

# **NETTLESTEAD PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2023 IN NETTLESTEAD VILLAGE HALL at 19:45**

**PRESENT:**        **Cllr Alison Green - Chair**  
Cllr Anita van Hensbergen - Vice-chair  
Cllr David Meredith  
Cllr Emily Corfe  
Cllr Martyn Evans  
Borough Councillor Claudine Russell  
Parish Clerk Suzanne Seal  
One member of the public

### **1.        APOLOGIES AND ABSENCE**

Cllr Jackie Bennett  
County Cllr Webb

### **2.        COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS**

Cllr Corfe declared interest in Planning Items 23/503617/FULL, 23/503638/LBC and 23/503637/FULL and took no part in these discussions.

### **3.        MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6<sup>th</sup> JULY 2023**

It was noted that in the minutes of the last meeting, under number 11.5, Cllr Corfe's name had been written as Cllr Salter; and on the front page of the minutes, the date of the meeting had been noted as 7<sup>th</sup> July instead of 6<sup>th</sup> July. These amendments were corrected manually and the minutes were then signed.

### **4.        EXTERNAL REPORTS**

#### **4.1        COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

Cllr Webb was not in attendance.

#### **4.2        BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT**

Cllr Russell was in attendance and had circulated her report in advance of the meeting:

#### **MBC Members Report from Cllr Claudine Russell**

**Dated: September 2023**

#### **Finances**

We are just beginning to budget again for next year and the information is going to the PACs this month. A £900k shortfall has been identified for the period 24-25 but we are looking to close this gap through adjustments to services rather than cutting any front line services. For example, within my portfolio, we have identified the potential for the print room at Maidstone House to offer some services to other government etc organisations, also that the Museum is no longer liable to Business Rates thanks to a recent government ruling following a court of appeal challenge ruling.

#### **Temporary Accommodation**

The pressure on TA is real and growing, this is the major item impacting MBCs finances. We are placing more effort in to work to detect when people are about to become homeless, also in to

things such as the welfare scheme that provides basic furnishings for council properties which would enable people to move out of TA and into permanent accommodation but we are currently seeing need grow rapidly.

### **Local Plan**

The inspector has agreed to sit again for a further 3 weeks to more fully understand the concerns of a lawyers for fish group. It has not been indicated that he is minded to adjust the spatial strategy at this stage but it will have an impact on the overall timescale for adoption of the plan.

### **Town Centre Strategy**

The town centre strategy will be going out for public consultation shortly, the period runs right up until 2030 so it will be a combination of deliverables and ideals that will only become available as options in the longer term – look out for that consultation to get involved.

### **Parish Charter**

The consultation with parishes and officers has been extended until the end of September and then we will be working, together with parishes, to take the next steps to drafting a new charter.

### **Events**

The literary festival is on in October and tickets are already selling fast (it is a mixture of low price tickets and the children's activities which are mainly free). It is being held in a lot of the historic buildings around the town and hopefully will bring life and footfall into the town centre. We hope that this may become an annual event.

As always, if you need my help, please do not hesitate to email me at  
[claudinerussell@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:claudinerussell@maidstone.gov.uk)

## **5. COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

### **5.1 NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT**

Cllr Corfe reported the Crime Report No. 46/131503/23 for the damaged window of a car parked in Hampstead Lane.

### **5.2 PARISH MAGAZINE**

Cllr Van Hensbergen reported that the Parish Magazine went to print on 17<sup>th</sup> August, a day earlier than usual this month. Unfortunately, Teston Pre School missed the deadline since they stated there would not be a report from them for September when asked on the 16<sup>th</sup> August. A different staff member then sent a report after copy had been sent to the printers.

### **5.3 CHATTERBOX AND WARMSPACE**

Cllr Bennett had circulated her report in advance of the meeting:

Chatterbox continues as normal and had enjoyable meetings over the summer months.

Warmspace/Summerspace: We were lucky enough to receive a grant of £3,000 from Maidstone Borough Council to provide lunches for children during the school Summer holiday. Good quality sausages and burgers were sourced from a local butcher and were offered to all those whose families may be struggling during the current cost of living crisis. A selection of games and activities were also bought in order to attract children and families to the scheme and to entertain them whilst they were there. It was noted that there had been a positive response to the initiative.

## **6. KGV FIELD**

### **6.1 TREE GRANT SCHEME**

Cllr Green had not received a reply from KCC and will contact them for an update.

### **6.2 PLAYGROUND ROSPA REPORT**

Cllr Green advised there were 7 items in the report which had been highlighted as a risk:

1. Damage to the brick wall next to the steps – Low Risk: A previous quote of £920 had been obtained in November 2022. It was agreed by all Councillors that this is low risk and will not be actioned at this point.
2. Fencing Ball Stop – Low Risk: Some sharp protrusions and damage in places, chain link loose to the posts and a hole in the fencing. It was agreed that this should be repaired. Cllr Corfe to request a quote from Mark Fisher of AFS.
3. Cableway – Medium Risk: The seat does not reach the starting section platform and is too high for children to climb on to it, it also bottoms out so it is not possible to lower the seat. The Clerk to check when the annual inspection is due and speak to Capel Groundcare to discuss how to repair this fault.
4. Cycle Track – Medium Risk: Dead moss is present on the track and where the tarmac is bubbling, weeds are coming through. It was agreed that the moss could be removed with a hard broom and the Clerk is to obtain a quote from Capel Groundcare for killing the weeds.
5. Mounds – Low Risk: Tyres exposed and surface repairs. It was agreed that this is low risk and will not be actioned at this point.
6. Eight Station Fitness Unit – Low Risk: The swivel platform exceeds the maximum deflection. A quote for replacement parts had been received (£2,884). It was agreed that this is low risk and will not be actioned at this point.
7. Combination Goal – Medium Risk: The sign is loose and needs to be cable tied to the panel. Cllr Green to repair this with cable ties.

### **6.3 PLAYGROUND INSPECTION AND 6 MONTH SERVICE REPORT**

Cllr Green circulated the report in advance of the meeting and advised that Capel Groundcare noted missing palings and suggest signage for the BMX track. It was agreed to ask Mark Fisher to deal with the palings and the Parish Council also re-stated the decision to not place a sign at the BMX track at this stage.

### **6.4 KGV FIELD – DRAFT PUBLIC CONSULTATION SURVEY**

Cllr Green reported that she had drafted the survey and will recirculate and carry forward to the next meeting.

### **6.5 KGV FIELD – REQUEST BY A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC FOR TEMPORARY INSTALLATION OF A COMMERCIALY HIRED BOUNCY CASTLE**

Cllr Green reported that the event took place and the field was left tidy afterwards. Cllr Green to bring the policy forward for approval.

## **7. CHURCHYARD**

Cllr Green reported that everything was looking good at the Churchyard.

## **8. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS**

### **8.1 SPEEDWATCH**

No update received.

## 8.2 SPEEDING

It was noted that KCC Cllr Simon Webb has arranged a meeting for residents to discuss speeding and traffic issues on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 12noon at the Village Hall. Cllr Green, Cllr Corfe and Cllr Russell will be in attendance at the meeting.

## 8.3 DOG WASTE/BINS

Cllr Green had circulated an email from Cllr Russell ahead of the meeting which stated that one of the Parish Council owned bins could be moved and would continue to be emptied in the new position, but the bin on the bank cannot be moved. It was agreed that both of the bins that could be moved are well used in their current positions and will not be moved.

## 8.4 FOOTPATHS

Cllr Van Hensbergen raised an additional agenda point regarding the footpaths. She had met with the Maidstone Ramblers while they were clearing the footpath behind The Old School House. The Maidstone Ramblers are advised by KCC as to where paths need clearing and they carry out the clearing as volunteers.

Discussions took place as to whether the weeds on the curbs from Gibbs Hill to Nettlestead Green can be sprayed with weed killer. The Clerk to look into this.

Cllr Van Hensbergen also raised the point about the broken bus stop sign by the Church which has not yet been repaired. The Clerk was asked to report the matter again.

## 9. OLD SCHOOL HOUSE CLOCK

Cllr Van Hensbergen reported that the clock was not working when she went past recently. Cllr Corfe advised that the owner is currently on holiday, but he winds it up every Sunday and will continue to do so until the service is due in December 2023.

## 10. PLANNING MATTERS

### 10.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

A member of the public joined the meeting at this point and the new planning applications were discussed:

<i>23/503617/FULL – revised scheme</i>	<b>Rock Farm Barn Gibbs Hill Nettlestead Kent ME18 5HT</b> <i>Demolition of distribution and storage building. Erection of 1no. dwelling with garage and storage building (revised scheme: 21/503137/FULL).</i>  <b>AN EXTENSION FOR RESPONSE WAS REQUESTED AS A FULL MONTH WAS NOT GIVEN. IT WAS RESOLVED BY ALL MEMBERS THAT IF PLANNING PERMISSION IS GRANTED, IT BE CONDITIONAL AGAINST FUTURE CONVERSION OF THE GARAGE/STORAGE BUILDING TO EITHER RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL USES.</b>
<i>23/503694/SUB</i>	<b>Former Syngenta Works Hampstead Lane Yalding Kent ME18 6HJ</b> <i>Submission of details to discharge condition 12 - Proposed Slab Levels,</i>

	<p><i>Subject to 19/504910/OUT</i></p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED BY ALL MEMBERS PRESENT TO MAKE NO COMMENT.</b></p>
23/503638/LBC	<p><b>Rock Farm House Gibbs Hill Nettlestead Kent ME18 5HT</b></p> <p><i>Listed Building Consent for internal and external renovations, including erection of single storey side and rear extensions, raising of roof height of rear stair tower, and conversion of existing outbuilding to create an annex, including raising of roof height to existing side projection and installation of an air source heat pump.</i></p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED BY ALL MEMBERS PRESENT TO EXPRESS A DESIRE THAT THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE BUILDING IS MAINTAINED.</b></p>
23/503637/FULL	<p><b>Rock Farm House Gibbs Hill Nettlestead Kent ME18 5HT</b></p> <p><i>Erection of single storey side and rear extensions, raising of roof height of rear stair tower, conversion of existing outbuilding to create an annex, including raising of roof height to existing side projection and installation of an air source heat pump, and erection of a detached garage.</i></p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED BY ALL MEMBERS PRESENT TO EXPRESS A DESIRE THAT THE HISTORIC INTEGRITY OF THE BUILDING IS MAINTAINED.</b></p>
23/503503/FULL	<p><b>3 Rose Cottages Maidstone Road Nettlestead Kent ME18 5HB</b></p> <p><i>Erection of a part single storey side/rear extension, part two-storey side extension including accommodation in the roof and changes to fenestration. Removal of outbuilding.</i></p> <p><b>COMMENTS CLOSED ON 23<sup>rd</sup> AUGUST.</b></p>
23/503304/SUB	<p><b>Ashtree Place Hampstead Lane Nettlestead Kent ME18 5HN</b></p> <p><i>Submission of details pursuant to conditions 4 (Flood Risk Assessment) and 8 (Vehicle Charging Points Details) of application 19/504988/FULL (Allowed on Appeal: APP/U2235/W/20/3258990).</i></p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED BY ALL MEMBERS PRESENT TO MAKE NO COMMENT.</b></p>

23/503746/FULL	<p><i>Three Pines Gibbs Hill Nettlestead Maidstone Kent ME18 5HS Erection of a single storey porch extension, conversion of garage to habitable accommodation and infilling of undercroft, upper floor extension to either side of dormer and a two storey rear extension.</i></p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED BY ALL MEMBERS PRESENT TO OBJECT DUE TO THE SUBSTANTIAL SIZE OF THE PROPOSAL WHICH REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE SIZE OF THE PROPERTY BEARING IN MIND THE LOCATION IN METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT.</b></p>
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## 10.2 DECISIONS MADE BY MBC

23/502118/REM	<p><b>Former Syngenta Works Hampstead Lane Yalding ME18 6HJ</b>  <i>Approval of Reserved Matters (scale, layout, appearance and landscaping sought) for Phase B of the development, comprising erection of 20no. commercial units with associated parking, access and landscaping, pursuant to 19/504910/OUT - Outline application for the redevelopment of the former Syngenta works site to provide a new business park of up to 46,447 sqm of B1(c), B2 and B8 accommodation with associated access, parking and infrastructure works. (Access only being sought).</i></p>
23/502562/LAWPRO	<p><b>Three Pines Gibbs Hill Nettlestead Maidstone Kent ME18 5HS Lawful Development Certificate for proposed single storey porch extension, conversion of garage to habitable space, plus erection of part single storey, part two storey rear extension.</b></p> <p><b>REFUSED – NOTED.</b></p>
23/501314/SUB	<p><b>Former Syngenta Works Hampstead Lane Yalding Kent ME18 6HJ</b>  <i>Submission of details to discharge condition 11 (RAMS monitoring procedure) of planning application 19/504910/OUT.</i></p> <p><b>PERMITTED - NOTED</b></p>

The decisions were noted.

### 10.3 PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

Cllr Green reported that a condition of the planning permission granted to Yalding Enterprise Park was that the widening of Hampstead Lane takes place prior to the building works, but the developer is seeking permission for building works to commence prior to completion of the road widening. The Parish Council has asked for this application to be considered by the Borough Planning Committee and Cllr Green will attend.

## 11. FINANCE

### 11.1 RESOLUTION TO RECEIVE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2023

Cllr Meredith advised that he had not received all invoices due to the handover between Clerks, but the direct debits had been paid. **RESOLVED by all members** to approve the Budget Monitoring report for AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2023.

### 11.2 RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PAYMENTS FOR AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2023

Cllr Meredith and Cllr Corfe signed two cheques which were for Capel Groundcare and Streetlights. The Clerk to post these two cheques. Further cheques may need to be sent. The Clerk to locate the missing Npower invoices.

**RESOLVED by all members** to approve payments for AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2023.

NPC CHEQUE LIST - AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2023					
Cheque No	Gross	VAT	Nett	Details	
622339	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	Cancelled	
622340	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	Cancelled	
622341	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	Cancelled	
622342	£441.54	£73.59	£367.95	CAPEL GROUND CARE	GM CONTRACT JULY
622342	£120.00	£20.00	£100.00	CAPEL GROUND CARE	HEDGE & VERGE WORK AT KGV
622343	£212.54	£35.42	£177.12	STREETLIGHTS	2nd Payt of 4 - 23/24 LIGHTING CONTRACT
DD 170823	£9.60	£1.60	£8.00	SAGE PAYROLL	Payroll fee - AUG
DD 240823	£109.10	£5.20	£103.90	NPOWER BUSINESS	STREET LIGHTING ENERGY - JUNE
BAC 280723	£133.00	£0.00	£133.00	GROBER LTD	WARMSPACE GRANT
BAC 280723	£341.98	£0.00	£341.98	MRS MICHELLE RUMBLE	CLERKS SALARY - FINAL PAY TO 07.08.23
	<b>£1,367.76</b>	<b>£135.81</b>	<b>£1,231.95</b>		

### 11.3 RESOLUTION TO AUTHORISE SETTING UP A NEW STANDING ORDER TO PAY THE NEW CLERK

Cllr Meredith reported that a new standing order would be set up to pay the new Parish Clerk.

### 11.4 INTERNET BANKING

Cllr Meredith reported that the process of moving the banking to online is still ongoing and the new Parish Clerk will now look into this.

### 11.5 ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEW CLERK

It was **RESOLVED** by all members to appoint Suzanne Seal as the new Parish Clerk.

Cllr Meredith reported that the new Parish Clerk would be starting on an LC218 pay grade which was approved.

**12. SOCIAL MEDIA**

It was agreed that Becky Pullen would announce the news of the new Clerk and her email address on the Nettlestead Parish Council Facebook page.

**13. CORRESPONDENCE**

- 13.1** The streetlight inspection report was discussed. Cllr Corfe and Cllr Evans to advise the number on the lights which are a different colour to the others and which light is on during the day and not coming on by sensors.

It was agreed that quotes need to be obtained for the items on the Service Inspection Report. Parish Clerk to obtain quotes.

Cllr Green reported that the Npower contract had expired and the rates had increased significantly on the 1<sup>st</sup> September from 33.08 pence per kilowatt hour to 50.19 pence per kilowatt hour. Parish Clerk to research prices.

**14. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Internet banking  
KGV Field – Public Consultation Survey  
KGV Field – Policy for temporary installation of a commercially hired Bouncy Castle  
KGV Field – Quotes  
Speeding  
Traffic and Highways Issues – Hampstead Lane and Station Road

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7.45pm at Nettlestead Village Hall.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20pm**