

UNNAPROVED MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 18th MARCH 2008

**A MEETING OF BOUGHTON MALHERBE PARISH COUNCIL WAS HELD ON
Tuesday 18th March 2008 at 7.30pm in Grafty Green Village Hall**

PRESENT: Mr K Alexander
Mrs S Close
Mr M Hitchins
Mr R Turner
Mr S Wickens
Mrs P Anderson (Clerk)

John Collins
Gary Town
Chris Wheal

APOLOGIES: Cllr J Gibson
Lord Sandy Bruce-Lockhart
Paul Kemsley
PCSO Tom Smith

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on items on the Agenda

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 22nd January 2008 were circulated approved and signed as a true and correct record.

PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

Chris Wheal complained about the way the works had been carried out at Liverton Hill; that particular section of the hill where the posts have been put in is neither a one-way road nor a two-way road and in his opinion the best thing would be for a priority sign to be erected.

The meeting that was held on the previous Friday regarding the extended opening hours at the Who d'a Thought It, was discussed and all those present were unanimous against opening hours being increased.

LOCAL POLICING

Neither PC Paul Kemsley or PCSO Tom Smith were present, one was on Annual Leave and the other on training. PA had been in touch with Mannie Curd who supplies the Crime figures and she had promised to email the clerk on the afternoon of the meeting giving the latest figures. PA apologised to the meeting because she had totally forgotten to check her email, the figures would be added to the Minutes.

Crime Figures: -

1 x Criminal Damage which occurred overnight in a pub in Headcorn Road (LCD television struck with unknown object, investigation ongoing.

Paul Kemsley had advised the clerk that a speed check had been carried out between 6 & 7am one morning; they had actually issued 6 tickets to speeding motorists. Another speed check would be carried out in the near future for a longer period.

MATTERS ARISING from Minutes of 22nd January 2008

40-30 Mile Speed Limit Changes

As previously mentioned Paul Kemsley had already carried out one speed check and a further more extensive speed check was planned, which hopefully would help to prove that the change of speed limit had made no difference at all, motorists totally ignore any speed limit signs and further measures were needed to slow traffic down. **ACTION PA**

30-Mile Speed Limit Signs

The re-siting of the existing 30mph sign and the installation of the new 30mph would be done as soon as the traffic order advertising this had been placed, Louise Rowland would let the clerk know. The estimate of £2000 for 'slow markings on the road and red tar does cover the cost of this being done at both ends of the village. **ACTION PA**

HGV's Weight Restrictions

PA had contacted Peter Rosevear about the HGV problem and had received no reply, she then sent a copy of the email to David Bond and because he will be leaving he has now passed this on to Louise Rowlands, who is going to check to see whether there is any traffic flow data available and will let her know. **ACTION PA**

No. 59 Bus

John Collins reported on the meeting, which was held on 4th February, the next one is to be held on 19th May – now nearing the end of the second year of the four year contract awarded to Nu-Venture, KCC reported that the contract was continuing to perform consistently as far as carryings were concerned with the subsidy under the £3 per passenger journey benchmark.

The Monday to Friday service continues to be operated commercially by Arriva and KCC is not expecting this to change. The free bus pass scheme for those aged 60 and over is going nationwide from 1st April 2008. The existing Kent scheme has a start time on Mondays to Fridays of 9am but from 1st April this will change to 9.30am in line with the rest of the country. Advice has already been received from Arriva that the current 9.15am departure for Maidstone will change to 9.30am from Monday 7th April, presumably arriving in Maidstone Town Centre at 10.20 rather than 10.05. According to Arriva, there are unlikely to be any other changes to the timetable.

The 331 Thursday only service operating since September 2007 by Nu-Venture under contract to KCC was introduced as a temporary replacement for the withdrawn Post Bus pending arrangements being made by Lenham P C for the operation of a Community Bus, a vehicle being supplied by KCC is still running 7 months later and KCC confirmed that it would continue to subsidise it as long as the Lenham Parish Council scheme still looked to be a runner.

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Should the Community Bus scheme not come to fruition, KCC will review whether it was worth continuing the 331 longer term. Although 12 passengers sometimes use the service, eight come from Grafty Green and KCC would probably argue, rightly, that there is already an equivalent service to Maidstone in the 59.

As far as the Community Bus is concerned, JC had spoken to the Lenham Parish Councillor dealing with KCC, who told him that he had now found eight volunteer drivers so training could start. He had requested KCC to order the bus but had yet to receive confirmation as there is apparently a 14 week lead time for delivery, it would seem it won't happen anytime soon. As well as being available for Lenham clubs and societies to use, it is intended to run on the same route as the 331 and on Tuesdays and Fridays. It will not, however, be a stage carriage service, i.e. one that runs to a published timetable open to the public. Prospective passengers will have to be members of the Community Bus scheme and telephone their intention to travel on it in advance. An annual membership fee of £10 -15 will be payable and probably a fare, but the over 60's free pass will not be usable on it. Initially it will apparently only be open to residents of Lenham Parish to join the scheme.

Freedom Passes for 11-16 Year Olds are gradually being introduced across Kent with schools in Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, and Canterbury already part of the pilot scheme. It will be extended to schools in the Maidstone Borough area from 4th June and to the rest of Kent in 2009. An annual pass costing £50 will allow free bus travel throughout Kent at any time for 11 to 16 year olds. Application forms are being distributed in schools in April.

The Chairman thanked John Collins for everything he does in respect of the 59 Bus and for attending the meetings on behalf of the Parish Council. **ACTION PA**

Potholes Woodcock Lane & Church Road

PA reported that she had sent several emails and left several messages for Earl Bourner about the ever-increasing Potholes, but all to no avail, she would continue to nag them. **ACTION PA**

Proposed Closure of Platts Heath School

KA reported that for the time being the school is not going to close and that this item need not be included in future Minutes

Travellers Sites/Petsfield

The clerk reported that she had written to MBC as agreed and had received a telephone call saying that they were still awaiting further information from the Agent. PA also reported that she had received the February update on information re planning enforcement issues in our Parish, which included this site. It stated that enforcement were to check by 1st February '08. PA had spoken with Peter Hockney who said they were awaiting further information and was monitoring the situation. **ACTION PA/RTH**

Willow Tree Cottage-Fire Hydrant

It is hoped that this repair will be carried out during the hill closure, which began on 3rd March. **ACTION PA**

Liverton Hill Farm

Double kerbing is currently being re-instated during the hill closure.

ACTION PA

Public Footpath-Church Road

PA had finally managed to get hold of someone at the Public Rights of Way office, she

was informed by David Munn that Ian Hayes had left but no replacement had been made yet.

Following PA's request David Munn had inspected the footpath and reported back that nothing was obstructing the footpath. He was going to write to the owners of the fence along the path about a fence post that was supported by a stake driven into the ground making the path narrow at a point where it is already very narrow. **ACTION PA**

Pothole – Ivy House Farm

This repair would be carried out along with the other items, when the hill is shut.

ACTION PA

Various Requests from Rosemary Smith for the Village Green

Robert is in the process of sorting this out and is to meet Michael Smith tomorrow.

Once he has spoken to Michael the soil will be ordered.

ACTION RT

Planning Applications going to wrong Parish Council

The clerk reported that she had written to MBC querying an application to prune trees at Elmstone Hole Farm, which had been sent to Lenham PC and not us. She had received a reply saying that Elmstone Hole Farm lies with Lenham PC and Elmstone Farm lies within Boughton Malherbe PC, this clears the matter up.

Drains Woodcock Lane

Since the last meeting the drains and gullies on the corner of Woodcock Lane had been jetted.

Parish Council Elections

These are due to take place on 1st May. The clerk had given each of the Councillors their Candidate's pack containing nomination papers, which are to be completed and taken in to MBC in person from Friday 28th March and before Noon on Friday 4th April. Notices had been put on the Boards and in the magazine advertising that the Council was up for re-election and should anyone want to stand, the necessary forms were available from the clerk.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Woodcock Farm, Woodcock Lane, Grafty Green ME17 2AY- MA/07/2542

Application for change of use from Agricultural to B1 – Granted subject to certain conditions including S.106

Popes Hall Barn, Sandway, Maidstone ME17 2BH – MA/07/0472

Erection of an aisle extension to converted barn – Appeal dismissed

Glen Hill, Headcorn Road, Grafty Green ME17 2AS – MA/07/2560

Erection of a single storey side extension – Parish Council advised no objections

CORRESPONDENCE

MBC- News Release – Highways Agency puts brake on KIG Planning
Kent Highway Services – Draft Permit Scheme

KALC – Notification that what was Kent Association of Parish Councils had now changed names to Kent Association of Local Councils

MBC – Forward Plan of Key Decisions 1/3/08 – 30/06/08

Kent County Council – Subsidised Local Bus Services
Kent Highway Services – Draft Permit Scheme – Extension to Consultation
Mayor & Mayoress of Maidstone – Invitation to Charity Ball
MBC – What could Maidstone do better?

FINANCE

Balance in Hand on 22nd January 08 £ 1870.63

The following cheques had been issued: - £

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Balance in Hand as at 18/03/08 £ **1870.63**

It was agreed that £500 should be donated towards the cost of running the magazine.
MH declared an interest.

A further £500 was to be given to the Village Hall towards the painting of the ceiling – both Mike Hitchins and Robert Turner declared an interest.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Pothole by Church

A large pothole has appeared beside the converted barn adjacent to the Church.

ACTION PA

Liverton Hill

During the recent closure at Liverton Hill, the kerbing at Liverton Hill Farm had been reinstated along with the erection of posts into the verge, some being black & white and the others solid wood to try and safeguard the trees in the verge. The general consensus of opinion within the Parish is that it has made an already very narrow part of Liverton Hill into a single-track road making it impossible for vehicles to pass each other and more of a problem for larger vehicles. The posts make this part of the hill extremely dangerous especially when one vehicle is speeding up or down the hill, without any consideration for other road users. The possible result of the installation of these wooden posts in their existing position could be a serious/fatal accident.

Kenneth Alexander & Shaun Wickens met with Andy Mitchell from Kent Highways on Friday 14th March to discuss the situation, Andy Mitchell said that he would be asking the Health and Safety Officer to look at it. The trees over hang the road on both sides and arrangements would be made for these to be trimmed. PA reported that PC Paul Kemsley had agreed to inspect it as well. Andy Mitchell said that he had decided himself to install the bollards and posts.

It was agreed by the Parish Council that PA should find out who Andy Mitchell's boss is, ensure that the Police inspect the installation and contact Health & Safety, as well as write in to Kent Highways.

ACTION PA

In the meantime PA reported that she had received a letter dated 11th March from Roy Pearce, the owner of Liverton Hill Farm putting across his side of the argument. He

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emphasises that the posts have been put in to stop the trees falling across the road, and that the road is not being narrowed but their boundary is being partially re-instated to the way it was originally, which was at least 2ft wider than at the moment. He has suggested to Highways that it would be better to have the trees cut back to 15ft and a metal barrier be installed which would protect the roots. Mr Shaw opposite has now requested wooden posts as he feels traffic will encroach on his side.

Country Walks

KA reported that he had received notification that there are further permissive footpaths in the old part of Chilston Park, which now belongs to the Heaths Corridor Charity.

2 Manholes Dipping

In front of what was once the garage in Grafty Green, is a manhole, which is dipping as well as another one at the front of Lavender Cottage. PA is to report this. **ACTION PA**

Honywood & Douglas Charity Lenham

The clerk had received a letter from Pat Sutton advising that David Chantler and Mike Davidson who are Boughton Malherbe's representatives on the above Charity are due for reappointment in 2008; they had both expressed their willingness to continue as long as we as Parish Council had no objections. Each Councillor was asked if they had any objections, none did, PA was to advise Pat Sutton that the Parish Council is agreeable to them both continuing as Trustees. **ACTION PA**

Date of Next Meetings

13th May 2008 Annual Parish Council Meeting & Annual Parish Meeting
19th Aug 2008

There being no further business, the meeting closed.

Signed. Dated