

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE METHODIST OLD CHURCH HALL ON MONDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2008**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. Crowley, Gardner, Gress, Poole (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. Macdonald, Mrs. Relf, Street & Shead

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mrs K Bell (Clerk), County Councillor Long, Borough Councillors Mrs Holland & Rogers, 3 residents & 4 representatives from The Hop Farm Country Park

**APOLOGIES:** Cllrs. Bearman, Crawford & Ireland, & PC Andy Sergeant

In the absence of Cllr. Crawford, Cllr. Poole chaired the meeting. Cllr. Poole opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present.

1. **Declarations of Interests:** Cllr. Street declared an interest in item 11c(i)

2. **The Hop Farm**

a. **Invited Guest: Mr Martin Westwood, The Hop Farm Country Park**

Mr Westwood and his colleagues were welcomed to the meeting. Mr Westwood was invited to address members and other persons present. Mr Westwood proceeded to provide an overview of current activities and attention was drawn to the following:

- An overview of current activities
- Rolling programme of repairs
- The Hop Farm would not be completing the 64 holiday units but would be limiting the development to 16 units
- 2008 Events Programme
- New ownership
- Visitor attraction out performed by events
- Target audience as families with children up to 8 years old
- Would value a good working relationship with the Parish Council
- The licence application to vary the existing licence conditions

Cllr. Poole thanked Mr Westwood for his presentation and proceeded to take questions, during question time the following issues arose:

- The recent licence submission by the Hop Farm to TMBC
- The need for clarity to be provided on the changes to the East Peckham residents concessionary gold card scheme
- The need for an Educational link between the Hop Farm and The School

Mr Westwood provided some feedback on the concerns expressed with regard to the licence application and undertook to provide some feedback regarding the East Peckham resident's concession scheme and the possibility of creating an Educational Officer at The Hop Farm.

b. **Consideration of PCs response to the Licence Application submitted by the Hop Farm to vary the existing licence in two aspects, which were:**

- (i) To increase the capacity of licensable activities from 29,999 to 49,999,
- (ii) To increase the size of the venue (following the recent acquisition by the Hop Farm of an additional 350 acres)

Following a discussion, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the PC would raise the following objections and concerns to the licence application:

### Objections

- **Public Safety**  
TMBC would be advised that roads in and around the Hop Farm already became clogged up with traffic leading to and from The Hop Farm and any increase in the numbers of persons attending events would create additional risk to public safety.
- **The Prevention of Public Nuisance**  
TMBC would be advised that the large events, which already took place, caused an unacceptable level of disturbance, noise, nuisance, inconvenience and annoyance to the residents of East Peckham.

### Concerns

TMBCs attention would be drawn to the following:

- Public footpaths were blocked before, during and after events
- The tow path and wooded areas become fouled with human waste, bottles, cans and other litter
- After the 2007 War and Peace Show, the A228 was closed because there was so much mud on the road, which came from vehicles exiting the Hop Farm Site.
- Noise from music, sound systems and fireworks was often at unacceptable volumes and on some occasions has gone on until the early hours of the morning.
- It was unlikely that the local infrastructure would be able to support any increase in traffic movements to and from The Hop Farm.

### 3. Reports were received as follows:

#### County Councillor

County Councillor Long asked whether the feedback on the spreadsheet had improved, and was informed there had been some positive response from KHS but real improvements to the village highway network were still hard to achieve. County Councillor Long was advised the main problems in the village were currently drains, potholes and ponding. County Councillor Long informed the meeting that although he was supportive of the Hop Farm in their plans to improve tourism he was of the opinion that The Hop Farm must have due regard to the sensitivity to neighbouring villages and residents. County Councillor Long hoped that the Hop Farm would communicate effectively with the PC.

#### Borough Councillors

Borough Councillor Rogers drew attention to the ongoing enforcement process, which was being taken, against the Hale Street Garage.

### 4. Parish Council

#### a. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 08

Following a discussion, it was

**RESOLVED:** The minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

#### b. Matters Arising

##### Minute 2, County Councillor Long – Members Grant

It was reported that confirmation had been received that the grant had been approved and that an application had been made for the monies to be released.

**Minute 3b, Best Village Front Garden Competition (Possible liaison with the Gardeners Association) & EA Maintenance Work**

It was reported that no response had been received.

**Minute 3g, 2007 Christmas Lighting**

Attention was drawn to the following:

- The Christmas Lights had been delivered to the Sports Hall for storage.
- With regard to the Merry Boys display, Ditton Electrical was of the opinion that the bracket became loose either as a result of vandalism or by being struck by a vehicle. It had been suggested that the bracket used was unsuitable for wooden poles and had suggested that special fabricated brackets be fitted permanently to the wooden poles.
- With regard to the two displays, which were damaged by water, Ditton Electrical had suggested that these be returned to the supplier for examination and repair before being made available during 2008. It appeared that the base of the glass on the low energy lamps was smaller in size to the base of the standard light bulbs when screwed into the sealing ring.
- Gala Lights had been invited to comment on the observations made by Ditton Electrical.
- Project costs: It was noted that the following grants and donations made up the total budget available which was £5,970 (PC Grant (£2,000, J Clubb Ltd (£100), EP Village Stores (£50), Woodlands Health Centre (£60), Travis Perkins (£200), TMBC (£3,560)) and that expenditure as at 11.02.08 had amounted to £5,429. It was further noted that the only residual expense to pay was in respect of the energy costs, which was unlikely to cost more than £100.

**Minute 3j, East Peckham Primary School**

It was reported that the Clerk of the Governors had despatched all the relevant paperwork to Cllr. Mrs Macdonald

**Minute 8b, Budgetary Control Statement as at 31.12.07 – Investigation of Variances**

The information, which had been prepared by the Clerk & and copied to members, was **APPROVED**.

**Minute 8d, Nat West Banking Arrangements**

It was reported that no acknowledgement had been received in response to the PCs SIBA application and request for written confirmation that the new mandate instructions had been activated.

**c. Installation of CCTV: To receive update**

Cllr Poole reported and drew attention to the following:

- Work was in progress on the users and operators manuals
- Two of the cameras at the Sports Hall had developed a malfunction, which was being investigated by the supplier.

**d. 2008 Annual Report**

Attention was drawn to the following:

- Work was in hand on the front cover which would depict a montage of village events over the past twelve months

- The Annual Report would be finalised within the next week and there was still a short period of time to either submit articles or to make amendments to those, which had already been submitted.

5. **Finance Committee: Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 08**

Following a discussion, it was

**RESOLVED:** That the amended minutes, which had been copied to members, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

6. **Planning Committee: Minutes of Meetings held on 21 January 08 and 04 February 08**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes which had been copied to members be **RECEIVED & NOTED**

7. **East Peckham Playing Field Company**

a. **Finance:**

(i) **2007/08 Sports Hall & Playing Field Grant**

The information, which had been prepared by the Clerk and copied to members, was **APPROVED**. It was noted that as at 31.01.08 the position was as follows:

2007/08 Grant	£11,000
Less Expenditure (includes £114 from 2006/07)	£7,121
Plus Refunds	£55
<b>Net Grant available to 31.3.08</b>	<b>£3,934</b>

(ii) **Financial Report from EPPFC**

A brief statement of the accounts for the current financial year was tabled. The main detail of the report was summarised as follows:

Balance at 31.03.07	Credit Account	£15,623
	Deposit Account	£26,458
Balance at 31.01.08	Credit Account	£8,627
	Deposit Account	£20,066
2007/08 Income as at 31.01.08		£10,125
2007/08 Expenditure as at 31.01.08		£28,983
Forecast Balance at 31.03.08	Credit Account	£8,265
	Deposit Account	£20,066

b. **Sports Hall Repairs**

(i) **Update**

Cllr Crowley reported that the EPPFC guttering repairs to the Car Park side of the Sports Hall were still to be completed.

(ii) **Repair Fund**

The information, which had been prepared by the Clerk and copied to members, was **APPROVED**. It was noted that as at 08.02.08, the net budget available was £7,028

c. **To receive report from representative on any other issues**

Cllr Crowley reported and drew attention to the following:

- A vehicle was recently driven onto the Playing Fields causing some damage. It was believed that the vehicle had some connection with Wateringbury FC and enquiries were being made.
- The order had been placed with KCC in respect of the marking out of a seven-a-side pitch and the remarking of the tennis court.

8. **Groups & Organisations**
- a. **Community & Police Working Group**  
Cllr. Gardner reported that the next meeting would be held on 19.02.08.
- b. **Tonbridge & Malling Crime Reduction Partnership**  
Cllr. Street reported that the next meeting would be held on 25.02.08.
- c. **Parish Plan**  
Cllr. Street reported that good progress continued to be made.
- d. **Youth Panel**  
Cllrs. Mrs Macdonald & Relf reported and drew attention to the following:
- It was hoped that the cooperation of Mascalls School could be obtained in engaging the village youth through the citizenship curriculum.
  - The panel was hopeful that they may have found a youth willing to serve on TMBCs Youth Forum and would have more information for the next meeting.
- It was noted that Action with Communities in Rural Kent had organised a Youth Forum Workshop, which would be held on 13.03.08, unfortunately neither Cllr. Mrs Macdonald nor Mrs Relf would be able to attend.
9. **TMBC**
- a. **Parish Partnership Panel**  
It was reported that the next meeting of the PPP would be held on 06 March 08 and that TMBC had requested items for the agenda. Following a discussion, it was:  
**RESOLVED:** That in view of the increased problem with litter borough wide, TMBC be asked to clarify the arrangements and frequency for dealing with litter and flytipping especially to the outlying areas of parish boundaries.
- b. **Heritage Open Days 2008**  
It was reported that the event would take place over the weekend of 13 & 14 September and that the PC had been asked to nominate properties for the event. It was noted that St Michaels Church had already been nominated. Following a discussion it was:  
**RESOLVED:** That as St Michaels had been nominated no action was required.
10. **Medway Valley Countryside Partnership - Riverside Communities Project:**  
It was reported that an update had been provided and attention was drawn to the following:
- a. **Sculptured Bench**  
MVCP had met with the artists involved and had discussed siting the bench on the western side of the Playing Fields close to where the existing benches were
- b. **Waymarker**  
MVCP felt that it would not be possible for the waymarker to be located at the Old Road end of Pinkham Lane and suggested that an alternative location could be along the Medway Valley Walk close to where the River Bourne met the River Medway.
- c. **Walks Leaflets**  
MVCP intended to produce a suite of five leaflets each containing the details of a recommended walk one of which would be from East Peckham.
- d. **Walk Path Improvements**  
Improvements would be carried out along the Medway Valley Walk.

e. **Interpretation Boards**

The East Peckham interpretation Board would be positioned in the village centre.

Following a discussion, it was:

**RESOLVED:** In order to ensure that the proposals were to the complete satisfaction of the EPPFC and PC, a meeting would be arranged between representatives from the MVCP, the EPPFC and the PC.

11. **Finance**

a. **Bank Reconciliation as at 31.01.08**

The information, which had been prepared by the Clerk & and copied to members, was **APPROVED**. It was noted that as at 31.01.08 the balances held with Nat West were as follows:

Current Account	£250
Reserve Account	£39,045
Capital Account	£13,629

b. **2007/08 Donations**

It was reported that the 2007/08 free resource budget was £1,650 and that as at 11.02.08, the following items of expenditure had been charged to the fund:

Try Angle Award	£50.00
BTCV (Tree and pond warden schemes)	£50.00
Royal British Legion	£80.00
Best Village Front Garden Expenses	£201.95
Summer 07 playscheme	£900.38
<b>Total Free Resource expenditure to date</b>	<b>£1,282.33</b>
<b>Budget remaining to allocate</b>	<b>£367.67</b>

It was noted that as at 11 February 08, requests for financial assistance/donations had been received from the following organisations:

Victim Support Kent  
Tonbridge volunteer Centre  
Vitalise  
Hospice in the Weald  
Age Concern Malling  
Kent Air Ambulance Trust

It was further noted the following donations were made during 2006/07:

Royal British Legion	£75.00
The Kenward Trust	£50.00
CAB	£150.00
Hospice in the Weald	£50.00
Kent & Sussex Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group	£35.00
Victim Support Kent	£25.00
Age Concern Malling	£50.00

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Street, seconded by Cllr. Mrs Macdonald and **RESOLVED** that £32.33 be vired from the 2007/08 Contingency Fund and that the following donations would be made:

Tonbridge Volunteer Centre	£100
Hospice in the Weald	£100
Age Concern Malling	£100
Kent Air Ambulance Trust	£100
<b>Total of donations approved</b>	<b>£400</b>

**c. Consideration of request for financial assistance from East Peckham PCC**

**(i) Removal of a large tree stump from the Churchyard**

It was reported that a large cedar tree in the northeast corner of the churchyard fell some years ago and whilst the tree was removed the stump remained. As well as the tree stump being unsightly, the PCC had advised that during 2007 the last but one rows of burials in that part of the churchyard was completed and during 2008 bodies would be buried in a row a few feet west of the eastern boundary wall. The PCC advised that having obtained an estimate for the removal of the tree stump it had been ascertained that the work would cost £500, £250 of which could be met from church funds and the PC had therefore been asked for a contribution of £250 towards the work. Following a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Poole, seconded by Cllr. Street and:

**RESOLVED:** By seven votes to one that the PC would contribute £250 towards the removal of the tree stump.

**(ii) Additional grant in respect of the Garden of Remembrance.**

It was reported that the 2007/08 PC Grant in respect of the Garden of Remembrance was £300 and that the PCC had spent £353.50. Whilst the PCC was reimbursed with the sum of £300 during October 07, they had asked the PC to cover their entire costs. The PCC was advised that the matter would be considered by the PC towards year-end when the PC would be in a better position to ascertain whether additional funds could be made available. Following a discussion, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That as the PCC was aware that the 2007/08 Garden of Remembrance was £300 before any expenditure was committed; it was the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that costs did not exceed the grant available and costs over and above the PC grant were to be met from church funds. It was noted that the 2008/09 grant would be £400.

**d. Financial Transactions**

**Receipts**

07.02.2008	Granwood Flooring Ltd – Refund of S/Hall repairs	£290.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£290.00</b>

**Automated payments**

02.01.08	Subscription – Emergency Planning society	£90.00
07.01.08	*EDF Energy Sports Hall Electric Supply 2007/08	£390.00
22.01.08	*British Gas Sports Hall Gas Supply 2007/08	£100.00
23.01.08	PWLB – Initial Payment	£2,930.22
<b>Total</b>		<b>£3,510.22</b>

**The following payments were approved (included VAT where applicable)**

Mrs. K Bell	(S111) Clerks Salary – Feb 08	
	plus expenses less deductions	£939.61 Chq 2736
Sweepclean	(S137) Litter Clearing January 08	£88.13 Chq 2737
EDF Energy	(S10) Streetlight maintenance 07/08	£340.32 Chq 2738
Kent Grassland Services	(S19) *Playing Field Maintenance	£141.00 Chq 2739
KCC	(S19) *Sports Hall Supplies	£88.89 Chq 2740
Headland Garden Svcs.	(S112/136) St Michaels C/yard	£1,053.00 Chq 2741
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£2,650.95</b>

\*Denotes charged to the Sports Hall PC Grant for 2007/08

**e. Appointment of External Auditor**

It was reported that the Audit Commission proposed to appoint Mr Alun Williams of the Audit Commissions Limited Assurance Specialist Unit as auditor to the PC and that the appointment would be for a five year period commencing with the 2007/08 accounts. The Commission also proposed to appoint a panel of officers that could be the external auditors to the PC in the event that Mr Alun Williams could not continue with the appointment or to assist with or act solely on additional work where necessary. It was noted that the Audit Commission was to be advised of any objections to the proposals by 29 February 2008.

**12. Correspondence**

It was reported that the following items had been received:

- a. DisExtra: No 674 (21.01.08) & 675 (04.02.08)
- b. Local Gov.co.uk: e bulletins dated 17.01.08, 25.01.08, 29.01.08 & 31.01.08,
- c. Government Computing Magazine (February 08) – Passed to Cllr. Poole
- d. Product Information:
  - (i) Furnitubes (Street furniture)
  - (ii) Wicksteed Playscapes: Play equipment – Passed to Cllr. Crowley
  - (iii) Sight & Sound: Security Solutions
  - (iv) Stocksigns
  - (v) Glasdon
- e. Capel Parish Council: Emergency Plan
- f. TMBC:
  - (i) Standards Committee: Sixth Annual Report 2007(3 copies received, passed to Cllrs. Crawford & Poole)
  - (ii) Mayors Charity Event: Pudding Evening to be held on 28.03.08
  - (iii) Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held on 10.10.07 together with agenda for meeting held on 23.01.08
- g. Farplace Animal Rescue: Details received regarding changes to recycling provider
- h. SLCC: Details of meeting held on 07.02.08
- i. Kent Association of Parish Councils
  - (i) T & M Area Committee: Minutes of meeting held on 13.12.07
  - (ii) Planning Information Day: Details received of event to be held on 15.03.08
  - (iii) New Resources added to KALCs website: Parish Polls Guidance & Consultation in respect of orders relating to Conduct of LA Members in England
- j. KCC: Kent Trading Standards: Registration in respect of TS Alert email messaging system in order to receive warnings of doorstep criminals operating in the area
- k. English Rural Housing Association: The Bulletin (winter 2007/08)
- l. Emergency Planning Society: Notification of renewal of membership

- m. The Salvation Army: Details in respect of Annual Quiz Night to be held on 08.03.08.
- n. Tonbridge & Malling Crime Reduction Partnership: Newsletter Issue 5 January 08 (4 copies received, 3 copies passed to Cllrs. Crawford, Gardner & Street)
- o. Action with Communities in Rural Kent
  - (i) Parish Plans: Funding Opportunities
  - (ii) Oast to Coast (Winter 2007)
  - (iii) South East Planning Aid: Independent Planning Advice
- p. Kent Air Ambulance Trust: Promotional literature including Strategic Review

**13. Matters for future Discussion**

**Cllr Gardner**

Drew attention to the dog bins at the Lock end of Pinkham Lane, which had not been emptied for many weeks. The matter would be referred to TMBC.

**Dog Fouling**

Attention was drawn to the excessive dog fouling which was prevalent within the village. The matter would be again referred to TMBC with the specific request that additional resources be brought into the village such as additional dog bins, additional patrols by the dog warden and positive action being taken to catch and fine those responsible.

**14. Parishioners Question Time**

**a. To receive correspondence from Parishioners**

It was reported that a letter had been received from Reverend Carr expressing his astonishment that the PC was considering spending £5,000 on the renovation of the War Memorial at the same time as the Church was having difficulty in obtaining funds to repair and widen the pathway access across the churchyard. Reverend Carr had been informed that it was unfortunate that TMBC were unable to offer a grant towards the repair works but that was a decision taken by TMBC over which the PC had no control. Reverend Carr had further been informed that the PC's spending policy for 2008/09 did include £5,000 towards renovating the Village Civic War Memorial and that subject to the PC's 2008/09 preferred projects being carried out within budget it might be possible that there would be funding available during 2008/09 to assist towards other projects within the village and on this point the church was asked to confirm how much they would be able to contribute towards the project to repair and widen the Holy Trinity pathway.

**b. Parishioners Questions**

- (i) A resident queried the nature of the renovation works in respect of the Village War Memorial. The resident was informed that the actual names would be in black lettering and gold leaf would be used elsewhere on the memorial.
- (ii) A resident questioned the speed data information of the village. It was agreed that the Clerk would put the resident in contact with PC Andy Sergeant who undertook the speed data exercise.
- (iii) A resident drew attention to weeds on footpath MR539 (Ashpath). The matter would be referred to KCC PROW.
- (iv) A resident drew attention to footpath MR540 that was impassable. The matter would be referred to KCC PROW.
- (v) A resident drew attention to the street furniture left on Hale Street following recent works. The matter would be referred to KHS.

- (vi) A resident drew attention to a dilapidated building on Branbridges Road, adjacent to the Speedy Hire business. It was believed that the building was listed. The matter would be referred to TMBC.
- (vii) A resident expressed the opinion that there was not enough in the village for the youth aged between 10 – 16 to do.

**15. Date of Next Meeting:** Confirmed as 17 March 08