

**Minutes of a Meeting of
BOUGHTON MALHERBE PARISH COUNCIL
Tuesday 20th November 2012
7.30pm in Grafty Green Village Hall**

Present

Robert Turner, Chairman
Ron Galton
Tony King
Barbara Pearce
Christine King, Clerk

Cllr Jenefer Gibson MBC
Cllr Richard Thick MBC

7 members of the public

1. Apologies

Keith Anderson; Alan Beech; John Collins; Mike Hitchins; Jenny Whittle.

2. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 28th August 2012, having previously been distributed, were unanimously **agreed** and the official copy was signed as a true record by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

Footpath conditions at Judge Farm and Broadstone Cottage have been reported but as yet no improvements have been made. CK will find out why.

Action CK

Still no response regarding the 30mph signs by Wrens Nest.

Action CK

TK had suggested, at the last meeting, that a large parish map on a board would be very useful as a geographic aid when a location is being discussed. He had 2 large maps copied and asked that they be kept in the Hall. It was suggested that Richard Pilborough be asked if this would be ok.

Action CK

4. Local Policing

4.1 Police Report written by PCSO Alan Beech, read by CK

Crimes that have been reported / committed over the period 22/08/2012 - 19/11/2012. For this period there have been 5 reported / committed crimes. They are broken down as follows:

1 x THEFT FROM SHOP - SHOPLIFTING. (Tortoise)

1 x CRIMINAL DAMAGE TO PROPERTY VALUED UNDER £5000 (Vehicle damage)

3 x THEFT - MISCELLANEOUS - INCLUDING THEFT BY 'FINDING'. (Oil, Gas, Mobile phone)

Alan has also checked the same period for 2011 and there were 29 reported / committed crimes, so there has been a big drop in crime committed within the Parish which he would like to say is down to a lot of patrolling over this period in the area, but it's not the only reason.

4.2 Speedwatch Report written by Keith Anderson, read by CK

There is not much to report since the last Parish Council Meeting.

The Speedwatch team continue to catch speeding vehicles through the village, and now the Interactive sign is in place, this should help to slow vehicles down.

At some distant date it would help if Boughton Malherbe could afford to purchase its own Speedwatch equipment as it is becoming increasingly difficult to borrow from other villages.

5. Highway and Footway Matters

5.1 Speed Indicator Device

This is now in place and working but there have been several reports of concerns about its proximity to the highway and fear of a vehicle hitting it. This had been reported to Highways who are due to come and inspect it. Nothing has been heard since last week, follow up needed.

Action CK

5.2 Flooding/Drains at Crumps Lane Corner, Headcorn Road

A huge drainage pipe has been put in, approximately 2 ft in diameter, but it was observed that it will take water to road junction - which will then create reservoir there when it rains. Follow-up needed with Highways.

Action CK

5.3 Ditches and Gullies in Woodcock Lane

There are 3 gullies at the start of Woodcock Lane, (Grafty Green end) and good downpour creates a lake right across the road, leaving water lapping at the edge of raised section of the entrance next door to Maples. When the road was resurfaced, a raised section put on top to keep the water at bay. Needs reporting to Highways.

Action CK

5.4 Blocked Gullies Church Road

These are still blocked as not considered a priority by Highways. Add to list of issues.

Action CK

5.5 Liverton Hill

Notification has been received of intended work to resolve problems, however, it is considered that nothing will be resolved as French Drains have already been tried, twice, and failed to solve the problem. A wider gully will not help as the springs will move so it is a never ending battle. It is the opinion of a resident that the gullies will be totally blocked in 3-4 weeks' time.

5.6 Missing Finger Post, Chain Gate

CK sent a photo of the missing sign to Highways and a replacement is being made up.

5.7 Grass Verge Cutting

Grass verges were cut from the Headcorn end of the Village to Park Farm, and then stopped. It was not done in the Village. KCC were unable to give a reason for this.

Action CK

5.8 Pot holes

Elmstone Lane - notification has been received from Highways of silt-clearing, sweeping and then patching work to be carried out.

6. Resources and Environment Matters

6.1 Woodcock Lane trees

At the last meeting, the situation was on-going with notices still on the trees. A second arborist's report stated that different trees from those first suggested are contributing to subsidence at Ash Tree Farm. As no further information has been received and nothing expected for the foreseeable future it was decided to remove this item from future agendas.

6.2 Litter Picking Group

The Litter Pick day will be organised by Joan Drury in the spring, with equipment from MBC

Action JD

6.3 Garden Club Invoicing

This will be discussed further when an invoice is received.

6.4 Emergency Plan

It was **AGREED** that a Group be formed to work on an Emergency Plan for Boughton Malherbe, consisting of Pat Anderson; Ron Galton and Chris Wheal, who will meet in the near future and report progress at the next Parish Council Meeting.

6.5 Village Plan

Following an explanation by TK of the importance of the Village/Neighbourhood plan, it was **AGREED** that a group be formed to work on a plan for Boughton Malherbe, consisting of Sylvia Close; John Collins; Mike Davidson; Tony King; Ian Shaw and Robert Turner, who will meet in the near future and report progress at the next Parish Council Meeting.

6.6 Planning Applications, the way forward

It was **AGREED** that future planning applications be discussed, and decisions arrived at, at Parish Council meetings where the dates coincide or at interim Planning Meetings where they do not. All Councillors will undertake any necessary training to keep them abreast of planning rules and regulations.

6.7 59 Bus

John Collins has nothing further to report until after the next meeting of East Maidstone Rural Transport Group Meeting which is 14th January next year.

6.8 Queen Elizabeth Yew Tree

CK found out that it has a TPO. No 1, and that payment for the last repairs to the enclosing wall was in March 1996: £2,772.50. Points raised: had a precedent been set?, is there any evidence that the tree/wall is the responsibility of the Parish Council?, is it right to spend public money on something on private land?, do parishioners value it? The recent publication of the Wotton Surveys appears to confirm the Yew's age. RT to see Jamie Clark.

Action RT

7. Public Session

Chris Wheal, KFRS volunteer, updated the Council on the KFRS's Integrated Plan, and its aims of the next 12 months. There are many positives and good initiatives. Recruitment of on-call fire fighters is going well, as is training. This is leading to response times in rural areas of 12 - 15 minutes. A recent response to an RTA on Liverton Hill was 15 minutes. A massive programme is being rolled out to all Kent parishes based on the work done in Grafty Green, a large part of which is fire prevention.

Regarding Lenham, Charing and Harrietsham fire stations, the aim is to have two operational and available at key times, the ultimate goal being two on 24 hour cover. This will take time to achieve with recruitment and training.

It was suggested that a 'Skid Risk' sign be erected in Woodcock Lane.

Action CK

A blue speedwatch area information sign has been attached to the 30mph sign at the end of the drive to March Farm, Headcorn Road, causing a blind spot for vehicles leaving the drive.

Action CK

With regard to the Planning Approval with Conditions at Ivy House Farm, below, it was noted by a parishioner that the discovery of Great Crested Newts in a Pond adjoining Ivy House would impact on all future planning applications within a 500 meter radius of the site in that ponds will have to be surveyed and a licence from Natural England granted before any development could take place. This information was **NOTED**, to be incorporated when discussing future applications.

8. Planning

8.1 Petsfield, Eastwood Road

A letter was received from the Planning Department dated 3rd September, saying that the occupants are being allowed to apply for retrospective planning permission. CK telephoned on 14th September: No application has been received, however, they have 30 weeks in which to apply.

The following Registered Planning Application was **NOTED**:

8.2 12/1621 Gardners Cottage, Chilston Park, ME17 2BE

An application for discharge of conditions relating to MA/12/0929 (Erection of a detached garage) - being details of condition 3 - materials

The following Planning Decisions from MBC were **NOTED**:

8.3 12/1262 Elmstone Farm, Elmstone Hole Road. ME17 2AJ

Application for conversion of outbuilding to music room, store and garaging (residential) with roof extension and new weatherboarding as shown on drawing numbers PL-03 and PL-02 and a Heritage Design and Access Statement.

Approved/Granted with conditions

- 8.4 12/1172** Gardners Cottage, Chilston Park, ME17 2BE
Application to discharge conditions relating to MA/10/1961 (An application for listed building consent for the erection of a two storey side extension and internal alterations) - being details of condition 2 - materials and condition 3 watching brief
Approved/Granted
- 8.5 12/1173** Gardners Cottage, Chilston Park, ME17 2BE
Application for discharge of conditions relating to MA/10/1960 (Erection of a two storey side extension) - being details of condition 2 (materials) and 3 (joinery)
Approved/Granted
- 8.6 10/2029** Land at Ivy Farm, Liverton Hill.
Erection of a PPS7 house with ancillary energy centre building housing an aerobic digester. Including access, ecological enhancements and landscaping including new pond in accordance with plan numbers 1718-4-C-300-1002, and 1718-4-C-300-1001 **Approved/Granted with Conditions**

9. Matters of Report

9.1 County and Borough Councillors' Reports

Richard Thick - (spoke after Matters Arising, then left the meeting) updated the Council on the situation with Traveller pitches and problems, and referred to the recent Gypsy and Traveller Awareness presentation on 5th November this year, the first half of which was considered to be informative. It was suggested that the slides from the meeting be available on the Parish Council website.

Action CK

Jenefer Gibson: was asked how the decision was arrived at regarding wheelie bins for garden waste at all properties, it being considered that people don't really want 3 ugly bins outside their house in rural areas. Jenny explained that MBC's view is that, apparently, bags were collapsing so, having considered several ideas; it was considered that, ecologically speaking, waste bins are better.

Regarding the funding of PCSOs, Jenny has heard nothing about lack of funding.

9.2 The Chairman's Report

Since the last Parish Council Meeting, I attended the Joint Parishes Group meeting on 17th September to discuss the new Maidstone strategy, especially concerning development for M20 junctions 7 and 8 that the core strategy proposes and to which much objection was raised. It was felt that the Kent Showground Site would be preferable.

On 18th September there was a Roads Meeting at Offen Farm, with several points arising from it: Would we like a new Village sign: a white gateway with village signs on it - although this could not be considered until next year due to budgetary constraints. Also on offer is a traditional sign post on the green instead of the 3-finger post. It would be made of fibreglass but look as though it is made of metal. Should the sign/s be for Grafty Green or the hamlet of Boughton Malherbe (which has no sign)?

On 20th September I attended a Council Tax Discount Briefing meeting - to do with reductions in the amounts of grants/benefits/assistance that people in need can receive, (and changes to Council Tax on 2nd homes). The maximum levy for Boughton Malherbe will be in the region of £13.50/year, so not particularly significant.

I also attended a KALC meeting to discuss planning enforcements with Rob Jarman and Peter Hockney; a KALC Conference about Localism, and a Police Forum meeting at Headcorn where urban response times to urgent crimes are e15 minutes and rural response time 20 minutes.

10. Councillor Reports on External Meetings attended

Covered above.

11. Correspondence

2 letters from MBC re Petsfield
Lord Lieutenant's Annual Civil Service Invitation
Audit Commission, return of Annual Accounts
Electoral Roll update

RG said he has received a response from South East Water which states it will not go along with the idea of regular maintenance as this is carried out as and when it is actually needed.

12. Finance

- 12.1** Income since the last meeting was **noted**: Concurrent Functions: £1580.00
12.2 To authorise any payments made since meeting of 28th August 2012: None
12.3 It was **resolved** that the following cheques be signed:
Cheque No 000386 Audit Commission, Annual Audit £144.00
Cheque No 000387 KALC - 3 attendances at Localism Conference £216.00
(Cllrs Galton, King and Turner)
- 12.4** The Balance at the bank was noted: . £6511.36 (Less unrepresented Cheque 000378 £450)
12.5 Concurrent Functions: 2nd instalment received, £1,580.00

13 Parish Services Scheme update - given by RT

The only money available under this scheme would be for cutting grass on land in the care of the Parish Council, and, possibly for the Village notice-board. There would be no money for Speedwatch. The petition had in the region of 3,400 signatures and is being presented on 12th December. It is hoped that as many people can attend as possible. For us, we have not complied with requirements in that we have not yet submitted the measurement of land in our care. At the KALC meeting tomorrow what to do next will be decided.

14. Further Information

A Budget meeting needs to be held before Christmas, with RT, MH and CK.

Action CK

15. Dates of next meetings: 22nd January 2013; 19th March 2013

There being no further business, the meeting closed 9.25pm