

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 29th November 2023 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

Cllr Powell welcomed all present to the meeting.

Public discussion

A resident requested that draft minutes be added to the website before they are approved. It was agreed that this would be considered at the January F&GP meeting. **ACTION: F&GP Cttee**

A resident queried whether there would be a Christmas light switch on and it was explained that the lights had been set on a timer and it would cost £350 to allow for this, which was not felt to be value for money. Also, with the A20 running through the middle of the 5 lights, there isn't a focal point where residents could safely gather.

A resident reported that a number of streetlights along the A20 by the West Street/Goddington Lane area are not working, which makes the junction extremely dangerous. **ACTION: Highways Cttee & Clerk**

A resident spoke regarding the Heathlands Garden Settlement and the major impact this could have on the water supply to Harrietsham, Lenham and Charing area. The wetlands, which are to be formed as part of the development, will accept sewage discharge to protect the river, but the liner to be used will breakdown over time. The concern is that there is an aquifer directly opposite the proposed wetlands, which could then become polluted and this would have a harmful impact on the water supply for the area. The resident stated that the hydrology of the area is not understood by MBC or the Planning Inspector.

The Friends of St John's still have packs of 5 Christmas cards available for £2.00.

1 Present

Cllr E Powell, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr C Roots, Cllr S Brown, RFO/Amenity Manager Mr M Cuerden and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst
4 Members of Public

2 Apologies for absence

Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Sams, Cllr T Griffiths, Cllr S Luck, Community Warden Martin Sherwood

3 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 25th October 2023 - This item was deferred due to the lack of Councillors who could approve the minutes as an accurate record.

4 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

There were no changes to the register.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Cllr C Roots: Agenda Item 7.3 (Finance - Recommendations Grants & Donations - Harrietsham in Bloom & Candlelit Memories Event) as he is the Treasurer of HIB and he will have a stall at the Candlelit Memories Event with his wife.

Agenda Item 7.4 (Finance - Other Financial Matters - Knit, Crochet & Chat Donation Request) as his wife is the Leader of the group and they both fund all cash deficits.

Cllr S Brown: Agenda Item 7.3 (Finance - Recommendations Grants & Donations - Harrietsham Fish Scheme) as he is the Advertising Manager for the Network magazine.

Requests for Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

5 Planning

5.1 The outstanding planning applications were noted.

5.2 The approved applications were noted.

5.3 Other Planning Matters

- Land South of Ashford Road Planning Appeal: Cllr Powell spoke regarding the recent appeal, where the Developer had relied on the Local Plan review as their argument. They had also stated that there would be no visual impact, due to the speed of vehicles passing the development; which had been strongly contested by the Parish Council. A decision is expected in 5-6 weeks.

- MBC Local Plan Update: Cllr Powell confirmed that the Parish Council's response to the main modifications had been submitted, which had included reiterating that Harrietsham should not be designated as a Rural Service Centre. The main issues include the waterways, M20 issues and their impact on the A20, in addition to the traffic modelling used. Once the Inspector's report is released, there would be a 6-week period in which to formally apply for a Judicial Review and this is to be discussed at the Planning Meeting on the 1st December. It was agreed to open the meeting to all members of the Parish Council.

6 Environmental

6.1 Other Environmental Matters

- Allotment Fees for 2024-2025: Cllr Brown requested that this item be discussed at the January Environmental Meeting, for a recommendation to be made. This was agreed by all present. **ACTION: Environmental Cttee**
- The Clerk reported that tree works are required around the new burial ground and Garden of Remembrance. A quote had been approved last year, however a further visit had taken place to finalise the works required and the cost has risen by approximately £100 to £760. It was proposed by Cllr Brown to accept the revised quotation and this was seconded by Cllr Roots; with all in favour. **ACTION: Amenity Manager**

7 Finances

7.1 Income and Expenditure spreadsheets: The financial document was proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Brown; with all in favour.

7.2 Minutes of the F&GP Meeting held 9th November 2023: This item was deferred due to the lack of Councillors who could approve the minutes as an accurate record.

7.3 Recommendations from the F&GP Meeting:

- Grants & Donations:

Harrietsham in Bloom - £100 (Decision deferred)

Harrietsham Fish Scheme - £1,000 (Decision deferred)

Harrietsham Lawn Tennis Club - £500 (payable April 2024)

St John the Baptist Church - £1,304

Friday Coffee Morning - Hall Hire Fee for 2024/2025

Candlelit Memories Event - Up to £100

(Hall Hire Fee (£60) & expenses with receipts up to £40)

It was proposed by Cllr Stanley to approve the donation recommendations for the Harrietsham Lawn Tennis Club, St John the Baptist Church, Friday Coffee Morning and the Candlelit Memories Event. This was seconded by Cllr Powell, with all in favour.

Grants for Harrietsham in Bloom and Harrietsham Fish Scheme to be deferred until the January meeting. **ACTION: Clerk**

- To Approve Reviewed Key Documents:

Financial Regulations

Risk Assessments

Asset Register

Investment Policy

It was proposed by Cllr Stanley to approve the reviewed financial documents, this was seconded by Cllr Brown; with all in favour.

Cllr Stanley queried whether larger signs could be purchased to remind parents of their responsibility to ensure their children play safely on the equipment. It was agreed that this could be discussed at the January Environmental meeting. **ACTION: Environmental Cttee**

7.4 Other Financial Matters

- Knit, Crochet & Craft Group Donation Request: This item was deferred to the January meeting.

8 Highways

It was noted that a report had been circulated before the meeting.

9 Santa's Grotto

The Clerk reported that Cllrs T & J Sams had offered to assist with setting up and taking down of the grotto. No further Councillors offered to help and the Clerk stated she would ask again. **ACTION: Clerk.**

- 10 80th Anniversary of D-Day**
This item was deferred as there have not been any recent meetings.
- 11 To Approve Reviewed Standing Orders**
It was proposed by Cllr Roots to approve the reviewed Standing Orders. This was seconded by Cllr Brown, with all in favour.
- 12 To Approve Biodiversity Policy**
It was proposed by Cllr Brown to approve the circulated Biodiversity Policy. This was seconded by Cllr Stanley, with all in favour.
Cllr Powell stated that new Planning Biodiversity Laws come into force in January 2024, with planning applications requiring a biodiversity increase of 10%. However, MBC have stated that they will want to see a rise of 20%.
- 13 To Approve Unauthorised Encampment Policy**
It was proposed by Cllr Roots to approve the circulated Unauthorised Encampment Policy. This was seconded by Cllr Brown, with all in favour.
The Clerk reported that she would be drawing up an instruction booklet with copies being kept in both the Parish Office and meeting room. This would also be sent to all members of the Parish Council, to download at home. This will ensure that, if an incident occurs in the future, anyone on the Parish Council could take the lead, if the Clerk and RFO/Amenity Manager were not available. **ACTION: Clerk**
- 14 Membership of the Communications Group**
It was proposed by Cllr Brown that Cllr Luck become a member of the Communications Team. This was seconded by Cllr Powell, with all in favour.
- 15 Future Events**
Candlelit Memories (Remembering Loved Ones at Christmas) - 3rd December (4pm - 7pm - Village Hall)
Salvation Army Concert - 8th December (8pm onwards with Mulled wine and mince pies)
Santa's Grotto - 17th December (Village Hall)
Soup Saturday - 14th January (St John the Baptist Church)
Coffee Morning - Every Friday in the Booth Hall (10am - midday)
- 16 Items for Future Consideration**
No items for consideration
- 17 Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 31st January 2024 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall**
(No meeting in December)

With no further matters to discuss the meeting closed at 8.28pm, with the Chairman wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas.

Public Discussion

A resident thanked Councillors for checking the salt bins.

A resident thanked the Parish Council for their efforts during the year.