



**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL ON
TUESDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2021 HELD IN THE OLD SCHOOL ROOM,
GOUDHURST ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

093/21 PRESENT

Cllrs Adam, Barker, Besant, Boswell, Burton, Gibson, Newton, Robertson, Tippen (in the Chair) and Turner were present. The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and two members of the public were also in attendance.

094/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were given by Cllr Stevens and Borough Councillor Russell.

095/21 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Register of Interest

There were no registers of interest

Changes to Declarations of Interest

There were no changes to declarations of interest

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for granting of dispensation

096/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th November 2021 and the Extra Ordinary Full Council Extra Ordinary meeting held on 7th December 2021 were agreed and signed as true records.

097/21 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Members of the public did not wish to speak on any item on the agenda.

The meeting was adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

One member of the public raised two issues:

Concerned that a brick wall along Maidstone Road was not safe – The Clerk was asked to contact MBC Building Control to investigate.

Marden at Christmas on Saturday 4th went very well and wished to congratulate all concerned.

EXTERNAL REPORTS

County Councillor Report

Not in attendance

Borough Councillors Report

Not in attendance – written report received which would be given at item 099/21

Police Report

Not in attendance – crime figures would be given at item 099/21

Community Warden Report

Not in attendance

The meeting was reconvened to discuss item 098/21 onwards.

098/21 CLERK'S REPORT

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting which included: Deputy Clerk and Admin Assistant were now working from home with the Clerk working from the office. This would be reviewed in the new year or following Government guidance; staff annual leave over the Christmas/New Year break; update on Fingerposts (given at item 103.21); CCTV meeting held (report would be sent to Amenities); The footpath at The Parsonage had been named Simmons Way and Redrow had agreed to install a memorial bench; Redrow were also considering the installation of a notice board at the open space area of The Parsonage; confirmation had been received from MBC that although the litter bins on The Parsonage development had "Maidstone Borough Council" on them they were, in fact, owned by Redrow and a cost was paid to MBC for emptying; MBC had reported back on the request for litter bins at Windsor Meadow (report to Amenities) and the Tax Base for 2022/2023 had been received in readiness for the budget meeting in January.

099/21 PARISH MATTERS

Reports from MBC and KCC

A written report had been received from Borough Cllr Russell which included: a vote had been passed not to extend the consultation period for the Local Plan Review; Cllrs and residents had met with Redrow regarding the boundary treatments on Vicarage Field development; Cllr Russell was due to meet with MBC in the New Year regarding CiL and S106 and would arrange a meeting with Marden PC following this; Still no date for Chainhurst Chicken Farm application to go to MBC Planning Committee and a vote had been passed at an Extraordinary Full Council Meeting of MBC held on 8th December for 4 yearly elections which would bring an end to the elections by thirds. The first election for this will be in 2024.

Cllr Russell was happy to be contacted with any issues and wished Marden PC a Happy Christmas and apologies that she couldn't be in attendance for this meeting.

County Cllr Parfitt-Reid had agreed to grant £500 towards the side of the library work.

Police Update/Report from Police Forum

Crime Figures

5 crimes had been reported since the last meeting which included: Theft of motor vehicle – found located in Chart Sutton, vehicle involved identified and enquiries ongoing; Robbery at Shop – till stolen, CCTV images of offender and media appeal sent out; Theft from Shop – items stolen and thrown, images obtained and investigation ongoing; Burglary – garden fence climbed, property entered and several items stolen, enquiries ongoing; Burglary – property broken into and jewellery stolen, enquiries ongoing.

Other Police Issues

No anti-social behaviour had been reported through 101. Vehicle seized last night possibly in relation to recent burglaries, enquiries ongoing.

PCSO Nicola Morris is now back working in the village.

Communication

Next meeting of the Communications Sub-Group is on 24th January 2021

Marden Flooding

Following an extraordinary amount of rain last week the drain at Maynards footpath overflowed again. Southern Water was notified and the Clerk had logged the issue. Cllr Newton had received reports of surface water flooding in Maidstone Road possibly from a blocked gully /drain. Although Kent Highways had visited the site previously the issue still remained. The Clerk would contact Kent Highways for an update.

Cemetery

Exclusive Right of Burial Certificates

Two ERB Certificates were signed for new burials and interment of ashes

Climate Change, Biodiversity and Carbon-Neutrality

Cllr Boswell had written a Climate Report to respond to KALC's request from Parishes as to what actions they are taking. Cllrs were in agreement that Marden PC should consider having

a separate Sub-Group to take this further. It was also on the agenda for the Marden Neighbourhood Plan meeting in January.

Marden Dementia Group Update

Cllr Boswell reported that the Dementia Group was holding a Latin music event at Marden Village Club on 22nd January.

Maidstone Lions – Recycling

Clerk has received an email from Maidstone Lions regarding recycling of items, mainly of which are already collected by Marden Eco-Hub, other than hearing aids and milk bottle tops. The Lions were asking for collection points within the village and for someone to deliver them to a member of the Lions once a number have been collected.

Eco-Hub – Locations

The Clerk had been in correspondence with the member of the Eco-Hub who runs the recycling which is currently collected in boxes at P&P Signs. Unfortunately, the area is not large enough for the number of boxes they use for collecting individual items. The resident is still happy to sort and deliver to the relevant charities but had asked the Parish Council if it knew of any other locations.

Both the above two items were discussed together:

It was proposed that a request be sent to the Marden Business Forum to ask if they were aware of any location that could be used. If a new site came forward the Clerk would then put the Eco-Hub in touch with Maidstone Lions to consider helping with the collection of the items.

It was known that some organisations in the village also collected for charity and Cllrs felt that it would be good if this was publicised more. It was agreed that this would be done once a new location was found.

Update on Marden at Christmas event

The Clerk provided a written report on Saturday's event and a full report including costings will be provided to the Amenities Committee meeting in January.

The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Admin Assistant were thanked for all the hard work that went into arranging this day.

Diffusion Tube Monitoring

Latest results have been received from MBC and had been circulated to Cllrs. The results showed very low readings for both locations (Primary School and High Street) and were a long way from the threshold when action was required. It was very unlikely that Marden would reach this threshold and after discussion it was agreed that the agreement with MBC would be discontinued. This would be reviewed periodically if circumstances changed.

100/21 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

Draft Minutes of the Amenities Meeting held on 23rd November 2021 had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

Planning Committee

Draft Minutes of Planning Meetings held on 16th and 23rd November and 7th December had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

Finance Committee

Draft Minutes of the Finance meeting held on 30th November had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars attended

Cemetery Sub-Committee – 23rd November

HR Sub-Committee – 25th November

Tree Charter Day - 27th November. The planting of the memorial trees at Southons Field was very well attended but due to bad weather only a couple of families joined Cllrs with the planting of the saplings on the new developments.

20.10 – Member of the public left the meeting

KALC Area Committee meeting – 29th November 2021 – Cllr Tippen reported on this. The main item of discussion was the Code of Conduct, which at the moment does not support Clerks who are bullied by Cllrs.

Future Events Conference – 2nd December – Cllr Boswell had attended and had circulated a report prior to the meeting.

Marden at Christmas – 4th December

KALC Parish Liaison Meeting – 6th December 2021 – attended by Cllr Tippen who had circulated a report prior to the meeting.

MBC Planning Training – Countryside Policy – 13th December – attended by Cllr Boswell who provided a short report to the meeting.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

MBC Planning Training – Design and Sustainability – 10th January 2022

Marden Neighbourhood Plan meeting – 15th January 2022

MBC Planning Training – Ecology to Include Biodiversity – 7th February 2022

Communications Sub-Group – 24th January 2022

101/21 CORRESPONDENCE

MBC Housing Survey 2021-2026 – closing date 31st December 2021

As the Housing Strategy document was not easy to find and Cllrs had not had chance to read it in full it was agreed to defer to the Planning Committee meeting next week.

MBC Parish Liaison Newsletter

Circulated to Cllrs. Item on tree planting was to be forwarded Marden Wildlife Group and Marden Business Forum

Letter and Statement from Friends of Marden's Heritage

A letter and statement from Friends of Marden's Heritage informing Marden PC that unfortunately they were having to disband in February 2022. Cllrs were sorry to see this charity fold.

Marden Parish Church Magazine – November and December editions for information

The Clerk – November edition for information

Clerks and Councils Direct – November edition for information

102/21 FINANCE

Bank Statements at date of meeting:

Revenue Accounts

Nat West - £43,365.86

Unity - £46,387.14

Capital Account

Santander - £71,585.26

Payments for Approval

Electronic Payments

Community Heartbeat – defib pads - £55.20

Paul Waring – mowing of playing field - £80.04

Ian Jones – unlocking/locking toilets and Southons Field - £200.00

Kerry Underdown – office cleaning - £40.00

Employees – Salaries –

TOTAL

Other

Internal Audit Interim Report

This had previously been circulated to Cllrs and reported to Finance Committee. Clerk provided an update on recommendations laid out by the Internal Auditor including:

Page 3 – Maintenance of Accounting Records and Bank Reconciliations: Cllrs would consider a CCLA Deposit Fund account and a Finance meeting in March;

Page 5 – Assessment and Management of Risks: The Financial Risk Assessment, and all other risk assessments and policies, would be reviewed by Council and Committees in the New Year for ratification by Full Council in March;

Page 6 – Review of Income: the memorial form dated 28th April 2021 was filed for information only, no details of memorial, stonemason or costs had been received to date; monies outstanding from interments had been paid in October (Internal Audit visit only viewed accounts from April to September).

Cllrs agreed the Clerk's report and confirmed receipt of the Internal Auditor report. The Clerk was thanked for her work on this.

Nat West Bank Mandate

The Clerk had received an electronic form to amend the mandate. Cllrs agreed to delete six ex-Cllrs from the account and add Cllrs Barker, Besant, Burton, Gibson and Stevens. The Clerk provided forms for each new Cllr to complete and would upload this to the electronic form once received. Cllrs Tippen and Turner provided signatures to confirm the deletion of 6 Cllrs and addition of 5 new Cllrs.

Involve

A request had been received for a donation towards community transport

Cllr Robertson proposed that £100 be donated, Cllr Gibson seconded and all Cllrs agreed for the donation to be made.

The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Member of the Public left the meeting for the next item

Staff Additional Payments

Chairman updated the meeting on the discussion held at HR Sub-Committee to recommend an unconsolidated bonus to both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk for the work they have undertaken over the past year. The amount was agreed and this would be added to the December salary.

The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Member of the Public returned to the meeting

103/21 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Highways

Highways Improvement Plan

The survey responses had been sent out by Administrative Assistant along with those received on the Infrastructure Spend Plan. A good response had been received to the point that unfortunately only 100 responses could be viewed due to the fact that the free option of the survey had been used. To receive the remainder, it would cost £45 or £360 for the year. Cllr Burton proposed that £45 should be paid to receive the remainder but Microsoft Forms should be looked at to undertake surveys in the future. Cllrs agreed and a payment of £45 would be made.

Fingerpost Signs

Cllr Besant had provided the Clerk would a contact in Maidstone who may be able to assist with finding a company to undertake the work. This company had provided the details of a blacksmith in Sutton Valence who would be interested but would like to undertake a site visit. Cllr Turner agreed to meet and the Clerk would arrange a convenient date and time.

Development Highways Conditions

Update received from Kent Highways and had been circulated to Cllrs. A meeting would be arranged with County Cllr Parfitt-Reid to discuss further.

Other Highways Issues

Concern had been raised by a resident regarding speeding traffic in Howland Road. The Clerk would advise resident to contact County Cllr Parfitt-Reid and the Clerk would also contact Kent Highways to see if there were any suggestions of what could be done.

Public Transport

Cllr Adam had taken part in a telephone market survey with a company contracted by South Eastern. Cllr Adam was able to raise key points of (1) improve services to Marden with a full timetable being offered; and (2) restart regular meetings with the Station Manager.

Cllr Adam also reported that a new timetable had started on Sunday which went through to May 2023 – this may change depending on numbers of users increasing over coming months.

Other**(Not on Agenda)**

Cllr Boswell asked if there was any update on allotments. The Clerk reported that the contact at Redrow had left and a new person had taken over. The Clerk and Chairman were putting together a timeline which would be sent to Redrow and a meeting would then be arranged to discuss further.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.52pm

As this was the last Full Council meeting before Christmas the Chairman wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Date: 14th December 2021

Signed:

Cllr Kate Tippen, Chairman
Marden Parish Council
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Marden

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