



HERNHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Hernhill Parish Church on Wednesday 29th June 2022 from 8:00pm to 10:15pm.

Present:

Cllr. B Heller (Chair) Cllr C. Page Cllr A. Rumble Cllr P. Couzens

Also Present: Mrs R. Parr (Clerk), Cllr A. Gould (SBC) and 4 members of the public

485 SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Heller signed the declaration of office.

486 APOLOGIES

Cllr. T Valentine Cllr R. Lehmann (KCC) Cllr. S Castle
Cllr B. Chipperton Cllr S. Edgington

487 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None.

488 MINUTES

A. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 25th May 2022 (470-484) having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

489 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- A. Mr Wilson raised a query as to the name of the road at Fostall. Action: The Clerk is to enquire with SBC and KCC.
- B. Mr Wilson also requested whether a sign could be added to point people in the direction of the School. The Clerk confirmed that the school and Village hall postcodes when placed into Sat. Navs. means that people are directed to Fostall. Action: The Clerk is to request KCC for a sign to be added to the sign post at the junction of Kemsdale Road and Fostall directing people for the school and village hall.

490 PLANNING

A. Planning Applications:

- 1) 22/502565/FULL PROPOSAL: Proposed development consisting of a drive through restaurant and 3no. commercial buildings with a total floorspace of 4043 sq.m with associated parking and accessed from Highstreet Road.
ADDRESS: Land At Plumpudding Lane And Highstreet Road Hernhill Kent ME13 9EN

The Clerk read out correspondence that she had received from a resident in Dargate with concerns regarding the proposed development being the potential for increase in traffic movement through the village which may become a 'rat run'. In addition, suggestion was made that any construction traffic through the village should be avoided and could be addressed via a construction plan.

The Councillors discussed the application, noting that the location was considered suitable given that it is immediately surrounded by three roads and a junction off the Thanet Way. There are already commercial units being added on the opposite side and it is next to services. The representative from the applicant was there to answer questions. Mr J. Wilson confirmed that the drive-thru would be 24 hours and that all units had provisionally been let. The council welcomed the additional employment opportunities. Concerns were also raised in respect of having an appropriate litter picking plan and whether this could be widened to include three bridges across the Thanet Way. The council voted on the development with three in favour and one no adverse comment. The following response to SBC Planning was provided:

'The Parish Council voted to support the application, subject to the addition of some conditions. The proposed development was considered to be in an ideal location on a site surrounded by three roads with no immediate residential neighbours and welcomed the employment opportunities by the proposed development. However, the council would like the following conditions to be considered should Swale Borough Council agree to the application:

- Through the construction management plan, confirmation that there is a lorry restriction with no construction vehicle movement to occur through the village with all entry/exit via the Thanet Way.

- The council would welcome approval for a litter picking scheme in relation to the drive-thru that encompasses the area that includes three bridges that cross over the Thanet Way being Plum pudding Lane, Wey Street and Staplestreet. '

- 2) Section 73 - Application for removal of conditions 10 (removal of storage containers), 11 (willow trellis fencing) and 13 (external storage) pursuant to 17/504077/FULL for - Construction of building housing 5 x 75m² industrial units type B1/B8 complete with parking spaces and indigenous hedge landscaping to site, as amended by drawings referenced SMT-0317-01 Revision H Sheets 1, 2 and 3 received 28th June 2018. ADDRESS: Unit 1A Smiths Transport Yard Highstreet Road Hernhill Kent ME13 9EP

A member of public spoke to raise that the planning description was incorrect. The planning description referred to material changes for application 17/504077 but in fact the planning conditions requested were actually approved in planning application 19/504983. Action: The Clerk is to inform SBC Planning of the discrepancy. The council discussed the proposal as submitted, noting that the original conditions were into place in order to tidy-up the yard and that they were disappointed at the request for their removal. The council voted to unanimously object to the application. The following response to SBC Planning was provided:

'The Parish Council unanimously object to the application for the request to alter some of the existing conditions. These conditions were agreed to in the previous application (19/504983) and not the original 17/504077 as referred to in this application. The conditions were originally agreed to in order to visually tidy up the yard and in respect of the location of the yard in the vicinity of nearby residential properties and the important visual amenity of the adjacent landscape of Victory Wood'

B. Planning Decisions: None

491 MATTERS ARISING

- A. Affordable Housing. Concerns were raised regarding the gate that was to be at the gap in the hedge, and that it was considered that it extended too far into the road rather than stopping at the hedge line. In addition, comments were raised as to the material to be used for the gate. Action: The clerk is to contact English Rural raising concerns as to its position and also what materials were planned.
- B. Neighbourhood Watch - Mr Wilson reported that there was a scam currently circulating where there were calls from the energy supplier. Action. Cllr Heller is to add the warning to the newsletter.
- C. Village Speed Limits - Cllr Page confirmed that the Kent teams were still in the process of reorganisation with the East Kent Team taking longer. Communications were ongoing in respect to arranging an online meeting with the East Kent Team and Cllr Page, along with Cllr Lehmann in order to progress the Highways Improvement Plan. The Chair of Dunkirk Parish, Mr K Kemp spoke to say that Dunkirk Parish were in the process of creating their HIP and given overlap of some roads would like to arrange a joint meeting with Hernhill and Boughton Parish. Action: Cllr Page would make contact with Mr Kemp.
- D. Queen's Jubilee - Cllr Page confirmed that permission had been received to plant a tree at the Churchyard. It was planned to undertake this in August and trees were still in the process of being sourced by Cllr Heller. Cllr Heller had framed the certificate of the Beacon event along with photographs of the lighting of the beacon. Action: Cllr Heller would speak to Mr Rawlins, Chair of the village hall for a suitable location for these.

492 REVIEW OF POLICIES

- A. Standing Orders: Cllr Heller raised that these should be amended to incorporate details for the appraisal of the Clerk. Action: the Clerk is to review for suitable wording and circulate to Councillors ahead of the next full meeting..
- B. Financial Regulations: The Clerk had prior to the meeting circulated changes to the Financial Regulations in order to take into account the potential for online banking having obtained wording utilised by a number of other local parish councils. The Financial Regulations had been reviewed by Cllr Page who had concerns over some of the wording. This concerned Budgetary Control. Section 3 (3) budget report altered from quarterly to 6 monthly. Suggested alterations to the wording concerning online banking as it was felt some of the wording surrounding passwords and security were not practical. Alterations to the wording concerning the S101 agreement to remove 'Any other relevant issue (excluding planning)' which was considered too ambiguous. Action: Cllr Page is to pass on the amended wording to the Clerk, post the meeting, for which the clerk will update the Financial Regulations and the revised document circulated ahead of the next full meeting for review by the other Councillors.
- C. Risk Assessment: This was agreed for a further year to June 2023

- D. Media Policy: This was agreed for a further year to June 2023
- E. Public Participation Guidance: This was agreed for a further year to June 2023
- F. Privacy Notice (Public and Staff): Cllr Heller raised the comment that the document refers to the EU and the European Economic Area. Action: The Clerk is to investigate whether such wording is still appropriate.
- G. Code of Conduct: This was agreed for a further year to June 2023

493 TIMING OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Cllr Page raised whether it would be suitable for the council meeting to commence earlier than 8pm. Cllr Couzens mentioned that it had been set at 8pm previously to allow people to get home from work and attend if they so wished. The Clerk mentioned that the hall would not be available earlier than 7.30pm due to Yoga, which does not finish until 7.15pm. The council voted to start future meetings from July onwards at 7.30pm. Action: The Clerk is to inform the village hall and post on the website. Cllr Heller is to include in the newsletter.

494. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- A. The Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan - The Clerk informed the council that the NP was due for consultation between the period 13th June - 25th July. Following a discussion of the plan, the council had no comments.
- B. Hernhill Neighbourhood Plan - The Clerk confirmed that the designated area was approved pre-covid and that the next stage was to have a public event in order to try and recruit volunteers to take the plan forward as a working group. The Dunkirk and Boughton Plan was created by local representatives and not the Parish Council. Cllr Gould confirmed that the NP only carries weight once approved. Any NP would likely be too late for the current Local Plan but should commence now in order to be hopefully included in the following Local Plan. Discussions were held concerning the advantage of a NP in relation to housing numbers and requirements. The council agreed to bring NP back for further discussion in the Autumn.

495 COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

- A. Cllr Couzens requested an update on the situation at Thread Wood. The Clerk confirmed that a parishioner had raised concerns regarding the felling of trees there and the timing of the felling occurring during the nesting season. The parishioner had also reported the issue to the Police. The Clerk had been in contact with the Forestry Commission, raising concerns requesting a site visit. A response had been received from an individual who confirmed that one would be done. Following an update requested by the Clerk, it since transpired that this person had left the organisation. Contact was made with another person who had since visited the site. Their response was as follows:

'I can confirm a site visit has been undertaken; the work completed to date was found to be compliant with the current felling licence and there were not any apparent breaches of the Forestry Act. 1967 (as amended) noted. A felling licence, when required, grants permission to fell trees during the licence period, typically five years (or ten years if attached to a Forestry Commission approved woodland management plan). With regards to the bird nesting season, there are good practice guidelines and advice on the specific timing of tree felling, though unfortunately we can't enforce them as they are not covered by the Forestry Act. 1967. Birds and their nests are covered by the Wildlife and Countryside Act. 1982 which, is administered by the Police.'

The Clerk has been informed that the felling was completed a couple of weeks previously and without any evidence there was little more that could be done.

- B. Cllr Heller raised that an allotment holder had informed the council that the allotment gate was in poor repair and letting in rabbits. This was despite working undertaken earlier in the year to add an additional lock and that clearly the gate had deteriorated further. Action: The Clerk is to obtain quotes for a replacement gate with Cllr Heller posting in the newsletter asking for those interested in quoting to contact the Clerk for details.
- C. Cllr Page confirmed that works were awaited at the phone box. Discussion was held whether adoption would be suitable, which would mean that any cost, maintenance and insurance would become the village responsibility. Cllr Couzens asked how much the phone box was used? Action: Cllr Page to enquire about usage. The topic is to be kept on Matter Arising until the work is undertaken pending further discussions on possible adoption.

496 FINANCE

- A. The June Bank reconciliation was approved and signed.
- B. June's 2022 cheques for payment were approved and signed.

The Clerk confirmed that £4.12 was required to be refunded to the council by the Clerk in response to overpayment of her pay increase due to issues over timings of the change to the bank standing order.

Chq-1625 Countrywide Grounds Maintenance (Mowing April)	£144.02
Chq-Advice Only S/O R Parr (Salary & Expenses)	£250.32
Chq-1626 Hughes and Son (May Church Mowing)	£130.00
Chq-1627 Village Hall (May hire)	£15.00
Chq-1628 R Parr (Expenses Stamps and Envelopes)	£49.80
	£589.14

- C. The Clerk discussed appointing Mr L. Robbins as auditor again for 2023. He had been appointed as an auditor for Dunkirk Parish as their existing auditor was reducing workloads. There was a shortage of auditors and there would be benefits for the Clerk in having the same auditor for both councils. The council agreed to continue with Mr Robbins.

497 ADMINISTRATION

- A. Grass Cutting: The Clerk raised that the contract for the grass cutting for the village hall playing fields was last reviewed in 2016. Whilst we were happy with the work, it was considered appropriate for the Clerk to obtain quotes for the work which was for 16 cuts in the year between March and October every 2 weeks. It was discussed and agreed to keep the contract specification unchanged. Action: Cllr Heller is to include details in the newsletter inviting interested parties for quoting for the work to contact the Clerk.

498 CORRESPONDANCE

- A. Defibrillator: The Clerk mentioned that she had received notification from The Circuit database, where the two defibrillators are registered, that a 999 call had directed individuals to the defibrillator at The Dove. This was then required to be checked over by the Clerk before being noted for being back into action. The Clerk

found no evidence that it had been removed and used. The Clerk also advised that a letter had been received from SBC with concerns over lack of maintenance on some defibrillators. The Clerk confirmed that the defibrillators are checked weekly and that they were in order. The SBC letter recommended registration with a different database (ww.nddb.uk). The Clerk had enquired with the NDDDB who confirmed that The Circuit and NDDDB are separate systems and that there was no need to report on both. Given that the Circuit is the one recommended by the SECAMB service, it was agreed to remain only with The Circuit. The Clerk enquired whether it would be more appropriate for Cllr Chipperton to check the defibrillator weekly at The Dove given her close proximity to its location. Action: The Clerk is to liaise with Cllr Chipperton.

- B. Vehicle Activated Sign: The Clerk had received notice from KCC that the VAS had been removed from Staplestreet given it clashed in location with the development of Forge Farm Row. KCC confirmed that the sign would not be replaced elsewhere as the sign were old, out of warranty and any new sign would be subject to road surveys and purchase of a new VAS. KCC informed us that a new scheme has been developed by us using a portable speed indicator device (SID) which is managed locally by parishes. This gives more flexibility than a fixed sign and is community-based with a reduction in asset liability for the county council. An overview for information had been provided which confirmed that a mini 3 post version was approx. £7k excluding VAT and a 5 post version circa £9k which was considered expensive and is down to KCC having a preferred supplier. The Chair of Dunkirk mentioned that they were looking into obtaining one and it would possibly make sense to share costs with Dunkirk and Bouhgton for a 5 post version scheme. Action: Cllr Page would investigate and consider appropriate sites in relation to the HIP.
- C. PCSO: The Clerk had met the PCSO Denis Pashov who expressed an interest to joining one of the council meetings. It had been arranged for him to attend in August.
- D. Firestoppers Campaign Toolkit: Kent Fire and Rescue were inviting residents to complete a questionnaire. Action: Details of the survey would be posted on the website.
- E. Road Closures:
1. Staplestreet 4th July for 1 day for resurfacing
 2. 12-18th July Crockham Road in the vicinity of Crockham Oast
 3. Staplestreet afternoon of the 23rd July wheelie bin race in the vicinity of the Three Horseshoes
 4. 4th July Church Hill - Despite previous notice the Clerk confirmed having spoken directly to South East Water that the road closure planned for the 4-7th July was no longer required with the issue having been dealt with on the 20th June.
 5. M2 Closure from Friday 1 July at 8pm westbound between junctions 7 and 5 until Monday 4 July at 6am for bridge work.
- F. Benstead Charity: The area of benefit is approximately the twenty four parishes to the east of Teynham within the boundary of the Borough of Swale. Grants are awarded for (1) relief for the old, sick and infirm persons, (2) the provision of recreational facilities, and (3) educational bursaries, support and equipment. Further details and application forms may be obtained from The Clerk to the Trustees, The Alexander Centre, 15-17 Preston Street, Faversham, ME13 8NZ Tel: 01795 859704 Email: office@benstedscharity.org.uk Applications for grants to be received before Monday, 4th July 2022.

499 CHAIRMAN & CLERK's SUNDRY REPORTS

- A. None.

500 ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON JULY's FULL MEETING AGENDA

- A. Affordable Housing
- B. Neighbourhood Watch
- C. Village Speed Limits.
- D. Queens Jubilee
- E. Review of Council Policies
- F. Allotment gate
- G. Neighbourhood Plan
- H. Forge Farm Row hedge gate
- I. Fostall Sign

501 Closed Session

- A. English Rural Local Connection shortlist. A closed session was held to discuss local connections.
- B. Planning Enforcement: The Clerk provided an update on ongoing planning enforcement cases.

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

CHAIRMAN