

**Minutes of a Meeting of Boughton Malherbe Parish Council
on Tuesday 25th March 2014
in Grafty Green Village Hall at 7.30pm.**

Present:

Cllrs: Robert Turner, Chair
Ron Galton
Mike Hitchins
Barbara Pearce

Christine King, Parish Clerk

Cllr Jenny Gibson MBC

5 members of the public

1. Apologies

Cllr Tony King - whose apology for absence was unanimously accepted.
Keith Anderson; PCSO Alan Beech; John Collins; Stuart Ellesmere Community Warden; Jenny Whittle.

2. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th January, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed as a true record.

3. Declarations of Interest

- I. Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests - none
- II. Declaration of Interest in items on the Agenda - none

4. Matters Arising - none

5. Public Session -

1) Concern and frustration was expressed at UK Power's ineffectual response to overgrowing trees on Liverton Hill affecting power lines.

2) It was suggested that, as a proportion of vehicles are travelling from Lenham to Headcorn Station for the faster train links to London, a more efficient train service from Lenham Station to London would be beneficial and may lessen the amount of traffic.

6. Local Policing

6.1 Police Report - from Alan Beech

Sadly, I will not be able to attend this evenings meeting. I do understand that it has been a while since I was able to attend. Things are changing in June with Kent Police and the way they work and with that comes a change in shift pattern that will be more Parish friendly. More on that when the finer details are known.

Please find below the reported / recorded crime figures for the Parish for the current period.

For this period there have been 2 reported / recorded they are shown as.

ASSAULT A PERSON THEREBY OCCASIONING THEM ACTUAL BODILY HARM - SECTION 47 x 1

AGGRAVATED VEHICLE TAKING - (DRIVER DID NOT TAKE) AND PROPERTY DAMAGE UNDER £5000 x 1.

For the same period last year there are no crimes showing.

I have nothing else of note to report to the Parish and thank them for their support.

6.2 Speedwatch Report - no Speedwatch has been carried out of late.

Community Warden Report from Stuart Ellesmere, read by the Clerk

Unfortunately I will be unable to attend Tuesday's Parish Council meeting. I have a number of appointments on Tuesday late morning and afternoon that I will be needing to attend. Hopefully I will have caught up with a few of you on Tuesday morning when I visit Grafty and the surrounding areas.

Over the last month or so I have visited the area on a number of occasions (mostly on foot) as I get to know the area and its inhabitants. I have found the staff at the Post office and the Kings Head Pub to be very helpful indeed.

Admittedly, the weather and other commitments within my role have limited me somewhat with the Frequency of my visits to your village. With the weather changing and things (hopefully) calming down a bit I am looking forward to taking in some of the delightful views and getting to meet more of the residents. One way of doing this will be on April 8th at the Community Awareness event at the Village Hall that Chris Wheal has masterminded. It's always pleasing to be a part of these events – not only in the sense that you get a feel for the local community but also a place to talk with partnering agencies over future networking and link-ups that may prove beneficial to the area.

I have also sent through copies (templates) of KCC's Emergency Plan to the Parish Clerk. There is one blank copy and one that has been filled out (for guidance.) I apologise if you have already received this. Headcorn and many other local villages have adopted this template for their Emergency Plan – with this it is hoped that this will improve the efficiency of any emergency that villages will have to deal with around Kent. At my last Team meeting – We (The Maidstone Community Wardens) were asked by the Emergency Planning Unit to talk with our relevant villages over the prospect of having Emergency Plans that shared the same template and way of working. If agreed, the Emergency Planning Unit were discussing future training with those that are involved with their village emergency plan. The Community Wardens would also play a part in this training alongside those above. I have no details of the location or agendas for the training as yet. I would imagine that KCC are waiting to see what interest there is from Parish Councils across Kent. Obviously, as soon as I hear anything I will let you know.

On a positive note and a good example of how the Wardens are beneficial to their areas, I would like to share a good news story.

On Wednesday the 19th March, I was nominated by Trading Standards for an award. Recently I was made aware that an Elderly Gentleman in Headcorn had been visited by a door step scam artist. The 'Scammer' had only been there for three minutes and had picked up vital information from the resident to later begin a week long phone relationship where the 'scammer' impersonated a Trading Standards worker. Sadly the Elderly person had been a previous victim of Rogue traders. The 'scammer' used this information to convince the Gentleman to part with two Cheques worth nearly £19,000 – The money funnily enough was supposed to be for legal fees to secure the money that he had previously lost to the Rogue Traders. Thankfully, I managed to catch wind of this and worked with Trading Standards, Kent Police and the Gentleman's bank. It was a huge relief that the bank reimbursed the Gentleman's money – which was his life savings. Trading Standards and I also installed a call monitoring system to his telephone to help stop this from happening again. This is one of many examples how Wardens (and partnering agencies) can be useful in their communities once we start to gain trust.

If there is anything on this report that you would like me to elaborate on – or have any questions in general, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will see you on the 8th April at the Village Hall.

7. **KFRS** - Chris Wheal reminded Council of the Community Day on 8th April

8. **AED** - Courts are sponsoring the AED and have ordered it. It is hoped that it will be here on time to be on display at the Community Day.

9. **Highway and Footway Matters**

9.1 Liverton Hill

There appears to be an increase in traffic possibly contributed to by Leeds Road closure. The recent traffic survey showed 9,000 vehicles/week, approximately 400 of these being trucks/vans. The

Chair expressed deep concern that, with the house-building planned at the Service Centres of Headcorn, Lenham and Harrietsham, Grafty Green will be swamped and that the traffic can only increase. Liverton Hill is the only route between Willington Street/A20 Bearsted, and Charing A20, without a weight restriction. It was never meant for heavy traffic and in 3 places is single track and extremely narrow.

9.2 Pot holes

The situation with pot holes has been dire, Liverton Hill was closed for the best part of two days and yet dangerous pot holes were left un-filled so Kent Highways Operations Manager came and did the work himself. In Southernden Lane, in 0.6 of a mile, there are 27 pot holes!

9.3 Ditches and Gullies

Some have been cleared; those in Woodcock Lane have been done by residents fed up with waiting.

9.4 Grit bag in Church Road - has been requested for next winter, it didn't materialize for this one.

9.5 HGV Weight Restrictions/Traffic Survey - see 9.1

9.6 Speed Indicator Sign re-siting - repeatedly reported, still not moved.

10. Resources and Environment Matters

10.1 Emergency Plan - the first part has been drafted after many revisions. A template has recently been received from the Community Warden.

10.2 Neighbourhood Plan - nothing to report

10.3 Bus Service 59 - Report from John Collins, read by the Clerk

The East of Maidstone Rural Transport Group met on 17th February.

The KCC representative reported on the results of the recent re-tendering of the KCC funded services.

For the **59**, these are the Monday to Fridays 07.11 ex Grafty Green on non-school days (recently re-timed from 07.21) and the 17.45 ex Maidstone, and the complete Saturday service.

The good news is that contracts have been awarded for four years from 7th April, with no changes to the timetable, and Arriva will continue to operate the service.

One timing change to the Monday to Friday services operated commercially by Arriva has already been implemented. From 24th February the schooldays 07.03 from Grafty Green was re-timed to depart ten minutes earlier at 06.53. This according to Arriva is to improve reliability which is being compromised by increasing traffic congestion in Maidstone, and is in response to complaints from parents and schools about students arriving late. I made the point at the meeting, as did others, that this is a very early start, especially in winter, and it has been agreed and included in the meeting minutes that Arriva will consider reverting to a later start time should traffic conditions start to improve.

There are no other timetable changes being considered.

The schooldays **66** service between Headcorn and Cornwallis Academy via the Pig and Whistle has up to now been funded by KCC. Following the re-tendering process, Nu-Venture has decided to operate the service in future on a commercial basis. From 21st April this will involve a change of route, in fact a complete change of direction - passengers will need to wait on the opposite side of the road to now!

The morning service will start from Ulcombe Hill Top at 07.30 and call at the Pig and Whistle at 07.37 (estimated - exact time to be confirmed) and run via Headcorn, Sutton Valence, and Chart Sutton to Cornwallis Academy, due to arrive as now at 08.20. The return journey from Cornwallis Academy will depart as now at 15.05 with an expected arrival time at the Pig and Whistle of 15.43 (exact time again to be confirmed). The next meeting of the group is scheduled for 14th July.

11. Matters of Report

11.1 County and Borough Councillors' Reports

Jenny Whittle, KCC County Councillor report read by the Clerk

HGV survey, Member Highway Fund

We need to meet with Andy Padgham of Kent Highways to discuss next steps following the HGV survey. I will work with you to find a date.

The Chair's complaint about poorly undertaken repairs on Liverton Hill received a response from the Highways Manager, West Kent. Kent Highways have admitted full liability for the botched repairs on Liverton Hill.

Speedwatch

I have agreed to provide a funding contribution for the Boughton Malherbe Speedwatch scheme from my 13/14 Member Community Grant.

KCC's 14/15 Budget

KCC had a full Council meeting in February to agree the 14/15 Budget. We had to find a net saving of £80m, much of this found through transforming Adult Social Care (a massive reduction in application processes which has helped many clients access care at an earlier stage), revision to the Freedom Pass (fee increasing from £100 to £200, concessions for those on free school meals and free for children in care and young carers) but still a significant subsidy which makes this scheme the most generous in the country outside London. The net revenue budget for 14/15 is now £940.5m.

11.2 The Chairman's Report

See 9.1 Also, Cllr Turner has attended several meetings, including the Police Forum and KALC in addition to local AED meetings.

12. Councillor Reports on any External Meetings attended

13. Correspondence :

Clerk and Council Direct
Oast to Coast
Playdales
Junction 7 Newsletter

14. Finance

14.1 Income since the last meeting £496.50 (2nd half PSS)

14.2 Authorisation of any payments

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|-------------------|--|------|
| 10th March 00409 | St. Nicolas' Church Churchyard Maintenance | £500 |
| 10th March 00410 | GGVH Hall Rental | £500 |
| 10th March (N)412 | R Tew, Christmas Tree | £80 |

14.3 Resolve that any cheques be signed:

(N) 000413 £1246.83 C. King Salary

14.4 To note the balance at the bank £22,780.61

14.5 Report from Finance Committee – nothing to add until after the year end.

15. Further Information

The Woodland Trust is offering trees, free, to plant in Remembrance of WWI. It was considered that there is nowhere in the Parish that would benefit.

16. Dates of next meetings –

Tuesday 6th May (Annual Meeting)
12th August
11th November
13th January 2015
10th March

Before closing the meeting, as it was her last attendance at a meeting here, Cllr Turner expressed thanks and gratitude, on behalf of the Council, to Cllr Jennifer Gibson, who has been working with, and in support of, Boughton Malherbe Parish council for many years and who will be greatly missed.

The Meeting Closed at 9.05pm