

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 18TH JANUARY 2021 AT 7:30PM USING ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

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

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the public attended the meeting from Item 4 until Item 7.2 and another attended from Item 7.1.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence (all Members present).

2. FILMING AND RECORDING

The members of the public did not wish to film or record 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 23RD NOVEMBER 2020

The minutes of the meetings held on 23rd November 2020 had been previously distributed. Members approved the minutes. The Chairman will sign the official copy of the minutes at the next Full Council meeting held in person.

Cllr Heaton suggested that, as there are a number of minutes which need signing, due to holding virtual meetings, he could sign all the minutes at home, and this could be noted at the next meeting. The Clerk will check whether this is allowed.

ACTION: CLERK

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

Item 9.5 – The quote from Robert Cox was accepted for the maintenance of the hedge and verges on the permissive footpath.

6. POLICE

PCSO Vasey has provided a report. No crimes have been reported but anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note are:

- 09/01/2021 – Abandoned moped on East Street.
- Vehicles parking on the junction of Grove Lane Hunton, reported by a Hunton resident though not causing an obstruction so far. The PCSO will monitor and talk with the owners.

Cllr Heaton noted that PCSO Vasey can monitor vehicle parking at the junction of Grove Lane and West Street but has no powers from the point past the post box in Grove Lane as it is an unadopted road.

Cllr Heaton advised that he had called 999 before Christmas as there were two boys on Lughorse Lane carrying uncovered and unbroken air rifles. The police took it seriously as the boys were under 16 years of age and carrying an uncovered, unbroken air weapon is a firearms offence. It is not listed on the police report.

A Huntonwatch report has been received from Steve Wyles:

There are many scams doing the rounds, many taking advantage of the Covid situation, and many Huntonwatch members have reported receiving scam calls, texts and emails. Happily, we believe that previous advice and the fact that people are looking out for these things has meant nobody in the village has fallen victim.

There have only been a very small number of crimes or suspicious activities reported to us, mainly groups of people or cars hanging around for no apparent reason and one member (who lives just outside the village) had an attempt made to break into a car.

We are in regular contact with PCSO Paul Vasey and see him about once a week.

7. LOCAL COMMUNITY

7.1 King George V Playing Field Committee

The Chairman of the Committee, Steve Jones, has been down to the field at least twice in the last two weeks and found deep motorcycle tracks on the cricket outfield. The cricket square and football pitch have not been affected. The tracks lead to the north west corner of the field. The Committee will monitor the situation, but if there are recurring incidents the access to the field may need to be reconsidered.

The Committee is forecasting a carry forward of funds of approximately £7,000 to 2021/22 as spend has been limited due to Covid. There has been little capital expenditure and a new picnic table, matting and bin have all been funded by an MBC grant, with a small contribution from the Committee. Most expenditure this year has been on regular maintenance, approximately £3,500.

The Committee is very grateful for the funding received from the Parish Council, for the benefit of the village and the sports clubs, and would like to request that the funding continues at the same amount of £6,000 per annum for 2021/22.

Mr Jones thanked Members for the discussion at the last Parish Council meeting concerning the spend of the £10,000 MBC Business Rates grant received by the Parish Council. It was agreed at that meeting that some of the grant could be allocated to the Playing Field Committee to assist the sports clubs for their loss of income due to Covid. Written submissions have been made by each of the clubs. The amounts submitted by the Cricket Club and Bowls Club take into consideration funding received from their sports bodies. The recommendation from the Playing Field Committee is a grant of £3,000 from the Parish Council, which the Committee would then distribute to the clubs.

Cllr Heaton stated that this had been discussed previously and a one-off grant could be given to the Playing Field Committee under s19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. The Football Club has not received any funding from elsewhere, but if they did receive other funding, it would subsidise losses from the new year to the end of the season in 2021, whereas the Cricket Club and Bowls Club are covered for 2020.

Cllr Lee noted that the submission from the Cricket Club included a claim for stolen mowers and asked whether there was insurance. Mr Jones clarified that the Cricket Club is not requesting funding for the mower at the current time. The equipment stolen was second-hand and of relatively low value, but the Cricket Club could not insure it due to the conditions under which it was secured and is looking at options to increase security of the equipment to enable equipment to be purchased that can be insured. The £3,000 does not include the replacement mowers, that is purely for loss of income.

Members **Agreed** to the grant of £3,000 for the Playing Field Committee under s19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Mr Jones thanked the Parish Council. The Clerk will arrange the transfer of the grant to the Playing Field Committee using online banking, to be authorised by two Members.

ACTION: CLERK/MEMBERS

7.2 Traffic & Road Safety Working Party/Highways

Cllr Goddard reported that the Traffic & Road Safety Working Party (T&RSWP) has agreed the following proposal for lowering the speed limits on some of the roads in Hunton:

- A 30mph limit from the top of Hunton Hill to the school.
- Extend the 40mph limit from Scotts House round the corner, then start the national speed limit.
- Make the whole of East Street a 30mph limit.

It is expensive to change between speed limit zones. Cllr Goddard has costed the proposal and asked Jennie Watson at KCC to check it is accurate – she will be looking at it on 19th January. Cllr Goddard will then email Members or present it at the next Parish Council meeting. There is no particular rush as works are being delayed due to Covid.

ACTION: CLLR GODDARD

Cllr Goddard advised that a 'Road narrows' sign has been requested for the narrow section of road on East Street. Cllr Goddard will ask Jennie Watson for costings and reported back to the next Parish Council meeting

ACTION: CLLR GODDARD

A resident took a photograph of a Spanish lorry travelling down East Street from Redwall Lane. Cllr Goddard called Berry Gardens, who said it was unlikely to be one of theirs and was more likely to be from the north side of the Wares Farm site. However, they did agree to put a sign up at their exit as they want to work with the village. Cllr Ward noted that a member of the T&RSWP had looked at the site and said there were no signs on the exit from the north side of the site to instruct drivers to turn left. Members **Agreed** that the Clerk should write to Firmins to ask that signage is erected to advise drivers on the

direction they need to travel when they leave the site. ACTION: CLERK
Cllr Goddard advised that the T&RSWP is also liaising with KCC over culvert damage on Redwall Lane/George Street. Members of the T&RSWP will call the Berry Gardens depot if lorries are seen on the roads and the information can be provided to the Parish Council.
Cllr Ward noted that another item raised at the T&RSWP meeting was damage to the side of the road near Brickyard Cottages on Redwall Lane. Cllr Heaton agreed that there are a number of verge run overs in the village, which can be reported, but KCC may not take action. Members **Agreed** that the Clerk could report the verge damage near Brickyard Cottages to KCC Highways. ACTION: CLERK
Cllr Ward reported that the T&RSWP had suggested that the Parish Council could write a letter to Clockhouse Farm regarding the verge damage, but Cllr Heaton advised that it is not always tractors causing the damage, sometimes it is vans, and it is difficult to assign the damage to a particular business.

7.3 **Tree & Pond Warden**

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

Mr Summersgill has looked at the Oak tree on the field (ref T3 from the VTA) since the last meeting. Although there are two small dead limbs near the ground which could be removed relatively easily, there is a branch in the crown/canopy that looks dead and needs to be removed in the early spring. The Poplar tree in the far corner of the field (ref T2) needs to be looked at, to see whether it is a threat/risk to the road. Both trees require action within three months of the VTA. Mr Summersgill has said he will try to obtain costings of remedial work for the March 2021 Parish Council meeting.
Cllr Heaton does not believe there is a risk from the Poplar tree as it is down and can be left to rot.

8. **PARISH MATTERS**

8.1 **Coronavirus**

Steve and Sue Wyles of Huntonwatch have reinstated the meds collection service. All Huntonwatch members have been emailed and a post has been put on the Hunton Facebook page. There will also be a front-page item in the February Hunton Herald. So far, the take up has been minimal (four households) and many seem to be more comfortable with the arrangements at the various surgeries than they were first time around. Huntonwatch will monitor the situation and see whether the take up increases once the Hunton Herald is issued.

8.2 **Parish Councillors**

Cllr Ward advised that the railings are broken on the footbridge over the ditch to the permissive footpath near the Village Hall. Cllr Heaton assumed that as it is a capital item it is likely to be the responsibility of KCC PROW to fix the railings. Members **Agreed** that the Clerk should report the damage to KCC PROW. ACTION: CLERK
Cllr Trought provided an update on the Village Club. Various grants have been received to keep the Club going. The Club did the teas in November. Although it is closed, the Club is not doing badly.

8.3 **Culvert on Grove Lane**

Cllr Heaton noted that Grove Lane is a problem as it is an unadopted road and queried with Cllr Goddard whether the culvert should be the responsibility of the residents.
Cllr Goddard advised that maintenance costs for fixing potholes and clearing ditches is split between the residents. Cllr Goddard asked whether the road could be adopted by the Parish Council. Cllr Heaton did not feel that the Parish Council could commit to the capital expenditure of replacing the culvert on Grove Lane, but as it has an effect on West Street and the school, as well as Grove Lane, the Parish Council could consider cleaning the culvert a couple of times a year.
Cllr Goddard advised that, to clear the culvert under the road, a camera would need to be put down to see if it is blocked or has collapsed. If it could be cleared it would reduce the flooding on the roads. KCC have tried to blow water through the culvert previously but it did not go through. Cllr Goddard will obtain quotes for the clearing of the culvert. ACTION: CLLR GODDARD
Cllr Heaton noted that the culvert in Lughorse Lane has collapsed. The pipe is not very big and is being replaced with a plastic pipe. Cllr Heaton suggested speaking to Betts, as some flooding is due to land use because the water is coming off the fields quickly. It needs to be kept on the fields. Cllr Goddard has spoken to Betts – they are committed to leaving crops on the fields which absorb water and mitigate rainfall.

Cllr Ward advised that the road always floods further down West Street near the Gudgeon, but the last time it happened residents said it took longer to drain away and there was an unpleasant odour. Cllr Heaton does not believe the culvert there was blocked; it was just sheer volume of water, although Cllr Goddard advised that it was a bit silted up. Cllr Heaton stated again that the water needs to be kept on the land, otherwise it brings the silt down. Cllr Heaton noticed that there are barriers at Gudgeon Oast and is not sure if the banks are collapsing.

8.4 Storage Container

Cllr Heaton has checked the cost of containers on eBay, which are generally in the region of £1,600, plus the cost of collection, so the £2,000 quote from Mr Lawrence for a 20-foot container is reasonable. It would also be painted green and have the correct security lock. This would be a reconditioned container. Cllr Thomas asked where the container would be located, why a 20-foot container would be needed and what it would contain. After some discussion, it was agreed that a 10-foot container located alongside the existing container near the Football Club would be preferable as it would be more aesthetically pleasing than a 20-foot container located on the road side of the car park. The container will be used for machinery, gazebos, the apple press and other items used for village activities. Cllr Stanbridge felt it should be in view of the CCTV cameras.

Members **Agreed** in principle to the purchase of a 10-foot container at a cost of £1,600. Cllr Heaton will measure the suggested area for location to ensure the container will fit. ACTION: CLLR HEATON

8.5 Website

The Clerk has spoken to clerks at five parish councils which use parishcouncil.net as their website provider. Four clerks were complimentary, but one had an issue with response times.

Members **Agreed** that parishcouncil.net should still be used.

The next stage is the completion of the Website Development Brief, a lengthy document which allows the Parish Council to provide the specification for the website. The Clerk suggested that several Members may wish to be involved so that the website includes the requirements of the Parish Council. Cllrs Stanbridge and Ward **Agreed** to form a small working party with the Clerk to assist in the completion of the Website Development Brief. Cllr Lee suggested that it would be useful to have a map on the website and that the website name should be for Hunton Kent as there are other villages named Hunton in the country.

ACTION: CLERK/CLLR WARD/CLLR STANBRIDGE

The Clerk had completed a spreadsheet showing the basic content required for the Parish Council. Cllr Ward suggested that the Parish Council website should include the content from the village website to save users having to go to both sites. The Clerk will speak to the village website Webmaster.

ACTION: CLERK

8.6 KALC Community Awards Scheme 2021

KCC launched the 2021 KALC Community Awards Scheme in November 2020, 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 two recipients for the award. Cllr Heaton **Agreed** to contact the recipients to ensure they are happy to accept it.

ACTION: CLLR HEATON

8.7 Clerk's Report

The Clerk did not have any items to report.

9. FINANCE

9.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st December 2020 was **Noted**.

9.2 Income Received

No income has been received since the last meeting.

The bank reconciliation was provided to Members for review but will need to be signed by one Member at the next Full Council meeting held in person.

9.3 **Payments Made**

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

SO – Sharon Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – November	£464.47
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Unity Trust Bank – Service charge	£18.00

9.4 **Electronic Payments**

Members **Agreed** that the following payments be approved. Cllrs Stanbridge and Ward will authorise the payments set up in Unity Trust Bank using online banking:

E.ON – Street lighting electricity	£14.73
Sharon Goodwin – Expenses	£121.12
King George’s Field Hunton – Grant	£3,000.00

9.5 **MBC Business Rates Grant**

The provision of a grant to the Playing Field Committee from the MBC Business Rates Grant was considered under Item 7.1.

9.6 **Budget and Parish Precept 2021/22**

Members had received the budget papers produced by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Members **Agreed** the budget for 2021/22.

Members **Agreed** that the Precept should be set at £26,338, the same amount as the last two years. This creates a tax of £83.09 per property, a decrease of £1.36. The Chairman and Clerk will sign the Parish Precept Requirement 2021/22 form for submission to MBC. **ACTION: CLERK/CLLR HEATON**

10. **PLANNING**

10.1 **Planning Decisions**

Members **Noted** the following planning decision, made by Maidstone Borough Council since the last Planning Committee meeting:

10.1.1 **Lantern Cottage, Barn Hill - 20/505445/FULL**

Demolition of existing pergola, erection of a single storey flat roof side extension and installation of 3no. Rooflights to north elevation. Erection of a new pergola and conversion of outbuilding to outdoor kitchen, including internal alterations and associated hard and soft landscaping alterations.

Parish Council recommendation: No objection.

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Permitted.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next full Parish Council meeting is on Monday 15th March 2021 at 7:30pm.

There being no further matters to discuss the meeting closed at 8:48pm.