

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 24th April 2024 at 7.15pm in the Booth Hall

Cllr Powell welcomed all present to the meeting and stated that there would be Public Discussion at the end of the meeting, if time allowed. There would however be the opportunity to speak with Councillors during the following Annual Parish Meeting.

1 Present

Cllr E Powell, Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Sams, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr C Roots, Cllr S Brown, Cllr S Luck, Cllr T Griffiths, RFO/Amenity Manager Mr M Cuerden, Community Warden Mr M Sherwood, County Cllr S Prendergast (from 7.30pm) and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst
7 Members of Public

2 Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 27th March 2024 - The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr J Sams; with all in favour.

4 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

There were no changes to the register.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations.

Requests for Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

5 Planning

5.1 The outstanding planning applications were noted.

24/501523/TPOA - 19 West Street

TPO application: Horse Chestnut - Trim back/raise overhanging branches to a height of 5.5-6m from the ground, leaving a spread of 6m.

Members of the Planning Committee had no objection to the application and did not request that it was reported to the Planning Committee. **ACTION: Clerk**

5.2 The approved applications were noted.

5.3 The refused applications were noted.

5.4 Other Planning Matters

- Adoption of MBC's Local Plan: Cllr Powell reported that the Parish Council's Barrister, Mr Bell, had supplied his advice on mounting a legal challenge and it was thought that the Parish Council would not have a strong enough case to progress. Applications will need to be challenged as they are submitted, in the hope that enough are refused for the Plan to look unsound. It is hoped that the newly elected Borough Councillors may look to complete an early review of the Local Plan. It was noted that two parties are mounting legal challenges and Councillors, although unable to offer financial backing, could offer support, where appropriate. Cllr T Sams added that, whilst the advice was disappointing, the Parish Council must accept it. It was noted that Mr Bell had suggested that the Parish Council look to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and it was felt that this was something which should be discussed in the future by the Planning Committee. **ACTION: Planning Cttee**

6 Environmental

6.1 Other Environmental Matters

- Cllr T Sams had circulated an email from Bedfont Scientific, who had requested permission to put up a sign in the village, advertising the Bluebell Walk, as they are supporting the event. After brief discussion it was agreed that this could be placed on the West Street green and must be removed as soon as the event has finished.

7 Finances

7.1 Annual return of Accounts & Audit 2023/2024

- 7.1.1 Annual Accounts for 2023/2024: The financial sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr T Sams; with all in favour.
- 7.1.2 Internal Audit Report & Recommendations: The Clerk reminded all present that the internal audit report had previously been circulated by the RFO and the content was noted by Councillors.
- 7.1.3 Annual Governance Statement 2023/2024: The blank Annual Governance Statement had been circulated and it was proposed by Cllr Luck that the Chair tick 'Yes' for boxes 1-8 and 'N/A' for box 9. This was seconded by Cllr T Sams, with all in favour.
- 7.1.4 Accounting Statement 2023/2024: The completed Accounting Statement had been circulated to all Councillors. Cllr Roots proposed that the Accounting Statement be approved. This was seconded by Cllr J Sams, with all in favour.
- 7.1.5 Date of Public Inspection: It was noted that the Period of Public Inspection will be from Monday 3rd June - 12th July 2024, with the documents being posted on the website on Friday 31st May.
- 7.2 Income and Expenditure spreadsheets: The finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr T Sams; with all in favour.
- 7.3 Minutes of the F&GP Meeting held 18th April: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Stanley; with 4 in favour (those present at the meeting).
Councillors asked for thanks to be noted to the RFO for his work on preparing for the audit and for supplying a comprehensive breakdown of the AGAR form at the F&GP meeting.
- 7.4 Recommendations from the Meeting:
 - Employment of a Part Time Parish Warden: It was proposed by Cllr Griffiths to employ a part time Parish Warden during the current financial year. This was seconded by Cllr J Sams, with all in favour.

7.5 Other Financial Matters

There were no further matters to discuss.

8 Highways

It was noted that a report has been included in the Annual Parish Meeting booklet.

Cllr Brown reported that the yellow lines had already been installed in West Street (around the junction with Station Road) and no issues had been reported.

9 80th Anniversary of D-Day

All present were reminded that the Big Lunch will be held on Saturday 15th June and the event has been advertised around the village. A meeting is to be arranged in the next fortnight to finalise the arrangements.

10 Renewal of Annual Subscription to the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)

It was proposed by Cllr Griffiths to renew the annual subscription to KALC at a cost of £1,309.25 (£1,091.04 + vat). This was seconded by Cllr Roots, with all in favour.

11 Future Events

Heart of Kent Hospice's Bluebell Walk - 5th May

Ploughman's Lunch in St John the Baptist Church - 11th May (12-2pm) £5 for lunch & 50p for a drink.

Weald of Kent Rotary Club's North Downs Walk - 9th June

Harrietsham's Big Lunch inc. D-Day Commemorations - Saturday 15th June (12-4pm on the Glebe Field)

Coffee Morning - Every Friday in the Booth Hall (10am - midday)

Welcome to Coffee Morning - Every Monday in the Booth Hall (10am - 11am - open to all residents)

Cllr T Sams thanked a representative from HIB for the brilliant quiz night, which had been enjoyed by all who had attended.

12 Items for Future Consideration

No items for consideration

13 Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

With no further matters to discuss the meeting closed at 7.45pm.

Public Discussion

The following items were discussed during the discussion:

- Grass cutting along the A20 - this should be site lines only rather than cutting the whole verge, until the end of August, as it is better for biodiversity. **ACTION: Environmental Cttee**
- Concerns regarding the amount of litter along the A20 and the fact that it doesn't get litter picked before the verges are cut. **ACTION: Environmental Cttee**
It was noted that the Borough Councillors do ask MBC to litter pick along the A20, however the litter soon builds up again. A resident commented that the volunteers can only litter pick within the 30mph zone along the A20.
- Concerns regarding the bus having access along West Street and the suggestion was made that vehicles should only be allowed to park on one side of the road to solve the issue.
- Hedges are encroaching onto the pavements along the A20, making it very dangerous to walk along there. It was noted that these areas would need to be reported to Kent Highways.
- A resident spoke regarding the Neighbourhood Plan which was being produced around 10 years ago and queried why the linked footpath around the village had not been created and why the lift at the station had not been progressed. It was noted that the subsequently elected Parish Council had withdrawn the plan and the resident responded to say that this was very disappointing, as a vast amount of work had gone into produce the Plan.