

No apologies or report received

219 **Maidstone Borough Council – Ward Councillor - Gill Fort**

Apologies received.

The Clerk has contacted Cllr Fort following an announcement by MBC that they are making changes to the planning application process, whereby paper copies will not be provided from March.

Cllr Fort reported:- following reports of concerns of residents after a number of traffic issues in Broomfield and Kingswood during times when Leeds road is closed and drivers are using alternatives rather than sitting in static traffic, the Planning Inspector, when reviewing the local plan, didn't think there would be funding in the short term for a Leeds/Langley relief road but the proposed development to the south and east of Maidstone can still go ahead. Cllr Fort has been in discussion with KCC, the highways authority and Gary Cooke who is championing a relief road is quite happy to arrange a meeting with the parishes effected to update them as to where we are. Included in the invite would be the local ward and KCC member together with the highways officers. Councillors confirmed that they would like to send a representative to this meeting.

Junction 8. The planning application for warehousing has been appealed. Cllr Fort has previously objected to this application and will continue to do so as the appeal process progresses.

There has been a marked increase in fly tipping in the area. It can be reported via MBC's website however if you experience delays let Cllr Fort know and she will take it up.

The Clerk advised councillors that the new PCSO was attending the meeting but had not yet arrived, councillors agreed to delay the police item until his arrival.

220 **Finances**

220.1 Responsible Finance Officer's report - payments were ratified and agreed – report retained on file

221 **Policing**

PCSO Boyd was introduced to councillors and welcomed as the new PCSO for our area following the resignation of PCSO Tom Maybank.

221.1 PCSO Boyd reported on the Crime figures for 17 January – 20 February 2017:-

January – 21st, Gravelly Bottom Rd, Theft of Statue from front garden;

17th, Charlesford Ave, Damage to vehicle

February -

During this period there were 21 calls to the police including the above crimes

Also there were :- 1 RTC's – Pitt Rd

A stray dog was found down the Chegworth Rd this was taken to the vets to liaise with the dog warden to ascertain the owners

2 reports of nuisance youths knocking over bins - no description of youths or CCTV available

1 report of nuisance youths firing catapults a description was given, area search was taken by officers but no sign of anybody

Cllr Annette Friend joined the meeting at 8.05pm

221.2 NHW has received reports of youths with catapults causing criminal damage which was reported to the police on 101. The catapults have a velocity capacity of 140 mph, fit in the palm of your hand and are as deadly as a hand gun. Kent Police have advised to ring 999 if there are further sightings of persons with catapults as catapults are classed as an offensive weapon and therefore a crime is taking place.

Signed _____

Clerk

These items are considered to be as deadly as a handgun. PCSO Boyd confirmed this was the appropriate action.

221.3 Cllr Friend reported an increase in fly tipping around the parish, the clerk advised that she has reported two incidents, MBC will come and clear within 48 hours if dumped in a public place.

221.4 There have been a lot of complaints of vehicles parking on footpaths, parking on junctions especially around the school and parking across dropped kerbs. PCSO Boyd advised he would attend the parish and leaflet drop vehicles that he considered could be causing obstructions and liaise with the school.

220
(Cont.)

Finances

220.2 Bank reconciliation – December 2016 & January 2017 were agreed and signed by Cllrs Tandy and Darling respectively.

220.3 Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2017 – it was unanimously agreed to ask Lionel Robbins to carry out the internal audit for 2017.

220.4 Ratify purchase of new computer equipment and Office 365 – councillors agreed unanimously to the purchase of a new computer, computer cable and the Office 365 programme for the clerk.

220.5 Credit Card facility – Councillors agreed unanimously to apply for a credit card facility in line with financial regulations for the use of the Clerk as necessary. There would be a limit of £500.

220.6 Co-operative bank are currently offering 0.03% interest on balances up to £99,999. Cllrs requested this to be an agenda item for April, the new financial year.

220.7 MBC have confirmed our precept application of £55,500 and advised that the Band D Council tax for this parish for 2017/18 will be £78.03

220.8 Following lobbying of MBC after the reduction in the Parish Service Scheme for 2017/18 an increase of £500 has been agreed.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

222

Kent Highway Services

222.1 Lenham Road – speed restriction – Councillors confirmed the decision of the Parish Council in 2015 that they did not support the implementation of a speed restriction along the Lenham Road to Wents crossroads, but that alternate road traffic calming measures should be considered.

222.2 Emergency closures of neighbouring roads – Susan Laporte, District Manager, KCC Highways would welcome the opportunity to attend a parish meeting to discuss options to prevent traffic chaos when local road have to be closed. Councillors requested the clerk to arrange a date with Ms Laporte.

222.3 Road gritting –Following changes after an optimisation exercise carried out by KCC Highways, Kingswood will not be automatically gritted as it is now classed as a secondary route, however, should there be a “snow emergency” or the “likelihood of ice” then the roads would be gritted.

Clerk

223

Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk had previously circulated correspondence from DWF regarding an insurance claim. The solicitor has advised that the claim is unlikely to succeed. Councillors agreed unanimously that it would not be in the interest of the parish to pursue the claim any further.

Clerk

224

Preschool Premises

Cllr Friend advised councillors that due to the government policy of increasing childcare funding for working parents there was a need for the pre-school to be able to offer whole days of childcare. The village hall could not supply the needed availability as it would be to the detriment of all the other clubs and societies, therefore they would need to look for alternative premises to survive.

Councillors suggested that the pre-school should approach the Village Hall Committee and/or the Scout Group, and if after that the PC would offer their support if needed.

225

Rural Community Energy Fund

There is a government programme which is offering a support grant of up to £20,000 to pay for an initial

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investigation into the feasibility of developing a community renewable energy project. Councillors requested the Clerk to include this information in the next edition of the Parish News to enable a community group to come together if they wished to pursue this opportunity.

Clerk

There was a brief recess for refreshments at 9.13pm, the meeting re-opened at 9.22pm

226 Complaints re increase of dog fouling & parking on footpaths

The Clerk is receiving an increased amount of complaints from residents in Kingswood about the dog fouling on the footpaths around the village. The Clerk has contacted both MBC & KCC and MBC have put up posters and will be returning to carry out stencilling of the pavements. The Clerk will include another article in the parish news. Both subjects were brought to the attention of PCSO Boyd (see item 221)

Clerk

227 Requests to reply

Following requests to the Clerk that the PC respond to various articles about developments around the parish in the local press, councillors confirmed that they did not wish to escalate issues with responses and that the MBC emerging Local Plan had already indicated that there would be no sizeable developments within this parish.

228 Sports Field

228.1 Quotes for cutting hedge – councillors unanimously agreed to ask Steven Waring to cut the sports field hedge.

228.2 Dog Waste bins - despite requests by the Clerk the co-mingle bins that were due to replace the dog waste bins have not been installed. There is a noticeable increase in dog fouling in the sports field. The local shopkeeper had also advised the clerk that he was having to remove his customer bins from outside the shop as people had been importing large bags of dog waste and dumping them in and around his shop bins.

228.3 Determine contractor for 2017- councillors agreed unanimously to ask Steven Waring to continue to maintain the sports field. In addition it was agreed that he should increase the ratio of fertiliser, as suggested, to maintain the quality of the grass due to the increased use being experienced. Steven Waring was also to be asked for the annual maintenance of the hedge to be included on the maintenance schedule for 2017/18 and to cut the grass verges around the village as per his quotes. Clerk to confirm arrangements.

Clerk

Cllr Friend told councillors that during the recent half term break the sports field was very busy, being well used and enjoyed by many.

229 Parish Council Office Provision

The Clerk had written to the Village Hall Committee as requested at the November Parish Council meeting, on 28th November but has never received any acknowledgement or other response. Subsequent enquiries at ACRK revealed that the Village Hall would not be able to allow the parish council to add to the village hall buildings as it is governed by the Charities Commission and this would be against regulations.

230 Councillors Resignation

Cllr Darling informed councillors that it was with regret, due to other family commitments, that he was resigning as a councillor, with immediate effect at the close of the current meeting.

The Clerk will notify MBC and advertise the vacancy accordingly.

Clerk

It was discussed and agreed the Vice Chairman, Tina Clark would take over the chair until the APM in May,
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also Cllr Davies was asked and agreed to take over the weekly inspections of the sports field until the APM.

230 Reports

230.1 Media & Communications Conference – Clerk – report previously circulated and retained on file.
230.2 KALC Area Meeting – Cllr Clark – minutes of meeting previously circulated and retained on file.

231 Any Other Information

- 231.1 Parish Police Liaison Meeting - on 24th May at 7pm at Maidstone Police Station
- 231.2 Clerk is hoping to take her remaining annual leave from 27th March to 10th April
- 231.3 Peter Pease Close, rental property available.
- 231.4 Clerk has reported the damaged road sign for Charlesford Avenue
- 231.5 Planning committee meeting required – 6th March - tbc
- 231.6 Letter: from Broomfield residents re motorway noise – agenda item for March
- 231.7 MBC have taken the decision to stop forwarding hard copy planning applications.
- 231.8 Letter: of thanks received from Porchlight for the donation.
- 231.9 Letter: requested donation of £250 from Kent, Surrey, Sussex Air Ambulance
- 231.10 ICO Certificate of Registration for 2017/18 has been received
- 231.11 Planning application for development at Woodcutts Farm, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne has been set down for a public enquiry. The Chairman of the JPG is asking for PC's to write to Paul Carter, KCC confirming the opposition to this application by the Parish Council
- 231.12 The Village Hall AGM will be held at 8pm 27th February 2017 at the Village Hall
- 231.13 Cllr Darling wished to extend his thanks for the support of councillors and clerk during his time as a councillor and latterly as chairman. Cllr Hoy thanked Cllr Darling on behalf of the parish council for all his work and for his chairmanship in the last year.

Cllr
Davies

Clerk

Clerk

Cllr
Friend

232 Items for next Meeting's Agenda

Nothing noted

233 Parish Council Meetings

The next Meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 20th March 2017 at The Village Hall, Gravelly Bottom Road, Kingswood from 7.30pm.

There was no further business: Cllr Darling closed the meeting at 10.35pm

Signed _____