



Boughton Malherbe Parish Council

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Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 23rd January 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs B Adams; N Eastwood; R Turner
Clerk Mrs Vickie Ford

In the absence of the Parish Council Chairman, the Clerk opened the meeting at 7.30 pm

M01/01/23 Chairman

RESOLVED: in the absence of Cllr Galton, Cllr Turner to chair the meeting.

Anybody filming or recording this meeting kindly requested to declare it – none

M02/01/23 Apologies

Apologies from Cllr R Galton; Cllr S Prendergast (Kent County Council); and Cllrs M Round and Z Trzebinski (Maidstone Borough Council) were received and accepted.

Cllr Turner informed all present that Cllr Kennaird had resigned.

M03/01/23 Declarations:

Any lobbying – none declared

Any interest in items on the Agenda – Cllr Eastwood declared a personal interest in the Christmas tree.

Any changes to the register of pecuniary interests - none declared

M04/01/23 Approval of Minutes

RESOLVED: the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2022 and the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 28th November 2022 were taken as read, confirmed and signed as being an accurate record of the proceedings.

M05/01/23 Public Session – eleven members of public present:

- A member of the public requested an update on the installation of the kissing gates on various rights of way. They expressed particular concern regarding the unsafe condition of one stile along KH427. The Clerk explained that the Parish Council had been obliged to delay replacement of the stile it lay on the footpath as walked rather than as shown on the definitive map. The member of the public asked if landowners were insured in case of accident. Cllr Turner suggested that the Parish Council could go back to Kent County Council (KCC) and the landowner to find out if anything could be done to repair the existing stile.
- A member of the public asked if the Garden Club could use Cllr Galton's tap to water the planter on the Village Green in order to retain it. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to include a special resolution to retain the planter on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.
- A member of the public asked if a kissing gate could be installed further along KH325 beyond the newly-installed gate. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to check if a stile in the location has been identified for replacement.
- A member of the public asked if any action could be taken to repair the wall around the yew tree in Church Road. Cllr Turner stated that nothing could be done by the Parish Council as the tree and wall were on private land. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to contact KCC with regard to the yew tree as it is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

- The Parish Lengthsman asked if the Parish Council would like a monthly report; Members confirmed that it would. Cllr Turner confirmed that feedback (reports, problems etc) should be through the Clerk. The Lengthsman had collected 2 bags of animal offal while litter picking and asked for a black bin to be sited conveniently for the disposal of rubbish.
- A member of the public asked if the Parish Council could put up posters requesting dog walkers to pick up waste. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to find out who would be responsible/authorised to do this.
- A member of the public raised the issue of water running down Liverton Hill. All present agreed that this was a big problem during icy weather, as had been proved recently. Cllr Kennaird had contacted KCC to find out why the road had not been gritted. The Clerk was asked to chase up with KCC.
- A member of the public raised concern regarding the speed of vehicles through Grafty Green and asked what was happening to introduce Speedwatch. Cllr Eastwood stated that the Parish Council's policy was to set up Speedwatch but not enough volunteers had come forward. The member of the public asked if it would be possible to use volunteers from neighbouring parishes. Cllr Turner asked that any volunteers contact the Clerk. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to contact the Community Speedwatch team to ask if volunteers could be shared.
- A member of the public expressed concern regarding the three serious potholes on the Headcorn Road near Offen Farm. The potholes had been reported to KCC but had not been repaired. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to follow up with KCC.
- A member of the public complained of intermittent water supply problems, making it difficult to have a hot shower due to safety valves. They proposed to carry out a leaflet drop to see who else was affected and then organise a meeting with South East Water. Cllr Turner asked the member of the public to notify the Clerk of any meeting. Cllr Turner asked the Clerk to raise the matter with South East Water.

M06/01/23 Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Report

Cllr Trzebinski had submitted a written report, which Cllr Turner read aloud. The Cost of Living event had been held in Headcorn and a number of people were able to receive advice which would improve their financial position in real terms. Also, subject to Parliamentary approval, Sutton Valence would be added to the existing four parishes in the Headcorn ward, to be called Headcorn and Sutton Valence from 2024.

M07/01/23 Planning Outcomes since 7th November 2022

Noted that:

22/504385/FULL Erection of a single storey rear extension, with a new pitched roof to front porch (Resubmission 22/501981/FULL) at Sunnybank, Headcorn Road, Grafty Green, ME17 2AN: **APPROVED**

22/504842/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate to regularise the existing use and development of outdoor arena, stable, store and tractor shed;

22/504843/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) to establish use of additional land as residential garden;

22/504844/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate to regularise the development of the existing swimming pool, pool house and plant room; and

22/504857/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) for change of use of agricultural land to amenity land with tennis court and formal garden at The Black House, Southernden Road, Egerton, TN27 9BT: **APPROVED**

22/505189/LDCEX Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) for loft conversion which was completed in approximately 2000 at Woodsden Barn, Lenham Road, Headcorn, TN27 9LJ: **WITHDRAWN**

M08/01/23 Local Policing/Community

Police/Crime Report: It was noted that the latest information was for December and 2 crimes had been reported since 7th November 2022.

M09/01/23 Speedwatch: Due to Cllr Kennaird's resignation, no update on Speedwatch was available.

RESOLVED: to defer discussion of an article on traffic calming for publication in the Malherbe Monthly.

M10/01/23 59 Bus

The Clerk summarised the current position regarding the service and funding: due to the withdrawal of KCC subsidies from 13th February, the service would be reducing to one return journey to Maidstone every Wednesday following the re-opening of Ulcombe Hill in mid February; enquiries were being made into the availability of funding from KCC from July 2023.

RESOLVED: to delegate authority to Cllr Eastwood, Mr John Collins (East of Maidstone Transport Group) and the Clerk to apply for a community transport grant if feasible.

M11/01/23 Litter

It was noted that Liverton Hill was badly affected by littering.

M12/01/23 Highways Improvement Plan

There were no changes to be made.

M13/01/23 Footpaths and Grafty Green Stile Replacement

The Clerk reported that no progress had been made.

M14/01/23 Councillor Reports on any External Meetings

Cllr Turner reported that he, Cllr Galton and the Clerk had attended a meeting with Mr Norman Kemp of Nu-Venture, Mr John Collins, representatives of parish councils along the 59 bus route and Headcorn Parish Council, held in Grafty Green Village Hall on 2nd December 2022. The meeting had discussed the future of the 59 service after the withdrawal of KCC subsidies.

FINANCE

M15/01/23 Balances at the Bank: Balances as at 17th January 2023 were noted:

NatWest current	Nil
NatWest business saver	Nil
Lloyds current	£6,756.82
Lloyds business instant access	£40,013.81
Nationwide	£14,230.15
Cambridge and Counties	£23,685.05

M16/01/23 Receipts since last meeting: £198.26 Cambridge & Counties, £13 Lloyds interest

M17/01/23 Bank Reconciliation

The statement prepared by the Clerk was accepted and signed.

M18/01/23 Statement of receipts and payments against budget

The statement to 31st December 2022 prepared by the Clerk was accepted.

M19/01/23 Cheques to sign: Clerk's expenses £59.05, ted learning Ltd £29.93, Clerk's salary increase from 1.4.22 £273

M20/01/23 Authorisation of payments since the last meeting: Amesis Ltd £84, Mr R Tew (Christmas tree) £239.99, Simon Jones Assoc £480.12, Amesis Ltd £42, V J Ford £1,026.48

M21/01/23 Lloyds Bank

RESOLVED: to open a 32-day notice account with Lloyds bank to sit alongside the current and instant access accounts; and to transfer an initial deposit of £20,000 from the instant access account.

BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2023/24

M22/01/23 Budget 2023/24

Members had before them a revised draft budget, in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance and Staffing Committee. Cllr Turner stated that the Parish Services Scheme (PSS) grant was likely to reduce to £262 in 2023/24.

RESOLVED: subject to the PSS grant being amended to £262, to adopt the 2023/24 budget as presented.

M23/01/23 Precept 2023/24

RESOLVED: in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance and Staffing Committee and the agreed budget, to set the 2023/24 precept at £7,113.

Cllr Turner thanked the Clerk for her work on the budget and explained that a Parish precept of £7,113 would result in no increase per Band D equivalent household next year.

M24/01/23 Lengthsman Contract

RESOLVED: to increase the rate paid for lengthsman's services to £14 per hour.

RESOLVED: to order a black rubbish bin for the Village Green for the lengthsman's use, storage site to be agreed.

M25/01/23 Electricity for Christmas tree lights

RESOLVED: to approve remittance of £50 to the King's Head pub.

M26/01/23 Finance and Staffing Committee Terms of Reference

RESOLVED: to adopt the revised Terms of Reference, as recommended by the Finance and Staffing Committee.

M27/01/23 Clerk's Salary

RESOLVED: to increase in Clerk's salary 2022/23 by £1 per hour, in line with NJC pay scales and in accordance with the recommendation of the Finance and Staffing Committee

Cllr Turner closed the meeting at 8.50 pm