

HOTHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held

on the 6th July 2022 at 7.00pm in Bluebells Centre Hothfield

1.Note of Persons Present: Cllr Cox (in the Chair), Cllr Cook, Cllr Pollock

In attendance : Mrs M Norris, Clerk to the Council, ABC Cllr Bell.

2.Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Lloyd (Chairman), Cllr Merrion (Vice Chair), Cllr Sutcliffe.

3.Declarations of Cllrs Interest in items on the Agenda

There were no declarations of Cllrs interest in items on the Agenda.

4. Public discussion and Parishioners questions.

Although no members of the public were in attendance, a resident had raised, with Councillors prior to the meeting, concerns that only part of the grass on Hothfield Green had been mowed. No one in attendance at the meeting knew the reason why but Cllr Bell agreed to investigate further on our behalf. **Cllr Bell**

5. Minutes of the last Meeting & Matters arising.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 1st June were approved and signed by Cllr Cox. The Clerk agreed to put the proposed plans relating to the Turners development in West Street on the Hothfield website alongside the approved minutes.

6. Matters for Report Arising from Previous Minutes

Cllr Bell had yet to hear from Planning Officers about Tree applications but will report back to the PC with details once known.

7. Planning & Enforcement

New planning applications

22/00843- Manor Cottage, Church Lane, Hothfield, TN26 1EL

Alteration of roof and windows on conservatory including new roof covering.

HPC felt that there were no significant changes to this application and Cllrs agreed that the application should be submitted with No objections.

Permit

Decided Planning Application

21/01796-Land West & Rear of Thanet Terrace, The Street, Hothfield.

Construction of a 1.5 storey dwelling and car port including access, parking landscaping and other associated works under submission 20/01644.

Withdrawn By Applicant

The above item had not appeared on the agenda as the decision was not received until the day of the meeting.

8. Borough Councillors Report

ABC's new planning portal was currently being rolled out the aim is that the new design and interface would be more user friendly. At present a few issues had been reported but as the site had only gone live yesterday it was expected that the glitches would be smoothed out.

Cllr Bell gave a report which included an update on the Stodmarsh appeal which had recently been challenged by ABC but the appeal was not successful. Cllr Cox asked to view a copy of the judgment if available.

First look at data from the 2021 census had been published and shows that population numbers in Ashford have increased from 118,000 in 2011 to 132,000 in 2021 this equates to an overall population growth of 12.5%. higher than the England average at 6.6%, and the South East at 7.5%. Although Ashford does not have the highest rate in Kent which is currently in Dartford and Maidstone.

The council have recently approved the adoption of a customer services IT and digital strategy which is an update from the previous strategy adopted in 2017. This has increased visits to the website by around 40% resulting in a drop of visitors to the Civic Centre. It is hoped that this will provide a more joined up experience for business and residents. Although ABC are mindful that those unable to use digital services can still access the services they require.

HPC attention was drawn to 3 consultations documents that were currently available to comment upon:

Kent Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment which relates to pharmacy services.

National Highways & Transport Service including road safety, congestion and other relevant highways issues and finally Transport for London proposal to extend the ultra low admission zone to the whole of London which will mean that it borders North Kent which may

potentially affect those who drive up to London. The County Council will look to respond on this.

A discussion ensued about the conflict between targets set for housing versus the need to comply with Stodmarsh restrictions. Cllr Bell agreed that there was a conflict and reported that ABC had made representations through their chain of command to make their position quite clear. No outcome is available to report

A further discussion ensued about the cancellation of local bus services in particular those aimed at providing bus routes for school children. Whilst it was generally accepted by all that the consultation period and the announcement of the decision was extremely short, Cllr Bell highlighted that the decisions made by Stagecoach was a purely commercial one. ABC Transport Committee did not have any direct authority over these decisions however they were making representations to Stagecoach. It was also accepted that the provision of public transport in the local rural community was not good although a "full" size bus may not always be the solution and greater use of minibuses could warrant investigation by these commercial organisations

9. Financial Reports

Cllr Merrion and the Clerk met with the auditor earlier this month. The report had been issued to all PC members prior to the meeting. The clerk advised that the Notice of Public Rights had been publicised on the notice board and HPC website.

The bank reconciliation as of 13th June was £58,377.89

The following accounts were approved for payment

001700	Hothfield Hall Hire	£40.00
01701	Satswana	180.00
01702	Lionel Robbins Audit	90.00
01703	The Play Inspection Co	120.00
01704	LCN	163.15
01705	M Norris	327.70
01706	K Marden	304.59
01707	The History Society	100.00
01708	The Pilgrims Hospice	250.00
01709	St Margaret's Church	500.00
01710	Mrs S Jubilee	32.75
		£2075.29

A monthly payment via direct debit of £10.00 to EDF was noted.

Cllr Cox mentioned that a resident had raised the question as to whether the litter pickers salary had been paid. The clerk was aware of this and confirmed that at last month's meeting she had requested that the Chairman write an open letter of thanks to be published in the newsletter. This would then coincide with the donation to Pilgrims Hospice that is made on behalf of HPC in lieu of a salary paid to the litter pickers. The payment of £250 for the hospice was agreed as part of the July accounts above.

Cllr Cox proposed that September's meeting review the amount of the payment that are currently made to the Pilgrims Hospice on behalf of the litter pickers and those made to the History Society and St Margarets' Church. The Clerk advised that these payments were previously set by the Finance Working Group and agreed by the PC when setting the budget for 22/23. Cllr Cox requested that these particular payments are placed on Septembers' agenda to agree payment for FY 23/24.

10. Review of Policies & Procedures

The Employment policy was not discussed at this meeting and will remain on the agenda for September.

11. General Council Business

Correspondence received

Received by the Clerk: _ A flyer received from the Pilgrims Hospice regarding an upcoming sponsored walk was passed to Cllr Cox as acting Chairman.

- Charing Neighbourhood Plan Consultation: The clerk reminded all in attendance that the consultation document had been issued (email 17/06) and if Hothfield PC wished to comment they could do so.

No emails were brought to the attention of the HPC by Councillors in attendance.

Hothfield Highways Improvement Plan

Further to the email received from Kelly Garrett where she confirmed that, if we wish to progress with the next step, KCC would need to provide a design fee quote (outlined in her email 01/06) A decision was deferred until the September meeting when more members where available to discuss.

Action Clerk to relist on September Agenda

Cllr Cox informed the PC that he had obtained from Charing PC a breakdown of costings for their CCTV project. He felt that we would be able to break the costing down and therefore produce an estimate. Cllr Cox asked requested an update on the proposed site visit

between HPC and Capita. The clerk explained that although she was still in communication with Capita, a date could not be confirmed until payment of the fee of £300, which had been agreed, had been received. **Action: Clerk to chase for an update.**

Village Hall

The newly revised hire rates had been published on the Village Hall Website and included in the July edition of Hothfield News.

Following the Jubilee celebrations, a number of Jubilee Mugs were still available. The Chairman proposed previously that these were now made available to any resident who would like one. This was agreed and the Chairman should now speak with the village hall to consider how and when residents could collect the cups.

PCSO/KCC Warden

Diane Wakeling has now left Hothfield and her role as KCC warden is yet to be filled. The Clerk will update the HPC when a replacement for Diane is identified and in post.

ClIr Bell advised that there is a Community Safety Officer available via ABC and that issues, including those surrounding antisocial behaviour problems in the village, should be brought to their attention.

Muga

ClIr Cook praised Mr Marden's work of cleaning and weeding the area. ClIr Cox suggested that we put an advert in the newsletter appealing for any decorators in the village who would like to be considered to quote on the work to contact the HPC.

Action: Clerk to pass to Chair for inclusion in newsletter.

Hothfield Newsletter

The chairman confirmed that all items for inclusion in the newsletter should be passed to Ian in the first instance and Ian will then collate before sending to Hedley.

The printer currently used to print out copies of the newsletter for villages is now very old and will need replacing shortly. ClIr Cox suggested that now would be the right time to consider two options.

- The first being to buy a new or previously used printer
- To consider and cost outsource the printing requirement.

Although a decision was not made at the meeting concerning the above, ClIr Cox requested that the minutes made these options clear and the matter be brought to the next HPC meeting for further discussion and agreement.

Solar Projects

An informal meeting of the PC will take place in August to discuss the projects further with an aim to consult village residents at a meeting in October. Cllr Cox suggested that this would enable the residents to reject the ideas that were no longer wanted or viable. The remaining items can then be ranked and the PC can then proceed through the ranking process overtime subject to budget. This would mean that the cost will only determine when the particular project can be finalised (bearing in mind there are only finite funds in each financial year).

This is particularly pertinent in terms of speed reduction measures in the village where despite HPC having the funds to go ahead with a plan, KCC will only allow certain measures to take place in year.

12. Forum for Exchange of Information

Cllr Cook advised that a resident of West Street had been in touch as he had been the victim of a serious incident. Although the PC were not in receipt of the details. Cllr Cox advised that he would try to find out further information about the incident.

Cllr Pollard raised for discussion how currently the HPC communicate with residents in the village. Cllr Pollard had some concerns that residents were not aware that they could attend meetings and felt that consideration should be given to better methods of communication albeit that he appreciated there were already means in place.

Some options discussed were the use of a mailbox that residents could send questions or emails to that would then be discussed at the parish meeting, however the Parish Clerk felt that her email address and the contact us email address via the parish website were both available for this purpose.

The idea of a calendar to be produced which listed the events etc in the village was considered to be a good idea. Although at this stage no one volunteered to create or populate a calendar.

The clerk also suggested that the village noticeboard could be better utilised. Although there were some rules and regulations that needed to be adhered to when posting on the noticeboard. Items posted on the noticeboard in colour would be eye catching for residents. The clerk however does not have access to a colour printer.

13. Items for The Next Agenda

No additional items were identified.

14. Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on the new date of the 2nd Wednesday of the month September 14th 2022 at 7.00pm.