



HERNHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Hernhill Parish Church on Wednesday 26th July 2023 from 7:30pm to 9:30pm.

Present:

Cllr. B. Heller (Chair), Cllr D. Figgis, Cllr. E Bannock, Cllr K. Wakes,
Cllr D. Waters

Also Present: Mrs R. Parr (Clerk), PC Gary Morris and 4 members of the public

43. APOLOGIES

Cllr R. Lehmann (SBC & KCC), Cllr A. Gould (SBC), Cllr P. Smith

44. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None

45. MINUTES

A. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 26th June 2023 (25-42) having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair.

46. KENT POLICE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE - PC GARY MORRIS

- A. Introduction - PC Gary Morris introduced himself as the PC representative for the Boughton and Courtney ward along with a couple of other local wards. PC Morris is looking to hold regular surgeries for local residents. The next one will be in Boughton library on August 15th from 10-11am, villagers are welcome to pop in to share any concerns. He can also be contacted directly by email: gary.morris@kent.police.uk. He also explained about My Community Voice, a messaging service that helps Kent and Medway residents, businesses, and community groups to keep in touch with their local policing teams. The service sends updates by email or text message about your local area directly from the police officers themselves. You can sign up to join the service at <https://www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk/>.
- B. Local Crime statistics - There were no for June and none so far in July.
- C. Slip Road Issues - Dargate PC Morris has been patrolling the area and will speak to the site manager of the construction works over concerns with regards to parking. Other issues were raised with regards to speeding and Monkshill and High Street which will be investigated by PC Morris.

47. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH COMMUNITY SAFETY CHARTER

A question was raised about the difference between My Community Voice and Neighbourhood Watch charter. **Action:** PC Gary Morris would investigate with regards to the Neighbourhood Watch Safety Charter and revert with more information.

48. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- A. A parishioner raised concerns about Crockham Oast where the site had been cleared. Enquiries with SBC confirmed that no permission was needed. Concerns were also raised in respect of the large mobile home now on the site which had caused debris in the village from vegetation and the mobile structure itself with bits breaking off. **Action:** Given the size of the mobile, it was agreed for the council to speak to SBC planning enforcement.
- B. A parishioner raised concerns regarding the No Mow May policy and the impact caused with poor visibility splays and general untidiness.. It was commented that KCC now appears to be mowing the verges later in the year and not necessarily directly related to No Mow May. In addition, hedgerows are not able to be cut in the Spring/Summer period and hedgerows are the landowner's responsibility.
- C. A parishioner raised the issue of parcels going astray in the Monkshill area as there were now a significant number of businesses and households now on the same postcode. The council agreed that this was not a council issue and that any problems should be taken up with the courier services by residents.

49. REVIEW OF COUNCIL COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCESS

Following the previous full council meeting, Cllr Bannock had prepared a flow chart of the complaints process with the recommendation that the recently approved NALC/SLCC model complaints policies could be replaced with a simpler approach and a single line in the Standing Orders. Following a discussion, it was considered to retain the existing policies with the benefit of a detailed approach but recognised the value in the process flow diagram. It was approved for the process diagram to be amalgamated as an appendix to the existing policy. **Action:** The Clerk is to create the appendix to the existing policy and add to the website.

50. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- A. Cllr Wakes provided an update on the meeting that occurred on the 5th July 2023. The NP group is to create an A5 flyer to go into the Hernhill News to drum up local support. Abbey Print had quoted £55 to print 400 colour flyers but details needed to be firmed up before final approval. There is now a new tab on the parish council website for all matters neighbourhood plan, whilst the group works to develop its own website. The group are arranging for a presentation to be held at the village hall on the 13 October 2023 with a presentation and Q&A for parishioners. Next NP meeting is on the 16th August.

51. KCC HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The TRO had been advertised and 13 comments were received by KCC. 12 in support and one objection. Therefore the project can continue to proceed. The Clerk confirmed that we were still waiting to hear from KCC for the civil engineering stage and quote. The Clerk had been contacted by the Active Travel Co-ordinator at SBC who is creating the Local

Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and requested Parish councils HIPs to ensure that any appropriate HIP actions are included in the LCWIP. The council discussed that a new HIP is required following the recent TRO as additional priorities may now be included. **Action:** The Clerk is to enquire with the co-ordinator to find out if there is time for the PC to create an updated HIP to be included and for the Clerk to add to the August full council meeting agenda.

52. OAKWELL DRAINAGE ISSUE

The Clerk had been contacted by a parishioner presenting a video showing overflowing sewage from drains at Oakwell. Further investigations were undertaken by the Clerk confirming that this was a long standing issue of some decades whereby in heavy rainfall the pumping station at Oakwell cannot cope and sewage backs up and overflows in front of the properties and eventually pools enough to flow into the nearby watercourse. Despite past media activity and reports to the Environment Agency no action appears to have been taken to address the issue. **Action:** The council discussed and agreed for the Clerk to write to the CEO at Southern Water, cc'ing the Environment Agency/

53. CLOSURE OF KCC PROPOSAL FOR FAVERSHAM'S WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRE

Cllr Lehman had provided an email update to the Clerk concerning the issue. There will be a public meeting in Faversham at 7pm on the evening of 8th August at The Assembly Rooms to raise awareness and advise on ways in which residents can respond to the consultation. The FTC working group which Cllr Lehmann is on along with members of Faversham Town Council are organising a protest at the KCC full council meeting on 21st September and are looking at hiring a bus to take people from Faversham to Maidstone and back to ensure a good turnout for the protest. Cllr Lehmann informs that the petition to oppose the closure is still running and is approaching 2,500 signatures. <https://www.change.org/p/save-faversham-tip-from-closure>. The Clerk also informed the council that as of yet, KCC had not presented any business case for the closure and that FTC had made 5 Freedom of Information requests for information and had yet to receive anything. The council continues to wait for the official consultation and whether it is accompanied by detailed information.

54. 80TH DD ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

There are to be national celebrations of the anniversary of DD. The country is encouraged to light beacons at 9.15pm on the 6th June 2024 accompanied by a reading of a tribute. The council agreed that they would like to light the beacon in support. **Action:** The Clerk is to ask for permission to use the field to light the beacon and to ask a local resident if they would volunteer to prepare and monitor the beacon.

55. PC TO CONSIDER BETTER WAYS OF CONSULTING AND GATHERING VIEWS MORE DEMOCRATICALLY

Cllr Bannock had prepared a presentation distributed to councillors prior to the meeting around why public consultations do not work and evidence pertaining to the Swiss system that does work. The council discussed that communication should be 2-way and that in recent years greater attempts have been made to engage with parishioners using Facebook and the website. It was considered that in order to move forward specific practical suggestions were required in how to engage further. Unless any suggestions are

forthcoming, the matter was closed.

56. Village Hall Update

Cllr Bannock had introduced himself to Peter Rawlins (VA) and Mark Woodcock (DCA), and then attended the AGM and subsequent committee meeting held on the 6th July. They expressed their appreciation to the Parish Council and particularly for the grass cutting. The site is owned by the VH with the exception of a piece at the back which is owned by KCC. A waste bin by the play area is missing which was acknowledged that the Clerk had previously raised with SBC and is on the list for eventual replacement.

57. Hernhill News - Allows Ads?

A parishioner had contacted the council to enquire whether they were able to place an ad in the Hernhill News for a request for a gardener. The council discussed whether such ads were appropriate and if a charge should be made. It was agreed to accept parishioner offers or requests for free. However, commercial ads would not be appropriate.

58. PLANNING

A. Planning Applications-

- 1) 23/501777/FULL Proposal: Erection of annexe ancillary to main dwelling, incorporating log store and garage. Location: Crockham Farmhouse Crockham Lane Hernhill Faversham Kent - Revisit as requested by SBC.

The Council discussed the application voted to object to the application with the following comment:

“Hernhill Parish Council were asked by the Borough Council to revisit the application. The Council voted to continue to object to the application on the grounds that it is considered overdevelopment of the site. Whilst it is the same footprint as the buildings approved under prior application 21/504835/FULL, the usage under the current application is different and the council are not reassured by the potential inclusion of any condition stating that the separate unit of accommodation it will be ancillary to the residential use of the main dwelling.”

B. Planning Decisions -

- 1) 23/501781/FULL Bungalow Mount Ephraim Staple Street Hernhill Faversham Kent ME13 9TX Creation of new vehicular access and driveway. Application Withdrawn
- 2) 22/504625/FULL Cairo Lodge Butlers Hill Dargate Faversham Kent ME13 9HH Demolition of existing bungalow. Conversion of an existing store/garage to a holiday let with the erection of a front porch with access ramp. Installation of a new metal sliding access gate. - Application Permitted with demolition of original bungalow a condition prior to letting.

59. MATTERS ARISING

- A. Neighbourhood Watch - None
- B. Dale Farm Oast - No update.
- C. Email provider update - Cllr Smith and the Clerk had set up and test the new

system. The Clerk will contact each councillor individually to set up over the coming weeks..

D. Allotment -

(i) Quineeys had come back out to re-hang the gate. Cllr Heller had added chicken wire to the gate.

(ii) The Clerk and Cllr Wakes had applied for the grant to the Kent Community Foundation for the replacement of the fencing at the allotment for £2110.00 and this had been accepted. **Action:** The Clerk is to thank KCF and communicate to allotment holders the news asking them to keep the area by the fence clear in anticipation. Cllr Wakes is to liaise with the contractor.

(iii) The council conducted the annual inspection on 14th July. In general the allotments are looking in good fettle with a couple of exception for which there are known valid reasons.

(iv) A couple of allotment holders had recently mentioned about the need for water supply at the allotments. This was something previously discussed and negotiated in great details with the landowner when the allotments were created and it was not possible to arrange for a water supply. Many allotment holders have since become creative in capturing water and this is something to be encourage.

E. KCC Cutting of verges complaint Following the previous meeting, the Clerk had ade the complaint and was waiting on a response.

60. COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

A. Cllr Waters and Bannock had recently met with the local MP, Helen Wahately. Topical local issues were around the closure of Faversham's Waste Centre and speeding. Also mentioned was fly tipping, the Thanet Way and issues that cause people to cut through villages.

61. FINANCE

A. The July's Bank reconciliation was approved and signed.

B. July's 2023 cheques for payment were approved and signed.

Chq-1711 Countrywide Grounds Maintenance (Mowing July)	£152.66
Chq-Advice Only S/O R Parr (Salary & Expenses)	£322.25
Chq-1712 Hughes & Son (June Church Cutting)	£130.00
Chq-1713 R Parr (10 hours overtime net of tax)	£132.30
Chq-1714 HMRC (R Parr - Tax)	£7.20
Chq-1715 Village Hall (June Hall Hire)	£17.00
Chq-1716 KCS (Photocopier)	£61.39
	£822.80

C. The Clerk had researched the online banking options that allowed for 2 authorised signatories. The best 2 for parish councils appear to be Unity Trust and Lloyds. Unity Trust would have a monthly charge whereas Lloyds was free. In addition, the Clerk had experience of their set up through another Parish Council. The council would save admin costs and time in sending out cheques. The Council discussed and all voted to move account to Lloyds. **Action:** The Clerk is to commence the process for opening the new account.

D. The council discussed the new signatories for the new account. There is currently 5

councillors as signatories and it was agreed to continue with 5 for the new account for the time being. **Action:** The Clerk is to note for the new mandate.

- E. The council agreed to continue with the existing auditor, Lionel Robbins for the coming year.

62. CORRESPONDENCE

- A. SBC Community Infrastructure Grant (CIG) Scheme - Launched by SBC as a scheme to support projects to improve the viability and encourage use of important community assets. **Action:** The Clerk is to add to Facebook and the website.
- A. Boughton Hill KCC Updates - The road has now opened.
- B. M2 J4 to J7 Resurfacing - Overnight closures of east or west carriageways are planned over the next few months for the latest information go to nationalhighways.co.uk and click on daily closures which is refreshed twice daily. **Action:** The Clerk is to add to Facebook and the website.
- C. Consultation - Kent County Council Local Transport Plan - The public can have their say on KCC's latest plan for future driving, public transport, walking and cycling whilst reducing pollution, improving our health and achieving carbon Net Zero. Fill in the short online questionnaire at <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/local-transport-plan-5>. **Action:** The Clerk is to add to Facebook and the website.

63. ADMINISTRATION

- A. None

64. CHAIRMAN & CLERK'S SUNDRY REPORTS

- A. None

There being no further business, the Chair declared the Meeting closed.

CHAIR