

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 26th February 2025 at 7.30pm
in the Booth Hall

Cllr Powell welcomed all present to the meeting.

The Clerk reminded Cllrs Powell, Dean and Luck that they are booked onto Councillors training on Monday 17th March at 6pm. An email will be sent to Cllr Donley.

ACTION: Clerk

Public discussion

A resident asked for an update on the flooding at Holm Mill Lane. The Clerk reported that the drainage team had been out and cleared 3 of the drains and are visiting again on the 27th February to investigate whether there are other issues in the area which could be exacerbating the flooding.

A resident had emailed the Clerk regarding speeding issues along the A20, which had been circulated to all Councillors. Cllr Powell responded that a roundabout, as suggested, would require a large sum of s106 money and the Parish Council does not have any powers relating to this type of project. He added that it is hoped the average speed camera may be reinstalled in the future, shared with another village, and added that the village Speedwatch group has been very effective.

The resident then raised a concern regarding the volume of litter along the A20, which Cllr Powell confirmed could be reported to MBC, and queried the grass cutting which is completed along the road, with the Amenity Manager responding on this point.

1 Present

Cllr E Powell, Cllr C Roots, Cllr G Dean, Cllr S Luck, Cllr R Dayes, RFO/Amenity Manager Mr M Cuerden and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst
2 Members of Public

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted for Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Sams, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr T Griffiths, Cllr S Brown and Cllr S Donley.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 29th January 2025: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Roots; with 3 in favour and 2 abstentions.

4 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

There were no changes to the register.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Cllr G Dean: Agenda Item 6.1 (Other Environmental Matters), as her property is adjacent to the lake in Woodlands Walk.

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

5 Planning

5.1 The outstanding planning applications were noted.

5.2 The approved applications were noted.

5.3 Other Planning Matters

The Clerk reported that, with the RFO, she had attended a meeting with the Practice Manager of the Glebe Medical Centre to discuss the possible installation of a pharmacy box. This will require a change of use planning application being submitted, as the box would be accessible 24/7. The alterations to the entrance area were outlined and the amount of s106 available is currently being investigated. Councillors were supportive of the project progressing.

The Clerk added that, whilst at the surgery, it had been noted that a local resident has removed part of the mature beech hedge and metal boundary fence, to install a gate, which now accesses behind the surgery. This has been completed without any permission and has now created a security risk for the surgery. A strongly worded letter has been sent to the homeowner to have the area reinstated by April, with 10ft saplings being required, otherwise the matter will be passed to the

Parish Council's solicitor to take further action. After discussion, it was agreed that the Housing Association should also be made aware of the damaged caused. **ACTION: Clerk**

6 Environmental

6.1 Other Environmental Matters

- Chalk Treatment in Woodlands Walk Lake: The Amenity Manager reported that the treatment would be completed imminently if approved, at a cost of £2,300. The price had been held at the 2024 cost, as the Parish Council had been helpful with resolving the issue that had arisen with the faulty aerators last year. It was proposed by Cllr Luck to proceed with the treatment, seconded by Cllr Dayes; with 4 in favour and 1 abstention. **ACTION: Amenity Manager**

7 Finances

7.1 Income and Expenditure Spreadsheets: The finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Dean; with all in favour.

7.2 Minutes of the F&GP Meeting held on 16th January 2025: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Luck; with 2 in favour (those present at the meeting).

7.3 Other Financial Matters

- Volunteer Community First Responder Scheme: The Clerk reminded all Councillors that an email had been circulated from a resident, requesting that the Parish Council considers funding someone to be part of the scheme. It was noted that there are no powers which could be used to progress with this and the general view was that, as this scheme is already operational in Kent, it would be more beneficial for the resident to speak directly with SECamb.
- Devolution: The Clerk informed all present that Kent had not been chosen to be fast tracked through devolution, which will result in Kent being restructured, but without the level of funding which had first been anticipated. The Clerk then reported on the recent KALC meeting, where Ryan O'Connell had spoken at length regarding a report which had been discussed at the MBC Democratic and General Purposes meeting at the end of January. An email had also been circulated to all Councillors from KALC suggested that Parish Councils need to start mapping their assets and to consider what the community would wish them to take on. After discussion it was agreed that each Committee (Planning, Environmental and F&GP) should discuss the items which the Parish Council might consider taking over, if a discussion is required with MBC/KCC or a newly formed Unitary Authority. The Clerk also raised concerns regarding the Glebe field and West Street green. KCC should have transferred 2/3rds of the Glebe field to the Parish Council in 2006 and the other 1/3 has a 125 year lease in place with MBC, however confirmation of the transfer is required. The Clerk will undertake a land search. The West Street green was discussed at a hearing on the 7th February 1979 where the Commons Commissioner had instructed KCC to register the Parish Council as the owner of the land under section 8(3) of the Commons Registration Act 1965. Having checked the Land Registry, there are no title deeds, which would suggest the transfer was not completed. After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should approach MBC and KCC to progress with transferring both areas to the Parish Council.

ACTION: Clerk & Env., F&GP & Planning Cttees

8 Highways

A highways report had been circulated prior to the meeting, which was noted.

Cllr Roots reported on the recent Speedwatch session, in 1 hour they registered 9 vehicles speeding, with the highest recorded at 42mph. This number is still far lower than before the temporary average speed cameras, when 20+ drivers were regularly caught speeding during a session.

9 VE Day & Big Lunch Events

Cllr Dean gave an update on both events.

VE Day (8th May): The Invicta Orchestra has been booked who will be performing 1940s style swing music at a cost of £300. It was proposed by Cllr Powell that the Parish Council pays for the band, seconded by Cllr Dayes; with all in favour. The Church Warden had confirmed that, in the event of bad weather, the evening could be moved from the Glebe field into the church (which can accommodate 120 seated with some additional standing room). The bells are to be rung at 6.30pm and the beacon will be lit by the Church at 9.30pm. Cllr Dean will arrange refreshments for the band. An electricity supply has

been arranged with the help of a local resident, if needed. A request was made for the hall to be made available for use of the toilets.

Big Lunch (22nd June): Cllr T Sams needs to contact the school regarding borrowing tables and chairs. Cllr Dean queried whether any raffle prizes were stored from the cancelled event in 2024 and the Clerk responded that these would have been returned to the companies/residents that had donated them; Cllr Dean will speak to Cllr Brown. The ice cream van, First Aider and face painter are all booked. The toilets need to be arranged.

Cllr Dean stated that Cllr J Sams would need to produce flyers for both events and the Clerk reminded Cllr Dean that risk assessments will be required as well.

10 Community Resilience/Emergency Plan

Cllr Roots reported that a public meeting is to be arranged on 25th March at 7pm to see if residents would like to get involved in creating a Community Emergency Plan. Cllr Roots was asked to complete the hall booking form and it was proposed by Cllr Powell to cover the cost of the booking, up to £60.00, seconded by Cllr Luck; with all in favour. It was noted that both Cllrs Roots and Dean had just attended a Kent Resilience Forum on-line session regarding creating emergency planning.

11 Christmas Lights

A quotation from Gala Lights had been circulated before the meeting. Cllr Roots felt that the annual sum of £5,025 adding an additional 5 festive lights to the current ones for 3 years, was a large sum of money to spend, when Councillors had already decided not to install electricity onto the green for a Christmas tree at a cost of £6,000. After brief discussion it was decided to review the situation when the current lease period ends after Christmas 2025.

12 Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk confirmed that Derek Eagle from the Parish Council Environmental Network has been confirmed as the speaker for the evening. The following reports were confirmed for the booklet:

Chairman: Cllr Powell Planning: Cllr Roots Finance: RFO

Environmental: Cllr Brown Highways: Cllr J Sams

Cllrs T & J Sams will arrange refreshments.

13 Whistleblowing Policy

It was proposed by Cllr Roots to approve the Whistleblowing Policy, seconded by Cllr Powell; with all in favour. The Clerk will add this to the website. **ACTION: Clerk**

14 Future Events

8th March - Soup Saturday in the Church 12-2pm

15th March - Bingo Fundraising Event for St John's in the Village Hall, 7pm for 7.30pm start

22nd March - Annual Parochial Church Meeting

25th March - Community Emergency Plan Public Meeting - Village Hall 7pm

28th March - Friends of St John's AGM 7pm in the Church

5th April - HIB Annual Quiz (Village Hall)

8th May - VE Day Invicta Orchestra Band & Beacon to be lit on Glebe Field from 7pm

21st June - Kettle Bridge Concertina Band Concert in the Church

22nd June - Big Lunch on the Glebe Field 12-4pm

15 Items for Future Consideration

No items for consideration.

16 Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 26th March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

With no further matters to discuss the meeting was closed at 9.00pm.

Public Discussion

A resident offered to assist with the Emergency Plan, as they had created contingency plans when working in the prison service. They also confirmed they would assist with refreshments at the meeting.

A query was raised about the Parish Council submitting 'No Comment' responses to planning applications.

A question was asked relating to the type of vehicles that are caught speeding (mainly cars and vans).