



Minutes a meeting of the Dymchurch Parish Council held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021, 7pm at the Scout Hut Chapel Road Dymchurch

# MINUTES

## PRESENT

Clr C McCreedy- Chair  
Clr J Williams

Clr C Young  
Clr M Wright

Clr D Noonan

Clr D Young

Also present:

Mr J Lawrence- Parish Clerk

Mr A Lawson- Projects and Finance Officer

District Councillor Ian Meyers

- 1. APOLOGIES.** Members are reminded of the need to tender apologies with the reason for absence direct to the Clerk if they are unable to attend.

Clr Deana Coker- Holiday

Clr Sandra Leverick- Holiday

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
- To declare any prejudicial interests in items on the agenda – any councillors with prejudicial interests must leave the room for the relevant items.

No declarations made

- 3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING-** held on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to be agreed by members present.

Proposed to accept by Clr Noonan and Seconded by Clr C Young. All agreed and minutes duly signed by the chair.

## 4. RESIGNATION OF CLLR JOHN CARR

- Members to note the resignation of Clr John Carr

Members noted the resignation of Cllr John Carr and acknowledged his service to the Council.

- b. Members will consider the purchase of ballot papers should the above resignation result in an election.

Members discussed the purchase of ballot papers should an election take place. A vote was held.

Votes for the purchase of ballot papers- Cllrs C Young, Cllr Williams, Cllr McCreedy, and Cllr Wright.

Votes against the purchase of ballot papers- Cllr D Young and Cllr D Noonan.

Carried that ballot papers will be purchased if required.

## **5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Members will propose to adjourn the meeting to allow Public Participation-

Standing Orders provide the opportunity for members of the public to speak at Council Meetings- The allotted time for Public Participation is 15 minutes and each person may speak for no longer than 3 minutes. This is however, at the discretion of the chair.

At the end of the Public Participation section the Council meeting will resume

NO QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

## **6. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**In circulation.**

- a. Email from a resident concerned at the lack of enforcement and illegal parking along the seawall road, especially within the disabled parking area.

ACTION- Clerk to contact the Parking services manager to inform them of the concerns and to ascertain when the enforcement of the disabled area will commence.

- b. Email from resident asking for confirmation that speed survey took place at the A259 near Kingsway-

Members were informed that this had taken place but the criteria for changing the speed limit area was not met and therefore KCC would not make any changes

## **7. UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING and CLERKS REPORT**

No	Details	Owner	Comments
1	Contact the RBL to agree to support the Remembrance Day parade under the insurance of the Parish Council	Lawrence	Completed
2	Letter to District Council asking for installation of Life Belt near to Martello 23	Lawrence	Response from District has been received and they will be installing a life belt in the location requested

3	Send letter to Ex warden Jon Lodge to thank him for his services to Dymchurch	Lawrence	Completed
4	Respond to Planning applications-	Lawrence	Completed
5	Installation of Flagpoles	Lawson	Partly Completed- Further work is required at the main slip way for installation at this location
6	Remarking of MUGA and clearing of post fittings for tennis court	Lawson	Delayed due to contractors not being able to confirm date for lining and cleaning at the same time- This will be completed in the spring
7	Cutting of hedges and agreement for two yearly trims at burial ground to be included in contract with Marc Coleman	Lawrence	Contacted
8	Reply to email regarding Bedingfield Trust to inform that Cllr McCreedy will sit on the board	Lawrence	Email sent
9	Arrange for donation of £50.00 to be paid to the Bedingfield Trust in support of purchase of trophies	Lawrence	Cheque to be signed- Cheque was signed at the meeting
10	Write to St Mary's Bay to seek views on Beach Safety Measures	Lawrence	Email sent awaiting reply
11	Arrange meeting for Working group to discuss beach Safety arrangements and potential beach manager provision	Lawrence	1st meeting cancelled due to sickness- This will be rearranged
12	To restart Beach Advisory Group	Lawrence	Ongoing
13	To obtain quotes for review at next Council meeting to appoint contractor for bench refurbishment and ongoing maintenance	Lawson	See item 15 (meeting agenda 5 <sup>th</sup> October 2021)
14	To write to KCC/ District Council to consider seasonal parking restrictions on St Mary's Road between the entrance to the recreation Ground and the Caravan Park	Lawrence	KCC state that statistics do not support the implementation of parking restrictions in this area. However, this is something that would be considered if the Parish Council wished to fund it- ACTION- Clerk to obtain costings for this project
15	To write to Grasshoppers to request removal of items from the Pavilion and to reinforce that no one is permitted to use the inside of the pavilion and to request the return of all keys to the pavilion which are being used.	Lawrence	Completed- See below for further clarification

Action 15 above further comments- Members agreed that the use of the Pavilion is and should be prohibited as the safety of users can not be guaranteed. There is signage at the location in place to warn people- The toilets are able to be used but users must ensure they are left in clean and tidy.

It was proposed that Grasshoppers are to be permitted to use the recreation ground and be allowed access to toilets. However, all property belonging to them must be removed from the building as soon as possible and all keys to the property must be returned to the Parish Council.

A Vote was taken- 4 For and 2 Against  
Decision Carried.

**Additional Matters-**

- The beach webcam problems have been investigated and appears stable at the moment- an upgrade of the broadband connection will go ahead.
- We are getting an increase of visitors to the office- The Clerk is maintaining Covid precautions with visitors and will continue to accept visitors to the officers while the current Government advice is in place.
- Carpark Cash Collections have ceased in its current state as the company who conducted this service have ceased trading- Insurance cover will be reviewed while a new provider is found.

Members asked if there were any monies outstanding payments due to the Council- It was confirmed that the account is up to date. Members also suggested that a new company is identified should the cash collections become an unreasonable strain on Parish Council Officers.

**8. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

**a. County Councillor**

Unable to attend on this occasion

**b. District Councillors**

Cllr Meyers reported that he had again attended a planning meeting regarding Willop Close and against all the technical advice given by experts' common sense and witness evidence of the flooding risk in the area has meant that this application has been refused.

**c. KCC Warden**

No report this month

**d. Kent Police – PCSO**

No report this month

**9. PLANNING:**

Reference	Address	Details	Comments
21/1880/FH	36 Green Meadows, Dymchurch, Romney Marsh, TN29 0JS	Erection of a single storey rear extension and a two-storey side extension.	No Objections- Carried unanimously
21/1839/FH/CON	34 St Marys Road, Dymchurch, TN29 0PN	Approval of details pursuant to condition 4 (implementation of archaeology) and 18 (prevention of water	Noted- No additional comments

		discharge onto highway) of planning permission 21/0173/FH for erection of new detached dwelling upon land adjacent to no 34 re-submission of 20/1223/FH	
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## 10. FINANCE

- a. Breakdown of expenditure/income since last meeting  
Mr Lawson gave an explanation of the payments and transactions- No issues raised
- b. Authorisation of Payments- Members will review the list of invoices for payment and identify two Councillors to authorise the payments online.

Cllrs Wright and McCreedy- agreed to authorise the payments online.

- c. External Audit Report and Certificate 2020-2021-  
Members will acknowledge the report and comments from the external auditors.

Members acknowledged the report.

- d. Appointment of Internal Auditor for period 2021-2022

Members agreed to appoint Mr David Bucket as Internal auditor for 2021-2022

- e. Purchase of replacement part for Gym equipment Seawall Dymchurch

After discussion it was agreed that the replacement part would be purchased at a cost of £328.75+VAT and the part would be fitted by the District Council who offered to do this free of charge.

## 11. VALUE ADDED TAX

Members will receive an update of the anticipated VAT charge accumulated as a result of providing parking services within the Parish.

Members were reminded that a review of the VAT owed by the Parish Council had taken place. This liability has been in existence for some years and had not been actioned by previous administrations. The Council employed an external agency to review our Tax liability and submitted our findings to the HMRC. The HMRC have the power to go back through the records as far as they wish however they have decided that the Parish Council are due to pay tax from the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013 on the revenue obtained from the sale of carpark tickets and permits in the Dymchurch Parish Council Carpark. The level of tax due is 20% of the revenue received over this time and this has to be registered by the 30<sup>th</sup> November this year.

The amount of back tax due to be paid is £40,371.58. This amount takes into account VAT that we are able to claim back on purchases.

The above was noted by members present.

In addition, members were informed that we now have to ensure that we include our VAT number on all invoices, and this includes the car park tickets- Taking this into account new car park tickets need to be printed.

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr C Young that the new carpark tickets be purchased- This was carried unanimously.

## **12. CAR PARKING CHARGES REVIEW**

Members will consider car park charges

Members discussed the option of increasing carpark charges now that VAT would be charged on each ticket sale at 20%.

After discussion it was proposed by Cllr D Young and seconded by Cllr Williams that the carpark costs should remain the same and a review is conducted after the next season (2022)

## **13. PAVILION WORKING GROUP UPDATE.**

- a. Members will receive an update after the latest working group meeting

Cllr McCreedy reported that in the next two weeks or so plans for a proposal to improve the Pavilion would be made available for members to review. It is then hoped that a public meeting can be held so that people from the village and surrounding areas can also see what the plans are and offer their comments.

Members were requested to provide feed back on the plans as soon as possible once they have been received.

- b. Member will hear a presentation from the Clerk covering how Parish Councils can borrow or raise money for projects.

The Clerk outlined the numerous ways in which a Parish Council can raise fund for projects emphasising the need to communicate with residents when making decisions about large sums of money being spent on behalf of the public.

After the discussion it was agreed that the Council would await further information regarding the plans for the Pavilion before making any decisions on funding.

## **14. BIKE HIRE KIOSK- SEA WALL NEAR MARTELLO BASIN**

Members will receive an update regarding the above and consider future arrangements.

After discussion it was agreed that the owner of the container is to be contacted to remove the structure within 28 days. It was confirmed that the Licence to trade in the location had finished on the 30<sup>th</sup> September.

The use of the space would be discussed by the Assets and Amenities Group.

## **15. BENCH REFURBISHMENT AND REPAIRS**

Members will consider the available quotes obtained and decide on future actions.

The schedule of works was discussed, and all agreed that the refurbishment of village benches was important. 5 businesses had been approached to provide quotes for the work but only one company replied.

It was proposed by Cllr Noonan and seconded by Cllr C Young that the quote be accepted. This was carried unanimously.

The work is due to be completed by end of March 2022.

#### **16. DESIGN A FLAG SCHOOL COMPETITION**

Members will consider arranging competition to design a flag which will be created and flown from the new flag poles.

ITEM ADJOURNED

#### **17. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AT FUTURE MEETINGS:**

- **Wooden Notice Board Replacement**
- **Disabled Parking Area Seawall- Update required**

#### **18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING-** The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 at 7pm at the Scout Hut Chapel Road Dymchurch unless stated otherwise.

**Members will propose to exclude members of the press and public to consider the following two agenda items.**

#### **19. Annual Pay Award- Mr Adrian Lawson**

After discussion it was agreed unanimously that Mr Lawson should be moved to PayScale 15 on the National Joint Council for Local Government Services pay award agreement.

#### **20. Review of investigation into historic financial and procedural matters.**

Members reviewed a report compiled by the Clerk who was tasked to investigate two financial payments made to a member of staff prior to the elections in 2019 as it appeared that the correct procedures had not been followed. Members heard that although no dishonesty or fraud had taken place there had been a lack of correct procedure in the way that the payments had been authorised in that the payments had not been authorised at a convened Council meeting nor had the decision to make the payments been recorded effectively.

In presenting his findings, the Clerk reported that during the investigation issues around the correct governance and following of financial guidelines were in some, but not all cases absent. Procedure in the way that previous audits had taken place had identified failings and the way that single officers could make payments from accounts were highlighted as bad practice.

In making these comments the Clerk emphasised that no misappropriation of public funds had taken place, but the way in which financial transactions were made in the past was a risk to the Council as a body. In conducting due diligence and investigating the aforementioned payments current members are confident in the way that funds are now managed by Dymchurch Parish Council due to the following changes-

1. Council Officers (Clerk and Other employees) are unable to authorise payments online without additional security measures.
2. Council Members have full access to view and monitor the Council Accounts.

3. Internal auditors are appointed on a yearly basis and this decision is recorded within the minutes.
4. All transactions along with account balances are published within the minutes each month.

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