

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 17TH JANUARY 2022 AT 7:30PM AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr D Heaton in the Chair, Cllrs A Trought, M Summersgill, T Stanbridge and I Simmons, and Mrs S Goodwin, Clerk.

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the public was in attendance. County Cllr Webb was in attendance from Item 8.1 to Item 10.4.

OPEN SESSION:

Cllr Summersgill introduced Jean Fuller, who was attending to observe the Parish Council meeting, with a view to being co-opted as a parish councillor.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Goddard.

2. FILMING AND RECORDING

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

3. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

3.1 Declaration of Interests

Cllr Simmons declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 10.3, being Chair of Governors at Hunton CEP School.

3.2 Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 15TH NOVEMBER 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2021 had been previously distributed. The Chairman signed the official copy of the minutes.

5. PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY

Following the notification from MBC that the vacancy on the Parish Council could be filled through co-option, it has been advertised on the notice boards and website since October 2021. As of 16th January, the Clerk had not received any expressions of interest.

Members **Agreed** that it they would need to try and find a parish councillor as the advertisements had not been successful. **ACTION: ALL MEMBERS**

Cllr Heaton confirmed that the term of office for a co-opted councillor is the same as for all councillors, to the date of the next election (May 2024).

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

Item 10.4 – The Clerk contacted Kent Fire & Rescue Service to sign the Parish Council up to the fire hydrant initiative.

Item 13.5 – The additional CCTV camera has been installed.

7. POLICE

7.1 Police

No crimes have been logged on the e-watch website since the last Parish Council meeting. PCSO Goodwin was contacted to see if he could attend the meeting, but a response was not received.

7.2 Huntonwatch

Huntonwatch do not have anything to report.

8. LOCAL COMMUNITY

8.1 King George V Playing Field Committee

The Chairman of the Committee, Steve Jones, sent his apologies for not attending the meeting but provided the following report:

Boundary fence:

The Playing Field Committee had further discussions with regards to the boundary on the North-West corner of the field and concluded that a hedge would be the most cost effective and aesthetically pleasing solution, with the possibility of combining this with the addition of new trees under the Platinum Jubilee Queen's Green Canopy scheme.

Requests for funding:

Following the Parish Council's agreement at their last meeting to pay £500 to help towards the purchase of a new mower for the Bowls Club, the Playing Field Committee agreed to make up the final shortfall in funds of £500.

Football Club changing rooms:

Members of the Parish Council gained access to the Football Club changing rooms in November and carried out a health, safety and condition survey. The initial draft findings of the visit were presented to the Playing Field Committee and highlighted issues with the electrics, gas, drainage, plumbing, heating, security and fire safety. The recommended minimum scope of remedial works required to ensure the building is safe and secure contained 10 items, including wiring replacement (both internal and external), reinstatement of the fire exit, new fire signage and equipment, new toilet and a replacement front door and frame.

Members discussed the planting of a hedge to the north of the field, using a combination of hawthorn and blackthorn plants, which is supported by the sports clubs and could be paid for by the Playing Field Committee. These plants have spikes which would provide security and are much more aesthetically pleasing than a fence. If the hedge is planted on the flat area, approximately 10 metres away from the football pitch, there will be space between the hedge and the poplar trees on the boundary to plant trees (possibly oak and hazel) for the Queen's Green Canopy for the Platinum Jubilee and it would also provide a wildlife corridor. A post and wire fence would probably need to be installed to support the plants, with a gate at the road end.

Cllrs Heaton and Stanbridge outlined the results of their survey of the Football Club changing rooms in November 2021, which was reported to the Playing Field Committee. The Parish Council need to carry out certain works (such as electrics, new toilet, new door), but the Football Club must keep the changing rooms clean and well maintained. The Football Club also need to clarify the purpose of the changing rooms – just for storage or for use of the full facilities. If the Parish Council is to make a significant investment, the Football Club will have to make a commitment to keep the changing rooms well maintained.

Members **Agreed** that a quote should be obtained for the electrical work and a new door/concrete lintel.

ACTION: CLERK

Members **Agreed** that an agreement should be put in place to set out the requirements of the Parish Council for the use of the changing rooms and **Agreed** that the Kent County Playing Fields Association should be contacted to see if they have a proforma document.

ACTION: CLERK

Members **Agreed** that the report should be sent to the manager of the Football Club to consider; to ask him to clarify what the Football Club want to use the changing rooms for; and to advise that maintenance needs to be kept up otherwise the facility could close.

ACTION: CLERK

8.2 Traffic & Road Safety Working Party/Highways

Cllr Goddard was unable to attend the meeting, but Cllr Summersgill explained that the work to be undertaken by KCC Highways will most likely happen in the next financial year now. Cllr Summersgill had copied Cllr Goddard into discussions on Redwall Lane. Cllr Summersgill is planning to organise a meeting of the Traffic & Road Safety Working Party (T&RSWP), whose membership currently consists of Cllr Summersgill, Cllr Goddard, Cllr Simmons and three residents. Cllr Heaton asked that the T&RSWP considers usage of the Speedwatch equipment and, with regard to Redwall Lane, there is no indication that lorries turning out of Berry Gardens are entering a 7.5T limit, so there should be an official highways sign.

ACTION: CLLR SUMMERSGILL

8.3 Tree & Pond Warden

Cllr Summersgill advised that the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) is due in April. He will organise the VTA and report back to the next Parish Council meeting.

ACTION: CLLR SUMMERSGILL

People have been out to East Street to survey Great Crested Newts, so it looks as though the East Street water main replacement should happen this year. Cllr Stanbridge advised that he has been assured that it

will.

Cllr Summersgill was asked to look at an orange ditch on George Street, which he is monitoring as he is concerned about it getting into the River Beult. All ditches leading to the pond on Redwall Lane have been checked and are fine.

9. COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

9.1 County Councillor

County Cllr Simon Webb had provided a written report for Members. Cllr Webb's work for KCC involves a lot of committee work spanning the whole county. In Adult Social Care contracts are being negotiated with carers. Cuts of £3million had to be made from last year across the whole council. Discretionary spending to Maidstone Borough Council is being cut.

9.2 Borough Councillors

Borough Cllr Simon Webb had provided a written report for Members. His work for the Borough Council is more interesting as it is more local. As Vice-Chair of the Communities, Housing & Environment Committee, he is trying to reduce the amount of fly tipping through the employment of more officers and therefore more patrols, which has been reported in the Kent Messenger. The Liberal Democrats wanted to keep Park & Ride, whereas the Conservatives do not. The service requires a £160,000 subsidy per annum and Arriva wanted another £100,000, which MBC refused. It costs £60 per person who uses the service and is not value for money. The Liberal Democrats also want a new leisure centre in Maidstone which would cost £30 million. Having visited the existing leisure centre, it needs maintenance, but a new leisure centre is not necessary. Two girls have been attacked in Brenchley Gardens in Maidstone; the park is now going to be enclosed by a metal fence and locked at night.

Cllr Summersgill asked what would happen to the Park & Ride sites, as a previous site at Armstrong Road was developed into housing. Cllr Webb did not know but hoped it would not be housing.

10. PARISH MATTERS

10.1 Parish Councillors

Cllr Trought reported that the Village Club has a lot of events coming up. The AGM had taken place, with not much change.

Cllr Summersgill advised that it would cost £2,500 to £3,000 to install an electrical vehicle charging point if the Parish Council installed one itself. There has been no further progress on the KCC application yet, which received 36 out of 45 points.

Cllr Summersgill is sourcing trees for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. MBC have put in a call for tree sites but want large sites and provide match funding.

Cllr Heaton reported that residents of The Chances are burning garden material on bonfires on the access land to The Chances (which is not their land). Members **Agreed** that this should be reported to

Environmental Health and Community Protection at MBC.

ACTION: CLERK

10.2 Flooding

Cllrs Summersgill, as a new Flood Warden, had appeared in the Downs Mail. He receives a Flood Warden newsletter and is continuing to compile the flooding history of Hunton. As a result of an article in the Hunton Herald, two residents want to talk to him about their flooding history.

There was a slight flood on West Street as a result of torrential rain, but it cleared quite quickly.

There was a flood at the end of East Street on Christmas Day which blew a culvert up, and a driveway.

KCC cleared it up but are still looking into the reasons for the issue with the culvert. Cllr Heaton advised that the Parish Council can close flooded roads.

A meeting was held with Betts and some West Street residents. Betts have agreed to leave a margin at the edge of the field, so it is not planted right to the boundary, and they will also turn furrows round 90 degrees, to prevent mud washing off the field to neighbouring properties.

10.3 Land Adjacent to Hunton CEP School

Cllr Simmons reported that, two years ago, Hunton Court wanted to gift land to the school to alleviate parking pressure for the school and West Street. This proved to be difficult to arrange and nothing further happened. Cllr Simmons is still engaged with the landowner, who would still like to help the school.

There are two options – for the land to be gifted to the village and run by the Parish Council and for the land to be leased by the school at a peppercorn rent. The owner would prefer the second option, but as

nothing has been decided, Cllr Simmons asked whether the Parish Council would support the first option in principle.

Members' thoughts were that if land is given to the village in perpetuity, a management committee would need to be formed, with the parish councillors as trustees. The car park would need a gate and be locked at night. It would take the parking off West Street, would be a community benefit, and could be used by visitors to the almshouses. A set of objectives would need to be set for the community benefit. There could be issues with how to finance the surfacing of the land so it is usable for parking and there would be maintenance costs to consider. There was concern about more cars exiting Bishops Lane to West Street as it is a problematic junction, and also that it would not be of that much benefit to residents. Cllr Stanbridge noted that Collier Street had some parking issues, but there is now a car park there which is gated and surfaced, so it may be worth contacting the headteacher at the Collier Street school for more information. East Farleigh also have a car park.

Overall, Members **Agreed** in principle that Cllr Simmons should further explore the options for a car park.

ACTION: CLLR SIMMONS

10.4 Neighbourhood Plan

Members agreed that it would be advantageous to have a Neighbourhood Plan for Hunton to help with planning but that it is a very big undertaking and would require a working party to carry out the work and professional advice. Members agreed that it would be worth exploring the idea further, to find out costs, how long it would take, scope, etc – then a decision could be made on whether to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. Members **Agreed** that Cllr Simmons should contact MBC for advice.

ACTION: CLLR SIMMONS

Member **Agreed** that Cllr Summersgill should contact Yalding and Marden parish councils and Cllr Heaton should contact Loose Parish Council as they have been through the process.

ACTION: CLLR SUMMERSGILL/CLL HEATON

10.5 Fibre Optic Cabling

Cllr Summersgill reported that several East Street residents have contacted him about fibre optic cabling in the village. Residents have found that when they contact BT individually, BT say there is no demand. If residents request it in larger numbers, it is more likely to be installed, which could be done formally through the Parish Council. Cllr Stanbridge **Agreed** to contact BT although they have not been very receptive previously.

ACTION: CLLR STANBRIDGE

Cllr Summersgill will send some information to Cllr Stanbridge, and if it looks as though fibre optic cabling is an option for the village, he will put an article in the Hunton Herald to encourage residents to register on the BT website.

ACTION: CLLR SUMMERSGILL

10.6 KALC Community Awards

The 2022 KALC Community Awards Scheme was launched in November 2021, with Member councils having the option of adopting the Scheme in their local area. Members **Agreed** that the Scheme would not be adopted this year.

10.7 Clerk's Report

A request has been received from Astra Recycling, a textile recycling company which diverts used clothing away from landfill and raises money for schools, community services and charities in the process. The company has asked if there is anywhere in the parish that they could place a textile bank for donation of unwanted clothes, accessories and bed linen. Members **Agreed** not to have a textile bank in the village but Cllr Summersgill will contact Maidstone Lions, who are undertaking recycling initiatives.

ACTION: CLLR SUMMERSGILL

The E.ON electricity account for the streetlight electricity has been migrated to Npower Commercial Gas Limited (part of the E.ON Group).

11. CONSULTATION

11.1 KCC – Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 – Regulation 18 Consultation

The Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 (KMWLP) was adopted in July 2016 with some limited changes adopted in 2020 as part of the Early Partial Review. Having been adopted five years ago, the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 has been reviewed to assess whether updates to the Plan's Vision, Strategic Objectives, policies and supporting text are required.

Cllr Summersgill has looked at the consultation which has no direct effect on Hunton, as it has no current mineral abstraction locations, and neither have adjacent Parishes. Members **Agreed** to not respond to the consultation.

12. FINANCE

12.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st December 2021 was **Noted**.

12.2 Income Received

Members **Noted** that the following income has been received since the last meeting:

Maidstone Borough Council – Parish Services Scheme grant – 2 nd half	£819.50
Hunton Parish Hall Committee – FIT	£371.81

The bank reconciliation was reviewed and signed by Cllr Stanbridge.

12.3 Payments Made

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

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

12.4 Electronic Payments

Members **Approved** the following payments. Cllrs Stanbridge and Summersgill will authorise the payments set up in Unity Trust Bank using online banking:

Robert Cox – Permissive footpath hedge and verge maintenance	£500.00
E.ON – Street lighting electricity	£11.22
Npower – Street lighting electricity	£8.87
KALC – Climate Change Conference	£48.00
Q-Tec Solutions Ltd – New CCTV DVR	£588.00
Hunton Village Club – Chairman’s Allowance – Christmas gathering (drinks)	£101.75
Cllr Goddard – Chairman’s Allowance – Reimbursement for Christmas gathering (food)	£250.28
Hunton Parish Hall Committee – Contribution towards running costs (2 nd half)	£500.00
Hunton Bowls Club – Contribution towards new mower	£500.00
Sharon Goodwin – Travel / Postage / Stationery / Chairman’s Allowance (reimbursement for food for Christmas gathering)	£115.76
SLCC – Annual membership subscription	£112.00

12.5 Heart of Kent Hospice

An email has been received from the Heart of Kent Hospice, seeking a grant. Last year 1,769 patients received care from the Hospice, four of whom came from Hunton parish.

Members **Agreed** not to contribute.

12.6 Fete Committee Funds

All members of the Hunton Fete Committee resigned in 2019, effectively disbanding the Committee. However, there is approximately £6,000 in funds remaining in the bank account which the previous members of the Fete Committee would like to be transferred to the Parish Council in case others wish to resurrect the Fete in future or for use towards other events. The KALC advisor has provided some advice previously. Cllr Heaton suggested that a trust could be set up, as a continuing entity, with the Parish Council as trustee. A trust document would need to be written up. Members **Agreed** that Unity Trust Bank, the Parish Council’s bank, should be contacted for advice. ACTION: CLERK

12.7 Budget and Parish Precept 2022/23

Members received the budget papers produced by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Members **Agreed** the budget for 2022/23.

Members **Agreed** that the Precept should be set at £26,338, the same amount as the last three years. This creates a tax of £82.48 per property, a decrease of £0.61. The Chairman and Clerk signed the Parish Precept Requirement 2022/23 form for submission to MBC. ACTION: CLERK

13. PLANNING

13.1 Planning Application

- 13.1.1 The Old Stables, Salters Cross, Vicarage Road, Yalding – 21/506878/LBC**
Listed Building Consent for insertion of replacement windows, doors and frames.
Parish Council recommendation: No objection.

13.2 Planning Decisions

No planning decisions have been made by Maidstone Borough Council since the last Planning Committee meeting.

The Clerk will check the date that a decision needs to be made on application 21/502279/FULL relating to The Chances. ACTION: CLERK

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Parish Council meeting will be held at 7:30pm on Monday 21st March 2022 at Hunton Village Hall.

There being no further matters to discuss the meeting closed at 9:53pm.