



**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 27TH
SEPTEMBER 2022 AT THE ALLENS, ALBION ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT
7.30PM**

A one-minute silence to remember Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was held prior to the commencement of the meeting.

057/22 PRESENT

Cllrs Adam, Barker, Besant, Boswell, Burton, Newton, Robertson, Tippen (in the Chair) and Turner. Borough Councillor, Claudine Russell and the Deputy Clerk was also in attendance.

058/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Gibson and Stevens. The Clerk had also given her apologies.

In the Clerk's absence the Deputy Clerk took the minutes.

059/22 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Changes to Register of Interest

Cllr Besant reported that he has changed his employment. He will contact the Clerk to update his information.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for granting of dispensation.

060/22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th August 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record.

061/22 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

The meeting was adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public were in attendance.

EXTERNAL REPORTS

County Councillor Report:

Not in attendance.

Borough Councillors Report:

Cllr Claudine Russell reported that the consultation to gain input into the public art in Mote Park is underway. People are being asked for their memories of the park to inform a piece of art for the new café. The art itself was a planning permission requirement in line with their public art policy and is being funded by S106 developers contributions from the café developer. Work should soon commence on the water main improvements that Cllr Russell along with others have been lobbying for Battle Lane. The Tanner Farm appeal starts on 11th

October and Cllr Russell is planning to attend but not speak. Written reps have been submitted along with comments from Cllr David Burton. With regard to Reed Court Farm in Hunton, the latest information is that it will be heading for the November Planning Committee but Cllr Russell will confirm. It was pleasing to hear that the Marden School expansion has been confirmed and that S106 money will be used. Cllr Besant asked Cllr Russell where the money was coming from. The money is coming from S106 money from local developments and KCC can also include CIL money if it chooses.

Police Report:

PCSO Nicola Morris was not in attendance. Crime figures will be given at item 063/22.

Community Warden Report

Not in attendance.

The meeting was reconvened to discuss item 062/22 onwards.

062/22 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported on current staff sickness absence and annual leave. An update was given on the new storage area and that the office/meeting rooms had been rearranged to allow meetings to commence from the next Planning meeting on 4th October. The work on the tree at the rear of Marden Playing Field had been undertaken but would continue to be monitored. Urgent drainage work had been needed at the public conveniences and a full report and additional costs was given later in the meeting. Cllrs would like to minute their congratulations and thanks to the Clerk for completing 20 years service to Marden Parish Council.

063/22 PARISH MATTERS

Reports from MBC and KCC

Meeting held with MBC/KCC Cllrs on 16th August

Notes previously circulated to Cllrs and Cllr Tippen provided an update to the meeting. Cllr Tippen asked Cllr Russell what the current situation is re the Local Plan. Extra information has been submitted to the Inspector relating to the garden settlements and therefore hearings have been adjourned to November.

Other information received from MBC/KCC

Emails received from KCC Cllr re primary school intake and highways improvement plans had been circulated prior to the meeting and were noted.

Police Update/Report from Police Forum

Crime Figures

The following had been reported since the last meeting:

7 Thefts (bag, trailer, paddling pool, fuel, two white vans and number plates);

2 Criminal Damage (ground fire and rear car light damage);

1 Burglary (Howland Road).

Maidstone Task Force

The Deputy Clerk updated Cllrs with information from the Meet the Clerks on 22nd September where she had met the Community Protection Team with the Admin Assistant. The Clerk requested an update on Cascade Close. The team reported that as much as incidences had quietened down it was difficult to take any further action forward to court due to the lack of evidence and witnesses willing to make a statement.

Other Police Issues

Anti-Social Behaviour Reports had been received in regard to Cascade Close and had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting. The Deputy Clerk had updated Cllrs on actions being taken by the Community Protection Team in the previous item. Noted. Several other anti-social behaviour reports had been received including nuisance motorbikes, calls in and around the station, at Cascade Close and ongoing work at The Cockpit. Some drug warrants had been issued.

Communication

Newsletter

Due for print week commencing 17th October 2022. Cllr Boswell said that despite there being a lot of content, it was coming together.

Marden Flooding

Cllr Tippen reported that she had had a meeting with David Goff from Collier Street. David has been pushing for Marden to be included in the Medway Confluence Operational Group for flooding and this was looking likely which was good news. Cllr Tippen informed Cllrs that there was now signage at Southons Field in order for the Flood Wardens to close roads and work with the team at Collier Street.

Cemetery

Exclusive Right of Burial Certificates

Two Exclusive Rights of Burial certificates were signed by Cllr Besant and Cllr Burton

Allotments

The Clerk has chased Redrow on several occasions, but nothing had been received prior to the meeting.

Warm Hubs

Several locations within the Parish to accommodate warm hubs together with the co-ordination and possible funding had been discussed at a meeting with Dr Morgan and Revd Harvey which Cllrs Boswell and Tippen had attended. Dr Morgan and the Vicar were now taking this forward. Cllr Tippen asked Cllr Russell whether MBC are getting involved but was told there are no current plans in place.

MPC Infrastructure Spend Plan document

Document circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

Cllrs discussed whether any new items should be added arising from Amenities and Finance Committee meetings. Cllrs agreed that a bench at the junction of Albion Road/High Street should be added to the ISP. Additional benches at Southons Field to replace two old broken benches, Cllrs proposed that these are a replacement, so revenue should be used to finance these.

Changing Rooms/Playing Field Pavilion

Recommendations from the Amenities Committee regarding the building and its future had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Tippen read out briefly the notes of the last meeting to inform Cllrs of the current situation. Cllr Besant suggested that two options also be included of (a) a demolition without rebuild and (b) the possibility of refurbishment of the existing building instead of a total rebuild. Cllrs agreed with these options and recommended that the wording be agreed at the Amenities Committee meeting for consultation in the next appropriate Parish Council newsletter.

Marden Car Park

Meeting held with MBC Officers on 18th August

Cllr Tippen reported from the site meeting held with MBC Officers. There had been reports of the rise in commuter parking and a resident had contacted the Council about this. The MBC officers had offered the possibility of a restriction in parking (this could be 2 or 4 hours). Cllrs agreed that the main use of the car park should be for those using village services, visiting residents in the village and for employees of businesses in the village. After discussion, Cllrs agreed that residents should be consulted on whether parking restrictions should be amended by asking two questions – should there be a two hour restriction or should the current restriction stay in place. This is to be included in the next appropriate newsletter.

Youth Club Visit

Cllrs Burton and Tippen visited Staplehurst Youth Club recently. The Youth Club is volunteer led with great facilities for young people. Including cookery lessons, pool table and table tennis. Cllrs discussed and it was recommended that an item be placed in the newsletter and through other channels to help recruit volunteers for the Marden Youth Club. Cllr Boswell informed Cllrs that the KCC Youth Worker was looking to restart the Youth Club at the John Banks Hall after October half term. There would also be activities on offer during the October half term. The long-term recommendation would be to build on this with a view

to using the old Football Changing Room as a future site for a Youth Club, depending on the outcome of the consultation. Cllr Burton had also met and spoken to the KCC Youth Worker who had struggled to engage with young people when walking around the village.

Public Conveniences

Drainage work

The Clerk reported that urgent drainage work had been required to deal with a blockage. This resulted in advice from the drainage company that descaling was required. Three companies had been approached and quotes had been received. Cllrs discussed and agreed that BN Pumps be used to conduct this work.

Trees

Donation of tree in memory of HM Queen Elizabeth II

Cllr Boswell provided Cllrs with information received from a local nursery and Cllrs agreed that the tree be placed at the bottom of the Playing Field. Cllrs would like to minute their thanks to Golden Hill Nursery for their very kind donation.

Report from Cllr Besant in regard to additional tree planting

Cllr Besant had reported previously to the Finance Committee on the purchase of additional trees to be planting at the Playing Field which had been agreed. It was proposed that a digger would be needed to dig the holes as the trees were quite substantive. Cllrs discussed and agreed in principle to Cllr Besant's proposal and of digger hire to conduct the digging for the trees. Cllr Adam requested that an operator with the appropriate qualifications be used.

Christmas Lighting

KCC permit completed – The Deputy Clerk reported that she had submitted the KCC permit for the Christmas lighting and at the time of the meeting had not received any further information.

064/22 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

There had been no Amenities Committee meeting was held in August and due to the rescheduling of the Full Council meeting the next Amenities meeting would be 25th October.

Planning Committee

Draft Minutes of Planning Committee meeting held on 6th September had been previously circulated and was available on the Parish Council website. No meeting had been held on 20th September due the public mourning period.

Finance Committee

Draft Minutes of Finance Committee meeting held on 30th August had been previously circulated and was available on the Parish Council website.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars attended

HR Sub-Committee meeting – 15th August (minutes previously circulated to Cllrs).

Parish Councils Environmental Meeting at Hunton – 15th August. Cllr Turner attended and would forward notes of this meeting onto Cllrs shortly.

Meeting with MBC Planners – 16th August. A report had previously been given to Planning Committee.

SLCC Finance Webinar – 7th September. The Clerk had attended and had provided a written report to Cllrs prior to the meeting.

Christmas Meeting – 12th September. Notes of this meeting had been circulated to Cllrs.

Environmental Sub-Group – 20th September. Notes of this meeting had been circulated to Cllrs.

Meet The Clerks – 22nd September. The Deputy Clerk had updated Cllrs at item 63/22.

Involve Meeting at Maidstone Museum – 23rd September – This meeting did not go ahead.

KALC Area Committee Meeting – 26th September. No representative from MPC was able to attend.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

Young Farmers Open Evening – 29th September (Cllr Boswell and Tippen attending)

SLCC Excel Webinar – 13th October (Admin Assistant attending)

Kent Rail Summit – 10th October (Cllr Adam attending)

Internal Auditor Interim Audit – 14th October

065/22 CORRESPONDENCE

Marden Parish Church Magazine – Cllrs noted
Clerks and Councils Direct – Cllrs noted

066/22 FINANCE

Bank Statements:

Revenue

Nat West £72,386.28

Unity Trust Bank: £40,148.67

The Clerk recommended that £20,000 of revenue funds be transferred from Nat West to Unity. Cllrs agreed and cheque was duly signed.

Capital

Santander: £71,615.69.

The transfer £10,080.50 from 2021/22 capital expenditure into Unity was still awaited. The Clerk would chase on her return.

Other Financial Issues

External Audit

The External Audit for 2021/22 had been received back from PKF Littlejohn
Cllrs wished it minuted that the external audit report for 2021/22 had been received with no issues raised. Copies of the audit had been placed in the notice boards and on the Parish Council website.

External Auditor Appointment Arrangements for 2022 to 2027.

The Clerk had forwarded to Cllrs information received from Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA) regarding future External Audits together with an email received from MPC's accounting software provider. The Clerk recommended that Marden Parish Council remain with the proposed External Auditor and not to opt out. Cllrs agreed.

Office Computer Systems

Cllr Newton provided an update at the meeting. Cllrs discussed this and agreed with Cllr Newton's proposal of removing the desktops and using laptops as operating systems. Cllr Newton also recommended that a network drive be arranged for the office so that all users can use shared documents. Cllrs agreed.

Payments for Approval

Electronic Payments

The following invoices were submitted to Cllrs:

Graham Carey – Grounds Maintenance - £300.00

Natural Signs – Cemetery sign - £300.00

Howland Electrical – electrical work in office - £58.56

Purchase Power – Admin fees - £57.58

Business Stream – waste water, public conveniences - £89.19

SLCC – Cemetery publication - £33.80

Barry Jones Florist – Queen Elizabeth II Wreath - £80.00

Alison Hooker – Padlock/USB/poppy wreath - £124.95

SLCC – Training - £144.00

Lexis Nexis – PC publication - £131.99

Viking – Office desk and office miscellaneous - £153.47

Viking – public conveniences supplies - £59.14

Total: £1,532.68

Cllrs agreed invoices and Cllrs Turner and Boswell would authorise on Unity.

067/22 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT**Highways**Highways Improvement Plan

Cllrs Boswell, Turner and Tippen met with the Clerk to review the HIP document. A template of Kent HIPs had been received from KCC and once Cllrs had agreed the priorities the Clerk would complete the template. A meeting was being arranged with Kent Highways Officers and MPC to discuss further. Cllr Tippen recommended that Cllrs view the document prior to the next Full Council meeting paying particular attention to the priorities.

Fingerpost Signs

The Clerk provided a report to Cllrs prior to the meeting with further costings. Cllrs agreed to the quote given by [REDACTED] **Lexiam Interiors and Services*** for the work.

**Amendment agreed at Full Council meeting on 11th October 2022*

Other Highways Issues

Cllr Adam requested that road closure notices be put on the next Full Council meeting.

Public Transport

The Clerk is still waiting for dates from South Eastern and Network Rail for a meeting. Cllr Adam reported that there is a new timetable that needs looking at. Cllr Russell informed Cllrs that the Step Free Access window could possibly be open and that should be explored again.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.30.

Date:

Signed:

Cllr Kate Tippen, Chairman
Marden Parish Council
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