

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE YALDING PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 10th NOVEMBER 2009 AT 7.30 P.M. IN LADDINGFORD VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT

Geraldine Brown (GB) Chairman
Derek Hudson (DH)
Sue Hobbs (SH)

Mike Newman (MN) Vice-Chairman
Symon Wilson (SW)
Andy Sanders (AS)

Cllr Rodd Nelson Gracie (RNG)

ACTION

1. PUBLIC SESSION

No members of the public were present.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Vivienne Robinson, Michael Stewart and Ken Gough.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF COUNCILLORS IN ANY ITEM

None declared.

4. DECISION TO TAKE AGENDA ITEMS UNDER CLOSED SESSION

It was agreed to take items 24 and 25 in Closed Session.

5. POLICE MATTERS

PC Garry Shaw (GS) and PCSO James Austin (JA) continue to have a high presence in the Parish. JA has now passed his cycling exam and will be seen about on a bicycle from time to time, which will make it easier for him to get around the area. The police bikes are kept in Maidstone but would be of much better use to JA if one were available locally, the Chairman will write to Maidstone police offering to store a bike in Yalding. JA reported that there has been very little anti social activity this month and the youths seem have stopped hanging around The Kintons after dark. The councillors thanked JA and GS for there continued presence. The Chairman asked JA to find out who was policing the yuletide market in order that she could emphasise the importance of traffic control to their role on the night.

CHAIR

6. PLANNING

Comments on all new applications are recorded at the end of the minutes.

6.1. ENFORCEMENT

MA/03/2352 – SHINGLE BARN FARM

The Chairman reported excessive light pollution from this development. The clerk will look up the original permission and conditions and report to the planning officer.

CLK

7. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 6th OCTOBER 2009

Proposed SH, seconded MN and all agreed that the minutes be signed as a correct record.

8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

8.1. ROAD SAFETY ON VICARGE LANE

MS has undertaken a Speedwatch session near the school and no one was caught speeding. The Chairman raised the matter of 20 mph speed limits at the Joint Transport Board (JTB) meeting and Nick Chard the Kent County Council (KCC) Cabinet Member, thoughts are still awaited. GS reported that all signs on Vicarage Road are as required and in good condition. Nothing further to report on improvements to the school crossing.

KG

8.2. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

There has been no response from John Grant from Maidstone Police regarding a survey of recreational facilities GS will chase.

CHAIR

8.3. WAR MEMORIAL

The Clerk chasing the War Memorials Trust for a grant towards repairs.

CLK

8.4. FOOTPATH HIGH STREET/SCHOOL GATE

The above footpath is in need of repair; KG reported that, due to an accident on the lower end of the footpath involving a local resident, KCC are unable to proceed with the resurfacing work until any legal issues are completed. There has been nothing further to report.

KG

8.5. THE FEN

8.5.1. OVER GROUND WATER SUPPLY

The water supply needs to be reinstated in order to allow the Fen to be used for educational visits again. KG has further details for the former site manager. KG and AS have walked the site.

KG/SW

8.6. THE TATT

8.6.1. THE TATT PARKING

Following a letter sent by the Clerk to residents requesting that commercial vehicles, other than CDVs, should not be parked on The Tatt, all non CD vans have been removed and the very tatty van has gone from the High Street.

NFA

8.7. ADDITIONAL ENTRANCE ONTO THE LEES PONY FIELD

The site meeting has not yet been arranged. KG will speak to Laddingford Engineering re the manufacture of a suitable gate, to allow access for agricultural vehicles and then arrange a site meeting.

KG

8.8. GYPSY SITES

A consultation document on gypsy sites is being prepared by Sarah Anderton the Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Gypsy Issues Officer; the Chairman will circulate when received.

CHAIR

8.9. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT

The parishes to give input to Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) the Clerk has asked for clarification on this and has to date received no response. The Clerk is now checking with other parishes re their approach.

NFA

8.10. STREET LIGHTING

8.10.1. YOUTH CENTRE LIGHT

The Clerk has spoken to GS with regard to the damage who advised that the only possible course of action was to claim costs. The witness only heard the accident but looked out immediately to see the car driver, fallen lamppost and the driver's mother running across the road shouting at him. The Chairman has discovered that the lamppost has never been reconnected and that we were never given a quote for this work. The Clerk (AL) paid EDF £471.50 for the reconnection, the Chairman will add this cost to those already paid out and download the Small Claims' Court paperwork.

CHAIR

8.10.2. MAINTENANCE

Ditton Electrical has been engaged to inspect and maintain the street lighting in the Parish. They would prefer to be paid by cheque however the Clerk is pushing for a standing order for this work. Electrical testing has been added to the perpetual diary.

CLKAG

8.11. CHURCH FLOOD LIGHTING

David Dunn has been engaged to maintain and inspect the church floodlights. He has ordered the parts needed to repair the broken light and the work should be carried out within the next week. The floodlighting is currently not working at all but this is probably because it has tripped out. Graham Spillman, churchwarden, now back from holiday and will address.

CLKAG

8.12. LITTER BINS

The Clerk has arranged a meeting with MBC to look at the various bins in the Parish.

CLKAG

8.13. SEAT AT LADDINGFORD

It was agreed that SH would varnish the seat opposite The Chequers. The metal seat on the verge into Laddingford also needs attention. The Clerk (AL) reminded Cllrs that the

metal seat from the High Street was still at The Forge and a decision as to its sitting needed to be made.

SH

8.14. PLAYScheme

The Clerk has written to the Clerks at Collier Street and Hunton whose children attend the play scheme asking if their parish councils would be willing to make a small donation.

ML

8.15. FINANCIAL AUDIT

The accounts have been submitted to the Audit Commission.

NFA

8.16. INSPECTION OF PLAY EQUIPMENT

The Clerk has spoken to MBC with regards to the extent of their inspection and to make them aware of the dangerous nature of the swings that were not reported by them. MCB have confirmed that their inspection is very thorough. KG will take this up with them as we believe that they area was left in a dangerous state.

KG

8.17. PARKING ENFORCEMENT

The Chairman has spoken with Steve Goulette, MBC, regarding the attendance by parking wardens at the Farmers' Market and he has taken note of the matter.

NFA

9. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

10. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

RNG had nothing to report.

11. PROGRESS OF THE CLERKS HANDOVER

The official handover took place on the 1st November; the telephone will be transferred on the 11th of November. AG has now got all the paperwork transferred to her and is dealing with all new issues, however AL is in place until the end of November to tie up any loose ends. Electronic data will be transferred when AG gets her new computer and email address. Both Clerks and the Chairman confirmed they were happy with the progress.

12. BYELAWS

DH questioned the need for byelaws but after discussion the meeting felt that we do need them. It was agreed that progress would only be made if a small sub team work on this project; this will be DH and the Chairman. It was confirmed that the DEFRA byelaws would act as our model.

DH

The Chairman to obtain quotes from local security companies.

CHAIR

13. FOWLE HALL GREEN

In order to maintain this land Darren Sutton has sorted the brambles and completed the one off tidy. He will mow the area twice yearly this has been added to the perpetual diary. DS has provided a quote, which was accepted.

NFA

14. BT MAINTENANCE

The Clerk has written to BT requesting that they paint their equipment. BT has acknowledged this and will make an assessment and report back.

CLK

15. YALDING LIBRARY

A site meeting has taken place between KCC Conservation Officer, MCB Conservation Officer and Mouchel, their advisors, to look at the exterior using Alan Collins photograph and they are now actively progressing the work and have confirmed that it will be complete by end March 2010.

ML

16. PUBLIC TOILETS

The Clerk (AG) has only found one company that is interested in cleaning these toilets they have quoted £252.25 (not including consumables) per week, which was felt to be reasonable. It does however exceed the monies MBC have offered of £2500 per year, if the toilets are cleaned for approximately 30 weeks of the year. Steplehurst have already agreed this budget with MCB, the Clerk will contact them to ask for their costs. The Clerk will also contact The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and Medway Valley Countryside Partnership (MVCP) to ask for advice regarding grants. There is also a possibility of looking at a sliding scale of cleaning either side of the summer.

CLK

The Chairman is investigating why the cesspit is currently being emptied weekly and the Clerk (AL) has found that YPC paid MBC approximately £1500 annually to empty the cesspit, however we have no documentation to show how often they did this.

CHAIR

The Chairman will explain the importance of these toilets to our tourism to MCB and request a larger budget.

CHAIR

17. POST OFFICE

The Landlord has spoken with the Clerk and advises that, as we have a full repairing and insuring lease, the asbestos survey is our responsibility. The Chairman has taken advice and checked the lease. DH still believes that the landlord should have had an inspection and should have a register. The Clerk will write again to the landlord asking if this is the case.

CLK

18. RIVERSIDE COMMUNITIES PROJECT END

This project, managed by the MVCP, is now complete. MVCP have agreed to celebrate this with a guided walk of The Fen followed by a pub lunch in the Walnut Tree on the 20th of November starting at 10.30am-with a limit of 40 places. The Kent Men of the Trees have judged us to be in the top 10 villages in Kent in a, Trees in the Village competition and our prize is a Lime tree, which will be planted at The Lees car park on the afternoon of the 20th, at 3 pm.

CLK

19. HIGHWAYS

19.1. LEES CORNER SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

The Clerk has had a site meeting with Aspen to discuss tidying up the tree on the Pony Field adjacent to the corner and they will do this work in the next couple of weeks. Aspen reported that the Oak trees on The Lees did not require any work.

KG is still pushing KCC for implementation of their original safety plan.

KG

19.2. FOOTWAY, HAMPSTEAD LANE

The repair of the third stretch of footway is being costed. KG has chased the highway officer.

MN raised the issue of the potentially dangerous contours of the footpath at the junction of the Lees path crossing and Hampstead Lane. The Chairman said that she would ask KG to look at this..

KG

19.3. LAY-BY JUNCTION BENOVER ROAD/MILL LANE

The reinstatement of the verge is on the highway list.

KG

19.4. REFLECTORS ON BEND NEAR TWYFORD BRIDGE

KCC have agreed to provide extra reflectors on this dangerous bend.

KG

19.5. LADDINGFORD SPEED LIMIT

The Chairman emailed Cllr Mrs Stockell to chase the implementation of the reduced speed limit and has sent a further reminder.

CHAIR

19.6. KENWARD ROAD

KG monitoring the work carried out by KCC to see whether it has resolved the problem of water on the highway. PC GS turned the speed limit signs around to the correct position.

KG

20. YULETIDE MARKET

The road closure is in place. The lights will be erected on Sunday the 22nd of November.

21. CORRESPONDENCE

21.1. BUS SERVICES

We have received a letter to inform us that our bus services are up for tender. The clerk will write to KCC to confirm that we have been very happy with the current provider.

CLK

21.2. NEW ELECTRICITY SUPPLY SWAN PLACE

EDF have requested that a new electricity supply be laid across The Tatt. The Clerk will confirm to EDF that this is acceptable.

CLK

21.3. VICTIM SUPPORT

Victim Support has requested a donation; the clerk will bring this to the budget meeting.

CLK

21.4. LAND REGISTRY

The Land Registry has informed us that their office in Tunbridge Wells is to close.

NFA

21.5. THE FAMILY HISTORY HELPER

It was agreed to put the KCC poster in the Library.

CLK

21.6. FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Fire and Rescue service have sent their plan for public consultation.

NFA

22. FINANCE

22.1. BILLS FOR PAYMENT

A list of bills, totalling £6790.23 exclusive of VAT, was circulated and proposed AS, seconded SW and all agreed that they be paid.

22.2. RECEIPTS

A list of receipts totalling £8254.42 had been circulated.

23. PARISH MATTERS

23.1. BUDGET

The chairman suggested that a Finance Committee be set up. It will report quarterly in January, April, July, and October. This will be put on the agenda of discussion next month.

CLK

The budget will be discussed at the December meeting and finalised at the January meeting. The Chairman requested that any requirements be emailed to her in advance.

ALL

23.2. WEB SITE

This will be on the agenda for discussion in December.

CLK

23.3. THE OUTGOING CLERK

AL thanked the parish councillors and community for her leaving celebration and gifts. Councillors thanked her in return for her years of loyal service.

COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

MA/09/1769

The Granary, Yalding Hill
Erection of a first floor extension and a two-storey extension to the southeast elevation.

The Parish Council questions if this development is contrary to the Policy of Preservation of Buildings of Architectural Interest that permitted the original conversion.

MA/09/1823

1 Swan House, High Street

XLB application for removal of felt roof to rear of property, insertion of new patio doors and renewal of existing rear balustrading in timber boarding with associated works.

NO COMMENT

MA/09/1739

Fairhaven, Queen Street

Change of use of land to use as a residential caravan site for one gypsy family with two caravans and associated buildings including day room and amenity block.

OBJECT

This is a flood zone 3a.

The Clerk (AL) was asked to check what conditions were put on any temporary approval given several years ago.

MA/09/1788

3 Acott Fields

Retrospective planning application for the extension of decking in the rear garden.

NO COMMENT

MA/09/1498

Laddingford Croft, Claygate Road

Provision of new entrance, access track, erection of a new timber tractor and implement store.

Change of description to add provision of new entrance, access track missed off the original title.

ORIGINAL NO COMMENT STANDS