



Prior to agreement of the minutes on 8th September 2020 an amendment was made to item 275/20 (Local Plan Update). The minutes would be signed at the first available face to face meeting of the Council.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 25TH AUGUST 2020 COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak all Parish Council meetings will be held remotely via Zoom virtual conferencing until further notice.

268/20 PRESENT

Cllrs Barker, Boswell, Mannington, Newton, Robertson, Stevens, Tippen and Turner. The Clerk and two members of the public were also in attendance.

269/20 APOLOGIES

Cllrs Adam, Brown and Jones had given their apologies.

270/20 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

County Councillor Hotson had requested an amendment to his report (1st paragraph; 3rd line: delete “but 2021 they expect to have a shortfall of £17m” and replace with “but 2021/22 presently shows a shortfall in excess of £100m”. Cllrs agreed this amendment and following changes made the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th August 2020 were agreed as a true record but would be signed at the next meeting when the Full Council convenes in person.

271/20 COUNCILLORS INFORMATION

Registers of Interest

There were no changes to Cllrs Registers of Interest.

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Boswell declared an interest in item 274/20 as a neighbour of Southons Field. Cllr Stevens declared an interest on item 274/20 (Allotments) as resident of Highwood Green. Cllr Barker indicated that, dependant on items raised he may need to declare an interest in regard to open space – he would make the Clerk aware at the time if this was the case.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation on any item on this agenda.

272/20 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

The two members of the public wished to speak on item 275/20 (Local Plan) and would be given the opportunity to ask questions at this item.

The meeting was adjourned for the following item

PUBLIC FORUM

The members of the public did not wish to raise anything in the public forum

The meeting was reconvened for the remainder of the agenda.

273/20 CLERK'S REPORT

Report had been sent to Cllrs prior to the meeting and a brief update was given. Report included annual leave dates booked, changing rooms cleaning and risk assessment, road closures and update on website accessibility.

274/20 AMENITIES**Update on any open space issues (Southons Field, Playing Field or Cemetery)**Caretakers to do list

Items completed: notice board erected at The Old Post Office, strimming at Southons Field, playing field mown. There has been some vandalism of the wetpour at the playing field play area which the caretaker will look to repair.

The Clerk reported that she had heard from the CCTV company stating that Golding Homes was in agreement for a camera to be installed on one of their buildings overlooking the playing field. The Clerk was arranging a meeting to discuss further.

Allotments

Cllr Tippen informed the meeting that a complete list had been received from the Horticultural Society but there was a query regarding the water supply. A response on this was awaited. The Clerk had contacted Redrow who are still looking into the amount for the commuted sum but had raised the question of whether the Parish Council would take on the car parking spaces as well as the allotment site. Cllr Tippen also reiterated to the Horticultural Society that an Allotment Association must be in place before MPC reach an agreement to take over the land ownership.

Cllr Stevens expressed an interest as a resident of the estate and gave a background of the current situation regarding the car parking being available to visitors but understood that Kent Highways, the management company (HML) or Redrow would not be maintaining it – discussions were still underway with Redrow and the residents. Cllrs took this on board and after taking advice from the Clerk Cllr Stevens was removed to the waiting room whilst Cllrs discussed in more detail.

Cllr Stevens was moved to the waiting room

Cllrs discussed the implications of taking on the car parking area, mainly in regard to future maintenance and usage. It was proposed, and unanimously agreed, that MPC will only agree to taking on the allotment site within the fenced area.

A group of Cllrs would meet, via Zoom, on 1st September to discuss the land transfer. It was noted that Redrow would need to amend the deed of agreement (S106) in regard to the transfer so the change to the car parking could be included in this.

*Cllr Stevens returned to the meeting***Southons Field**

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk were due to sort out the pavilion on Friday and install the storage units. Any rubbish would be left to one side for the caretaker to collect.

Playing Field

Following the cleaning of the changing rooms the Clerk had sent the football club a copy of the risk assessment and stated that a copy of the MMFC risk assessment and insurance document must be received prior to any further games being placed. The Clerk would monitor the Football Association website in regard to further amendments for use of changing facilities.

Signage at Playing Field

Cllr Jones had asked for this item to be discussed following the last meeting. However, Cllr Jones had sent around an email suggesting that this be deferred until further notice. Cllr Barker asked for the Community Warden to be contacted in regard to additional dog fouling signage.

OtherLitter Pick

The Clerk had obtained information from Keep Britain Tidy website which details maximum number of people who can litter pick – being 6 in a group. Maidstone Borough Council is also working with these guidelines and will only lend out a maximum of 6 pieces of

equipment. Cllrs discussed this and agreed, due to the current circumstances, to cancel the arranged litter pick on 17th October and an article would be placed in the next newsletter suggesting that if residents wish to litter pick they can do so under MPC's insurance provided they adhere to the risk assessments and are in groups of a maximum of 6.

275/20 PLANNING

Planning applications

20/503418/OUT – Pond Cottage, Maidstone Road

Outline application for the creation of 1 bungalow dwelling (all matters reserved except for access, layout and scale)

Cllrs had viewed the application prior to the meeting and although appreciate that there is already a bungalow south of the development site felt that this was not compliant with Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan Policy DM30. Therefore, they recommended refusal.

MBC Planning Decisions

20/501982/FULL – Murzie Farm, Hunton Road – granted

20/502602/FULL – Milebush Farm, St Annes Green Lane – granted

20/502603/LBC – Milebush Farm, St Annes Green Lane - granted

MBC Local Plan Update

Forthcoming MBC Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Meetings

Future meetings of the SPI Committee are due on 8th and 22nd September and 7th October.

The agenda and papers for these meetings should be available on MBC's website the week prior.

MPC's Plan of Action

Amendment (in italics - agreed at meeting held on 8th September 2020)

Marden Planning Opposition Group had contacted the Parish Council raising questions on the future SPI meetings:

As I'm sure that you are aware the September SPI meeting will shortly be upon us and following the release of the evidence the decision meeting is in October SPI.

(1) I wanted to ask what the councillors plan of action was relating to the above timescale and whether any lobbying of the SPI committee members and officers was planning to be done by Marden Parish Council?

(2) Secondly, I wonder whether we would be permitted to have a small section in the next newsletter - obviously we would submit any text for prior approval?

(3) Furthermore, I wondered if you would be able to ask councillors whether Marden Parish Council would be willing to commit funds to a planning solicitor in order to provide a professional Reg 18 response if the decision does not go in our favour?

In response:

(1) Marden Parish Council has not changed its stance on its response to the Call for Sites, in particular to site 309 - Strategic expansion of Marden. A thorough response was sent back to MBC in January 2020 which said in conclusion:

“The site is of a size and location that would not allow for suitable mitigation schemes to be physically or financially implemented which would adequately mitigate the impacts as identified above. The site is therefore neither sustainable development nor deliverable within the timescale of the revised Maidstone Local Plan and should not therefore be included.”

To make any further comment at this stage would be premature and could risk achieving exactly the opposite of what it would be intended to achieve. Until the papers relating to the Local Plan review are published for MBC's September Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee meeting and the Parish Council has reviewed them no further comments will be made.

Marden Parish Council will carefully review the information and listen to the debate at the September SPI meeting and will decide on any further action at the meeting on 15th September. A further meeting may be required on 29th September following the 2nd SPI meeting.

It would be agreed at the meeting on 15th September who would attend the October SPI meeting to lobby the Committee.

(2) Cllrs agreed that an A4 flyer could be inserted into the newsletter. A copy of the Newsletter Policy and dates would be sent to MPOG for information. As the newsletter is due to go to print after the final SPI meeting additional information may be available to be added by the Parish Council.

(3) MPC had not budgeted for any legal advice in regard to this and Cllrs were very hesitant to commit to anything at this stage. At this moment in time Cllrs do not want to commit until at least further information has been received and taken on board.

Other Planning Issues to report

There were no other planning issues to report.

276/20 UPDATE ON ANY MEETINGS HELD / DUE TO BE HELD

6th August – Christmas lighting – A meeting had also been arranged with a lighting supplier to discuss locations and costings. Cllrs agreed to look into providing new Christmas lights and the Clerk would report on the budget available.

13th August – Meeting with PCSO – notes circulated. The Clerk would contact the PCSO with an update in regard to the CCTV.

14th August – Meeting with Jones Homes representative (Appledown Grange). Cllrs who had attended the meeting felt that Jones Homes representative was very engaging and open to suggestions in regard to boundary treatment. The Clerk was asked to add this and the possibility of a boundary gate to the next agenda. A further meeting with Jones Homes was due in November.

277/20 FINANCE

Invoices for Payment

Electronic Payments

RJP Cleaning – Public Conv. cleaning £635.00

RJP Cleaning – Changing Room cleaning £350.00

Marden Memorial Hall – office rent £295.00

Pitney Bowes – Franking Machine Rental £15.54

Alison Hooker – S/Field storage and visors £442.99

Kerry Underdown – Office cleaning £20.00

Total: £1,758.52

Invoices were approved and Cllrs Mannington and Tippen would authorise.

278/20 HIGHWAYS

The Clerk had received several road closures and notifications of road works which had been listed on social media.

279/20 OTHER URGENT PARISH MATTERS:

For Decision

Community Infrastructure Levy

Update from meeting held on 18th August. A copy of the document had been circulated to Cllrs requesting that any additional items which they would like added to be sent to Cllr Tippen along with justification etc. Cllrs proposed that a public consultation be held later this year/early next dependant on when the library reopened.

Cllr Tippen asked that this item be renamed “MPC Infrastructure Spend Plan”.

Cllrs agreed that this document would help form the basis for budgeting purposes in years to come.

Section 106

The Clerk reported that she had received confirmation from MBC that an error had been made. The money requested for outdoor gym, CCTV, litter bins and benches would be forthcoming and that the money taken for The Cockpit Play Area would be reimbursed. The Clerk would continue to monitor.

Autumn MPC Newsletter

Cllr Boswell had started to update the next edition of the newsletter and would liaise directly with the Deputy Clerk for editing purposes.

Assets of Community Value

Cllrs Boswell and Turner agreed to revisit the work required and to discuss further in the New Year.

For Discussion / InformationMBC Business Rate Grant

The Clerk had applied for the grant and was awaiting confirmation of payment.

Part I of the meeting was closed and all the following was discussed under Part II Confidential meeting.

21.00 Two members of the public left the meeting

280/20 HR ISSUES

Cllrs had agreed, in line with MPC's Policy, to award a bonus to both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk in recognition of the extra hours and hard work undertaken during the CoVid-19 pandemic.

Other Issues Raised by Cllrs (not confidential):

Cllr Newton reported that he had written to County Councillor Hotson following the last meeting and had received a response – this had been circulated to Cllrs following the meeting. Cllrs requested that an Enforcement issue be raised under confidential items at the next meeting.

Cllr Adam would be asked to review the Local Plan FAQs

A copy of the statement at item 275/20 (Local Plan) be added to social media.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm

Date:

Signed:

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The next meeting of the Full Council will be held on 8th September 2020