

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23rd May 2006

A MEETING OF BOUGHTON MALHERBE PARISH COUNCIL WAS HELD ON Tuesday 23rd May 2006 at 8.20pm in Grafty Green Village Hall

PRESENT: Mr K Alexander
Mrs S Close
Mr M Hitchins
Mr R Turner
Mr S Wickens
Mrs P Anderson (Clerk)

Mike Davidson
Peter Palmer

APOLOGIES: Cllr R Thick
Cllr J Gibson
Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart

PC B Hillman

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Mr Alexander having stood down, the Clerk asked for Nominations for the post of Chairman for the forthcoming year 2006/2007. Mr Alexander was the only nomination proposed by Mrs Sylvia Close and seconded by Mr Robert Turner. Mr Alexander indicated that he would be happy to accept.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting of 29th March 2005 and the Parish Council Meeting of 21st March 2006, having been circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING from 21/03/06 Meeting

Liverton Hill PA reported that Earl Bourner had carried out an investigation, had found a leak which Mid Kent Water have been told about, they are checking to see if the water is spring water or not, and he is awaiting their reply. In the meantime Earl is devising a drainage system, and may make a manhole to take the spring. He reported that the bottom of the hill had been done and all gullies had been cleaned out. Mike Davidson said that this was not the case, the gully below his farm had not been done and that

MKW had done the test some 3 weeks before. It was suggested that Earl Bourner should contact Mike direct as he has full knowledge as to what is going on. **ACTION PA**

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Sign Woodcock Lane The sign has now been re-cemented in on the opposite side to where it was originally, the question was asked whether this was acceptable to everyone and it was agreed that it should be re-sited back to where it was originally and that a letter should be written to the Bus Company to ensure that their drivers are more careful in future to avoid the sign being knocked down again. **ACTION PA**

Debris Elmstone Hole

Dennis Gower has advised that this will be cleared when the road sweeping is done; the date is still to be agreed. **ACTION PA**

Road Sign on Village Green

Earl Bourner has advised that the arm pointing to Headcorn would be replaced by the end of June. **ACTION PA**

40-Mile Speed Limit Signs

At the meeting held on 19th April, it was decided that all the areas with agreed speed limit reductions, following surveys which had already been carried out, would be given priority to implement as soon as practicable. After this has been done then surveys will be carried out **again** in Grafty Green, which should take place over the next few months then advertisements have to be placed along with other areas determined for a speed reduction, but of course all this takes time and is dependent on budgets. We will just need to keep checking with the Highways Department. **ACTION PA**

HGV's Weight Restrictions

Nothing had been heard about the Weight Restrictions **ACTION PA**

Parish Website

MH had attended the Website training course, which he found very useful. He has now been able to upload the names of the Parish Councillors, Agendas and Minutes from the last four meetings for anyone to view. What he said is really needed is for people to look on it and give feedback. KA asked if the magazine is shown complete with adverts, MH said that, as it is essentially a Parish Website, advertisements could not be shown, as businesses cannot be seen to be making profit from Parish Websites. KA thanked MH for his efforts.

No. 59 Bus

The next working party meeting, which is attended by John Collins on our behalf, is on 19th June 2006. **ACTION PA**

Tree Cutting

The tree trimming on the Village Green has been carried out by Green Man Tree & Garden Services to everyone's satisfaction.

Elmstone Hole Lane

Dennis Gower advised PA that the Highways Dept don't dig ditches and that the farmer must dig them himself. Ken suggested that a phone call to Dennis' boss to see if he can be persuaded to dig the ditches should be made. **ACTION PA**

Potholes Woodcock Lane & Church Road

Dennis Gower has now marked out the potholes, which should be done within the next month. **ACTION PA**

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Inspection/Manhole Covers top Liverton Hill

PA reported that she had been told by MKW in April, that a gang had arrived to carry out the repair but the road was too narrow, and they would be applying to have the road closed. She had chased them again just before the meeting to be given the usual excuses but was promised the application would be made. Normally it would take 6 weeks for this to be agreed but they would get this rushed through.....We'll wait and see!!

ACTION PA

Path at the side of the Kings Head

MH reported that he had now received 2 quotes one from A R Cook for £2700 and the other from Penfolds for £1100. It was agreed that MH would obtain 1 more quote and so would KA.

ACTION MH/KA

Map of Parish

Bryan Hillman had asked for a map showing the Parish of Boughton Malherbe, this still needs to be done.

ACTION KA

Potholes Coach Road

Dennis Gower had now confirmed that Coach Road, Popes Hall Lane and Chain Gate Road were all included in a re-surfacing programme due to take place in July/August, which is to run from Platts Heath to the boundary.

ACTION PA

Green Lane/Byway KH632

During April KA sent photographs showing the state of Green Lane, Coach Road and Hazeldene Farm at Pemples Cross to Sandy Bruce-Lockhart and Richard King, this was then forwarded to the Cabinet Member Graham Gibbens, which certainly prompted a long awaited response. Repairs are due to be carried out mid June to mid August and in the meantime a Traffic Regulation Order has been placed restricting users of the Byway because of safety.

Re-surfacing programme

It is doubted very much that any re-surfacing would take place in Grafty Green, this year because of the re-surfacing mentioned above.

Greensand Ridge

PA had obtained a copy of a map showing the Greensand Ridge Special Landscape Area.

Planting a Native Tree

As there was nowhere in Grafty Green for a tree to be planted in memory of Amy Beard KA had come up with the idea that a tree could be planted on the edge of one of his fields on the escarpment which overlooks the Weald. The nephew Tony Spiess had been advised of this and was grateful that we could be of help. He is now to contact Ka direct, but to date KA had not heard anything

Blocked Footpaths

PA had contacted The Rights of Way Officer, he had pointed out that in most cases it would be down to the landowner to remove any dumped rubbish but he would try and help out but needed exact locations. PA asked for details from Leah White who recently replied, this in turn has been passed to the RWO Ian Hayes who as promised to take steps to ensure the paths are open to use.

LOCAL POLICING

Bryan Hillman was not able to attend this meeting because of recovering from his operation but had telephoned the following crimes to PA: -

- 1 Assault Domestic - Grafty Green
- 2 Thefts - Woodcock Lane
- 1 Burglary from a shed - Liverton Hill
- 1 Theft from Motor Vehicle in Yard – Grafty Green

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I would like to begin this year where I usually end by thanking our clerk, Pat. This is because she has really taken charge and has spent time and a great deal of effort into resolving many of our concerns and problems throughout the Parish.

Nothing changes over the years much – As always Liverton Hill continues to take up much of our discussion time and I'm not sure even now that all the water has been tapped and drained away. So the saga will continue, because it is such a dangerous road when there is frost and ice around.

Woodcock lane – The road sign, still in the hedge, I believe.

The drain cover repaired.

The many potholes temporarily filled in!

The Road sign on the village green –still with its finger to Headcorn missing!

The trees at long last have been trimmed, letting more dappled light underneath
The footpath behind the Kings Head is still in a state of disrepair, because we thought that the quote for its repair was too expensive and we intend to ensure that this is done this year.

Yes, we still have the speed limit of 40mph, not 30, as was indicated in KCC letter of Feb 05. Some one has conveniently mislaid all the paperwork, and this letter seems to mean nothing. However, some committee did discuss a proposal to put in hand surveys reduce the speed limit.

The Elmstone Hole grips and ditches remain a challenge for someone to sort out.

It must be mentioned that the smaller roads are still riddled with potholes and these do require constant repairs. Repairs, which are totally inadequate really. However, we have had one lane resurfaced, that is Bowley Lane, and this is now used a racetrack from Egerton through to the A20.

The Byway from Coach road through to Pemples Cross has been closed this week and will be totally rebuilt during June and July.

At the last meeting it was mentioned that a number of local footpaths were blocked. I hope that this has been resolved by now, although after all this rain everything is growing rapidly.

The 59 bus continues to run with our grateful thanks to the input by JC. It's survival, however, revolves around whether, or not, it is used. It has to remain viable.

The policing policy was changed during the year, and we now come within Headcorn's area, under the umbrella of Bryan Hillman and Peter Harding. However, we still contribute to the Len Valley Police Car, so are covered by that as well.

To planning. 16 received

6 granted

4/5 refused

Not in our Parish, but I must say something about Platts Heath Primary School. The KCC Cabinet has asked the AEO to seek ways of reducing school places in the

Maidstone area by 600. The Governing Body released a letter to the parents on Monday, which said that the AEO proposal was that both Platts Heath and Kingswood be closed and that a new school on the Kingswood site under a new name. The Governors and, of course, the Platts Heath village will make every effort for the school to remain at Platts Heath. I do not want to go into any deeper details tonight because the governors are meeting with the parents tomorrow evening to discuss how we go about putting our arguments forward.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Hazel Hill Cottage, Sandway, Maidstone ME17 2BH Ref MA/05/0249/CO3

Listed building consent for the erection of a two-storey extension to the north elevation, plus alterations to layout of windows and doors.
Permission granted on 8th March 2006

Woodcock Farm, Woodcock Lane, Grafty Green, Maidstone ME17 2AY Ref MA/06/0214

Erection of a new livestock building as shown on drawing number 0523/6
Permission refused on 24th March 2006

Broadstone, Headcorn Road, Grafty Green, Maidstone ME17 2AT Ref MA/06/0559

Application for loft conversion including addition of 2 no rear dormers.
PC made no objections per email dated 19th April 2006.
Permission granted 2nd May 2006

Masons Farm, Headcorn Road, Grafty Green, Maidstone ME17 2AP Ref MA/06/0577

Erection of a rear conservatory as shown on the site location plan.
The application was to be reported to the meeting of the Planning Committee on 18th May 2006. The Committee was keen to hear the view of people who have an interest in the application and to hear any views.
As no one from the Parish Council was able to attend a letter was sent via fax on their behalf stating single that our concerns were that 1. The proposed conservatory seems rather large and must represent 50% of the ground floor area of the house. 2. We believe that the conservatory will encroach on the Village Planning Envelope as pointed out in the recent planning refusal for stables. Apart from that the Council had no objections.

Stream Farm, The Barn, Liverton Hill, Grafty Green, Maidstone ME17 2AL Ref MA/05/2006/N

Change of use of existing two-storey barn to a residence, which will be ancillary to the existing farmhouse, including building/engineering works.
Gary Town was sending in an appeal against the Planning Refusal and had asked PA if a letter could be written on behalf of the Parish Council confirming that they had no objections to his planning application. A letter was written on 16th May 2006.

Woodcock Farm, Woodcock Lane, Grafty Green, Maidstone ME17 2AY Ref MA/06/0214

Erection of a new livestock building – re-submission with height reduction
An email was sent on 16th May 2006, pointing out that the Parish Council had no objections to the application going ahead now that the dimensions had changed, but

would like to ensure that the building is only ever used for livestock and if ever a change of use is applied for, it is never granted.

CORRESPONDENCE

M20 Parishes Minutes of Meeting 5th April 2006
Electoral Registration Alteration – Amy Beard deleted Apr '06
Notification of KCC Maidstone Local Board Meeting 12th April '06
Email re M20 re-surfacing Meeting of 19th May at 8pm Lenham Comm Centre
MBC – News Release – Successful prosecutions
MBC – News Release -Maidstone at the top of the list for planning
KCC – Website information from The Local Channel
Medway Valle Countryside Partnership Newsletter
MBC – News Release – Bird Flu
South East England- The South East Plan
MBC- Maidstone Local Development Framework-Sustainable Construction
Supplementary Planning document
MBC – Maidstone Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement
MBC - Forward Plan of Key Decisions
KCC – Doorstep Criminals are operating in your area
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister- Local Authority Byelaws in England: A Discussion Paper
KCC- Message re Avian Flu – Small Flock Database
MBC – Agenda Planning Committee 18th May 2006 re Masons Farm application for a conservatory
Kent Messenger Group – Request for Parish councils to take part in a charity event on July 14th
MBC – News Release regarding the new leader of the Council Eric Hotson
MBC – News Release welcoming the new Mayor of Maidstone on 21st May '06
KCC – Kent Rural Revival
MBC – Recycle for Maidstone
Kent Parish Councils leaflets
Parish News
MBC Maidstone Local Development Framework Sustainable Construction
Supplementary Planning Document
Kent Highway Services – Parish/Town Council briefings
“ “ “ Information leaflet
KCC – Trading Standards Consumer Newsletter
MBC – Maidstone 20/20 – our vision
MBC - Strategic Plan 2006-09
Kent Police Authority – Thank you letter for helping Kent Police stay as a single strategic Force
Kent Police – Notification that Maidstone and Swale police areas are merging
MBC – Agenda for the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board Meeting on 19th April 2006 discussing speed limits which included Grafty Green etc

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FINANCE

Balance in Hand on 21st March '06 **£1747.45**

The following cheques had been issued: - £

300261	Cancelled	0.00	
262	G.Green Village Hall	1100.00	
263	John Collins (Audit)	40.00	
264	Grafty Green G.Club	200.00	
265	Cancelled	<u>0.00</u>	
			<u>1340.00</u>

Balance as at 31/3/06 **£407.45**

Since year-end £1200.00 for Precept had been received plus £82.16 HM Revenue & Customs for re-claimable vat, one cheque was issued and signed to KAPC for £157.85

Closing Balance as at 23rd May **£1531.76**

PA reported that John Collins had audited the Accounts and everything was in order, the forms were now ready to be sent to the Audit Commission for the final Audit. KA reported on the Accounts and signed them as a true and correct record.

PA asked if any one had any objections to her being able to access the Alliance & Leicester Bank account the Internet, this was agreed.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

PA explained that in future, as had happened this year, there would be no need to have 3 Meetings at once. What was required by Parish Council law was that the Annual Parish Meeting (formerly called The Annual General Meeting) be held between 1st March and 1st June each year, and the Annual Parish Council Meeting (formerly called the Annual Parish Meeting) be held any day in May, (in Election year 4 days after the election or within 14 days thereafter) and on 3 other occasions throughout the year. Normally the Minutes of the previous meeting are circulated just before a meeting and because of the time in between it can be difficult to remember what was said, it was agreed that in future all 'Unapproved' Minutes will be circulated as soon as they have been prepared so that any comments can be made as soon after the meeting as possible. Both the Annual Parish Council Meeting Minutes and the Annual Parish Meeting Minutes can be approved at the very next meeting (August).

Proposed Closure of Platts Heath School

As already mentioned by KA in his Chairman's Report the AEO have proposed that Platts Heath & Kingswood Schools are to close and that a new school should open on the Kingswood site but under another name. The Parish Council were surprised and KA suggested that perhaps each Councillor could express their amazement and shock on the proposed closure by each writing a letter. Several questions were asked but KA did not want to elaborate as he wanted parents to be the first to receive this news and allow them to pass their opinions at a meeting which was due to be held in our Village Hall on the next evening Wednesday 24th May.

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Grass Cutting

RT pointed out that the grass at the Triangle near what was the Pig & Whistle was so high that it was difficult to see cars coming either way. It was also pointed out that the verges were also in need of cutting. It would be reported to Dennis Gower.

ACTION PA

Church Road Potholes

Peter Palmer asked if something could be done about the large Potholes in Church Road. I would be reported to Dennis Gower

ACTION PA

M20 Meeting

PA asked if anyone had attended the Meeting about the M20 re-surfacing and wondered if anyone new the outcome, noone had, KA pointed out that it would no doubt be reported on in this weeks Kent Messenger.

Date of the Next Meetings

22nd August 2006
16th January 2007

There being no further business, the meeting closed.

Signed..... Dated