



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12TH
SEPTEMBER 2023 AT THE ALLENS, ALBION ROAD, MARDEN COMMENCING AT
7.30PM

053/23 PRESENT

Cllrs Adam, Besant, Boswell, Newton and Robertson. The Clerk and one member of the public were also in attendance.

054/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Gibson, Rabot, Stevens, Summersgill, Tippen and Turner had given their apologies.

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman Cllr Robertson proposed and Cllr Newton seconded that Cllr Besant be elected to take the Chair for this meeting.

055/23 COUNCILLOR INFORMATION

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Changes to Register of Interest

There were no changes to Registers of Interest.

Granting of Dispensation

There were no requests for dispensation.

056/23 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th August 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

057/23 IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS INVOLVING PUBLIC SPEAKING

Member of the public did not wish to raise anything on the agenda.

The meeting was adjourned for the following items:

PUBLIC FORUM

Member of the public did not speak in the public forum.

EXTERNAL REPORTS

County Councillor Report

Not in attendance.

Borough Councillors Report

Not in attendance.

Community Warden Report

Not in attendance.

The meeting was reconvened to discuss item 058/23 onwards.

058/23 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk had submitted her report to Cllrs prior to the meeting which provided details of staff annual leave/flexi, new footpath at Marden library, meeting with Changing Room architect and update on footpath linking Windsor Meadow and The Parsonage.

059/23 PARISH MATTERS**Reports from MBC and KCC**

No reports had been received from Borough or County Cllrs.

Police Update/Report from Police Forum

The link had been provided to Kent Police website regarding crimes committed in the parish.

CommunicationNewsletter

Cllr The Clerk reported that at the recent Communications Sub-Group meeting Cllrs reviewed the quotes for the next 3 years of newsletter printing. The preferred contractor and costs would be submitted to the Finance Committee meeting for budgeting. Cllrs agreed to this proposal.

Marden Flooding

Nothing to report.

CemeteryExclusive Right of Burial Certificates

One certificate was signed by Cllrs.

Allotments

The Clerk reported that the officer working on the Allotment site on behalf of Redrow had left. The Clerk had contacted the new officer who reported that he needed to look at the current status and would report back as soon as possible. The Clerk had updated the timeline and would send this to him next week if no update received.

Neighbourhood Watch Advisory Group

The Clerk obtained details of contacts which has been passed to Cllr Stevens. However, Cllrs agreed that if no details came forward this item would be removed from the agenda until such time information was available.

MPC 5-Year Action Plan

Cllr Boswell requested that a few amendments be made – these were noted and Cllrs agreed to adopt the revised document.

MPC Risk Assessments

Cllrs agreed to adopt changes to MPC Financial Risk Assessment following receipt of the MPC Debit cards.

The Clerk informed the meeting that she had contacted the insurance company to ascertain if usage of these cards were covered on the premium. Once confirmation received these cards would be used for future MPC purchases.

MPC Policies

Cllrs agreed to adopt the amended Communication Policy & Procedure document proposed by the Communication Sub-Group.

Cllrs agreed to adopt the new Debit Card Usage Policy which had been proposed by the Finance Committee following receipt of the MPC Debit cards.

Local Council Award Scheme – Gold Level Criteria

Cllrs considered criterias (4) and (6) and agreed for several Cllrs to meet to draft statements following the Clerk speaking with other councils to see what was involved.

060/23 COMMITTEE REPORTS**Amenities Committee**

There was no Amenities Committee meeting in August.

Planning Committee

Draft Minutes of Planning Committee meetings held on 15th August and 5th September 2023 had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

Finance Committee

Draft Minutes of Finance Committee meetings held on 29th August 2023 had been previously circulated and available on the Parish Council website.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars Attended

18th August – Meeting with Kent Police. The Chairman and Clerk had met with the two new PCs for the ward. One, PC Johnson, had worked in Marden before and knew a lot of the area

and residents. Unfortunately, they were currently covering Staplehurst and Headcorn as well as Marden ward so was stretched but it was hoped that additional cover would be employed in the future. The Clerk had email addresses but was advised that all residents should report issues etc to 101.

22nd August – Contingency Planning Sub-Group. Cllrs had met to discuss possible contingency actions for the future.

24th August – Nature Prescribing Project Meeting. Cllr Boswell updated the Council on this which is a joint project with Marden Wildlife and Marden Medical Centre.

31st August – Communications Sub-Group. Notes previously circulated.

11th September – Kent Men of Trees visit. Cllr Boswell met representative of Kent Men of Trees and the volunteer tree warden. KMoT was impressed by the number of trees within the parish.

12th September – Meeting with architect re changing rooms. Cllr Besant met with the architect who took measurements of the building and would send plans once completed.

Conferences/Meetings/Webinars/Events forthcoming

21st September – Play Scheme Meeting

21st September – Community Forum meeting

21st September – Christmas meeting

2nd October – Golding Homes Charter signing. Cllr Boswell and the Clerk to attend. The Clerk would sign the Charter as Officer of the Council.

4th October – Conservation Area meeting with MBC.

12th October – Nature Prescribing Meeting

17th October – Environmental Sub-Group

18th October – KCC Rail Summit.

061/23 CORRESPONDENCE

Marden Parish Church Magazine – September edition

Noted

Community Warden Consultation – closing date 3rd October 2023

Family Hub Services Consultation – closing date 13th September 2023

Emerging Local Transport Plan Consultation – closing date 18th September 2023

Cllrs discussed all of the above three consultations and the Clerk would submit the responses.

062/23 FINANCE

Bank Statements:

Revenue Account

Nat West: £57,979.20

Unity: £68,210.91

Capital Account

Santander: £71,929.68

Payments for Approval

Electronic Payments

The following invoices were submitted for payment.

Kent County Council – photocopier rental - £108.02

SLCC – Clerk's Subscription - £337.00

Castle Water – Public Conv. Water supply - £8.27

Kent County Council – Christmas lights permit - £37.00

Unipar Services Ltd – Speed Watch battery - £104.40

Marden Memorial Hall – Office rent, refuse and cleaning - £345.15

Graham Carey- contract ground maintenance - £540.00

Total: £1,479.84

Cllrs agreed payments and Cllrs Boswell and Newton would authorise on Unity.

Completion of Limited Assurance Review

The Clerk had received the audit from Mazars, External Auditors, for financial year 2022/23 and no issues had been flagged.

Cllrs accepted the Conclusion of the Audit for 2022/23 from the External Auditors and noted Section 3: External Auditor's Report and Certificate on Page 6 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

The Clerk confirmed that this had been advertised on notice boards and MPC website.

HugoFox – MPC Website Provider

The Clerk had received information from Hugofox in regard to changes to their fee structure. Currently the "Bronze" level is free but from next month there will be a charge. The Finance Committee proposed to stay with "Bronze" level until it can be discussed in more detail at the budget meeting.

It was agreed that the Clerk would submit the direct debit request for payment.

063/23 HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Highways

Highways Improvement Plan

Letters have been sent to residents of Albion Road and Goudhurst Road regarding proposed double and single yellow lines and the Clerk would prepare a report following the close of the consultation. This would be reported to the November Full Council meeting.

Cllrs Boswell and Robertson asked that footways be included in the Highways Improvement Plan. It was proposed that the Clerks would do an audit of the village footways and report back.

Fingerpost Signs

The contractor had contacted the clerk to say that work would commence December/January on the broken fingerpost sign. Part funding was being obtained from County Councillor. It was agreed that the contractor would organise the groundworks to be done.

Public Transport

KCC Rail Summit – 18th October: Cllr Adam to attend.

Marden in Bloom and Community Payback Team were looking to tidy up the flower beds at Marden Station. The Clerk was in communication with Southeastern in regard to any funding available.

The Autumn leaf fall timetable starts on 9th October (early morning trains 3 minutes earlier).

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.03 pm

Signed:

Cllr Kate Tippen, Chairman

Date: 12th September 2023

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