

# Medstead Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Medstead Parish Council held in the Village Hall  
on **21<sup>st</sup> January 2014** at 7.45pm.

**Present:** Cllr D Jackson (Chairman); Cllrs R Pullen (Vice-Chairman), K Kercher, J Penny, P Buckland, P Fenwick, H Taylor, S Whitcher, and M Smith, District Councillor I Thomas and 1 member of the public.

**Also in attendance:** Miss Katie Knowles, Clerk.

## 13.108 OPEN SESSION

- Mrs Constantine informed the Parish Council that the noticeboard in the bus stop at the entrance to Greenstile was often steamed up, possibly due to a leak and therefore the notices were hard to read. Further it was noted that the pin board on the open side of the noticeboard was in need of replacing as the current material has deteriorated.
- Councillor Buckland reported that there was a pot hole on the edge of the Highway by the Cemetery layby. He commented that Wield Parish Council had recently installed a defibrillator in a decommissioned phone box. He was supportive of the idea and would hope that if the Council were approached with a similar concept it would be supported. It was requested that Councillor Buckland report the pothole on behalf of the Parish Council, using the County Highways online reporting system.
- Councillor Fenwick thanked Councillor Taylor and Ian Hampshire for all their hard work following the bad weather over the Christmas period, by clearing the windblown trees from the Highway and the footpath off South Town Road on the Village Green.
- Councillor Taylor reported that Hampshire County Council are currently consulting on a proposed reduction to the mobile library service as a result of budget cuts which will effect stops in Medstead and Four Marks.

At the conclusion of the Open Session, Standing Orders were applied.

## 13.109 APOLOGIES

Apologies were no apologies received.

## 13.110 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 13.111 COUNCIL MINUTES

- a) The minutes of the Council meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 having been previously circulated, **were proposed as a true record** by Cllr Pullen, seconded by Cllr Kercher and agreed by all, and **signed by the Chairman**.
- b) Under matters arising:
  - **Minute Ref 13.99(b) Parish Lengthsman Project** - The Clerk reported that the Lengthsman scheme was now operational. A schedule of works for Medstead has been submitted to the lead Parish and the Lengthsman is due to commence in the Parish for the week commencing 24 February 2014.
  - **Minute Ref 13.95 (a)** The Clerk confirmed an email had been sent regarding dog fouling.
  - **Minute Ref 13.95 (c)** Cllr Buckland confirmed that he had registered Medstead's War Memorial.
  - **Minute Ref 13.95 (d)** Cllr Kercher confirmed that the Clerk had obtained a response from Hampshire Highways, though it was evasive when it came to clarifying the County Councils obligations.
  - **Minute Ref 13.95 (e)** The Clerk confirmed that an e-mail stating the Council's views has been sent to Mr Peach on 21/11/13 and acknowledged with a statement that the virtual footway over the Boyneswood Rd Bridge had been audited and passed by their safety team. Cllr Pullen commented that since then, Hampshire Highways have acknowledged that some errors have been made in respect of the line painting, which is short of the existing footway. Further the footway should have been coloured in and the first tree line reduced from the A31 heading north to improve visibility. This work is still to be done.

### 13.112 COMMITTEE MINUTES AND REPORTS

- 1) The minutes of the **Planning Committee** held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2013 and 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 having been previously circulated, **were ratified.**

**Councillor Pullen** welcomed Cllr Mike Smith onto the planning committee. He also thanked Cllr Jean Penny for her work on the committee, during which time her local knowledge and calm reasoning have been much appreciated, qualities which will be very useful to the Maintenance committee.

Since the last full council meeting the Planning Committee has met twice and have considered 14 applications including EIA screening requests. Medstead is currently under siege, along with the rest of the of this district and half of the country, from developers trying to take advantage of EHDC and other local authorities not having a JCS in place nor a 5 year housing stock. A very well attended consultation/exhibition was held a couple of weekends ago to highlight this problem and suggest a possible way forward. We would like to thank Cllr Ingrid Thomas who drove and organised this event together with a similar meeting at our neighbours in Four Marks.

Major decisions by EHDC have been the application for 68 dwellings behind Lymington Barns gaining approval, adding to the 37 previously granted and the amended application for 6 dwellings in Windsor Road which was also approved. The biggest full application so far received is for 85 dwellings on land behind Friars Oak and the Committee has just submitted our comments on line for this one which, as you might guess, is a request for refusal.

The application for 3 dwellings at the old Cedar Stables goes before EHDC Planning Committee next week and we expect the two alternative applications for 23 or 17 on land east of that same site to go there in February. The Committee expects several more full or outline applications for big sites to be lodged with EHDC in the coming 2 or 3 months so the work load of this Committee will not diminish.

Councillor Kercher thanked the Planning Committee for its robust comments on the latest Lymington Bottom screening opinion.

- 2) The minutes of the **Maintenance Committee** held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 were not available in time for the meeting.

**Councillor Kercher** reported that this meeting had been postponed from December to consider the tenders. The first tender was for the **Village Green Mowing Contract**. A total of five tenders were received. The quotes ranged from £10,640 to £3,504.60. The Committee had agreed to recommend to Council the incumbent contractor Jim Kimber, as the preferred contractor, whose experience and current performance was well regarded and he had submitted the lowest contract price. Cllr Buckland proposed to ratify the Committee's recommendation which was and seconded by Cllr Whitcher and agreed by all.

The second tender was for the **Tree Safety Works** following the Tree Safety and Condition survey on three sites in the Parish conducted by Alderwood Consulting Ltd. Two tenders were received and the committee agreed to recommend to Council Paul Triance as the preferred contractor, who has worked for the Parish Council before and more recently the emergency tree works in the Cemetery and Village Green. Councillor Smith proposed to ratify the Committee's recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Pullen and agreed by all.

The Committee also considered two quotes to **clear the windblown trees** on the Green and Cemetery. Paul Triance was the preferred contractor as he was carrying out the tree safety works in the three sites and the Clerk has been asked to re-negotiate the cost of the works up to a maximum of £470, on the basis that two of the trees were to have been felled under the tree safety works and the windblown trees on the Village Green were gradually disappearing, therefore reducing the amount of work he would be required to do.

### 13.113 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman commented that she had a number of things to report on, having had a fairly busy time over the past couple of months.

- Thanks were noted to District Cllr Ingrid Thomas for organising the recent Consultation event held in both Medstead and Four Marks Village Halls; to members of the Parish Council for their attendance, there was at least one member of the council present at all times and to members of the public for their attendance and for sharing their views. Cllr Thomas has been collating the data and will no doubt be sharing this information in the near future.
- The Clerk and the Chairman were kept busy following the recent storms, identifying fallen trees/ branches needing urgent attention – thanks also to other councillors for their observations and feedback. Two

emergency situations were addressed: A fallen willow in the cemetery that had dislodged a gravestone and a fallen/dislodged branches of an Oak tree adjacent to the Village Hall and overhanging the public footpath.

- The Chairman had followed up from Clerk's letters of contact with village organisations and met with some to promote potential funding opportunities through S106 contributions.
- Group of Medstead Councillors have met with representatives of Four Marks PC to explore working together on a joint Neighbourhood Plan which is a later agenda item. The Chairman is working to develop a good working relationship with her compatriot at Four Marks.
- Articles for "The Villager" and "Medstead Times" have been submitted. These outline the current status of the Neighbourhood Plan project and advise interested persons to register their details with the Clerk.
- Regular communications/ updates are being received from village resident groups, 'NoGreenGrab' and 'Campaign for Medstead'. Copies of bulletins are available on their websites.
- An email forwarded from Cllr Fenwick on behalf of Medstead School Governors are looking at ideas and additional measures that might be taken to improve safety of children at drop off and collection. A number of suggestions had been proposed which were read out. The Chairman noted that not all of the measures lie within remit of MPC, and questioned what actions the school are taking in terms of educating parents, or whether simple measures such as a "lolly-pop" person have been explored. It was suggest that the Maintenance Committee investigate further and report back to the next meeting of Full Council.
- Email forwarded by District Cllr Thomas: Year 6 class of Medstead School have drawn up a wish list of issues/ improvements they would like to see both in and outside of school. Many of their concerns appear to relate to the locality beyond the village itself, however this information could be passed on to the Neighbourhood Plan group (when finalised).
- Meeting of Parish Transport Representatives to be held on Saturday 15th March at HCC offices in Winchester. Aiming to consult parishes on public bus and community transport, given that a number of contracts will be due for renewal in the next financial year.
- The Chairman updated Cllrs on the Registration of the Castle of Comfort as an Asset of Community Value. The Clerk reported that she had been contacted by the office of MP Damian Hinds to request permission to mention the Councils application in a debate in the House of Commons on pubs. Unfortunately as EHDC had not formally notified the licensee, they had requested that it was not mentioned.

### **13.114 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT**

Councillor Thomas reported that the Brislands Lane development had caused absolute chaos to local residents. She recommended that when commenting on large scale developments, Medstead Parish Council should consider requesting that a community liaison panel is established in the event that permission is granted, to provide a dialogue with between residents and the Developer to address the concerns during the build period.

Councillor Thomas reported she had had several meetings with planning Officers about what is happening in our area and have passed on to them our concerns. There are a couple of applications which are awaiting decisions at the moment – Cedar Stables application is awaiting the District Valuers comments and 'Wistera' is still in discussion. It was a shame the site behind Lymington Barns was approved before all the concerns of local residents had been addressed but at least the Planning Committee agreed that the site layout was very poor and will have to come back before the Committee before full approval is given. The pumps outside the vegetable shop caused flooding further along Lymington Bottom Road a scenario we are promised will be solved by sufficient drainage when the site is built.

Councillor Thomas highlighted a forthcoming public consultation event about a proposed development of 110 dwellings in Barn Lane, Four Marks and in a separate application, 30 dwellings are proposed on a site known as Noah's Ark, Blackberry Lane, Four Marks. In Medstead, the EIA screening request for the proposed development at Cawke House was not deemed appropriate, by EHDC. The three dwellings at Cedar Stables are scheduled to be considered at the Planning Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2014 and she suggested a pre-meeting with Cllr Pullen to coordinate the representation to the Committee. Councillor Thomas commented the District Council is looking to the developers to deliver mains drainage to the sites including Friars Oak. Finally Cllr Thomas highlighted the forthcoming Community Forum meeting at Alton Maltings Centre on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 6.30pm.

### 13.115 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the income and expenditure reports for November and December 2013.
- b. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the expenditure against budget for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 December 2013.
- c. Members **received and noted** the Bank Reconciliation as at 31 December 2013
- d. Members **received and noted** the return of Section 3 of the Annual Return.
- e. Members considered a grant application from Victim Support in light of additional information provided by the service about how it has supported residents living in the Parish. Councillor Pullen proposed a grant of £200, which was seconded by Councillor Kercher, which was agreed by all. It was **RESOLVED** to make a grant of £200 to Victim Support.
- f. Members considered the interim audit report prepared by Auditing Solutions Ltd. The Clerk had circulated a report prior to the meeting, in response to the recommendations contained within the report. It was **RESOLVED** to note the report and recommendations and the Clerk was thanked for her report.

### 13.116 JOINT CORE STRATEGY (JCS) MAIN MODIFICATIONS

Councillors considered the consultation document highlighting the main modifications to the JCS following the Inspectors comments. Councillors expressed their concern at the deletion of the words “up to” now replaced with the word “minimum” in relation to the housing allocation for each area. Councillor Kercher commented that the longer that the JCS is in draft form the worse it will be for Medstead and the rest of East Hampshire, which was endorsed by all Councillors. Therefore it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge receipt of the main modifications, but not to comment other than to state that the Parish Council is concerned that any adverse comments would further delay the adoptions of the JCS.

### 13.117 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN & JOINT WORKING

Councillor Pullen reported that following the Council meeting in November when it was agreed to take a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) forward, four Cllrs together with 3 members of Four Marks Parish Council met at EHDC with several members of EHDC’s Planning Department including Julia Potter and Chris Murray. He reported that it was a very useful around the table discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of preparing a NP. It was felt at this meeting that another meeting between Medstead and Four Marks was necessary to take the idea further. To this end a joint meeting was held on the 14th of January ably chaired by Mark Kemp-Gee and attended by both Parish Clerks, 4 Medstead and 3 Four Marks councillors. Some frank discussions took place and at the end it was agreed that the preparation of a joint NP would be beneficial to both parishes. Four Marks went away and proposed the idea at their Full Council meeting the following evening. I am pleased to report that the motion was carried. At the public exhibitions and consultations that were held in both Parishes a couple of weekends ago the need for a NP was voiced quite often, supporting this Councils decision to explore further.

The next step is to prepare a Designation Order, to register the two parishes as ‘Neighbourhood’ area for the purpose of preparing a NP. A first draft of the Designation Order prepared by the Cllrs that attended the meeting, was circulated at the meeting for comment, prior to sending it to Four Marks PC for comment and input. Moving forward it is considered important to hold a public consultation meeting to explain the process and implications of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and the sort of commitment, skills, etc that are required from those preparing it and to seek more volunteers to add to the 7 that have already put their names forward.

### 13.118 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Councillors considered an appropriate speaker for the Annual Parish Meeting. It was **RESOLVED** to invite the Chairman of the Planning Committee, Cllr Angela Glass, to speak about the current planning regime from the District Councils perspective.

### 13. 119 COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

- a) **Village Hall** – Cllr Buckland reported that since the last report the Trustees have held two meetings. From the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 there is a new booking secretary, Felicity Bass, e-mail address [mybookthehall@hotmail.com](mailto:mybookthehall@hotmail.com) or telephone 01420 563774. New hall rates also apply from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014. The Hall continues to require a Caretaker Manager. The soil banking on the Green side of the Village Hall has been done. The hard standing for the bottle banks has also been completed and they are now back in place. The large accumulation of leaves on the car par have now been cleared with appreciated help of volunteers.

A new cooker, with larger oven has been bought and installed with its first major use being at the village lunch for the over 70s. The old cooker was bought by the bowls club. There appears to be a lack of respect by some users with poor cleanliness and items going missing. The hire deposit scheme is to be enforced but with the lack of a caretaker problems are sometimes difficult to identify. The Medstead Times renewals and new subscriptions to date are encouraging. Cllr Taylor commented that the typeset of the Medstead Times is getting smaller.

- b) Sports Club** – Cllr Kercher reported that Sports Club were considering an internal refurbishment of the Pavilion, including the replacement of the carpet on the stairs and upstairs. The Club is seeking grants to support this work.
- c) Parish Plan Committee** – The Chairman reported that there had not been a meeting of the Committee since the Council meeting in November but one had been scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014 for the purpose of closing down the Committee and considering how to disperse the remaining funds.
- d) East Hants Association of Town and Parish Councils (EHAPTC)** - Cllr Fenwick's previously circulated a report summarised the main points from the meeting. There had been a long discussion on the Joint Core Strategy and there are a number of pending items still outstanding awaiting a response from EHDC.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10.04pm

Chairman .....Date.....