

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 30th November 2022 at 7.30pm in
The Scouts Hut

Cllr Powell welcomed all present to the meeting.

The Clerk reported that, due to the elections being held in May 2023, the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council would be held earlier in the month, on Wednesday 10th May. Cllr Griffiths was asked to check whether the Scout's Hut would be available for the evening. **ACTION: Cllr Griffiths**

The Clerk gave each Councillor instructions on how to create their new Parish Council addresses and asked for everyone to let her know when these are set up. Remote support can be arranged, if anyone has any issues. **ACTION: All Cllrs**

Public discussion

A resident asked whether HIB could be given permission to plant any leftover bulbs on the mounds around the edge of the Glebe Field. All Councillors were in agreement with this and the Amenity Manager asked that they let him know where any are planted so that he can inform the Contractor. It was noted that The Friends of St John's still have some packs of Christmas cards left (£3.50 for 5).

Mr Rob Yorke, the Senior Early Help Worker from Infozone Youth Hub spoke to Councillors regarding the Youth group to be set up in the village, as he had submitted a grant request to be discussed during the meeting.

His team, who deliver youth work in the Maidstone area, focus on engaging teenagers involved with ASB and work in conjunction with the local PCSO and Community Wardens. Activities can include sport, arts & crafts, life skills and trips. Cllr Powell asked how the workers reach out to the teenagers and Mr Yorke explained that they look out for groups to engage with to then invite along. The Staplehurst group already running has 30+ children attending. Numbers would depend on the staff/youth ratio. Whilst this would be a facility for both Harrietsham and Lenham children, it is expected that more youths would attend from Harrietsham, as the scheme will be located in the village. The group does have a minibus that can be used to bring children over from Lenham, if required. The group would start with up to 30 children as there are 3 members of staff, however they are hoping to recruit further volunteers (who must all be DBS checked). The group will run on a Friday evening in blocks of 6 weeks, with a break in between for planning. Youths attending will be aged between 11 and 18 (or up to 25 if they have additional Special Educational Needs). It is hoped that the group will commence in January and there will be a signed agreement between the youth and group with all details being added to a membership form so that families can be contacted, if an issue occurs. The group will then write their own set of rules to follow. Mr Yorke confirmed that a first aider will be at every session.

1 Present

Cllr E Powell, Cllr G Dean, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr C Roots, Cllr T Griffiths, Cllr R Dayes, Cllr S Luck, Cllr S Brown, RFO/Amenity Manager Mr M Cuerden and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst
2 Members of Public

2 Apologies for absence

Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Sams, Community Warden Martin Sherwood, County Cllr S Prendergast

3 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 26th October 2022 - The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Roots; with all in favour.

4 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

There were no changes.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Cllr C Roots: Agenda Item 7.1 (Finance - Grant for Harrietsham in Bloom) as he is the Treasurer of HIB
Agenda Item 7.1 (Finance - Grant for Harrietsham PCC) as he is the Treasurer of the Friends of St John the Baptist Church, who may be asked for a grant if the Parish Council does not provide the full amount requested,

Cllr S Brown: Agenda Item 7.1 (Finance - Grant for Harrietsham Fish Scheme) as he is the Advertising Manager for the Network magazine.

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

5 Planning

5.1 The outstanding planning applications were noted.

5.2 The approved applications were noted.

5.3 The refused applications were noted.

5.4 The withdrawn applications were noted.

5.5 Other Planning Matters

- Cllrs Dean and Powell spoke regarding the MBC Local Plan Examination hearing, which had recently concluded, and had not reflected well on the Borough Council. Highways issues discussed had not included any costings for highway improvement schemes. A representative from Gleeson homes had spoken in favour of development. The Parish Council had been well represented regarding why Harrietsham should not have been classified as a Rural Service Centre. The fact that Harrietsham had not been consulted on Heathlands, even though it will affect the village, had also been raised. MBC had stated that they had acquired 95% of the land for Heathlands, however this was shown to be inaccurate. Cllr Powell added that the next stage should be in January, however he felt that nearer March would be more realistic.
- Cllr Dean reported that the Firwood & Jays View Planning appeal hearing is to take place 13th - 16th December and asked as many Councillors as possible to attend. The Clerk added that Cllrs T & J Sams would be attending and a representative of Lenham Parish Council will be speaking.

6. Environmental

6.1 Minutes of the Meeting held 21st November: The Minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr Luck; with 3 in favour (those present at the meeting).

6.2 Recommendations from the Environmental Committee:

- To purchase an additional bin for the Glebe Field, to be located by the Marley Road/Church Lane junction: It was proposed by Cllr Roots to purchase a bin for £282 and this was seconded by Cllr Dean; with all in favour. It was noted that the emptying arrangements still need to be clarified with MBC. **ACTION: Cllrs T & J Sams**

6.3 Other Environmental Matters

- The Amenity Manager mentioned that the duck houses will all be refurbished and two have already been taken. The other will be removed imminently. Cllr Dean queried the amount of buoyance aid which had been stuck to the bottom and how this appeared to have been reduced. It was felt that that could be part of the reason why they had been sinking recently.
- Cllr Dean mentioned the lake treatment and the Amenity Manager confirmed that this is to be discussed at the January Environmental meeting.

7. Finances

7.1 Income and Expenditure spreadsheets: The finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Dean; with all in favour.

7.2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th November 2022: The Minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Stanley, seconded by Cllr Roots; with 4 in favour (those present at the meeting).

7.3 Recommendations from the F&GP Committee:

- To allocate a further £10K towards the Local Plan Enquiry, in case it moves to Stage 2: It was noted that the Local Plan hearing may move to Stage 2, if not thrown out, and the Barrister who had recently attended (on behalf of the Parish Council) may need to be employed again. There was also discussion regarding the possible need for representation at the Firwood & Jays View appeal. It was then proposed by Cllr Dean to set aside a further £10k towards further legal representation/advice for planning matters. This was seconded by Cllr Roots, with all in favour.
- To purchase mugs (or something similar) for the King's Coronation: This was proposed by Cllr Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Roots; with all in favour. The Clerk will look into the commemorative items available when information is sent to Clerks. **ACTION: Clerk**
- Grants for 2022:
- Harrietsham In Bloom: It was proposed by Cllr Dean to approve a donation of £100. This was seconded by Cllr Luck, with 7 in favour and one abstention.
- Harrietsham Fish Scheme: It was proposed by Cllr Griffiths to approve a donation of £500. This was seconded by Cllr Dean, with 7 in favour and one abstention.
- Harrietsham PCC: It was proposed by Cllr Dean to approve a donation totalling £1,226 (£726 for the churchyard and floodlighting costs and £500 towards a new projector) This was seconded by Cllr Luck, with 7 in favour and one abstention.
- New Harrietsham & Lenham Youth Group: This related to the discussion with Mr Yorke at the beginning of the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Roots to approve a donation towards hall hire costs of up to £820, being paid directly to the Village Hall Trust. This grant will have the caveat attached that 6 monthly reports should be submitted to the Clerk detailing a breakdown of where the youth's attending come from. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Dean, with all in favour.

8. Highways

The Clerk reported that Cllr T Sams had been dealing with many flooding and pothole related issues in the past couple of weeks.

Cllr Roots reported on the A20 traffic surveys, which had just been completed. Outside of working hours the average speed was in excess of 30mph. Areas in the 85% centile, doing over 40mph, were towards the edges of the village (close to The Hollies and Church Lane). The surveys had shown a steady increase in the daily average vehicle movements:

February 2021	12,600
November 2021	13,600
November 2022	16,800

Cllr Roots also reported that the most recent traffic surveys had recorded a vehicle travelling at 70mph. After further investigation (viewing domestic CCTV) it was found to be a car, overtaking a lorry. In one hour, on the morning of the Parish Council meeting, there had been 12 drivers caught speeding. Of the four that were travelling at over 40mph, three of them were lorries.

Cllr Stanley reported that the pedestrian refuges are very hard to see in the dark and Cllr Luck mentioned that she had reported them to KHS last year and they had subsequently been cleaned. The Clerk was asked to report this to KHS again.

ACTION: Clerk

- A20 Average Speed Camera Surveys: The Clerk reported that she had inputted 204 surveys and the link had been published on various groups to encourage further responses. KHS have carried out a site visit and it had been noted that electrical connections and concrete posts sockets need to be installed. The scheme is still proposed for some point early next calendar year.

9. Civility & Respect Pledge

The Clerk read out statements relating to the Civility & Respect pledge, which led to discussion regarding the inadequacies of the Code of Conduct, if this pledge is required by NALC, SLCC and One Voice Wales. Cllr Griffiths stated that, by taking the pledge, it protected the Council from anyone behaving inappropriately in the future, as the expected level of conduct will be quite clear. It was subsequently proposed by Cllr Griffiths for Harrietsham Parish Council to take the pledge. This was seconded by Cllr Dayes, with 6 in favour and 2 against.

The Clerk stated that there would need to be two policies drawn up (Dignity at Work and Equality & Diversity) and each Councillor and member of staff would be required to complete a training requirements questionnaire.

ACTION: Clerk

10. Christmas Lights

Cllr Roots asked whether he could add some battery-operated lights to the trees on the West Street green, as the festive lights already agreed cannot be installed until next Christmas. He added that this can easily be done with a pole, rather than requiring ladders etc. After brief discussion it was proposed by Cllr Powell that £200 be spent on some lights. This was seconded by Cllr Dayes, with all in favour.

ACTION: Cllr Roots

11. Santa's Grotto

Cllr Griffiths gave a brief update on the arrangements for Santa's Grotto on the 18th December and added that he has now arranged 6 stalls to be in the large hall as well.

Cllrs Stanley, Luck & Dean will assist with the refreshments.

Cllrs T & J Sams, Roots, Griffiths and the Clerk will help set up the hall on the Saturday evening with Cllrs Griffiths, Roots and Stanley putting everything away after the event. Cllr Powell stated that he could confirm whether he can assist the week before.

ACTION: Cllr Powell

The Clerk asked for all selection boxes to be returned to the office, no later than Monday 12th December.

A backdrop is required for behind Santa in one of the gazebos along with some cable ties for the garlands. The Clerk was asked to purchase these.

ACTION: Clerk

12. KALC Climate Change Carbon Footprint Calculator

This item was deferred to the January meeting.

13. Parish Council Policies

The amended policies had been circulated to all Councillors. The only alterations were to several Acts of Parliament, which have changed since the NALC standard policies were created. Cllr Roots proposed that the policies be adopted and this was seconded by Cllr Powell, with all in favour.

14. Boundary Commission for England 2023 Review

Cllr Roots gave a brief update on the Constituency Boundary Review, which moved Headcorn out of the current parliamentary constituency. If elected again, Helen Whately MP would remain the MP for Harrietsham and Lenham. After brief discussion it was felt that no further comment is required, as Councillors were happy with the current proposals.

On another note, the Clerk added that Cllr T & J Sams were happy to see that part of Harrietsham is not being removed in the Ward boundary review, as had recently be suggested by MBC.

15. Future Events

PTFA Christmas School Fayre - 3rd December (Harrietsham Primary School)

Santa's Sleigh visit to Harrietsham - 9th December

Santa's Grotto - 18th December (Village Hall)

Coffee Morning - every Friday in the Booth Hall (10am - midday)

16. Items for Future Consideration

King's Coronation (incorporating The Big Lunch) - *Cllr Dean*

(Cllr Dean stated that one of the ideas to be discussed for the Coronation is bunting for West Street)

Cllr Dean asked that thanks be noted to the volunteers who had produced the Poppy displays on the West Street green and in the Church. All Councillors agreed that they had been fabulous and had been a lot of work for everyone involved.

17. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 25th January 2023 at 7.30pm in the Scouts Hut

With no further matters to discuss the main meeting was adjourned at 10.00pm.

A member of public thanked the Parish Council for their work over the past year.

Minutes of Confidential Agenda Item 18 (Staffing Matter) will be filed with a signed copy of these minutes.