

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 20TH JANUARY 2020 AT 7:30PM AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Four members of the public were in attendance. Three left after Item 7.4.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs T Stanbridge and H Ward. Borough Cllrs L Parfitt-Reid and R Webb had also sent their apologies.

2. FILMING AND RECORDING

The members of the public did not wish to film, record or photograph the meeting.

3. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

3.1 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

3.2 Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18TH NOVEMBER 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2019 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 8.2 – A letter was written to Roger Gough, Leader of KCC, regarding the improvements to Linton crossroads. A response has not been received yet.

Item 8.2 – The MBC Enforcement Officer has been notified that Bardsley's have taken over the cold storage facilities at Amsbury Farm. She has not responded.

Item 12.1 – A consultation was held on 11th January 2020 to allow parishioners to comment on the MBC Call For Sites submissions. The parish councillors have a meeting with MBC on 20th January to discuss the submissions.

6. POLICE

6.1 Police

The new PCSO, Nicola Morris, was unable to attend the meeting but provided the following crime report:

01/12/19 – Grove Lane – Radio stolen from a vehicle.

10/12/19 – Lughorse Lane – Two men stole bales of hay and straw from a barn.

26/12/19 – West Street – Damaged caused to fencing.

17/01/20 – West Street – Poaching. Dog unit and patrol attended but no trace of persons found.

6.2 Huntonwatch

Steve Wyles reported the following on Huntonwatch:

Overnight on 24th/25th November, two field gates were demolished in the field between the end of Bishops Lane and East Street. We think a vehicle was driven through and then driven across/ around the field.

Two incidents were reported on 30th November. In Benover Road eggs were thrown at a moving vehicle which did not stop. This was fortunate as people were hiding by the side of the road where it would have stopped. This tactic is often used to steal vehicles or rob drivers. We issued advice on what to do in such circumstances to Huntonwatch members. In the second incident, a car was broken into and the logbook

and service record stolen. The owner was advised to contact the police.

The police reported that no progress could be made with the investigation into the container and football changing rooms break-in, so the case was being filed as 'no suspects identified'.

On 26th December, there was an attempted horse theft in the fields between the church and Hunton Court. The suspects gained access via the footpath from East Street just two days after a post on Facebook reported that the stile had been replaced by a gate. This supports our long-held fear that the criminal fraternity may in some way have access to the Hunton Facebook page.

There have been reports of a suspicious vehicle (a pick-up truck) in the Hunton Hill area. Details have been passed to the police.

Huntonwatch helped disseminate information on flooding and wind damage during the recent spell of bad weather.

Finally, our PCSO was due to leave on 6th January to take up a position with British Transport Police. We received no information regarding any replacement but now know it is PCSO Nicola Morris, so we will make contact with her.

7. LOCAL COMMUNITY

7.1 King George V Playing Field Committee

The Chairman of the King George V Playing Field Committee, Simon Taylor, was unable to attend the meeting. The following is an update from the Committee meeting held on 15th January 2020:

Both representatives of the Football Club have resigned.

The barrier has been installed at the entrance to the car park. Signs need to be printed and a rota needs to be worked out for opening/closing.

There are a number of issues which cannot be dealt with at the moment due to the wet weather, to be addressed in spring. These include: the removal of the green container and old cricket pavilion; drainage flush through; minor play equipment and field remedial issues; and cutting back.

Three health and safety reports have been received. The same comment appears on each regarding the multiplay equipment, that the platform has rough edges delaminating.

There is £6,764 in funds remaining. The Landscape Services quote for grounds maintenance for 2020 was accepted. The Committee will apply for more MBC SIPA grant funding for a picnic table, bin and matting. The Committee would like to ask for £6,000 in funding for 2020/21 from the Parish Council. A contribution towards the new Bowls Club changing rooms will be agreed when the shortfall figure has been provided.

The Annual Return has been submitted to the Charity Commission.

7.2 Hunton Village Hall Committee

The Chairman of Hunton Village Hall Committee, Cllr Trought, did not have anything to report. The next Committee meeting will be held on 18th February.

7.3 Hunton Primary School

Cllr Trought informed Members that Mary Holt-Goldsmith, who worked at the school, has sadly passed away.

Sue and Steve Wyles are to take over the school crossing patrol, starting around February half term.

7.4 Hunton Village Club

Cllr Trought was unable to attend the Club AGM.

The Club is organising an Entertainments Committee to book events at the Club. There is a meeting on 29th January.

The Club is fundraising for new toilets.

There is a health and safety issue around preparation of food. Food served at the Club cannot be prepared off-site and brought into the Club, it all has to be prepared on the premises, which causes an inconvenience for food such as soup for the lunches. The Committee is trying to find a solution.

7.5 Traffic and Road Safety Working Party/Highways

Cllr Goddard is meeting with representatives from Transport Survey Systems next week on East Street to decide on the three locations for the speed tracking equipment.

7.6 **Tree & Pond Warden**

The Tree & Pond Warden, Mike Summersgill, was unable to attend the meeting but had provided the following report:

Trees – I have been talking to the new Yalding Tree Warden, and trying to contact the Farleigh Tree Warden, so that we can work together on our 'patches'. The annual Tree Wardens gathering/AGM is on 1st February in Faversham, and I hope to attend that. There was a community tree planting day in the orchard/playing fields at the end of November, thanks to Liz Ridgeway who organised it. Crispin Tregoning has been asked to price up a climbed inspection of the Turkey Oak tree on the recreation ground. He did an inspection about three years ago. The Parish Council had some work done on the tree in April 2018 and also had a regular VTA in April 2019, which recommended that a re-inspection is carried out 18 months later by the same person who carried out the previous climbed inspection (Crispin). Ponds - nothing to report, but I mentioned to Cllr Heaton a potential problem on George Street with the main ditch outside Wilson's Yard, and a widening gap appearing behind the sandbagged repair of the bank/wall there.

The Clerk advised that the quoted cost for the Turkey Oak climbed inspection is £150. Members **Approved** the cost and **Agreed** that the inspection should be undertaken by Crispin Tregoning.

Cllr Thomas advised that the dead oak tree on the Tregothnan Estate has still not been felled and is dropping branches on the Barn Hill road. Members **Agreed** that the Clerk should contact the Tregothnan Estate again to ask that the work is done soon.

ACTION: CLERK

8. **COUNTY & BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

8.1 **County Councillor**

County Cllr Stockell was unable to attend the meeting.

8.2 **Borough Councillors**

Borough Cllr Webb was unable to attend the meeting (at a West Farleigh Parish Council meeting) but had sent a note to remind the Parish Council that the next meeting of the Wares Farm Monitoring Group takes place on 22nd January at the new offices on Redwall Lane. Regarding concerns about the exit from the Wares Farm site, Cllr Webb confirmed that there is no physical restriction on lorries turning left towards Hunton. There is a sign in three languages stating that HGVs must turn right but, as the exit is fairly wide, a driver could easily turn left. Cllr Webb will ask if there is anything which can be added to the exit to prevent this situation occurring.

Neither Cllr Heaton nor Cllr Thomas had been made aware of the monitoring meeting.

Borough Cllr Parfitt-Reid was unable to attend the meeting (at a meeting on Landscape and Ecology at the Town Hall) but had also sent a note regarding general concern about the MBC Call For Sites. Cllr Parfitt-Reid would like the process to be expedited, rather than delayed further into 2021 as some of the more senior MBC officers are trying to do, as she believes it could potentially expose the borough to the risk of being without a Local Plan, which would benefit opportunistic landowners/developers.

9. **PARISH COUNCILLORS**

9.1 **Liaison with External Bodies**

Cllr Thomas is in regular contact with the KALC representatives. They were due to meet with William Cornall at MBC, but he is busy with the Lenham Heath issue and no date has been arranged as yet to speak with someone else from MBC.

9.2 **Footpaths, Ditches and Flooding**

Cllr Heaton reported that there had been flooding in Grove Lane before Christmas. Cllr Goddard advised that he had organised someone to dig out the ditches on Grove Lane.

Jeremy Scott has cleared the ditches down to the Gudgeon but the culvert under the road is blocked. Cllr Heaton reported the blocked culvert to KCC, which was upgraded to an emergency. Conway came out but there was too much water for any action to be taken. It will have to wait until the water has gone down. The culvert from the flooding sign (at Smithfield House) has been dug away but water is coming up through the manhole near Scott's Farm.

At the mill, the water rose to within 2" of the top of a 7-foot cellar.

Cllr Lee asked whether anyone's house was damaged during the flooding; Cllr Heaton did not believe so.

Regarding footpaths, the stile has been taken away from the footpath from East Street to the church and

replaced with a gate.

9.3 **Communication & Events**

Cllr Trought advised that events need to be organised at the Village Club.

Cllr Heaton was concerned that the Hunton Facebook page is being used for nefarious activities (see Item 6.2); it would be worth reiterating that people need to exercise self-censorship and be more careful what they say. Members **Agreed** that the Clerk should ask Steve Wyles for some wording to this effect which can be included on the Hunton Facebook page. ACTION: CLERK

9.4 **Planning Issues and Consultations**

Cllr Thomas and Cllr Heaton met with Mark Egerton (Strategic Planning Manager) at MBC to discuss the sites put forward for Hunton in the Call For Sites exercise. Mr Egerton is in a difficult position as he may have to do what the government requires in terms of housing, rather than what is actually needed in the borough. There will be a delay in completing the review of sites put forward, which will probably be May rather than February. He did not give the criteria which will be applied when considering the sites. A total of 334 sites and 60,000 houses have been put forward in the whole borough. Mr Egerton considered the case put forward against the two sites in Hunton by Cllrs Thomas and Heaton was reasonable – the proposed development at Durrants Farm is too large and in an unsustainable location and Dingley Dell is a ribbon development outside Coxheath moving towards other parishes on ancient woodland.

Cllr Heaton noted that the general view is that planning officers are fed up with the planning system. A number of local authorities nearby are becoming non-compliant and are trying to lobby the government. Cllr Trought asked whether MBC would consider all sites put forward. Cllr Heaton advised that they have to look at all of them, but they would use a traffic light system at first to grade them. There is tension between the hub areas and rural areas. It is unlikely that the Durrants Farm site will go through and Mr Egerton did not appear to be pushing either of the two Hunton sites at all. If the Lenham Heath development goes through it will account for a lot of the housing allocation. Mr Egerton also said that many houses being built are the wrong size and are not selling, so they are not keen on the system. MBC has to take into account what is happening in neighbouring boroughs (areas such as Paddock Wood). MBC and KCC are working together regarding roads, recording traffic by mobile phone signals on a county-wide basis.

9.5 **Utilities**

Cllr Stanbridge was unable to attend the meeting.

10. **OTHER PARISH MATTERS**

10.1 **KALC Community Awards Scheme 2020**

The 2020 KALC Community Awards Scheme was launched in November 2019, with Member councils having the option of adopting the Scheme in their local area.

Members **Agreed** that they did not wish to adopt the KALC Community Awards in Hunton in 2020.

10.2 **Bins**

In September 2019, one of the bins in the car park near the Village Hall went missing. Despite numerous enquiries it has not been possible to locate the missing bin. There are four remaining bins in the car park and on the recreation ground, plus a mixed general/dog waste bin in the car park which is owned by Maidstone Borough Council.

Members **Agreed** that the missing bin should be replaced, and an additional bin should be provided; the Clerk will obtain prices.

ACTION: CLERK

10.3 **Clerk's Report**

Zurich Municipal has agreed to pay £955.12 (after deducting the £250 excess) for the damage caused during the cricket pavilion break in. Zurich has also offered £1,549 to replace the stolen mower. This will be received when a new mower is purchased.

The new barrier at the entrance to the car park has been insured with Zurich Municipal.

A letter has been received from Alison Broom at MBC in response to the letter sent by the Parish Council about not being allowed to speak at the MBC Planning Committee on 5th December 2019. MBC will look at how arrangements for speakers are communicated in future.

11. FINANCE

11.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st December 2019 was **Noted**.

11.2 Income Received

No income has been received since the last meeting.
Cllr Trought reviewed and signed the bank reconciliation.

11.3 Payments Made

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

SO – Sharon Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – November	£453.30
300318 – Q-Tec Solutions Ltd – Security lights	£708.00
300319 – David Heaton – Security lock for barrier	£35.94
300320 – Dave Brooker – Painting outside of the Village Hall	£221.06
300321 – Sharon Goodwin – Food for Christmas drinks (Chairman’s Allowance)	£71.72
300322 – David Heaton – Keys for barrier lock	£31.06
SO – Sharon Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – December	£453.30
Unity Trust Bank – Service charge	£18.00

11.4 Cheques for Signature

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

300323 – Hunton Village Club – Christmas drinks (Chairman’s Allowance)	£164.55
300324 – E.ON – Street lighting electricity	£14.73
300325 – Jacksons Fencing – Barrier at the entrance to the Village Hall car park	£2,733.88
300326 – Sharon Goodwin – Travel expenses/Postage/Stationery	£56.04

11.5 Hunton Bowls Club

(This item was moved after Item 6.2)

Members agreed at the last Parish Council meeting (on 18th November 2019) to contribute £1,000 towards the new Bowls Club changing rooms under s137 expenditure. The Bowls Club has asked for the contribution to be made as the project is nearly at completion.

Members **Approved** the contribution and cheque 300327 was written for £1,000, signed by Cllrs Trought and Goddard.

11.6 Village Hall

The Hunton Village Hall Committee is planning to install a new kitchen in the Village Hall and is seeking contributions from the Parish Council and the Hunton Herald towards the cost, which will be approximately £8,500. The Committee has asked for a contribution of £2,000 if possible.

Members **Agreed** to make a contribution of £2,000 and cheque 300328 was written for this amount, signed by Cllrs Goddard and Thomas.

Cllr Trought noted that the Village Hall will celebrate its centenary in 2026, so it will be an ideal opportunity to get the building in good shape for the next 100 years.

11.7 Heart of Kent Hospice

A letter has been received from the Heart of Kent Hospice, seeking a contribution. Last year 1,009 patients were referred to the Hospice, one of whom came from Hunton parish.

Members decided not to provide a contribution.

11.8 Fete Committee Funds

All members of the Hunton Fete Committee resigned last year, effectively disbanding the Committee which has organised nine fetes in the village. However, there is approximately £6,000 in funds remaining in the bank account which the Treasurer of the Committee would like to transfer to the Parish Council’s bank account in case others wish to resurrect the Fete in future or for use towards other events.

The KALC advisor, Clive Powell, suggested that the Fete Committee should be reconvened if possible, to

decide how the funds should be allocated. Members **Agreed** and Cllrs Heaton and Trought will organise a Fete Committee meeting. ACTION: CLLRS HEATON/TROUGHT

11.9 Parish Services Scheme Grant 2020/21

The details of the Parish Services Scheme Grant for 2020/21 have been received from Maidstone Borough Council. Members did not have any questions or comments about the grant, which amounts to £1,601 and is a slight increase on last year.

11.10 Budget and Parish Precept 2020/21

Members had received the budget papers produced by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Members **Agreed** the budget for 2020/21.

Members **Agreed** that the Precept should be set at £26,338, the same amount as last year. This creates a tax of £84.45 per property, an increase of £1.78. The Chairman and Clerk signed the Parish Precept Requirement 2020/21 form for submission to MBC. ACTION: CLERK

12. PLANNING

12.1 Planning Applications

12.1.1 Southover, Grove Lane – 20/500030/FULL

Erection of a single storey extension and internal alterations.
Parish Council recommendation: No objection.

12.1.2 Southover, Grove Lane – 20/500031/LBC

Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single storey extension and internal alterations.
Parish Council recommendation: No objection.

12.2 Planning Decisions

The following planning decisions, made by Maidstone Borough Council, were **Noted**:

12.2.1 The Old Pump House, West Street - 19/505361/FULL

Erection of single storey rear extension.
Parish Council recommendation: No objection.
Maidstone Borough Council decision: Permitted.

12.2.2 3 Bishops Oast, Bishops Lane - 19/505335/LBC

Listed Building Consent for proposed replacement of single glazed timber windows on a like-for-like basis.
Parish Council recommendation: No objection.
Maidstone Borough Council decision: Permitted.

12.2.3 Hilltop Farm, Shingle Barn Lane West Farleigh - 19/505751/PNQCL

Prior Notification for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to 1no. dwelling house (Class C3), and for associated operational development. For its prior approval to: - Transport and Highways impacts of the development - Contamination risks on the site - Flooding risks on the site - Noise impacts of the development - Whether the location or siting of the building makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the use of the building to change as proposed - Design and external appearance impacts on the building.
Parish Council recommendation: Comments made that it would be a shame to see another agricultural building converted into a dwelling in the countryside, particularly in such an unsustainable location and without services.
Maidstone Borough Council decision: Granted.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Monday 16th March 2020** at 7:30pm.

There being no further matters to discuss the meeting closed at 9:32pm.