



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH OCTOBER 2019 IN THE OLD SCHOOL ROOM, MARDEN MEMORIAL HALL, GOUDHURST ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

067/19 PRESENT

Cllrs Adam, Barker, Boswell, Brown, Jones, Mannington (in the Chair), Newton, Stevens, Tippen and Turner were present. The Clerk and 13 members of the public were also in attendance.

068/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Cllr Robertson and PCSO Nicola Morris.

069/19 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Register of Interest

There were no amendments to Cllrs Registers of Interest.

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Adam declared an interest in items 075/19 as Treasurer of Marden History Group and item 075/19 as had indicated would be speaking independently at the inquiry. For both items Cllr Adam would leave the meeting.

Cllr Newton declared an interest in item 075/19 as Member of Marden History Group and an interest in item 075/19 as Chairman of Marden Memorial Hall. Cllr Newton would leave the meeting for item 075/16.

Cllr Tippen declared an interest in item 075/19 as Trustee of Marden Memorial Hall and in item 075/19 as Member of Marden Footpath Group and partner would be speaking at the inquiry. Cllr Newton would leave the meeting for item 075/19.

Cllr Stevens declared an interest in item 075/19 as Trustee of Marden Memorial Hall.

Granting of Dispensation

Cllrs Newton and Tippen had received dispensation for Marden Memorial Hall items until May 2020.

070/19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th September 2019 were agreed and signed as a true record.

071/19 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members of the public wished to speak on item 073/19 Allotments and item 078/19 No.28 bus.

Cllr Mannington proposed, and all Cllrs agreed, to bring these two items forward to be discussed prior to item 072/19.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

No member of the public wished to raise anything that was not on the agenda.

EXTERNAL VERBAL REPORTS

County & Borough Councillors

Not in attendance and no reports had been received

Police

Not in attendance and crime reports would be reported at item 073/19(Police Update).

Community Warden

Not in attendance but Cllr Boswell requested that the Clerk write to the Community Warden asking for an update on any work that had been undertaken in the parish recently.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting for the rest of the agenda.

073/19 PARISH MATTERS**Allotments at Highwood Green**

Further information had been received from Redrow which had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting together with an email from the Chairman of the Horticultural Society. Cllrs Adam and Brown updated the meeting on the historic position of why the Parish Council had been reluctant to take on allotments in the past. However, it was felt that the situation had changed significantly and the Parish Council would reconsider the position. The Chairman invited members of the public to speak regarding the current position. Redrow had informed the Parish Council that the land would be transferred over freehold and if this was the case it would therefore be with the parish in perpetuity. It seemed from listening to the members of the public that there was a high level of interest, although this could not be guaranteed until confirmation of the land transfer taking place. Members of the Horticultural Society, Medical Centre and Dementia Group were keen to set up the allotment/ management society. The Clerk was asked to write to Maidstone Borough Council to ascertain whether there would need to be a change of use planning application if the area was split into 12 allotments and a community garden. After discussion Cllrs agreed in principle to take on the freehold and a Joint Working Group would be set up with members of the Parish Council, Horticultural Society, Marden Medical Centre and Dementia Group being involved to discuss the way forward and include a satisfactory legal contract, the setting up of an allotment society and that enough interest was forthcoming. A piece would be added into the next edition of the newsletter and anyone interested would be asked to contact the Chairman of the Horticultural Society.

19:56: 7 members of the public left the meeting.

077/19 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT**Public Transport**Bus No. 28 – Future of the school bus service

Nu-Venture who was providing this service had informed MPC and residents that it would be withdrawing the No28 bus from October half term. KCC had been informed and were currently looking at alternative provision with a tender document due in on 9th October. The Clerk had also written to Helen Grant who was also aware of the situation. The Clerk was asked to chase County Cllr Hotson and to keep pushing for an answer as this was an important service not just for school children but for commuters travelling into Maidstone.

072/19 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES (for information only)**Clean Air Sensors/Diffusion Tubes**

Further to previous correspondence an email had been received back from Maidstone Borough Council stating that there was not much of an air quality problem in rural areas such as Marden (although Marden has not actually been measured itself). MBC's project will run until the end of the year and no new areas have been found to continue. MBC could provide details of a laboratory who may be able to assist and offer advice, however there may be some costs involved. The Clerk was asked to contact MBC asking how they know that there is not an air quality in Marden if it hasn't been measured?

073/19 PARISH MATTERS**Reports from MBC and KCC**

No reports had been received but a joint meeting had been arranged for 7th November with Parish Cllrs, County Councillor Hotson and Borough Councillors.

Police Update/Report from Police ForumPolice Update

10 crimes had been reported since the last meeting which include: 1 criminal damage; 2 burglaries; 1 arson; 1 attempted burglary; 2 theft; 1 theft of a motor vehicle; 1 theft from a motor vehicle and 1 fraud. 3 reports of anti-social behaviour had also been reported. Residents also raised concerns over (a) people being verbally abused and stones being thrown whilst out walking or running; (b) an incident in Thorn Road and a report of animal neglect and were unsure if this had been reported/listed. The Clerk to contact the PCSO for an update.

Parish/Police Surgeries

Next surgery 19th October at Marden Library. Further surgeries planned for 16th November at Marden Memorial Hall and 21st December at Marden Library.

Police Forum

The Clerk had contacted the Chairman of the Police Forum and was informed that the next meeting should be arranged for January 2020.

CommunicationCommunications Sub-Committee

Notes of the meeting of 23rd September had been circulated to all Cllrs. Cllr Boswell wished it minuted the Cllrs thanks to the Deputy Clerk for the work that she had put in with regard to Parish Council communication.

Newsletter

Cllr Boswell had produced the first draft of the newsletter which had been circulated and comments had been returned from Cllrs. The Clerk would update the document and recirculate prior to sending it for production. Printing date was 25th October with delivery.

Social Media & Website

The Clerk was asked to review historic minutes as it seemed as some were either missing or in draft format.

CemeteryExclusive Right of Burial Certificates

1 certificate was signed.

Update regarding Flooding/Water issues

No new updates had been received however there was an invitation to a seminar on 13th November. Cllr Turner was interested in attending.

MPC ITWebsite Accessibility Regulations

The Parish Council website meets regulations, however the content needs to be reviewed and updated. The Clerk will continue to look into this as to what work is involved. SLCC provide webinars on this and the Clerk would look to register to take part.

Continual IT support

Emails and cloud storage - These would be discussed in regard to costings at the Finance meeting on the 15th October. In the meantime, the Clerk was asked to provide a list of all the issues and obtain quotes.

GDPRMPC compliant

All the Parish Council GDPR policies had been updated earlier in the year following taking GDPR in house. Cllrs agreed that the Parish Council was still compliant and that the compliance status would be discussed at the same time as reviewing the policies each year.

Cllr email addresses

Although not covered by any legislation KALC/NALC are advising Councils to consider specific council emails for Councillors. The Clerk would obtain information and report back to Finance Meeting on the 15th.

Parish Council Byelaws

Cllrs agreed to revisit the Open Space Byelaws and the Clerk and Cllr Adam would review previous correspondence to ascertain the current position.

Tree Charter

This item had been deferred from Amenities Committee to allow Cllrs time to read the details as Cllr Adam had reservations that there may be some financial implications. As this was not the case Cllrs agreed to sign up to the Charter.

Marden Neighbourhood Plan Fact Check

Report received from the Independent Examiner. MPC Planning Committee had discussed this at their meeting on 1st October and the proposals were put before Cllrs. It was agreed that all comments would be sent and to include the deletion of Annex 3 maps (SSSIs and Ancient Woodland) and to replace with a list of relevant website so that it stays updated.

Cllrs and members of the MNP Steering Group were very pleased with the positive response from the Examiner and envisaged only a few amendments would be required before going to referendum.

The Clerk was asked to contact MBC to ascertain why the report could not be made public at this stage.

Allotments at Highwood Green

Discussed at start of meeting.

Marden Parish Council Public Consultation/open days

The Clerk had circulated a list of roles for Cllrs to add their names against. Those able to attend had agreed who would lead on each item and that it would be called Open Days rather than public consultation days. The Chairman of MPOG, who was in attendance, was asked whether they would wish to take part in the day – this would be considered.

Marden Infrastructure Spend Plan

The draft document had been circulated to Cllrs and Cllr Boswell asked that bike storage be added to the public transport section. This was agreed and it was proposed that the launch of the public consultation with be at the Open Day on 15th November. The consultation would continue until 5pm on 3rd January 2020. Residents would be asked to view the document and to prioritise their top 5 preferred actions.

074/19 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

Draft Minutes of the Amenities Meeting held on 24th September had been previously circulated and were available on the Parish Council website. The Clerk was still waiting for confirmation of a meeting date regarding the water meter at the public conveniences. Cllr Turner asked to be informed when this had been arranged. An email had been received today from the Cabinet Member for Youth. This would be placed on the next Amenities meeting but highlighted a meeting should be arranged between the Parish Council and the Youth Leader.

Planning Committee

Draft Minutes of Planning Meetings held on 17th September and 1st October had been previously circulated and were available on the Parish Council website. Two consultations had been advertised on MBC website which included Affordable Housing (place on next Planning agenda) and Sports and Leisure (next Amenities agenda).

Finance Committee

No Finance Committee meeting held in September. The next meeting will be on 15th October to start discussing the draft budget for 2020/21.

HR Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee had meet to discuss employees annual leave entitlement. A proposal was put forward for Cllrs to consider MPC following NALC guidelines when setting annual leave entitlement and to place all employees on the annual leave year of 1st January to 31st December. All Cllrs agreed and the Clerk would contact employees to amend contracts accordingly. The HR Policy would also be amended to reflect this.

Other Conferences/Meetings attended:

KALC Clerks Conference – 17th September 2019 attended by Clerk and Deputy Clerk. The Clerk provided a short report on the speakers during the course of the day. Papers were available in the parish office.

KALC Area Committee Meeting – 23rd September 2019 attended by Cllr Mannington and minutes had been circulated to Cllrs.

MBC Planning Training – 23rd September 2019 not attended by MPC

MPC Christmas Meeting – 23rd September 2019 attended by Cllrs Boswell and Tippen and Deputy Clerk – notes of the meeting had been circulated to Cllrs.

Meeting with Fridays – 24th September 2019 attended by Cllrs Newton and Tippen and Clerk. Notes had been circulated to Cllrs and Cllr Newton gave a report following a site visit to the chicken farm at Knoxbridge.

VE Sub-Group Meeting – 27th September 2019 attended by Cllrs Boswell and Robertson and Deputy Clerk. Notes of the meeting had been circulated to Cllrs.

Community Led Housing Event – 27th September 2019 attended by Cllrs Brown and Turner. An update had been provided at the last Planning Committee meeting.

Marden Rural Services Centre Meeting – 5th October 2019. Cllr Tippen reported that this was a very productive meeting. Notes would be circulated once all the proposals discussed had been put together. This would then be taken to the Planning Committee meeting on 22nd October. A meeting had also been arranged with Cllr Burton on 16th October to discuss further.

Conferences/Meetings for the coming months

MBC Planning Training – 10th October 2019 – Cllrs Brown and Turner to attend.

KALC Finance Conference – 12th October 2019 – The Clerk to attend

TfSE Drop In Event – 22nd October 2019 – Cllr Barker to attend

KALC Transport Conference – 26th October 2019 – Cllrs Boswell and Tippen to attend

Assets for Community Value Meeting – 29th October 2019

075/19 CORRESPONDENCE**Marden Parish Church Magazine**

For information. The Men's Breakfast at West End Tavern had a speaker talking about Homelessness. Cllr Brown thought this may be of interest to the Parish Council and Cllr Turner agreed to attend.

21:15: Cllrs Adam and Newton left the meeting whilst the next item was discussed.

Letter from Marden History Group and information from Kent Archives regarding scanning of historic MPC Minutes

Following receiving information from Kent Archives regarding the minutes of the Parish Council stored at the Archive Centre Marden History Group had written to the Parish Council for financial assistance. The History Group had asked for MPC to cover the costs from Kent Archives (£35 per hour for preparing minutes for transport) and for the use of a scanner at Smarden Heritage Centre. The History Group would cover the costs of transport to and from Smarden and undertake the work. Following the work being completed the Parish Council would be provided with a memory stick with a copy of all the minutes. Cllrs agreed to cover the costs up to a maximum of £150.

21.17: Cllrs Adam and Newton returned to the meeting.

21:17: Five members of the public left the meeting

KALC – Brexit Bulletin

For information

Request from Marden Memorial Hall for replacement of lighting in John Banks Hall damaged by Youth Club.

Two quotes had been received for replacement lighting for consideration. After much discussion as to which quote the Hall Committee wished the Parish Council to consider for payment it was proposed that this would be deferred to the Finance Committee on 15th October when the budget could be viewed for agreement of expenditure.

MBC – Homeless Outreach Team
for information

21:29: Cllrs Adam and Tippen left the meeting whilst the next item was discussed.

The Planning Inspectorate – Public Path (part) Extinguishment KM250

Inquiry date 15th April 2020 - information circulated to Cllrs prior to meeting. After discussion it was proposed, and agreed, that as the Parish Council had submitted a written statement no witness would be provided at the inquiry.

21:32: Cllrs Adam and Tippen returned to the meeting.

KALC Parish News

September 2019 emailed to Cllrs prior to meeting – noted

Not on agenda

Invite from Marden Parish Church to the Remembrance Day Service on 10th November.

076/19 FINANCE

Bank Statements

Revenue Accounts

Nat West: as at 2nd September 2019 - £37,590.33

Unity: as at 30th September 2019 - £68,555.83

Capital Accounts

Santander: as at 22nd July 2019 - £46,795.66

Payments for Approval

Electronic Payments

Maidstone Borough Council – By-election costs £3,055.99

Ian Jones – Ashes plot preparation x 2 £120.00

Ian Jones – Southons Field/Public Conv. locking £200.00

Viking – Public Conv. supplies £47.95

Citizens Advice – outreach session £50.00

Homeleigh – Top Soil for Southons Field entrance £58.60

Cam Tech – batteries for external alarm £24.02

HMRC – PAYE/NIC - £2,408.07

Employees – October salaries - £4,999.67

Castle Water – Cemetery Water supplie £17.14

RJP Cleaning – Public Conv. cleaning £625.00

Graham Carey – Grounds Maintenance £588.00

Viking – Office supplies £50.26

Memorial Hall – Hall hire and Office Rent £536.00

Stanleys Garage – Vehicle fuel £67.92

PJK Littlejohn – External Audit 2018/19 £720.00

Marden Business Forum – Advert - £60.00

Total: £13,628.61

All invoices were agreed and Cllrs Newton and Tippen to authorise payments.

Cheque payment:

Cash - Office cleaning and bin bags £70.00

Agreed and cheque duly signed.

External Audit 2018/19 – completion of limited assurance review.

The external audit had been received back from PKJ Littlejohn Auditors. Cllrs accepted the report and the Clerk advised that the information had been placed on the website and notice boards before the conclusion date of 30th September.

Clerk – SLCC Annual Membership.

Cllrs agreed payment of annual membership of SLCC for the Clerk of £247.00. This would be added to the list of invoices at the next available meeting.

Purchase of 2019 edition of The Clerk Manual.

Cllrs agreed the purchase of the updated Clerks Manual at a cost of £47.50.

2020/21 Draft Budget proposals.

Cllrs were asked to consider future capital expenditure for 2020/21. Any recommendations should be with the Clerk before 15th October in readiness to submit to the Finance Committee budget meeting.

077/19 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT**Highways**Bollards at Chantry Road

The positioning of bollards at the junction of Chantry Road had been reported to Kent Highways as they had been installed in a way that stopped pushchairs and wheelchairs being able to pass. Kent Highways have raised a job to remove but the Clerk is unsure whether they will be placed in the correct position.

Public TransportBus No. 28 – Future of the school bus service

Discussed at start of meeting.

Provision of Bus Stops at Church Green.

An email had been received from Nu-Venture regarding the positioning of the bus stop outside the butchers. There was always a difficulty of pulling in to this bus stop due to parked cars and this resulted in the bus having to stop on Church Hill. A request for bus clearway signage/yellow box had been made and Cllrs agreed for this to be added to the Highways Improvement Plan and submit to Kent Highways.

Other Issues raised by Cllrs

Cllr Adam reminded the meeting that the Leaf Fall Timetable had commenced on Sunday 6th October therefore some train times had changed.

Cllr Adam asked for an item be placed on the next Amenities agenda to discuss single use plastic.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.17pm

Date: 12th November 2019

Signed:

Cllr Lesley Mannington

Marden Parish Council Chairman

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