



## **Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 4 October 2022 in Detling Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Geoff Cosgrove, Cllr Karl Pay and Cllr Lawrence Rustem;  
and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present were nineteen members of the public.

Cllr Cosgrove welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **Public Time**

*The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time*

Members of the public attended the meeting to raise issues regarding finance; open spaces; the notice boards; HGVs using the Pilgrims Way; and parking outside the village hall.

*7.30pm the meeting was reconvened*

### **2022/101 Councillor vacancies**

Cllr Cosgrove reported that the election timetable and notice has been published on the website.

### **2022/102 Apologies.**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Chris Evernden (unwell). It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the apology.

Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Shellina Prendergast (personal) and Ward Member Nick de Wiggondene-Sheppard (personal): apologies noted.

### **2022/103 Declaration of Interest.**

None were declared.

### **2022/104 Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2022.**

Cllr Pay **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record: **SECONDED** by Cllr Rustem: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

### **2022/105 Reports from External Parties:**

#### **a) KCC Councillor Report.**

KCCllr Prendergast. was unable to attend the meeting and had commented that the slip road closure is one that has been instigated by National Highways, this and other highways matters can be addressed by reporting on the KCC Highways portal.

It was agreed that Cllr Pay be the Parish Council's representative on the Joint Transportation Board.

**b) MBC Ward Member Report.**

Cllr De Wiggondene was unable to attend and had sent the following report:  
Maidstone Borough Council has been dealing with a number of issues.

Balancing the budget remains a major headache and we are trying to obtain further savings in order to be able to maintain services whilst also paying our team what they deserve for their tremendous work

We are negotiating a new contract for waste collection. I know there have been many issues over the past year and road closures in Detling have exacerbated this issue. We will do all we can to improve on this going forward and be assured I continue to chase council officers on this.

Housing is the biggest issue and the number of people on our list who we need to house because they cannot has grown faster than any councillors can remember. We have committed to acquiring 1000 extra units. we want to build our own but the urgency of this means that is not going to be possible in the short term.

On a more positive note, we have been awarded £500k to fund improvements in rural areas. I will see if we can obtain any of this for qualifying items in Detling.

**c) PCSO**

PCSO Anna Hicks was unable to attend the meeting and sent the following report:

There is nothing of note to inform you of. There have been thefts of motor vehicles (in particular Range Rovers) within Maidstone, so please remind people to lock their cars. If they have keyless models to look at purchasing Faraday pouches to keep the car keys in this blocks the signal from the car keys reducing the ability for the keys to be cloned. And even purchasing a steering lock which may act as a deterrent.

*ACTION: Clerk to request fuller reports with crime statistics.*

**2022/106 Planning Matters:**

a) Address: Pollyfields Manor Scragged Oak Road Detling Maidstone Kent ME14 3HL

Ref: 22/504075/FULL

Proposal: Erection of a single storey infill rear extension and insertion of 6no. additional rooflights. erection of ground mounted solar panels and a timber pergola.

Ref: 22/504076/LBC

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single storey infill rear extension, insertion of 6no. additional rooflights and internal alterations.

Councillors considered the application and comments from residents.

Cllr Cosgrove **PROPOSED** the Council support the application: **SECONDED** by Cllr Pay: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b) Address: Hall at Former Detling Church Of England Primary School The Street Detling Maidstone Kent ME14 3JT

Ref: 22/504121/FULL

Proposal: Change of use of former primary school to 1 No. dwelling, including erection of a single storey rear extension. Demolition of existing timber building, and erection of 2 no. detached dwellings and 3 no. associated open garages, including creation of new access road.

Councillors considered the application and comments from residents.

Cllr Pay **PROPOSED** the Council support the application: **SECONDED** by Cllr Rustem: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

c) Address: Park Valley House Cox Street Detling Kent ME14 3HE  
Ref: 22/504217/FULL

Proposal: Retrospective application for 1.8m close boarded fence and gates.

Councillors considered the application and noted that the proposal is a security measure, it has been suggested the fence be painted so it blends in.

Cllr Cosgrove **PROPOSED** the Council support the application: **SECONDED** by Cllr Pay: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

d) Ref: 22/503709/FULL

Address: Windy Bottom Sittingbourne Road Detling ME14 3ES

Proposal: Change of use of site to contractor depot and erection of new workshop and office buildings (resubmission of application 22/501483/FULL).

Councillors considered the application and comments from residents and noted that a previous application had been refused. Concern was raised that the site is currently being used as a depot and that traffic is backing up the A249.

Cllr Cosgrove **PROPOSED** the Council objects to the application on highways grounds: **SECONDED** by Cllr Pay: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **2022/107 Highways**

Closure of coast bound slip road at Stockbury roundabout

Cllr Pay informed Members that a resident has complained of increased traffic on the road between Boxley and Jade's Crossing since the closure of the slip road on the Stockbury Roundabout (M2/J5) and has asked if the road can be made one-way during the period of roadworks.

Cllr Cosgrove said that because it is in the middle of live roadworks it is difficult to get it changed. The closure would have audited and lots of money has been spent on the project. It takes time to get a one-way system in place and it would be too late.

## **2022/108 Financial Matters:**

a) Banking Mandate- to receive an update

The Clerk reported that the bank has not responded to request to change the mandate.

Cllr Cosgrove said that until the mandate is changed, payments cannot be made.

*ACTION: Clerk to escalate to senior manager.*

b) Invoices

*Deferred to next meeting.*

c) External Auditor report

The Clerk reported that she had been unable to provide details of the payments and expenditure as there was no spread sheet. The bank reconciliation had been submitted on the wrong form but this was rectified.

d) To consider quotations for payroll services

*Deferred to next meeting.*

## **2022/109 Play area inspection**

a) To receive inspection report

Cllr Pay said the harness needs to be replaced on the disabled swing.

The Clerk reported that she is waiting for quotations.

b) To consider arrangements for play area inspections 2023-24

*Deferred to next meeting.*

## **2022/110 Medway Valley Countryside Partnership**

Derek Whitehead, Partnership Officer submitted the following report:

**Horish Wood: -**

The summer months are a fairly quiet and it is when the trees go to rest that when the main woodland work can take place. There have been two task days in Horish wood since the start of the financial year 2022/23: 28<sup>th</sup> April when the main task was tidying up after the named storms and 4<sup>th</sup> August which was mainly pathway maintenance.

MVCP have led three events at Horish Wood during the summer: an orchid walk on 9<sup>th</sup> July, mini-beasting on 9<sup>th</sup> August and bird box building on 16<sup>th</sup> August. There was a Forest School event that was planned for 24<sup>th</sup> August which had to be cancelled. Five persons had booked on to that forest school event, but they were all from the same family and left it until the last minute to give notice of non-attendance.

**Monks Meadow: -**

A full task day was carried out on 5<sup>th</sup> May to install furniture, sadly this work was subsequently undone. A second full day had been planned on 12<sup>th</sup> May, but only a half day is to be charged which was to make the site safe. On 6<sup>th</sup> July the pathways were cut using a power scythe taking half a day and a site visit was carried out on 2<sup>nd</sup> August to assess the site.

**Costs so far: -**

Horish Wood	Task days	£500.00
Horish Wood	Events (including materials)	£655.00
Monks Meadow	Task days and site visit	£570.00
	Net	£1,725.00
	VAT	£345.00
	Total	£2,070.00

**Oct – March: -**

MVCP have twelve more task days on the calendar to carry out in Horish Wood with the volunteers before the end of the financial year. The next three days are Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October to continue with the coppicing work which is following a forestry commission management plan for the site. A copy of that plan should be available in the Parish council records but MVCP can forward that to you if required. During dates in November, it is planned to hire a gravity fed wood chipper to produce more pathway material. There are also some planned days for two officers to go to Horish Wood to address the 'Ash Dieback' situation. This work is on-going, and some work has already been carried out on site last year. All work carried out using petrol powered machinery is by persons who have trade standard proficiency certification.

MVCP are hosted by the Kent County Council and covered by KCC Public Liability Policy to the sum of £50,000,000.

If it is okay, I will be invoicing for the work carried out from the start of April to end of September 2022 over the next couple of days.

MVCP look forward to when the new 'Open Spaces Committee' is in place, then discussions can take place as to the future management of both Horish Wood and Monks Meadow.

Cllr Cosgrove said Medway Valley Countryside Partnership has been told to stop work because the Council is unable to pay invoices at the moment and also the contract cannot be found. The Council has the plan and quotes and has asked for a copy of the contract, we are trying to get our house in order.

Cllr Cosgrove said all works on open spaces are stopped.

**2022/111 Any other business**

Cllr Cosgrove reported that Neil Nixon of Pennies Nursery has contacted the Council, they have done works in Horish Woods and want to continue in Monk's Meadow. Mr Nixon will attend the November meeting to explain their next project.

Cllr Cosgrove reported that Paul Paulding Esquires Developers has requested a meeting with Councillors to discuss the potential development of the Rochester Bridge Trust land off The Street and /or Hockers Farm land off Orchard View., they have been invited to attend the next Parish Council meeting.

**2022/112 Date of next meeting – Tuesday 1 November 2022**

Cllr Cosgrove thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

**2022/113 CIC Community Shop Lease**

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press were excluded from the meeting during the consideration to consider renewal of shop lease.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: 1 November 2022