

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE YALDING PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 26th JANUARY 2010 AT 7.30 P.M. IN YALDING VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT

Geraldine Brown (GB) Chairman
Derek Hudson (DH)
Ken Gough (KG)
Vivienne Robinson (VR)
Sue Hobbs (SH)

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

ACTION

1. PUBLIC SESSION

No members of the public were present.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Rodd Nelson Gracie.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF COUNCILLORS IN ANY ITEM

DH declared an interest in item 12 as he is a member of the plant and fabric meeting for the church.

The Chairman and VR declared that they were given a gift from a local business as a thank you for their custom. Whilst this does not legally need to be declared as it was under £25 they felt it was appropriate to do so and they have both given their gifts to local charities.

4. DECISION TO TAKE AGENDA ITEMS UNDER CLOSED SESSION

It was agreed to take items 23 and 24 in Closed Session.

5. POLICE MATTERS

PSCO James Austin's bike will either be stored at the Village Hall or in the Lock-Up.

Yalding will now host the Police Forum meetings for the next two years. The first of these meeting will be on the 17th of March at 7pm in the village hall.

MH noted that the police were not present and asked that The Clerk to inform them that they are always welcome, although we appreciate that this may not always be possible. **CLK**

DH pointed out that he had seen an article in a local newspaper about the police no longer being able to use their mobile phones on duty. The Clerk will check if this applies to us. **CLK**

6. PLANNING

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

Planning decisions made by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) since the last meeting are recorded at the end of the minutes.

A list of Decembers planning applications was circulated and ratified, proposed MS seconded MN.

MA/09/1769 – THE GRANARY, YALDING HILL

The Parish Council questioned if this development is contrary to the Policy of Preservation of Buildings of Architectural Interest that permitted the original conversion. The Planning officer agreed, however following the submission of a more detailed business justification the plans were granted. **NFA**

MA/03/2352 – SHINGLE BARN FARM

Concerns were expressed that this development had ripped out the entire hedgerow and was causing light pollution. MBC have confirmed that a landscaping scheme was submitted and approved and the work being undertaken, including the removal of the existing hedgerow, is in accordance with that scheme. No reply regarding light pollution. The Clerk will check if business hours were a condition of the permission and if business hours were listed in the application. **CLK**

The Chairman has received a document from Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) with regard to the Local Development Framework; The Clerk will scan and circulate. **CLK**

DH supported by MN asked that it be minuted that he strongly objects to the fact that the January and February meeting were combined, as this causes important decisions such as planning applications to be made via email which he feels is not acceptable.

7. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 1st DECEMBER 2009

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

8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

8.1. WAR MEMORIAL

The War Memorials Trust has been in touch via the previous Clerk to ask for more information and photographs before they can progress with the grant towards repairs. The Clerk will progress and DH has offered to take further photographs. **CLK/DH**

8.2. ADDITIONAL ENTRANCE ONTO THE LEES PONY FIELD

Laddingford Engineering to manufacture a suitable gate, to allow access for agricultural vehicles. KG will now progress this matter. **KG**

8.3. GYPSY SITES

A consultation document on gypsy sites is being prepared by MBC Gypsy Issues Officer; it has not yet been received. The Chairman will chase and circulate once received. **CHAIR/CLK**

8.4. YOUTH CENTRE LIGHT

In order to progress the Small Claims Court paperwork for the recovery of damages caused to the youth centre light, The Chairman now has the invoice for reconnection but has asked the Clerk if she can trace the invoice for the column and lantern. Reconnection was scheduled for 5th January but EDF had to abort as there was a problem. The Clerk to chase for a new date. **CHAIR/CLK**

8.5. SEAT AT LADDINGFORD

The seat will be varnished in the spring. **ML**

8.6. BYELAWS

Yalding Parish Council (YPC) has agreed to produce its own byelaws. The Chairman and DH have met to discuss these they agreed that each piece of land really needed its own set of byelaws. They agreed that The Lees was the most vulnerable piece of land and, as this already has byelaws, they would find these and make recommendations to update as necessary. They will meet again in the next few weeks to make a full report. In the meantime, The Chairman to obtain quotes from local security companies with regard to enforcement of The Lees byelaws. **CHAIR/DH**

8.7. BT MAINTENANCE

BT confirmed that they would complete maintenance of reported street furniture by 10 December 2009 but no work has been undertaken. The Clerk to chase this work, in particular the appalling state of the telephone box. The Chairman was fortunate to come across an Open Reach engineer who removed the dangerous piece of metal that was overhanging the footway. **CLK**

8.8. YALDING LIBRARY

A planning application for the work to restore the outside wall of the library to its original condition has been received. Upon determination, the Clerk will obtain a work schedule from Kent County Council (KCC). **ML**

8.9. RIVERSIDE COMMUNITIES PROJECT END

Medway valley countryside Partnership (MVCP) produces apple juice from the Yalding orchards. The Clerk has put posters up around the village and has placed an advert in The Parish Magazine, she has arranged for it to be sold out of The Village Tea Room. Six bottles have been sold to date. **NFA**

8.10. WEB SITE

A plan needs to be put in place to manage the parish web site. This is deferred to February. **CHAIR/VR/CLK**

8.11. YULETIDE MARKET

The Christmas lights were left on for the duration of the snowy conditions as the footways were treacherous. **NFA**

8.12. TAP ON THE LEES

A tap is required on The Lees Car Park; MN is liaising with Tea Pot Island. This will not be progressed until the spring. **ML**

8.13. QUALITY PARISH COUNCILS

The Parish Council (PC) has expressed an interest in achieving the Quality Parish Council Status. The Chairman will circulate the check list and proposes a subcommittee be set up to work out a time schedule. **MARCH AGENDA**

The Clerk has not yet progressed her training schedule, which is one of the criteria required. **CLK**

8.14. MONITOR LIST

An updated list will be circulated, monthly. **CLK**

8.15. 20MPH SPEED LIMIT

The 20MPH speed limit implementation in the parish is with the Joint Transportation Board (JTB) meeting is at the end of February. **CHAIR**

8.16. FOOTPATH ALONG SIDE THE VILLAGE HALL

The Clerk has contacted Maidstone Housing Trust to cut back the hedge. They have reported that it is on their list and will be done before March. **ML**

8.17. COMMUNITY PAYBACK

The Clerk has contacted Community Payback about doing work in the parish. KG and The Clerk will put together a plan and then ask for a site visit. Any interested Councillors will be invited to attend. This has not progressed due to the weather; it will do so this month. **KG/CLK**

8.18. PERPETUAL DIARY

The Chair and The Clerk will update the perpetual diary and circulate. **CHAIR/CLK**

8.19. BIN AT BOWER MOUNT

The Clerk has emailed MBC to ask them to change the orientation of this bin as it is obstructing sight lines. They have responded that there is nothing wrong with the position, it is not causing a sight line issue and meets all the KCC guidelines regarding street furniture. The Chairman has objected to this response and MBC have agreed to resite the bin. **CLK**

9. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

None received.

10. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Rodd Nelson Gracie did not attend but had nothing to report.

Since the Parish Council's disagreement with Councillor John Verrall over a planning matter; we have had no input from him. We have not yet written to Chris Garland leader of the conservatives to express our disappointment, MN agreed to work with The Clerk to draft a letter. **MN**

11. PROGRESS OF THE CLERKS HANDOVER

Complete.

12. FOOTPATH HIGH STREET/SCHOOL GATE

The Clerk has written to the Public Rights of Way (PROW) officer to urge them to repair this public footpath as a matter of urgency. He has responded saying he is considering the repair of this path in the new financial year and, as the path is shared by residents and other users, he will be writing to all the parties to ask them to contribute to the cost of repair/resurface. He has ascertained that two thirds of the footpath is registered to the church and will be asking them for a proportional contribution. Obviously damage to the surface is mainly caused by motorised vehicles so users should have to contribute to the cost. In the meantime he has inspected the path and is not convinced it is that bad; his inspection took place on a snowy day, The Clerk has recommended that he comes out on a rainy day and has agreed to send photographs of such an occasion. Cllr Mrs Stockell has agreed with the Chairman to contribute £1,500 towards the cost of the works. The PROW has suggested a cost of around £4000 it was agreed to include an amount in the PC budget in case we also need to contribute in order to move this forward. SW pointed out that if we are to contribute it is important that we approve the specification to ensure we are getting an appropriate long term solution. The Clerk will discuss this with The PROW. SW offered to review the specification. **CLK**

13. THE FEN

13.1. WATER SUPPLY

The water supply to The Fen needs to be reinstated in order to allow it to be used for educational visits again. We have a cost for this, which needs to be agreed with St Mowden. MN suggested The Clerk write to St Mowden with a copy to Syngenta requesting that they reinstate this supply.

CLK

The Chairman will provide the relevant names.

CHAIR

13.2. DITCHES

KG questioned if the fences at The Fen were adequate to take cattle, AS confirmed that they are.

NFA

13.3. CATTLE

A meeting between MVCP, The Clerk, AS and MN has taken place, The Clerk now has a holding number for the land, and a rough plan is in place.

SH proposed and VR seconded that the Parish Council support this project, it was carried unanimously. Money will be added to the budget.

Various documentation needs to be put in place in order to progress.

CLK/AS

14. LITTER BINS

The Clerk has put together a wish list for new bins in the parish, but was disappointed at the emptying costs quoted by MBC. The Chairman has written to the Cabinet Member for the Environment to question the cost of emptying new bins and we await a reply. In the meantime The Clerk will circulate a proposal for new bins.

CLK

15. PUBLIC TOILETS

MCB have informed various parishes, Yalding included that they need to take over the running of their public toilets for an annual grant of £2500 or they will need to close. MBC are unwilling to increase their contribution towards the upkeep of the toilets. They are unable to give any positive cost for the emptying of the cesspit. 50% of their estimated cost of running the toilets is included in the PC budget. Marden have agreed to put the matter on hold. However, the Chairman notes there is a meeting of MBC mid February. The Chair suggested that we talk to MBC about the PC taking over for a year, with a review at the end so that we can get an accurate understanding of the costs. DH proposed that we inform MBC that we reluctantly except the £2500 but are only prepared to take over the cleaning and maintenance of the building and they must continue to look after the cess pit. It is felt that this will put us on a par with the other parishes. All agreed that we should pursue this option first.

CHAIR

VR has been approached by The Kent Messenger for a comment, she will reply in order to raise awareness of our concerns.

VR

16. FINANCE

16.1. PAY BILLS

A list of bills from December, totalling £7931.71 exclusive of VAT, was circulated and proposed SW seconded MS and all agreed that they be paid.

A list of bills for January, totalling £4217.36 exclusive of VAT, was circulated and proposed KG seconded SH and all agreed that they be paid.

DH and MN asked if documented evidence could be found that states The PC are allowed to pay the VAT for village organisations.

CLK

16.2. CONFIRM RECEIPTS

A list of receipts from December totalling £2671.81 was circulated.

A list of receipts for January totalling £937.42 was circulated.

The Clerk confirmed that VAT is now being reclaimed quarterly.

16.3. BUDGET

The Chairmen took the PC though a recommended budget for approval; with a few minor changes the budget was approved. It was agreed that the precept be increased from £42000 to £46000. The Chair will circulate the agreed budget.

16.3.1. THE CHURCHYARD

The church will now be using Community Payback to cut the churchyard and therefore will no longer require S.J Garden Services to do this in the future. The Clerk will write to inform the contractor copying in the church treasurer. **CLK**

16.3.2. CHARITIES

MN suggested that as a matter of principle the PC do not give donations to national charities as it is not for us to decide what charities the village support. However we should always consider supporting local charities on a one off basis. This principle was agreed by all. **NFA**

16.3.3. CAMERA

The Clerk will purchase a digital camera for PC use up to the value of £250. **CLK**

16.3.4. PLAYScheme

MN questioned the openness of the play scheme budget. The Clerk will have a meeting with Linda Gilbert, the play scheme leader, and bring a proposal to a future meeting. **CLK**

16.4. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Chairman asked for volunteers for the finance committee. SH, MN, VR, DH, GB volunteered. The first meeting will be held in April. **CLK**

17. TO SPEND MEN OF TREES PRIZE MONEY

A Lime tree has been planted on The Lees car park by the Kent Men of Trees. The Clerk has written a letter of thanks. £30 has also been received as a further prize. The Chairman proposed to purchase and plant a further tree on the car park, all agreed. **CLK**

18. POST OFFICE

Royal Mail has requested a type 2 asbestos survey be carried out on The Post Office. The landlord has responded to our letter on the subject; he states that, under the legislation, both the freeholder and the tenant have an obligation to have the Asbestos survey carried out to the structure. If it is carried out by the freeholder then under the terms of the Lease, the cost can be collected from the tenant. As the tenant is responsible for the survey of the interior of the premises. The landlord was under the impression that the Council had decided to have the whole survey done themselves as he feels this would be a cheaper option. DH has obtained a quotation for a Type 2 Asbestos Survey in the region of £300 +VAT. The Clerk will provide Medway Insulations with a plan of the post office and, providing the quote remains under £400 +VAT, she will instruct them to undertake the survey. **CLK**

19. HIGHWAYS

19.1. TO PRIORITISE REQUESTS TO KCC

The Clerk will update the highways list in order to prioritise at the next meeting. **CLK**

19.2. FOOTWAY, HAMPSTEAD LANE

It has not been possible to hold a site meeting to look at the potentially dangerous contours of the footpath at the junction of The Lees path crossing and Hampstead Lane. KG will arrange. **KG**

19.3. REFLECTORS ON BEND NEAR TWYFORD BRIDGE

Some of the reflectors installed by KCC have been demolished during one of three accidents that have damaged The Lees fencing. KCC to be asked to replace these once the fence is repaired. The other reflectors that KG had requested were for the other parts of the fence. MN requested a reflective arrow on the sharp bend. **KG**

19.4. HEDGES

KG has a meeting with Kim Hills, KCC Highway Manager for this area, on 10th February to discuss the policy for cutting hedges. John Wilson, MBC Cllr and Chairman East Farleigh PC will also attend. **KG**

19.5. BLOCKED GULLEYS

The blocked gulleys on Yalding Hill and Lughorse Lane have been reported. However, the Kent Highways system has been giving problems and the Chairman has reported again. **HL**

20. WEIGHT RESTRICTION

The next JTB is on the 17th of February. The Chairman has circulated the latest information from Cllr John Wilson (JW) The Chairman of the JCB; she continues to liaise with JW.

MN reported that a resident of the parish is very experienced in this matter having had a role as a senior officer in highways for Surrey County Council; he has offered his help to the PC. DH Suggested that The Clerk invites him to attend the JTB with The Chairman and to be introduced to JW, and to come along to advise the PC at the April meeting. **CLK**

21. CORRESPONDENCE

21.1. THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Education Foundation has now revised its constitution to take in the civil parishes of Yalding and Collier Street. Yalding is being asked to provide a new trustee and Michael Stewart indicated that he would be willing to fill this post. MN proposed and VR seconded.

22. PARISH MATTERS

22.1. CCTV

KG will sort out the wires on the CCTV on The High Street. **KG**

22.2. PLAY EQUIPMENT INSPECTION

The Clerk will write to the department at MBC that carries out the play equipment inspections to ask if we can accompany them on their next inspection. **CLK**

22.3. BOLLARDS

SH asked about illumination of the bollards on Lees Road as a resident had a collision with one. KG will try to resolve this. **KG**

22.4. YULETIDE MARKET

SW asked the yuletide committee to specify the noise levels of generators used by stall holders. **MS**

22.5. CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING

The Clerk, The Chairman and The Vice Chairman attended code of conduct training. MN gave a summary and reported that he had found it very useful. The DVD used as part of the training was particularly interesting. It was agreed to purchase a copy. **CLK**

The training team are keen to come out to the parishes to do training, it was agreed we would consider this after the next election.

CLOSED SESSION

23. ENFORCEMENT

Nothing to report.

24. THE CHARLTONS

24.1. THE CHARLTONS ACCESS OVER COMMON LAND

John Collins Solicitors have contacted the Clerk re vehicular access for The Barn and The Oast over common land and whether any payment should be forthcoming to the Parish. The Chairman will urgently speak to them before the next meeting. Sue Harris' solicitor has advised her to await contact from us. **CHAIR**

Mr Anderson has requested a meeting with the PC, MN agreed to arrange this meeting and represent the PC. **MN**

The Clerk will provide MN with The Charltons file. **CLK**

24.2. THE CHARLTONS BARN WAYLEAVE

The owner has paid the third instalment of the payment for this wayleave; the final payment will be in April. **CLK**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.07 pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

MA/10/0031 Land adjacent to Environment Agency Depot, Hampstead Lane.
Planning application for the erection of a single storey toilet and shower block and associated hardstanding.

NO COMMENT

MA/09/2272 High Lees Grange, Wagon Lane, Paddock Wood.
Planning application for the conversion of garage into additional living accommodation (variation of condition 3 of MA/99/1722)

NO COMMENT

MBC PLANNING DECISIONS SINCE LAST MEETING

MA/09/2012 Bower Mount, Lees Road.
Application to erect a single storey garden room.

GRANTED

MA/09/1823 1 Swan House, High Street
Listed building consent 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.

GRANTED

MA/09/1870 Kenward Orchard, Kenward Road.
Application to extend the time limit for implementing permission MA/04/1978 (demolition of existing dwelling and outbuilding and erection of replacement dwelling)

GRANTED

MA/09/1498 Laddingford Croft, Claygate Road.
Provision of new entrance, access track, erection of new timber tractor and implement store.

GRANTED

MA/09/1866 Wind in The Willows Farm, Wagon Lane.
Application for a certificate of lawfulness for existing use, being use of the land as a residential gypsy site for three mobile homes on a year round basis.

REFUSED