village is the school. Is there pressure on the school to grow, and would additional houses increase that pressure?

A. The school is at capacity so it cannot take any more children as there is not enough physical space. The catchment area for the school is large and many children come from outside Hunton, which creates additional parking issues, more traffic, etc. (Reverend Callway)

A. In the Call For Sites, developers put forward sites for houses. Why don't MBC ask KCC to do a 'Call For Schools'? They do not do it. The only schools being built in Maidstone are two in Bearsted, where no new houses are being built. They are in the wrong place. Why hasn't MBC asked KCC for schools? (Cllr Thomas)

A. I met the headteacher at Hunton CEP School and asked where most pupils came from. He said Maidstone and Coxheath, but he is trying to work out ways to increase the parking to take the cars off West Street. The school is trying to work on a solution; the will is there. Traffic issues are always the number one concern. (Cllr Trought)

The Chairman thanked everyone for their questions.

11. REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council has prepared a summary report, including the receipts and payments figures for 2018/19, which was distributed at the meeting and is published as a separate document. The report was explained briefly by the Chairman.

The Chairman thanked the parish councillors and the Clerk for all their work and thanked Lesley and Roger Lee for providing the food for the meeting, as well as Sue, Bridget and Andrea.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9:52pm.