

LAMBERHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 9th January 2018

Members present:

Cllr Denis Cruse	DC
Cllr John Uren	JU
Cllr Rolf Smith	RS
Cllr Sam Nicholas	SN
Cllr David Hurst-Brown	DHB
Cllr John Francis	JF
Cllr Clive Stott	CS

In attendance:

Barbara Uren, Parish Clerk	BU
Borough Councillor Sarah Hamilton	SH
Minutes Secretary, Chris Hamilton	CH

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the councillors and those in attendance to the meeting.

A. COUNTY COUNCILLOR SARAH HAMILTON

SH wished councillors a Happy New Year. She expressed her wish to meet with the clerk and/or chairman regularly before scheduled parish council meetings and she was given the projected dates for 2018. She raised three issues she considered might be of potential concern to parishioners:

Subsidised Bus Services

SH asked whether the parish had specific concerns about alterations to bus services. It was agreed that the potential changes did not appear to affect Lamberhurst. SH explained that potential changes had met with opposition on a number of counts and that the issues around this were complex. The subsidised bus services would now be looked at closely by KCC, who were also keen to hear any other ideas for the improvement of services.

Speed Issues

SH was aware of three areas of concern and now wished to hear from LPC what their priorities were. DC considered all of equal importance. The issue at School Hill could be swiftly and easily resolved and it was thought that the discussed modifications should therefore go ahead as soon as possible. Issues at Church Road and in Hook Green were equally important but the process would be lengthier. Feasibility studies would be needed. In Hook Green the fact that this was a semi-rural road made speed limit alterations harder to achieve. It was agreed that addressing the excessive and confusing signage would be a good first step at this location. On School Hill the interactive sign should be facing the other way (ie looking at traffic coming up School Hill) and be connected. It was felt that, in Church Road, the 30mph sign needed to be moved closer to the Forstal Farm roundabout. SH asked the council if they would be prepared to help financially if the cost of all such works exceeded the £2000 of her grant. Councillors would need to see how much expense this entailed but agreed to this in principle.

Broadband Service

There was a complex issue at Hook Green. SH was in discussion with a KCC expert and Greg Clark's office was also involved. DHB spoke of his own recent experiences and felt that some clarification was needed as to what was actually available in the village and to whom. It was agreed that Sarah Hamilton and a technical expert from KCC would attend the next parish council meeting on March 13th. Local residents and businesses who wished to find out more or to ask questions might also wish to attend.

SN asked for further clarification regarding school bus passes following recent upset and confusion over this issue. SH reiterated that this was a national policy which officers had no choice but to adopt. The only way to challenge it was through the appeal process. SH felt communication was key and would work to ensure that parents were aware of what the rules now were. DC remarked that data on the websites of KCC and the local schools all needed to be clearer, and added that the rule-makers should be made aware that a situation which discriminated between siblings in such cases was unacceptable.

1.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from SC, who was ill.

2.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

3.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF 14TH NOVEMBER 2017

Page 2 paragraph 2: *'the aspiration was for a 40mph speed limit all through Hook Green and thereafter a 50 limit to the county boundary'* should read: *'the aspiration was for a 40 mph limit all through Hook Green and to the county boundary'*

The minutes were approved as a true record, with this one amendment.

4.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THOSE MINUTES

Pg.2 Brewer Street Speed Limit

There had as yet been no response from Brewer Street residents with regard to the desirability of a 20 mph speed limit there.

Pg.3

Old School Clock

This matter was progressing slowly

Gala Lights

The lights had been much appreciated over Xmas. The clerk was still in contact with the company regarding a maintenance contract.

Protection of Lower Down

The Common Land group had carried out a site visit and decided that the ditch was acceptable there and no further work was necessary. DHB had also looked but was unsure whether the ditch protected against incursion.. JU felt that this was not a site that would be attractive to travellers, for several reasons. It was agreed that the current arrangement gave satisfactory security.

Pg. 4 KCC LED Lighting Project

The clerk reported that to make the alterations to LPC lights was likely to cost upwards of £6000. However, LED lighting would result in cheaper electricity bills than the current lights and the money would be recouped over 8 years. BU would talk to LPC's own contractor who might be able to do the work in stages. SN felt strongly that the council should have dark sky friendly lighting and needed to choose something softer. There might be good alternatives, albeit more costly. BU would continue to investigate this matter.

Pg.6 Bike Track field

SN had placed a piece about this in the January edition of the parish magazine.

5. ACCOUNTS

JF reported that the sale of non-performing assets had resulted in a small loss in the yearly accounts. This was smaller than the loss from the previous year, resulting from related legal fees, but overall there had been an expense to the council from these sales. The projected outcome for the current year suggested a possible £3000 surplus. The budget for the following year was a break - even one. Extra expenses next year were likely to be incurred through the Neighbourhood Plan (depending on grants) and the amenity vehicle. Currently no provision had been made for upgrades to streetlights or the public conveniences. JU added that a maintenance contract for the Xmas lights could cost in the region of £600. JF had made provision for a small increase in salary for the clerk. It was agreed that this should be delegated to the Finance committee for discussion. Payment for the Minutes Secretary should probably be discussed at the same time. (It was reported here that the Minutes Secretary had given notice and that there was now a vacancy for this position from March).

The proposal for the next precept was for £42,250. This represented an increase of 1.99% on a Band D property, in real terms an increase of £1.12 per year. JU proposed acceptance of this proposal and this was seconded by DHB. All were in favour.

Discussion of item 12 (New General Data Protection Act) was taken here but is reported as item 12.

JF left the meeting after this discussion.

6. COMMON LAND AND ALLOTMENTS

The clerk would begin allotment letters etc. in February. SN thought it advisable to put on emails and letters a statement of intent re data protection. SN would advise BU re wording.

There was no other general common land business to discuss.

Management Plan

SN reported that a meeting was planned for February and all was in hand.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

i. Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre Newsletter

Contents noted

ii. Kent Police: The public can now report crimes, incidents & non-injury road traffic collisions online via www.kent.police.uk

Noted

- iii. **English National Concessionary Travel Scheme** (ENCTS - Also known as the older persons bus pass) Managed by KCC, this will be automatically renewed when the current pass expires. However if the pass has not been used during the past year they will be seeking confirmation from the card holder that they still wish to be issued with one.

Noted

- iv. **TWBC Planning Policy: Lamberhurst Neighbourhood Area Application has been approved and came into force on December 29th 2017.**

For discussion later

V Battle's Over – A Nation's Tribute: 11th November 2018. 100 Years of Remembrance

Battle's over guide to taking part has been completed and Lamberhurst's Beacon has been listed to be lit at 7.00pm.

The overall aim is to have 1000 Churches/Cathedrals ringing out across the nation on the night.

Arrangements would need coordinating for the event. Ideally a piper should be found. The Bonfire Society would be approached about the lighting of the beacon, as would the captain of the bell ringers regarding the ringing of the church bells. Lamberhurst Community Cinema had agreed to show a film and the Pantomime Society were also on board.

8. PLANNING

Peppermills (Lamberhurst Manor) had made a retrospective application for planning permission for work already carried out on site. Extensive tree removal had been carried out. Spoil from the de-silted lake appeared to have been banked up to create a bund around the perimeter of the site. Councillors were generally in agreement that retrospective permission should not be allowed, that the bund should be removed and the hedgerow replanted. The fencing that had since been erected was considered too high, certainly higher than that which it had replaced, and urban in nature, resulting in the loss of a sense of place. There appeared to have been no flood risk assessment, in an area very prone to flooding, and the Environment Agency should be consulted. The Borough Council should be made aware that an archaeological survey should also have been carried out due to the site's proximity to a historic ironworks. Kent Archaeological Society should be consulted.

Councillors were asked to look at the plans and the intentions and circulate their views.

Borough Councillors Noakes and Hastie should also be contacted and asked either to call this in or to put pressure on planning officers to react.

9. REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

War Memorial Hall

The hall managers had applied to TWBC for a grant towards renewing the hall blackout blinds and were in consultation with architects regarding the way forward for the public conveniences.

Bowl Water

Nothing to report

Youth/Playground

Nothing to report

Playing Fields

DC reported that lidded bins would be expensive: in the region of £400-500 per bin. SN pointed out that nature reserves were now tending to remove bins and put up notices warning of prosecution for rubbish not taken home. Councillors were not inclined to remove bins as it was thought that a mess would result. DC would complete the investigation for discussion at the next meeting.

Buses/Transport

Nothing further to report

Police

Nothing to report

Highways

Nothing to report

Footpaths

Nothing to report

Flooding

Nothing to report

Housing

Nothing to report

Common Land

Nothing further to report

Events

Nothing further to report

KALC

Nothing to report

Parish Chairman

SN had attended the last meeting. She reported on projected changes to waste management (from 2019) which had been aired there. A plan to charge for brown bin waste had been mooted. A separate food waste box would be provided but a charge might be made for garden waste. The plan was to recycle glass and more types of plastic in doorstep collections instead.

Business

Nothing to report

Website

CH wished to hand over the responsibility of updating the site to another editor.

Neighbourhood Plan

To be discussed later

School

Nothing to report

10. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The council first discussed the potential outcomes of the local plan consultation. The early indication from TWBC was that Option 4 (A21 corridor) and Option 5 (garden villages) had the greatest support through the consultation process but all options were still being considered. LPC was expecting to hear back in February the potential housing figures. LPC had voiced strongly the wish to be consulted from beginning of the process.

There had been a Neighbourhood Plan meeting on 7th December. A series of meetings was now needed and the next was planned for early February. Jim Boot was involved and some funding was in hand to help with the next stage. A steering committee would be formed and members given areas to research. Training sessions would then be needed. A slot at the annual parish meeting would be a good idea if the date was right. DC thanked DHB and SN for their work so far.

11. BROADBAND SERVICE

This had been discussed earlier.

12. NEW GENERAL DATA PROTECTION ACT

New rules were about to come into force with this European directive to be enforced by UK legislation. Public authorities will have to have a Data Protection Officer. JF's opinion was that LPC did not really process data but did do a little manual processing e.g. the clerk might consult a list and then write a letter asking for payment for an allotment. He felt that the data held by LPC might cover one or two sheets of A4. SN explained that she held email data for the neighbourhood plan. NALC had expressed the view that most clerks and RFOs should not become DPOs because conflicts might arise between the two roles. JF was happy to assert that he did not process data and being a DPO would not conflict with his role as RFO. It was agreed that more information and advice was needed before a decision could be made. DC would seek it and come back with it to the council in March.

13. MATTERS OF URGENCY AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

DC reported that Xmas cards had been received from TWBC, TW CAB, and the Mayor of TW and from the MP for TW.

CH agreed to contact Alison Marshall and find a suitable date for the annual parish meeting. Thursday 19th April might be a possibility.

14. EXEMPT ITEMS (see separate sheet)

The meeting closed at 9.52pm

