

# Stinsford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9 March 2020 at 7.00pm in  
The Old Library, Kingston Maurward College

**Present:** Mr George Armstrong (Chairman), Mr Michael Clarke and Dr Andy Stillman

**Also in attendance:** Mr Luke Rake (Principal – Kingston Maurward College), Miss Kirsty Riglar (Clerk) and one member of the public (Mr High Grenville-Jones)

## 17. Apologies for Absence

17.1 Apologies for absence were received from Ms Liz Crocker and Cllr David Taylor (Dorset Councillor).

## 18. Declarations of Interest

18.1 There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary or other interest.

## 19. Dorset Council Matters

19.1 In the absence of Cllr Taylor, the Parish Council agreed that it would be useful to receive a written update and that this request be made to Cllr Taylor.

19.2 The Clerk reported that Dorset Council had now confirmed the dates for the second round of workshops to develop the relationship between the Council and town and parish councils and she would circulate these to the members of the Parish Council.

## 20. Kingston Maurward College update

20.1 The Principal of the College provided the Parish Council with an update on current matters. His report is attached as the Appendix to these minutes. He drew particular attention to the following:

- (i) 16-18 student recruitment remained strong and was illustrated by the numbers;
- (ii) plans were underway to re-shape the College day to finish at 4pm;
- (iii) new aquaculture and horticulture courses were being developed at A-level equivalent level;
- (iv) he had contributed to [Voices for Dorset](#), the Dorset Local Nature Partnership's response to the Government's 25 year plan to improve the environment;
- (v) development of the offer for heritage courses to be available from 2021/22; and
- (vi) the opening of the Play Barn had prompted an increase in visitors over the winter months.

20.2 The Parish Council welcomed such a positive report from the Principal and also thanked him for agreeing to speak at the public meeting on climate change which was due to take place in April.

## 21. Public Participation Time

21.1 Mr Grenville-Jones informed the Parish Council that he had approached Cllr Taylor seeking clarification of Dorset Council's interpretation of the requirements of sustainability in relation to planning applications, following the recent refusal of planning permission for a house at Hampton Farm Business Park. Similar decisions had been taken in relation to other areas of Dorset which appeared to indicate that Dorset Council were tending to view large-scale development as being more sustainable.

21.2 Mr Grenville-Jones also expressed his concern that few applications were being determined by the Dorset Council's Planning Committees but rather being decided by officers under delegated powers, even where the Parish Council had submitted an objection or supported the application. The Parish Council echoed this concern and it was suggested that the Head of Planning or Chairman of the relevant Planning Committee be asked to attend a future meeting to explain the process.

21.3 Mr Grenville-Jones also drew attention to the temporary nature of the tarmac mixture used on roads, for example outside the Dorset Studio School. The Chairman agreed that this lasted only a couple of days in dry weather and a more substantial repair was required to safeguard against danger to road users.

## **22. Co-option**

22.1 The Parish Council considered an expression of interest in co-option received from a resident of the parish to fill one of the vacancies arising following the elections in May 2019.

22.2 It was **resolved** that Ms Julie Martin be co-opted onto the Parish Council for the remainder of the current term of office.

22.3 Ms Martin signed the declaration of acceptance of office and joined the meeting in her capacity as a Parish Councillor.

## **23. Minutes**

23.1 It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2020 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

## **24. Finance**

### **24.1 Expenditure**

The following item of expenditure was **resolved**:

- HMRC - PAYE (Q4 2019/20) - £117.40

## **25. Preparation for Audit**

25.1 The Parish Council considered a number of documents prepared by the Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer, in readiness for the annual audit of the financial year 2019/20. She drew particular attention to the addition of the new HP laptop and the recommendation that the now defunct Compaq laptop be written off.

25.2 It was **resolved** that:

- (i) the Council's risk assessment document be approved for consideration by the internal auditor;
- (ii) the Council's Asset Register be approved;
- (iii) the Compaq laptop be written off and removed from the Asset Register;
- (iv) the Internal Controls be noted; and
- (v) Paula Harding of Barker Fox Associates be appointed as internal auditor for the year 2019/20.

## **26. Neighbourhood Plan for Stinsford**

26.1 The Chairman reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had received a useful presentation by the Puddletown Area Neighbourhood Plan Group. In relation to the drafting of policies for inclusion in the Plan, the Puddletown Area Group had handed the evidence over to Jo Witherden who had then drafted the policies. This was felt to be a good idea and worth considering for the Stinsford Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that Locality had not yet published how grant funding for 2020/21 could be accessed.

26.2 Additionally, it was reported that a summary of the survey data was now published on the Stinsford Neighbourhood Plan website. Following the stepping down of Ms Sally Cooke as Chair of the Steering Group, there had been no volunteer to take on this, role. It was therefore proposed that the chairing of the meetings would rotate amongst the members of the Steering Group for the moment.

## **27. Garden Village Bid**

27.1 The Parish Council considered the response received from the Service Manager – Spatial Planning, Dorset Council to the letter regarding the Garden Village Bid for the DOR15 site within the parish. In particular, this stated that the funding bid was accompanied by full copies of all the supporting letters, not just the quoted extracts, and that redacted versions of these would be made publicly available.

27.2 The Members of the Parish Council expressed their ongoing concerns about the basis on which Garden Village funding had been secured and agreed that correspondence should be shared with Dorchester Town Council. It was **resolved** not to support the letter published by STAND about the same issue.

27.3 It was proposed that the Environment Agency be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the restriction of phosphates and nitrates caused by development.

## **28. Climate Change Meeting**

28.1 The Parish Council considered the final arrangements for a public meeting on climate change to be held on Monday 20 April 2020. The Chairman reported that the Principal of Kingston Maurward College had agreed to speak about the aim to make the Estate carbon neutral. A response from a representative of Dorset Council was still awaited.

28.2 The following format was **resolved**:

- a. Chairman to open the meeting;
- b. Dorset Council representative to speak about work underway on climate and ecological change;
- c. Principal of the College to speak about making the Estate carbon neutral;
- d. Parish Council to introduce possible climate and ecological emergency declaration;
- d. opportunity for comments from residents in attendance; and
- e. opening of extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council to agree such a declaration.

28.3 It was agreed that the meeting should be promoted to local residents through The Pilot, the websites of the Parish Council and Kingston Maurward College and to local branches of Friends of the Earth, Extinction Rebellion and the Dorset Wildlife Trust. However, it was noted that in view of the current Covid-19 situation, it might not be possible for the meeting to go ahead and a decision would need to be made about this at least ten days prior to the date.

## **29. Road Safety and Traffic Management**

29.1 The Clerk reported that the Rangers based at the Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre had requested an update on the refurbishment of the white fingerpost at Bockhampton Cross. The local resident who had volunteered to carry out this work had been unable to do so. It was **resolved** to request that the loose letters be returned and any suitable local tradesman be invited to provide a quote for the work.

*Action by: Mr Clarke to identify any suitable local tradesman.*

29.2 The Parish Council considered the further degradation of the River Path. This was no completely flooded at the Stinsford end and someone had recently fallen into the river, although thankfully they had not been injured. Given that this was a major access to

Dorchester by foot and was now impassable to cyclists and horseriders, it was **resolved** to contact the Rights of Way Team again pointing out that this issue had now been outstanding for three years and requesting the position in relation to Dorset Council's insurance should there be an injury caused by the poor state of repair.

*Action by: Clerk*

**30. Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre**

30.1 No issues were raised under this item.

**31. Correspondence**

31.1 The Chairman reported the receipt of correspondence from a local resident about the legal minimum width of a bridleway in relation to the River Path. It was agreed that this should also be added to the communications with Dorset Council.

**32. Items for next/future Agenda**

32.1 It was agreed that the Covid-19 situation and emergency and ecological emergency should be added to future agendas as standing items.

**33. Date of future meetings**

33.1 It was noted that the climate change meeting would be held on Monday 20 April 2020 in the Pengelly Room, Kingston Maurward College.

33.2 It was noted that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be the Annual Meeting and be held on Monday 11 May 2020.

The meeting concluded at 8:50pm.

**Chairman**..... **Date**.....



## **Kingston Maurward College**

### **Update for Parish Council – February 2020**

#### **Introduction**

The winter appears to never end – the weather has shown little sign of improvement and we have experienced significant challenges across the estate from Christmas onwards. These included (but are not limited to), major groundwater flooding, sewage plant failure, lighting strikes, tree fall, water pump plant failure, wind damage and so on, all dealt with ably and quickly by those living on site in the estates team. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the balance of our income from NFU mutual pretty much matches our premium...

That said, we carry on. Green shoots have appeared with changes to the pricing policy in the animal park following a trial run over the Christmas break, and this gives at least some optimism for the future on this area. The flipside is path maintenance needs to increase and therefore additional investment will be required to maintain the opportunity.

#### **Student Recruitment**

As things stand currently, 16-18 student recruitment is looking strong and numbers illustrate this. However, there are a number of caveats as ever, so we continue to press hard to broaden the appeal of the College and ensure that applications convert to arrivals in September.

Conversion following open mornings has significantly improved, with the last one having 90 potential students visit, with 55 applying before the end of the day for September. Last year we averaged half this conversion on the day. The last Corporation meeting looking at Marketing strategy shows clearly how we have improved and increased our reach for the schools market and one hopes this is at least partly responsible in ensuring those visiting are more informed and more likely to be appropriate for our courses.

Work allied to this with the Careers and Enterprise Company and changes to schools' focus on careers and progression may help us in the long term, and I now chair the countywide steering group for Careers Education.

## Curriculum Development and Student Activity

Work continues and planning is now underway for next year's provision. One major change will be a re-shaping of the College Day, to finish at 4pm instead of 5pm, and frame the timetable around 1 hour slots, rather than 1.5 hours. This allows a number of benefits:

- Student sessions will be tighter and enable more productive learning
- Combined timetabling with the school will allow staggered lunchtimes, allowing students better access to food and thus hopefully recover some of our lost income from KFC *et al*
- Student days will be slightly shorter, which is better for Key Stage 3 at DSS, allow safer travel in the light for a longer period of the year and also encourage those who live further away to consider us more actively as a choice
- A reshaping of the curriculum may be possible, enabling a wider range of non-curriculum activities to enhance student experience.

Aquaculture development continues, with a major Aquaculture Expo happening at the College for the SW region on March 4<sup>th</sup> <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/oh20-aquaculture-expo-tickets-81472950789>. We are also exploring a possible Weymouth base in the near future as a possible facility.

Students continue to be well served by the academic team, with a good range of activities and experiences to enhance their studies, such as:



Arboriculture Health and (lack of) safety

Equine trip to Wincanton



Outdoor Adventure on Birchen Edge, Peak District



Construction students visiting Babcock



Social enterprise work by Foundation students for Valentine's day



## **Commercial Activity**

Weddings seemed to have peaked last year in a competitive market, but this is being partly replaced by increases in the animal park due to the investment in the café barn – we are seeing more visitors and this is likely to increase during the warmer months. Lambing weekend just past was very popular again.

Conferences have reduced slightly in number but are tending to be larger – a deliberate strategy to utilise the facility more efficiently.

## **Finance**

We continue to struggle this year financially against the budget. It is clear that we will find great difficulty in avoiding a deficit position this year, primarily due to downturns in adult education and apprenticeship numbers, a picture mirroring that of the sector nationally. Adult learning is still hampered by funding rules and has declined hugely nationally, and is currently at the lowest levels for 20 years in England. Funding continues to be at the level of a decade ago for sixth form students, so in real terms this is as hard a time to manage a college's finances ever.

The reality our single biggest opportunity is to grow our 16-18 provision via aggressive and innovative delivery and creation of new income streams.

## **Local Industrial Strategy / Partner Engagement**

The Dorset Local Industrial Strategy is now with government for sign-off. KMC is well placed with this and we should continue to see benefits over time as we continue to work closely with partners here and elsewhere. This also links to the developing Dorset Economic Plan which will helpfully support work in the wider environmental sphere.

The work we have done feeding into the Dorset strategy regarding environment and health has also fed into the Great South West joint LEP prospectus - the environmental pitch is significant and again KMC is well placed as long as we pursue opportunities aggressively and move fast with some appetite for risk. It is pleasing to see a KMC student in one of the photos in a document that has genuine traction at Number 10.

My work as the LEP representative on the Local Nature Partnership continues, and this coming month will see the Dorset LNP response to the Government's 25 year environment plan, to which I contributed a chapter.

Likewise, the recently released national 'state of the nation' document from the Careers and Enterprise Company had a foreword by myself, which places KMC on the national stage a little more.

Further partnership work of note includes developing the detail around the bid for a joint venture on Hengistbury Head with BCP Authority.

A promising meeting was held with Sue Colley, who is the Associate Dean Strategy Delivery, Business and Enterprise, The Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Southampton. Sue had not been here before and was taken with the opportunities to develop links for both research and also as a centre where students could utilise the fieldwork opportunities.

Similarly, two meetings with Ian Wilson of the National Trust. Triggered because of the LEP engagement, this opens up exciting opportunities within the areas of heritage tourism and land management. Further debate included opportunities to place students on future land management and tourism courses at NT properties, and potential endorsement of our programmes.

### **Masterplan**

The Local Authority have formally responded to this and this is broadly positive. The work we have done appears to have been worthwhile and managed well by our consultant. I have met with John Whatley to take this forward. The main issue at this time will be the need for a transport study, and to avoid multiple iterations of this, we will progress as a single piece of work. We are currently liaising with 'likely partners' for this work via John.

### **Awards, press and other items of note**

Always good to have decent numbers at an open morning...



Dorchester Chamber Breakfast at KMC:



Hustings:



Excellent work by students raising in excess of £1000 for Dorset Mind following the death of a fellow student earlier in the year:



And finally, it's great to see a KMC student, and indeed a governor, in charge of the whole county...

