

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE METHODIST OLD CHURCH HALL ON MONDAY 20th MARCH 2006 AT 20.10 HOURS

PRESENT: Cllrs: D Boyle (Vice-Chairman) Bearman . Crawford, Poole, Street , & Whiteside

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs. E Jones (Temporary Clerk) County Cllr. Richard Long, Borough Cllrs. Mrs E Holland; H Rogers; M Balfour (Cabinet member for Planning & Transportation) & P Bolt (Chairman, Policy & best Value Committee)

APOLOGIES: Apologies were NOTED from Cllrs Mrs Cresswell, Mrs Curry, Cresswell, Gardner & Shead

1. Opening of Meeting

The meeting was opened by the Vice Chairman, who welcomed everyone and read out a note from the Clerk thanking everyone for their cards and good wishes upon the birth of her baby daughter and extended an invitation to all members to call and see her if they wish. She does intend to bring Caitlin in when the weather is warmer.

2. Declarations of Interests There were no declarations of interest

3. Report from Borough & County Councillors

(a) Borough Cllr Mrs Holland

Mrs Holland advised that she understood that Holy Trinity Church had recently requested assistance from the Parish Council to meet the cost of providing access for the disabled at their main entrance. She is hopeful that some help for this project can possibly be obtained through KCC's Capital Grants scheme.

(b) Borough Cllr Balfour

Mr Balfour advised that Govia had intended to come and speak, but had been held up.

(c) County Cllr Richard Long

It was agreed that Standing Orders be suspended when Cllr Long arrives to permit him to speak.

4. Parishioners Question time

Mr Sales advised that he has seen a copy of the Lease which was recently circulated and observed that it only referred to 5 acres of land, whereas he thought the Playing Field measured 13 acres. If this is the case, the Parish Council should be asked permission to erect any equipment on their land. Mr Sales also stated that local organizations are permitted to be represented on the Playing Fields Management Committee and, as far as he is aware, no invitation has been issued to organizations to send a representative. Mr Sales asked the Parish Council to investigate these points.

Mr Cowley asked for the date of the Council's AGM. To avoid confusion, the following dates were confirmed:

Annual Parish Meeting:	3rd April 2006
Annual Parish Council Meeting:	8th May 2006

5. Parish Council

a. Minutes of the meeting held on 20th February 2006

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 20th February 2006 were **confirmed and signed** as a correct record of the proceedings

b. Matters Arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

[i] **The Hop Farm** (Page 3074, Item 4b)

The Management Committee at the Hop Farm have issued 100x 1-day Family passes to The Hop Farm to be awarded at the Parish Council's discretion. The local primary school has been contacted and it has been established that there are 155 families represented at the School, taking into account that some families have two or more children there. **RESOLVED** that the Farm be asked whether they are able to extend their offer in order that each family may receive a pass. The Hop Farm has asked that recipients be reminded that they **must** gain entry through the front entrance.

It was **NOTED** that the scrap heap has been mentioned to the grounds manager, who will ensure that the pile starts coming down in due course.

[ii] **Highway Lighting** (Page 3087, Item 10d)

The Clerk reported that when she rang EDF Energy to query the price difference for two identical ballast units, she was advised that the invoices were issued in error as the Parish Council has an inclusive maintenance contract. The Highway Lighting Department promised to put the work in hand without delay.

c. Parish Council Website: Update

Cllr. Poole reported that the finishing touches are being carried out. Items are soon to be indexed and sent to the Hosts. It was **NOTED** that Cllr Poole decided against the issue of the website cards until the site is available, which it is hoped will be in time for the Annual Parish Meeting.

d. Annual Parish Meeting (03.04.06)

[i] **Content of Annual Report**

Cllr Poole expressed concern that the Reports for the Emergency Planning Group and the Community & Police Working Group were missing from the Annual Report. The Clerk was advised that these were submitted in early January and December respectively and she agreed to investigate. **RESOLVED** that copies of both these reports be available at the Annual Parish Meeting.

[ii] **Guest Speakers**

It was confirmed that the following had accepted the PCs invitation to date:

- Mr. D Williams (TMBC Crime & Reduction Partnership) & Ms Shirley Fiddock (Community Warden) - Policing & Community update
- TMBC representatives – A presentation on what TMBC does for young people with young people themselves presenting a section on the Youth Forum.
- Sue Finnigan, of the Small Change Project

The above speakers will be contacted during the coming week to confirm their attendance.

[iii] **Billy Can Awards**

Cllr Boyle agreed to obtain the shields and deliver to the Clerk for engraving; he has already provided the Clerk with details of the recipients for 2006

[iv] **Sound System**

It was confirmed that the Salvation Army's sound system will be available for the meeting.

e. **Annual Parish Council Meeting**

A note on file had referred to calling an informal meeting to discuss the length of time which the Chairman of the Parish Council should serve in future. RESOLVED that this should be listed as an Agenda item at the April Parish council meeting, rather than be discussed informally.

f. **Village Sign: Progress Report**

It was noted that Signs of the Times had promised to e-mail a progress report for tonight's meeting, but have failed to do so. The Clerk agreed to make an urgent call tomorrow, 21st March 2006.

g. **Kent Village of the Year Competition**

Cllr Peter Street advised that the application will be submitted by the end of the month.

h. **Christmas Lights**

A response to enquiries from Hadlow Parish Council was READ and it was NOTED that their lights were purchased from Gala Lights of Maidstone and installed by Ditton Electrical Contracts. The lighting is organized through Hadlow Traders who have, in the past, obtained a grant towards these costs. RESOLVED that Gala Lights be contacted for further information.

6. **Planning Committee**

Minutes of meetings held on 20th February & 6th March 2006

The minutes of the meetings, which were copied to members, were approved

7. **TMBC**

- a. Here & Now Issue No.1 February/March 2006 **NOTED**
- b. Agenda for the Joint Transportation Board meeting, 6th March 2006 + relevant papers **NOTED**
- c. Serving you better – a Community Strategy for Tonbridge & Malling
It was NOTED that the draft strategy document can be downloaded by visiting the website www.tmbc.gov.uk/cgi-bin/buildpage.pl?mysql+1560
- d. Saturday Bulky Rubbish skip
NOTED this Parish Council's complaint regarding reversing skip vehicles has been forwarded to the Chief Environmental Health Officer (operations) for his attention.
- e. East Peckham Summer Playscheme
A response to this Council's questions was READ and it was felt that it should be possible for latecomers to be registered as required upon their arrival.
- f. Crime & Disorder Best Value sub-Committee – Minutes of meeting held 14/02/06
Borough Cllr. Bolt advised that the final Crime & Disorder Report has not yet been submitted and points of view are still welcome.
- g. Minutes of Cabinet and Committee meetings 13/12/05 – 14/02/06 **NOTED**

- h. Gardening for Wildlife Award Scheme 2006 & Gardening Seminar
NOTED this information has been posted on the Noticeboard. Cllr Whiteside took a leaflet for the Allotments.
- i. Licensing Act 2003
A copy of a letter to the Secretary of State expressing concerns regarding issues which have arisen following the implementation of the 2003 Licensing Act was READ and NOTED. This urged that Parish Councils be returned to the list of responsible authorities
- j. Grants to Parish Councils 2004/05
NOTED the post installation inspection report on the new play equipment is satisfactory and the £2,778.50 balance of the Grant has now been released.
- k. Town & Parish Councils Standards Sub-Committee
 - [i] *Annual Report 2005* **NOTED**
 - [ii] *Nominations for Vacancy* **READ AND NOTED**

8. KCC

- a. Technical Services **NOTED. Information to be kept on file**
- b. Are Tonbridge & Malling Students top of the class? **It was NOTED from the report of the Local Board Meeting that , overall, children educated within Tonbridge & Malling are achieving higher SATs results than both Kent and national figures show.**

9.. Groups & Organisations

- a. **Committee of Sports Hall & Playing Field Management:**
A letter from the Chairman of the Sports Hall & Playing Field Management Committee was READ and it was NOTED that the Committee is currently negotiating with the Borough Council for the skatepark grant to be reallocated for childrens' play equipment. The total cost of the play equipment is £43,883 and a Grant request has been submitted to TMBC. The Committee asked the Parish Council for a sum of £10,970 towards the project, to include the £10,500 which was set aside in Reserves.
After considerable discussion, it was PROPOSED by Cllr Poole, SECONDED by Cllr Crawford, that a letter be sent to the Sports Hall & Management Committee asking that all work be placed on hold until the permission of the Parish Council has been obtained for it to proceed. A letter setting out full proposals is required by the Council. CARRIED NEM CON. It was FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee also be advised that the Parish Council considers that a proper Constitution is a prerequisite for its operation. The Clerk was asked to place an item "Future of the Playing Fields Committee" on the Agenda of the April Parish Council meeting.
- b. **Community & Police Working Group**
NOTED this Committee will be meeting shortly.
- c. **Village Design Statement: progress report**
Cllr Whiteside reported that very few people had attended the recent meeting, but a further meeting will be arranged shortly.
- d. **Tonbridge & Malling Crime Prevention Panel: Minutes & Agenda** **NOTED**
- e. **Paddock Wood & District Action Plan Steering Group: Action Plan/Poster**
NOTED Poster is on Noticeboard.

- f. **The Rural Community Council for Kent & Medway:**
NOTED the Council's application for a DEFRA Parish Plan Grant has been unsuccessful
- g. **Local Board Meeting, 9th March 2006 -**
 A Report from Cllr Mrs Cresswell was **READ & NOTED**
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Standing Orders were suspended at this point in the meeting to permit County Cllr. Richard Long to speak

10. Report from County Councillor

Cllr Long apologised for his late arrival; he had come directly from another meeting. He reported that it appears that he has been successful in securing £10,000 from the 'Second Homes' money towards the Teen shelter project, which he hopes will prove to be popular. At this point several residents asked questions about the proposed shelter, to which the Chairman replied. It was NOTED that, although it will be enclosed the walls will be transparent and it was reported that Hadlow already has two of these. The Clerk was asked to make enquiries of the Clerk at Hadlow regarding the success of these shelters.

11. Finance

- a. **Bank Reconciliation as at 28.02.06**
 The information, which had been prepared by the Clerk & copied to members, was noted.
- b. **NALC Direct Information Service – subscription renewal**
RESOLVED this subscription be renewed for 2006/07: £90 +VAT
- c. **The Kent Men of Trees – subscription renewal**
RESOLVED this subscription be renewed for 2006: £25
- d. **KAPC Membership/Local Council Review/Parish News – subscription renewal**
RESOLVED this subscription be renewed for the year to 31/03/07: £701.43 + VAT
- e. **British Gas Business – new charges** NOTED
- f. **Hospice in the Weald – request for Financial Assistance)** HELD OVER until
- g. **Kenward Trust- request for Financial Assistance**) Annual Parish Council Mtg
- e. **Financial Transactions**

Receipts since 20.02.06

16/03/06	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council: balance of Grant	2778.50
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Payments made since 23.02.06

23/02/06	*D/D British Gas. Sports Hall Gas Supply (S19)	83.00
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Payments for Approval

Mrs K Bell:	Maternity Pay March '06	1084.53
Mrs E Jones:	Expenses March.06 (S112)	49.46
Mrs J Cresswell:	Chairman's Expenses 28/09/05 – 09/03/06	45.32

Proludic::	Supply & installation of Play Equipment	14,854.00	
		VAT <u>2,599.45</u>	17,453.45**
	** The balance of this account (£3,632) will be paid, plus VAT by the Playing Fields Committee		
EDF Energy:	S/L Maintenance March.'06	275.90	
		VAT <u>48.28</u>	324.18
Sweepclean (Kent) Ltd:	Service 8/02/2006	75.00	
		VAT <u>13.13</u>	88.13
KCC Commercial Services:	*Cleaning Supplies for Sports Hall	32.76	
		VAT <u>5.74</u>	38.50
Mid-Kent Water::	Metered Supply to Allotments		57.87
Mid-Kent Water	*Standing charge – Sports Hall		12.00
Shirley Fiddock:	Coffee morning expenses, as agreed		<u>28.16</u>
Total approved:			19,181.60

*** Payments to be charged to the Sports Hall and Playing Field Management Grant**

In response to questions regarding the Proludic account, the Clerk provided a breakdown of the funding; It was NOTED that the full Grant awarded by the Borough Council is now in the Parish Council's Account

12. Correspondence

It was reported that the following items had been received:

- a. NALC: Local Council Review: March 2006
- b. Page & Wells: Community Warden
- c. Kent Men of Trees: AGM Saturday 22nd April 2006 – Egerton Village Hall
- d. Kenward Trust: New Life – Issue One 2006
- e. Local Councils Update – Issue 75/76 – January/February 2006
- f. Government Computing: March 2006
- g. B N Pumps Ltd: Details of drain jetting and surveys
- h. Rural Community Council – Rural News No.72
- i. Medway Valley Countryside Partnership – How MVCP can help your Parish

- j. Fieldwork: March 2006
- k. Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust: Trust News, February 2006
- l. East Peckham Residents' Association – Scarecrow Competition
- m. The Clerk: March 2006
- n. Local Councils Update: March 2006
- o. Hospice in the Weald News: Spring 2006
- p. Clerks & Councils Direct: March 2006
- q. Countryside Voice: Spring 2006
- r. Miracle Design & Play: Product Details
- s. Macemain + Amstad: Product Details
- t. Kent Police: Area Restructuring
- u. Kent Enviropower: River Rubbish Round-up 22nd April 2006
- v. NAPS (Christopher Ryan): Local Signs
 AGREED Council members take stock of the cleanliness and condition of local signs whilst delivering their Annual Reports. An item to be placed on the Agenda for the Council's April Meeting.

Cllr Street felt that special mention should be made of the letter from Page & Wells regarding the Community Warden.. Shirley Fiddock is described as highly motivated, skilled, diplomatic and diligent within the community and that she has made the village a pleasure to live in. RESOLVED a copy of the letter be sent to Shirley. Cllr Street added that he is also impressed with Shirley and feels she deserves greater recognition.

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Standing Orders were suspended to allow Borough Cllrs Balfour and Bolt to speak and answer questions.

Cllr Poole asked whether the Multi-Agency Steering Group is now defunct and if so, could the Environment Agency take over? The Group was set up to deal with the flooding, but it is felt that other items in the Village have been sidelined. Cllr Balfour agreed that co-ordination is necessary to keep things moving

Cllr Balfour and Cllr Bolt addressed the Council on the following items:-

Kent Police: Not to merge

Neighbourhood Powers: Additional powers for Parish Councils

Unitary Authorities: It was NOTED that all the Kent Boroughs are in favour of maintaining the 2-tier scheme of District and County Councils, as these give far better local representation. County, Borough and Parish Councils each make a valuable contribution to local government. The cost of a Unitary Authority for Kent will be astronomical and take years to repay. At

Present Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is debt-free but, if burdened with this enormous debt, would be unable to respond to the needs of residents.

Cllr Poole asked how Planning Applications for the Flood plane are responded to. Cllr Balfour advised that there is no definitive view. Some sites may be suitable for redevelopment and if there is no valid Planning reason for refusal, the applicant will go to appeal, which costs the Council hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Cllrs Balfour and Bolt were thanked for attending as part of the Borough Council's campaign to build a spirit of consultation and co-operation with Parish Councils to better serve the interests of residents of the Borough.

13. Matters for Future Discussion

No further matters were raised.

14. Date & Time of Annual Parish Meeting: 3rd April 2006 19.30hrs

15. Date & time of Next Meeting: 24th April 2006 19.30hrs

There being no additional business, the meeting closed at 21.40 hours