

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 29th January 2020 at 7.30pm
in the Booth Hall.

Cllr Dean welcomed all present to the meeting.

The Clerk asked that the Doctor's Surgery be discussed as an urgent item under Agenda item 7.1 (Other Financial Matters). This was agreed by all present.

Community Warden: Martin Sherwood reported that residents had raised concerns with him regarding speeding in West Street. Martin informed all present that Lenham Library will be closed from the 1st February for approximately 6-8 weeks for refurbishment. He will be unable to hold his weekly surgeries until it reopens.

Police Report: PCSO John Boyd reported that, since the last meeting in November, there have been 16 crimes. These included 5 thefts from the Co-op, 3 Public Order offences including assault/criminal damage, 2 burglaries, 3 attempted burglary/thefts, 1 RTC with assault, 1 theft of number plates and an attempted ATM theft at the Co-op where the ATM had been attacked and exploded off the wall. It was noted that no money was taken. There were a number of other incidents which consisted of an attempted break in at an empty property, various RTCs and bikes being seized on the Pilgrims Way by Traffic Police.

Public Discussion

A resident thanked the Parish Council for the donation towards the new lighting in the Ambrose Hall.

A resident reported that the village litter pickers are attending a lunch hosted by MBC on Friday 7th February. There is a spare ticket if anyone who litter picks would like to go.

A resident raised concerns regarding the flashing lorry height warning sign on the A20. The Clerk reported that KHS are aware of this. Adding that it took them 10 months to repair it last time. Cllr Roots added that KHS have been out, as he had seen them working on the equipment approximately 2 weeks ago. The resident asked for the direct contact number for KHS.

ACTION: Clerk

A resident queried the reseeding of the verges. Cllr Dean reported that Bellway is in discussion with KHS to reinstate the verge and will plant bulbs if required. The verges included in the A20 Improvement Scheme are scheduled to be reseeded.

A resident reported that the pedestrian refuge bollards (part of the A20 Improvement Scheme) are muddy so cannot be seen in the dark.

ACTION: Clerk

1. **Present**

Cllr G Dean, Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Sams, Cllr T Griffiths, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr J Moore, Cllr C Roots, Cllr R Dayes, RFO Mr M Cuerden, Community Warden Martin Sherwood, PCSO J Boyd and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst
3 Members of the Public

2. **Apologies for absence**

Cllr V Foster, Cllr E Powell, Lenham Representative Cllr R Greenwood

3. **Minutes of the last meeting**

Parish Council Meeting 27th November 2019 - The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Day; with 3 in favour and 5 abstentions.

4. **Disclosures and confidential items**

Changes to the Register of Interests

There were no changes.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

There were no interests to declare.

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

5. **Planning**

5.1 The current planning applications were noted.

5.2 The approved planning applications were noted.

5.3 The refused planning applications were noted.

5.4 Other Planning Matters:

- Pilgrims Retreat: Cllr T Sams informed all present that a report relating to the site will be going before the MBC Planning Committee on the 27th February to be ratified by Councillors. It is not known whether this will be a confidential item.
- Cllr T Sams reported on a recent Save Our Heath Land (SOHL) meeting, held in Lenham Community Centre. There was approximately 300 members of the public and further details will be posted on the

SOHL website and should appear in a future KM publication. It was noted that this development will have ramifications for Harrietsham, if it progresses.

6. Environmental

- 6.1 Minutes of the Meeting held 9th January: The minutes of the meeting were found to be an accurate record, proposed by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Day, with 3 in favour (those Councillors present at the meeting). A copy was duly signed.
- 6.2 Recommendations from the Environmental Committee:
- Procurement of a new bench for the Garden of Remembrance: The Clerk reported that a new hardwood seat had been sourced from Glasdon, to replace the damaged one in the Garden of Remembrance. The cost of this is £950 (+ vat). The contractor overseeing the area (MBC) had quoted £450 to install the seat on a concrete base. The Amenity Manager stated that he needed to check whether there is a memorial plate on the damaged bench. It is expected that the contractor will take the bench away, whilst installing the new one. It was proposed by Cllr Roots to accept both quotes. This was seconded by Cllr J Sams, with all in favour.
- 6.3 Other Environmental Matters:
- Kent Downs AONB Tree Packs: The Clerk reported that 4 different packs of trees are available from The Woodlands Trust at a cost of £101.25 for groups in the AONB. After contacted the Kent Downs Partnership, they had confirmed that the Parish Council would be eligible to purchase them. The packs depend on the soil type and contain 45 saplings (15 of each species) along with the necessary stakes and shelters. The Clerk asked whether Councillors felt that these would be appropriate for the land gifted in the Saxon Place development along the boundary with the high speed rail and motorway. There was general agreement with purchasing some packs, however it was felt that some faster growing species needed to be interspersed with these. Cllr Dean added that, as this is VE year, it would be nice if the children from Harrietsham School could assist with the planting and it was agreed that Cllr Griffiths would approach the school to discuss this further. The Clerk stated that the delivery date would need to be checked so that the school could be given an idea of when the planting would be likely to happen. The Amenity Manager was asked to discuss the tree requirements and soil type with JB Landscapes (the contractor for the area). It was proposed by Cllr T Sams to set aside £500 for 2 packs and the supplementary trees to be planted. This was seconded by Cllr Griffiths, with all in favour. **ACTION: Amenity Manager, Cllr Griffiths & Clerk**
 - Grazing of Cattle on Teers Meadow: The Clerk reported that Mike Phillips has spoken to a lady who is happy to graze between 4 to 6 Herefordshire cattle from August to November this year. This can then be reviewed to see whether the Parish Council wish to continue for subsequent years. The lady has agreed to pay a peppercorn rent and will provide her own water supply. An agreement has been drawn up to be signed by both parties. This has been circulated to the Councillors involved in the Teers Meadow project and the Clerk asked Councillors to approve that she can sign this on the Parish Council's behalf. It was proposed by Cllr J Sams that the Clerk sign the agreement. This was seconded by Cllr Griffiths, with all in favour.

7. Finance

- 7.1 The Income/expenditure finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots and seconded by Cllr Griffiths, with all in favour.
- 7.2 Other Financial Matters:
- Minutes of the Meeting held 16th January: The minutes of the meeting were found to be an accurate record, proposed by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr T Sams, with four in favour (those Councillors present at the meeting). A copy was duly signed.
 - Procurement of a Projector and Screen for the Parish Office: It was proposed by Cllr Dean to purchase a projector and screen for Committee meetings at a cost of £800. This was seconded by Cllr T Sams, with all in favour.
 - To re-adopt the Parish Council Standing Orders: It was proposed by Cllr Roots to re-adopt the Standing Orders. This was seconded by Cllr Moore, with all in favour.
 - To re-adopt the Parish Council Risk Assessments: It was proposed by Cllr Roots to re-adopt the Risk Assessments. This was seconded by Cllr Moore, with all in favour.
 - To re-adopt the Parish Council Investment Policy: It was proposed by Cllr Roots to re-adopt the amended Parish Council Investment Policy. This was seconded by Cllr Moore, with all in favour.
 - To re-adopt the Parish Council Asset Register: It was proposed by Cllr Roots to re-adopt the Asset Register. This was seconded by Cllr Moore, with all in favour.
 - To re-adopt the Parish Council Financial Regulations: It was proposed by Cllr Roots to re-adopt the Financial Regulations. This was seconded by Cllr Moore, with all in favour.
 - Budget & Precept for 2020/2021: The Clerk reminded all present that the proposed budget and Precept for 2020/2021 had already been circulated to all Councillors. The proposed recommendation is that the precept requirements for 2020/2021 is £128,158 resulting in a precept of £95.47 per Band

D property. This will result in there being a 0.79% increase from the previous financial year. It was proposed by Cllr Dean that **the precept for the forthcoming year be set at £128,158, an annual increase of 0.75p per Band D household**. This was seconded by Cllr T Sams, with all in favour.

- **Doctors Surgery:**

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from the Doctors informing her that a Fixed Wire Test of the electrical circuits in the surgery is required. They are currently obtaining 3 quotes for this work. They have asked whether the Parish Council would consider paying half towards the cost. The amount is currently unknown but could be around £500 (the amount depends on how many circuits are to be tested). After brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr T Sams to contribute half towards the cost of the test. This was seconded by Cllr Griffiths, with all in favour.

The Clerk then reported that the surgery had also asked the Parish Council to complete a Fire Risk Assessment of the building at a cost of £125 (+ vat), as the Doctors were not prepared to pay for this as they do not own the building. On further investigation it appears that this is a normal risk assessment and the files in the office show that this has previously been completed by the NHS. A subsequent email from the Practice Manager's Assistant said that a fire caused by a spark could affect our insurance if we do not complete one. After discussion, it was noted that the building is of a standard construction and was an empty property when leased to the surgery. All of the items to be risk assessed are internal, which are not the responsibility of the Parish Council. There was a risk assessment completed in 2007 and there have been no material changes to the building since that report was produced. The Parish Council only insures the building and the surgery should have its own contents insurance, which may require a fire risk assessment to be completed. The RFO reported that the Insurance Company has never flagged up the need for a fire risk assessment to be completed as part of our insurance policy. It was therefore agreed by all present that the assessment should be completed by the surgery.

8. Highways

- 8.1 **Highways Issues:** Cllr J Sams reported that the usual highways items are still being reported. The lorry height warning flashing sign on the A20 was discussed. The Clerk stated that she had reported this, however it had taken KHS 10 months to repair the sign last time. Cllr T Sams asked that Helen Whately MP be copied in on any correspondence regarding the sign as she may be able to get the repair completed quicker, as it is a concern with the high sided vehicles using the road with the nightly M20 closures. The Clerk reported on an email that she had been copied in on from Jennie Watson to County Cllr Prendergast regarding the 20mph trial scheme that had been requested for West Street. The content of the email was agreed to be added to the minutes for information purposes:

When assessing whether or not a scheme is deliverable, we are mindful of both appropriateness and also whether there is funding to deliver on site, as the Schemes Planning and Delivery Team do not have designated funds to install these projects.

Once a definitive list of potential sites has been established, a two-stage approach is proposed. The first being to ensure that there is strong community support for a 20mph speed limit and we would expect this to be carried out by the scheme sponsor by way of an informal consultation. All comments would need to be presented to KCC. The proposal would then be appraised against a list of local factors - for example, will it help vulnerable road users around community centres, schools or shops?

If appropriate, the second stage would then involve traffic surveys which will confirm whether or not the location is suitable for consideration as a trial 20mph site. This is where existing speeds are between 24-28 mph and more innovative and psychological traffic calming methods could practicably be implemented. The aim is therefore to help encourage lower speeds by changing the driver's perception of the road environment. KCC can arrange surveys for you, but they may be chargeable.

If a site passes both of these stages, we will then look to work with the scheme sponsor to price up a scheme and identify how it could be funded.

To help determine the effectiveness of the successful trial schemes and their associated alternative traffic calming measures, KCC intends to undertake post installation monitoring in the form of gathering speed survey data and feedback from stakeholders.

- 8.2 **Church Road Footpath:** Cllr T Sams reported that KHS need to undertake an initial feasibility study for the footpath. The fee for this will be £2,815.00 which includes a site visit, utility company enquiries, land searches, liaison with asset owners and a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit on any subsequent outline proposals, in addition to associated project management duties and meetings. After brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr T Sams that the feasibility study be undertaken. This was seconded by Cllr Roots, with all in favour. It was noted that the Booth and Baldwin Trust have stated that they have already gifted land for the

footpath, although there are no legal documents on file to support this. Cllr Dayes was asked to see whether the Trust had any paperwork on file.

ACTION: Cllr Dayes

9. Climate Change

Cllr T Sams reported that he would like each Committee to think about how they can be more environmentally friendly. He will write a report for consideration at the March meeting.

10. Renewal of Annual Membership to CPRE

The Clerk reported that the annual subscription to Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) is now due for renewal at a cost of £36.00 (unchanged from last year). Cllr T Sams proposed that the subscription be renewed, this was seconded by Cllr J Sams; with all in favour.

11. Santa's Grotto

Cllr Griffiths reported that he would like to arrange an event for the growing community. As all of the children do not attend Harrietsham School, it would be nice if a grotto could be arranged for a day in the Village Hall. Thoughts included arranging refreshments to help with the cost of the hall, which would allow for residents to socialise. A small gift could be purchased for the children, who would need to pre-book a slot to see Father Christmas. The children would also be asked to bring a small item that could be given to a chosen charity, possibly a local homeless charity, so that they understand that Christmas is not just about receiving a gift. Councillors were in agreement that this was a good idea and suggested that a working party be organised to progress the project.

12. VE Celebrations

Cllr Dean reminded all present that VE Day is Friday 8th May and that Councillors had already agreed that the beacon should be lit and it was suggested that contact be made with the Church Warden to offer assistance. Cllr Griffiths volunteered to assist on the night, if required. It was confirmed that new gas has been purchased and the beacon is already in place. Cllr Dean also asked Councillor's views on having bunting along West Street, if residents were in agreement. Cllr Roots offered to speak to members of the craft groups so see if they are able to assist.

ACTION: Cllr Roots

13. Big Lunch

Cllr Dean informed all present that the Big Lunch will be held on Sunday 7th June. It was agreed that the Committee would need to look into submitting a grant request to cover the cost of insurance and toilets for the day.

14. Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk reported that the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on the 29th April at 8.00pm. The Clerk asked for confirmation that Councillors wish to hold the evening in St John the Baptist's Church again, this was agreed by all present. The Clerk asked Councillors whether they wanted to offer tea and coffee refreshments, which was agreed by all present. Cllrs T & J Sams confirmed that they were happy to arrange these again. The Clerk asked for ideas of a possible speaker for the evening and requested that any thoughts be emailed to her.

ACTION: All Cllrs

15. Future Events

8th February - Soup Saturday (in the Church)

9th February - Service to celebrate the new extension in the Church (9.30am)

22nd February - Barn Dance in the Village Hall

7th March - Morning at the Meadow (Teers Meadow) - 9.00am - 11.00am meeting in Marley Road

11th March - Friends of the Meadow (Teers Meadow) - 7.00pm - 9.00pm in the Parish Council Office

4th April - Friends of St. Johns AGM (7.00pm in the Church)

26th April - The Wild Spaces of Harrietsham (Teers Meadow) - 2.00pm - 4.00pm meeting in Marley Road

16. Items for Future Consideration

- Harrietsham Pre-School - *Cllr J Sams*
- Climate Change - *Cllr T Sams* (March agenda)

17. Date of next meeting

Full Parish Council Meeting - Wednesday 26th February 2020 from 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

With no further matters to discuss the meeting was closed at 9.02pm.

Minutes of Confidential Agenda Item 18 (Staffing Matters) will be filed with a signed copy of these minutes.