



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL ON TUESDAY 6TH APRIL 2021 HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

461/21 PRESENT

Cllrs Adam, Barker, Boswell, Jones, Mannington (in the Chair), Newton, Robertson, Stevens and Tippen were present. The Clerk, County Councillor Hotson and six members of the public were also in attendance.

462/21 APOLOGIES

Cllrs Brown and Turner had given their apologies.

463/21 PARISH COUNCILLOR DETAILS

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Boswell declared an interest as a neighbour of Southons Field (although no item was due to be discussed on this)

Cllr Tippen declared an interest as Trustee of Marden Memorial Hall (wished to raise a question to County Cllr Hotson)

Cllr Jones declared an interest in item 467/21 (Playing Field CCTV) as a neighbour of Marden Playing Field.

Changes to Register of Interests

There were no changes to Cllrs Register of Interests.

Granting of Dispensation

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

464/21 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th March 2021 were agreed as a true record. They would be signed at the next face to face meeting.

465/21 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

One member of the public wished to speak on item 472/21 as a resident of Howland Road. The Chairman proposed, and Cllrs agreed, that this item would be taken after the External Verbal Reports.

The meeting was adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

One member of the public wished to speak on behalf of WeLoveChainhurst in regard to the amendments due on Reed Court Farm planning application. The Chairman invited the resident to speak to Cllrs regarding this.

The Group continues to refuse the proposal, although some small areas of improvement had been made to the amendment received. However, there were still major concerns including ecology, flooding, highways and planning. The Group feels that only the minimum amount of changes are being made including extending the buffer area from the woodland to the boundary.

A briefing meeting will be held with consultees and Marden Parish Council is invited to attend. Cllr Tippen was happy to listen in but could not make comment.

EXTERNAL VERBAL REPORTS

County and Borough Councillors

No Borough Cllr was in attendance.

County Cllr Hotson spoke to the meeting raising the following:

He was disappointed to see the further response from the Cabinet Member regarding the reopening of Marden library together with the letter from Helen Grant MP. There has been no sign of a date for opening in the near future.

He had received numerous telephone calls and emails regarding the traffic concerns on Howland Road and would listen in to the discussion later in the meeting.

7.40pm – Cllr Newton arrived at the meeting.

County Cllr Hotson had written again regarding the opening of the Children's Centre but had not yet received a response. He would chase again following this meeting.

Cllr Tippen updated County Cllr Hotson on the issue regarding the use of the Memorial Hall in that the hall was looking to reopen to hirers from 17th May and therefore would not be available for secure storage for the Children's Centre. County Cllr Hotson was asked to push further for the opening of Marden's Children's Centre.

Police

PCSO Nicola Morris was not in attendance. However, there was a lot of concern of motorcycles using farmland around the parish and youths using catapults. The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting with the PCSO.

Community Warden

Not in attendance

The meeting was reconvened for the remainder of the meeting.

As proposed above item 472/21 regarding Howland Road would be brought forward:

Howland Road

The Chairman invited the member of the public to speak:

The resident had lived on the narrow bend in Howland Road for 26 years and has experienced his property being damaged at least 3 times and his vehicle, parked on the road, 19+ times. There is an increasing concern about the high number of construction traffic using this road which causes the properties to shake/vibrate and residents are unsure of the damage it is doing to the structures. The resident reported that it is frightening sometimes with the amount and size of vehicles using Howland Road with some days up to 50 lorry movements carrying construction materials to developments.

County Cllr Hotson was aware of the increase in large vehicles in recent years especially going to construction sites, although no firm evidence to show it is Russet Grove. However, there is no dedicated lorry route through, into or out of the village. County Cllr requested that a site meeting with the County Cllr, Highways representatives and the Parish Council to discuss what can be done/achieved and needs an evidence base to take this further. He reported that Borough Cllr Blackmore was speaking with the Conservation Officer at Maidstone Borough Council as to what can be done and to be asked if a vibration recording device could be used to provide evidence.

Marden Parish Council would do all it can to ensure a satisfactory ending is reached. It is Kent County Council (as Highway Authority) and Maidstone Borough Council (as Planning Authority) to action anything. Cllrs agreed to help wherever they can and to push the correct authority into action.

8.00pm – One member of the public left the meeting.

Cllr Tippen suggested that the Clerk makes contact with Countryside Developers on the build timescale of Russet Grove and what number of vehicles are expected daily to and from the

site. This was agreed and the Clerk would make contact following her leave. Road closures around the parish haven't helped with the diversions taking vehicles along Howland Road. Cllr Newton reported that bollards had been used in other areas of the parish but could not see this being a viable option. He had spoken to some construction workers at Russet Grove who indicated that work could continue until 2022.

8.10pm – County Cllr Hotson and one member of the public left the meeting.

466/21 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk had circulated her report prior to the meeting. The Clerk reported on staff annual leave booked for the next couple of months; action taken since the last meeting (letters to Helen Grant MP); training undertaken; a form had been received regarding the criteria for new grit bins which would be added to the next Full Council agenda and End of Year Accounts procedure.

467/21 PARISH MATTERS

Reports from MBC and KCC

Nothing further to add from County Cllr Hotson's report.

Police Update/Report from Police Forum

Crime Figures

No crime figures received.

Other Police Issues

No other Police issues raised.

Communication

Newsletter

Next newsletter was due in June 2021.

Social Media

Update from Communication Sub-Committee held on 19th March 2021 and minutes of this had been circulated to Cllrs.

Marden Assets of Community Value

The Clerk is due to submit the application for The Unicorn but was waiting for a plan to be drawn up on Pear Technology by Cllr Turner. Cllr Barker was still investigating the ownership on The Stilebridge.

Marden Flooding

Cllrs thanked the two residents who had made comments on the draft flooding report. The Clerk would now send to Max Tant at Kent County Council requesting a meeting.

MPC Meetings – April/May and after 7th May 2021

Agreed/Proposed meetings:

13th April – Annual Parish Meeting (virtual)

20th April – Planning Committee (virtual) and Finance Committee (to agree 2020/21 accounts)

27th April – Amenities Committee (virtual)

4th May – Full Council (virtual) (to conduct normal Council business and to delegate powers to Officers/Emergency Committee)

11th May – Annual Parish Council Meeting (non-virtual) – may have to be held in Memorial Hall car park depending on outcome of legislation amendments for virtual meetings.

MPC Policies, Risk Assessments and Terms of Reference

All Committees had reviewed their policies and risk assessments and Full Council policies had been circulated to all Cllrs to view and make amendments. Cllr Tippen asked that the Travel and Subsistence Policy be reviewed if changes are made to the amount claimed for lunch etc. The Virtual Meetings Policy would also be reviewed once the outcome of the legislation hearing was known. Cllrs agreed all amendments and the Clerk would update these and place on website.

Council and Committee Terms of Reference were also agreed.

Parish Elections 2021

Closing date for nominations is 4pm on 8th April. Parish Council should be notified on 9th April as to whether an election will be held.

Playing Field CCTV

Still waiting for a response back from Golding Homes

Highwood Green Allotments

Draft documents sent to Allotment Association – waiting for their response. The Clerk was asked to contact the Allotment Association asking for their response by 4th May. Cllr Turner would be asked to liaise with Cllr Adam regarding the commuted sum.

MPC Administrative Assistant Role

Previously discussed by HR Sub-Committee and Finance Committee. The Clerk circulated to Cllrs draft job description, person spec and salary details prior to the meeting. Cllrs agreed that this position would be advertised in the Summer newsletter and adverts put in notice boards and on social media. Interviews would take place late July/early August with a start date of 6th September.

468/21 PLANNING

Planning Applications Received

21/500079/FULL – 3 Clover Drive

Erection of a pre-built summer house in rear of garden (retrospective)

Cllrs raised no objection.

21/500243/FULL – 7 Pilgrim Close

Erection of single storey rear extension (amendment to the site location plan)

Cllrs raised no objection.

21/501189/FULL – Milebush House, Maidstone Road

Removal of roof over living room, kitchen and utility and erection of replacement part double pitched, part flat roof, including insertion of 3 rooflights, 1 roof lantern and alterations to fenestration.

Cllrs raised no objection.

21/501208/FULL – Southons House, Maidstone Road

Erection of a single storey timber conservatory to rear.

Cllrs raised no objection.

469/21 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Amenities Committee

Draft Minutes of the Amenities Meeting held on 23rd March had been previously circulated and were available on the Parish Council website. The Chairman of Amenities Committee reported that the contractor employed to install the outdoor gym would also look at the play area gates to reduce the noise. Site meetings were taking place for open spaces on Friday 9th and Saturday 10th April.

Planning Committee

Draft Minutes of Planning Meeting held on 16th March had been previously circulated and were available on the Parish Council website.

Finance Committee

No Finance meeting had been held.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars attended (all meetings virtual unless otherwise stated)

15th March – Communications Sub-Committee – minutes circulated to Cllrs.

16th March – Planning Committee – minutes circulated to Cllrs.

22nd March – KALC Area Committee – attended by Cllrs Mannington and Tippen. Minutes circulated to Cllrs.

23rd March – Amenities Committee – minutes circulated to Cllrs.

24th & 25th March – Securing External Funding – attended by Cllrs Boswell and Tippen.
Some useful information received together with information on accessing a funding system, although there were some costs involved.

29th March – Memorial Hall AGM – Cllr Newton had been re-elected as Chairman.

30th March – Document Management Webinar – attended by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk.
This was run by a company using Microsoft 365. Both clerks would look into this following the elections.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars forthcoming

9th & 10th April – Amenities Site Meetings

14th April – AGAR training

6th May – Elections

470/21 CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence received.

471/21 FINANCE

Bank Statements:

Revenue Accounts

Nat West (as at 3rd February 2021) £23,935.60

Unity (as at 6th April 2021) £52,954.02

Capital Account

Santander (as at 18th January 2021) £47,088.33

Payments for Approval

Electronic Payments

RJP Window Cleaning Services – Public Convenience cleaning - £635.00

Employees – April salaries - £5,227.76

Stanleys Garage – vehicle fuel - £132.04

Ian Jones – Southons Field/Public Convenience locking – £200.00

Kerry Underdown – office cleaning - £40.00

HMRC – April PAYE/NIC - £1,359.47

Graham Carey – Grounds Maintenance - £450.00

KALC – AGAR Training - £42.00

KALC – Communication Training - £42.00

Maidstone BC – Changing Rooms rates - £354.29.

TOTAL: £8,482.56

Cllrs agreed all payments. Cllrs Boswell and Mannington would authorise payments on Unity.

472/21 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Highways

Highways Improvement Plan

Jennie Watson of Kent Highways had offered a virtual meeting to discuss this document.

Cllrs Adam, Newton and Tippen together with the Clerk would attend.

Cllr Tippen reported that, along with the Clerk, a dropped kerb survey had been undertaken and a report would be provided shortly.

Fingerpost Signs

No further information received. Cllr Turner would be asked to speak with East Peckham Parish Council again.

Howland Road

Email received from residents – property/vehicle damaged by HGVs. Item discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

Public Transport

Cllr Adam reported that there was still a reduced timetable Monday to Friday and this will become more of a problem once people start returning to work. Cllr Adam would investigate when the timetable is due to be reviewed again.

Cllr Barker asked the Clerk to chase regarding the height barrier and whether it was still required.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.11pm

Date:

Signed:

Cllr Lesley Mannington

Chairman

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