

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE METHODIST OLD CHURCH HALL AT 19.55 HOURS ON MONDAY 19 FEBRUARY 07

PRESENT: Cllrs: Bearman, Boyle, Crawford (Chairman), Mrs. Curry, Gardner, Gress, Poole, Street & Whiteside

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs. K Bell (Clerk), County Councillor Long (item 3) and 2 residents

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Received and accepted from Cllr. Crowley (prior engagement)

1. **Declarations of Interests:** There were none.

2. **Verbal Reports:**

County Councillor

County Councillor Long drew attention to the following:

- a. **KHS Spreadsheets -** Understood the PCs reservations regarding the spreadsheet system of reporting highways issues but urged the PC to continue to use the document. It was noted that West Peckham, Watlington, Mereworth and other neighbouring parishes had expressed similar reservations. It was noted that the spreadsheet only covered items, which had been raised by the PC, and KHS would be asked for procedural information on how data received via the public was dealt with.
- b. **Libraries –** There would be no KCC cuts to the library service in East Peckham
- c. **2007/08 budget –** KCC had set the budget for 2007/08; costs would be increasing by 4.9%. It was noted that less money would be spent on highways.

3. **Parishioners Question Time**

Attention was drawn for the following:

- A resident had provided copies of his correspondence regarding the removal of detritus following the clearance of ditches (UMIDB, TMBC & EA) and the redevelopment of the Syngenta site in Yalding, (St Mowden Developments Limited). The resident requested the help of the PC in resolving the issue of rubbish washed down stream to his property.
- Complaint and long protracted correspondence from a resident who had expressed his frustration that a blockage on the Coult's Stream footpath had not been cleared quickly enough. Members were informed that the footpath had been cleared and that the Clerk had made two telephone calls to KCC PROW followed by numerous emails and the delay was caused by the Christmas period and bad weather. The Clerk confirmed that she had written to KCC requesting that in future similar problems should be dealt with more promptly
- A resident present expressed his disappointment with the amount of litter in the village. It was agreed that an article would be included in the Annual Report encouraging all residents to clear the litter from outside their homes. The central village takeaway establishments would be encouraged to clear up the litter, which had been dropped by their customers.

4. **Parish Council**

a. **To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2007**

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting, which had been copied to members, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

b. Matters Arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

Minute 3, Request for Plastic Recycling Bank

It was reported that a letter had been received from TMBC confirming the PCs request for a plastic recycling bank to be located within the village and that TMBC would be happy to investigate any particular site suggestions, which the PC may have. Members were of the opinion that the Somerfield site would be the obvious location and TMBC would be advised accordingly.

TMBC would also be asked to confirm the location of the nearest plastic recycling bank within the borough as members and residents were currently availing themselves of the facility provided by TWBC at Paddock Wood.

Minute 5b, Holy Trinity War Memorial – Re-etching of names

It was reported that a quotation had not yet been received. The matter was being pursued.

Minute 5b, Festive Lighting

It was reported that the Borough Council festive lighting grant had been received. The grant from the Hop Farm had yet to be received but the matter was being pursued.

Minute 5d, Anonymous Standards Board Investigation

It was reported that the legislation provided for allegations to be investigated if made by known or unknown persons.

Minute 8, Replacement of Sports Hall Car Park Gate

It was noted that the gate to be replaced was in Pippin Road.

Minute 13, Removal of Benches and reduction in size of bushes outside the Methodist Building

It was noted that the work had been carried out.

Minute 14c, District Audit

It was reported that District Audit had proposed the appointment of Mr Alun Williams an officer of the Audit Commission as auditor for the financial year 2006/07. District Audit also advised that it had approved new fees to operate from 2006/07 and it was noted that the new audit fees effective for a five year fixed term based on expenditure of £50,000 - £100,000 would be £370.

Minute 14e, Special Works Grants to Parish Councils 2007/08

It was reported that the TMBC officer recommendations had been approved and the grant of £8,620 had been confirmed in respect of the CCTV project.

Minute 14f, S136 2006/07 Grant to Halls and Open Spaces

It was reported that a letter of appreciation had been received from the Village Hall Management Committee.

Minute 16, Former Parish Councillor Tom Keily Dec'd

It was reported that a letter had been received from Mrs Keily thanking the Parish Council for its letter of condolence.

c. Co-opted Members: Written Undertaking & Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr. Gress completed his declaration of Acceptance of Office and signed his Written Undertaking. Cllr Gress confirmed that he would abide by the Parish Councils Code of Conduct.

d. Annual Meeting 2007: Update

(i) Guest Speaker

The Hop Farm had accepted the PCs invitation and speakers would include Suzanne Gorrige (Strategic consultant), Susan Murphy (Head of Marketing) and Simon Hume-Kendall (Proprietor).

(ii) Photograph for front cover of 2006/07 Annual Report:

Members were provided with a preview of the montage for the front cover of the Annual Report.

(iii) Contributions: The deadline was extended until 23.2.07.

e. Information Sheets: (What can Local Councils Do? The conduct of Town or Parish Meetings, English Village or Town Government (Parish or Town Councils) – Noted and Copied to members

f. New Code of Conduct: To receive information

Following the publication of the Local Government White Paper, 'Strong and Prosperous communities which was published in October 06 and announced the governments intention to put in place a clearer, simpler and more proportionate code of conduct for members of local authorities the Government had published a consultation paper on the draft proposed new model code of conduct. It was noted that the new code introduced changes to the rules on personal and prejudicial interests and would combine the current four individual codes into one. Comments on the draft documentation were to be received by 09 March 07 and copies of the document could be viewed at www.communities.gov.uk.

The Clerk informed members that she had attended a briefing on the subject with the TMBC Monitoring Officer and provided members with Information sheets, which highlighted the major changes to the Code of Conduct. She had also printed a copy of the document from the website which would be circulated to members. Following a discussion, it was:

RESOLVED: That members could respond on an individual basis should they wish and the issue would be discussed at the Planning Meeting on 05 March 07. Any collective comments could than be submitted.

5. Planning Committee:

a. Minutes of Meetings held on 22 January 07 and 05 February 07

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings held on 22 January 07 and 05 February 07 which had been copied to members be **RECEIVED, NOTED & APPROVED**

b. Members of Committee: To confirm role of newly co-opted members

RESOLVED: That Cllrs. Crowley and Gress would also be members of the Committee.

6. **East Peckham Playing Field Committee**

a. **Update on current issues**

(i) **KCC Small Community Grant**

It was reported that the KCC Cabinet had passed the grant on 09 February 07 and assuming it was not recalled by the Scrutiny Committee the contract formally offering the grant would be issued shortly after 22 February. It was likely that the fund would be released prior to 31.3.07.

(ii) **Terms of Reference & Responsibilities for the EPPFC**

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Poole, seconded by Cllr Crawford and:

RESOVLED: That the existing management committee would form a Management Company which would be limited by guarantee.

Following further discussions it was also:

RESOLVED:

- The costs of creating the Management Company (estimated to be in the region of £450 - £500) would be met by the PC.
- The annual Sports Hall Grant would be conditional upon the Management Company submitting annual accounts to the PC and other budgetary information throughout each financial year.
- The Management Company would be required to consult the PC on any activity likely to require planning permission.

It was noted that the Sports Halls entitlement to Rate Relief would be unaffected.

(iii) **Survey**

It was reported that no interest had been shown in the work required at the Sports Hall by local contractors and that alternative arrangements would need to be made in order for estimates to be obtained and instructions placed for the work to be carried out. Members were of the opinion that the work should be project managed. Following a discussion, it was:

RESOVLED: That the Peter Clymer Partnership would be asked to consider undertaking the role of project manager and to submit a quotation of the fees involved for the work.

b. **Report from representative**

Cllr Gress drew attention to the following:

- (i) A recent rate relief application had been accepted and assuming that there were no material changes, another application would not be required until 2011.
- (ii) The Committee had applied for a KCC members grant in respect of the replacement entrance gate to the Car Park at Pippin Road.

7. **Community & Police Working Group:** Report of Meeting held on 25.01.07

Cllrs. Gardner reported and drew attention to the following:

- a. The meeting was well attended by representatives of the Group, the Police and wardens
- b. Current police matters were discussed including the latest crime statistics for the village.
- c. The next meeting would be held on 29.03.07.

8. East Peckham Flood Risk

It was reported that a further response had been received from TMBC (copied to members) stating that the EA was currently preparing a plan outlining their areas of responsibility. The plan would also indicate the areas of responsibility for TMBC and the UMIDB. TMBC had also confirmed that riparian landowners were responsible for the maintenance of ditches and streams within the riparian ownership and for the clearance of hedge cuttings that fall adjacent to the land within their ownership. Following a discussion, it was:

RESOLVED: That in view of the unsatisfactory response from the EA, TMBC and the UMIDB to the issues raised by the PC, the matter would be referred to Sir John Stanley MP and to David Hughes (TMBC Chief Executive)

9. Creating an NHS fit for the future

Cllr Crawford reported that as part of the consultation process he had attended the meeting on 15.01.07. Attention was drawn to the following:

- (i) The meeting was quite interesting.
- (ii) He was of the opinion that if patients had to travel further to a hospital then paramedics would have to receive extra training so that they could provide more emergency on the spot treatment.

10. KCC, Local board: Report of meeting held on 30.01.07

It was reported that Cllr. Crowley had attended the meeting and in his absence had provided a written report (copied to members). The report drew attention to the following:

- (i) A 'Toward 2010' DVD presentation was given outlining KCCs proposals for the next four years.
- (ii) A representative from TMBC gave a talk on the types of funding available and application procedures.
- (iii) A representative from KCC spoke on the grant funding available for village and community halls; although substantial funds were available it was only to halls, which were independent of church or council involvement and grants were not available for repairs or maintenance.
- (iv) A KCC representative spoke regarding the grant funding available via the Local Board.

11. Finance

a. Bank Reconciliation as at 31.01.07: The information, which had been prepared by the Clerk and copied to members, was **APPROVED**

b. 06/07 Sports Hall & Playing Field Grant

The information, which had been prepared by the Clerk and copied to members, was **APPROVED**. It was noted that the current position with regard to the 2006/07 grant was as follows:

2006/07 Grant	£12,784
(Included £2,000 virement from contingency approved at the September PC meeting)	
Plus refunds	£3,279
Total Grant	£16,063
Less Expenditure up to 09.02.07 (excl VAT)	£15,706
Less anticipated DD payments in respect of Gas supply to 31.3.07	£228
Net Grant available to 31.3.07	£129

c. 2006/07 Donations to organisations

It was reported that the 2006/07 S137 free resource budget was set at £1,600 and as at 19 February 07 the following items of expenditure had been charged to the fund:

Volunteer Litter pick costs	£41.97
Best Village Front Garden Expenses	£246.50
Summer 06 playscheme	£874.16
2006 Poppy Appeal	£75.00
Total	£1237.63

It was noted that the net sum available from the 2006/07 S137 Free Resource budget to allocate was £362.37 and that requests for financial assistance/donations had been received from the following organisations:

Vitalise	The Kenward Trust
Hospice in the Weald	Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group
Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells	NHS Trust Charitable Fund
Tunbridge Wells & District CAB	Victim Support Kent

It was further noted that during 2005/06 donations were made as follows:

Try Angle Awards	£50.00
The Kent Men of Trees	£25.00
Royal British Legion	£75.00
CAB	£150.00
Hospice in the Weald	£50.00
South East Regional Play Association	£20.00
Age Concern Malling	£50.00

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Crawford, seconded by Cllr. Boyle and **RESOLVED** that the following donations would be made:

The Kenward Trust	£50.00
Hospice in the Weald	£50.00
Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group	£35.00
Age Concern Malling	£50.00
Tunbridge Wells & District CAB	£150.00
Victim Support Kent	£25.00
Total	£360.00

d. Parish Plan

It was reported that the PC had been successful in obtaining a grant of £2,131 from DEFRA (via Action with Communities in Rural Kent) and a commitment from TMBC to contribute £1,000 towards the in house printing of a quality document. Following a discussion it was:

RESOLVED: That an article on the proposed Parish Plan would be included in the Annual Report and that work on the project would begin following the May elections.

e. Financial Transactions: For Approval

Receipts since 22.01.07

26.01.07 TMBC Festive Lighting Grant (S10/S144)	£610.00
02.02.07 Customs & Excise – Refund of VAT 3 rd Quarter	£1,769.74
Total Receipts	£2,379.74

Automated payments made since 22.01.07

23.01.07 *British Gas S/Hall Gas Supply (S19)	£114.00
02.01.07 Emergency Planning Society – Subscription 07/08 (S112)	£85.00
Total automated payments	£199.00

The following payments were approved (includes VAT where applicable)

Mrs. K Bell	Clerks Salary – February 07 & Expenses (S112)	£898.34 Chq 2555/2556
Harris Landscapes	Removal of benches and cutting of bushes o/s Pound Road Methodist Building (S164)	£300.00 Chq 2557
EDF Energy	Streetlight maintenance February & March 07 (S10)	£648.36 Chq 2558
R & SM Saunders	Cut down and removal of conifers at playing field (S19)	£2,350.00 Chq 2559
EP Parish Magazine	Annual Article contribution (S112)	£25.00 Chq 2560
Ileostomy Association	Donation in memory of Former Parish Councillor Tom Keily Deceased (Chairman's Allowance)	£20.00 Chq 2561
Audit Commission	District Audit Fee 2005/06 (S112)	£411.25 Chq 2562
Headland Garden Svcs	Churchyard maintenance – St Michaels (S164)	£443.00 Chq 2563
KAPC	Publications (S112)	£26.98 Chq 2564
Rural Kent	Publications (S112)	£21.76 Chq 2565
Sweepclean	Litter Clearing Jan/March 07 (S137)	£264.39 Chq 2566
Tate Fencing	Replacement fencing at playing field and 28 Russett Road (S19)	£962.10 Chq 2567
Hills Office Services	Provision of Norton Internet Security incl. Firewall (S112)	£44.07 Chq 2568
Total		£6,415.25

*** Payments debited from PC Sports Hall grant**

12. Correspondence

It was reported that the following items had been received:

- a. **Total Landscapes, Primafox Lighting,** (Letters of introduction)
- b. **SLCC:**
 - (i) Working with Your Council (updated information)
 - (ii) Conference for Practitioners (Details)
 - (iii) Minutes of Branch meeting held on 04.10.06 together with accompanying papers in respect of meeting held on 07.02.07
- c. **KAPC:**
 - (i) Parish News (January 07) - copied to members
 - (ii) 'Sign up to end Operation Stack': (Information sheet)
 - (iii) Planning Information Day (Information on Information Day to be held on 17.03.07)

- d. **ROSPA:** Inspection of areas where children play (passed to EPPFC)
 - e. **KHS:** KHS News (January 07): by email (forwarded to members)
 - f. **Action with Communities in Rural Kent**
 - (i) Invitation to attend the Community Halls Conference on 14.04.07
 - (ii) Invitation to attend Fire Safety Briefing on 15.02.07
 - (iii) Invitation to attend Fire Safety Briefing on 15.03.07(forwarded to members)
 - g. **Valuation Office Agency:** Update information request
 - h. **TMBC:** Minutes of meeting of Standards Committee held on 25.01.07 together with accompanying papers in respect of meeting held on 24.01.07 rural
 - i. **Shaws:** Details of available forms, records, registers and publications for local councils
 - j. **Local Councils Update:** January/February 07
 - k. **Nat West:** Banking Information
 - l. **Hospice in the Weald: Proposed Events for 2007** (via email, forwarded to members)
 - m. **TMBC:** Here & Now Feb/March 07 (3 copies received)
 - n. **Medway Valley Countryside Partnership:** Collecting riverside memories (copied to members)
 - o. **EDF Energy Trust**
 - (i) Details of Energy Debt course for money advisers
 - (ii) Newsletter (February 07)
13. **Matters for future Discussion:** To receive information
- Cllr Boyle**
Drew members attention to the fact the PC had not paid the Clerk a 2006 Christmas Bonus. A discussion followed where it was agreed that the Clerk would receive a belated bonus of £100. The Clerk thanked members for their kind gesture. The payment would be ratified at the next meeting of the PC.
- Cllr Poole**
Drew attention to the following:
- a. The footpath running from Marvillion to the Playing Fields. The path was becoming worn in places and it was agreed that KCC would be asked to provide a surface of planeing's.
 - b. Informed members that he had been made aware that Brookside Garden Centre had received some pornographic emails via the website comments form and asked whether other members had received similar emails. Whilst the matter was being investigated Cllr Shead could not be contacted via the website.
14. **Date of Next Meeting:** 19 March 07

There being no additional business the meeting concluded at 21.50 hours
