



Cowden Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF COWDEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14 MAY 2018 AT COWDEN MEMORIAL HALL

PRESENT: Councillors: Valerie Bishop, Glyn Henley, Andrew Saunders, Lorraine Millgate and Stephen Boakes. Also present: Caroline Bizios (Parish Clerk), Councillor Matthew Dickins (Sevenoaks District Councillor), Councillor Peter Lake (Kent County Councillor) and four members of the public.

Public Question Time:

Jenni Hallett, a member of the public, addressed the meeting in respect of parking issues in Chantler's Mead, particularly when multiple clubs and organisations use the Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground at the same time. Ms Hallett reported that there had recently been a particular problem which had caused significant chaos within the village and expressed the view that the Parish Council should co-ordinate the fixtures of sports clubs using the Recreation Ground so that parking can be co-ordinated. Other members of the public present who reside in Chantler's Mead, expressed their frustration that on occasions, they have been unable to gain vehicular access to their properties or leave their properties as a result of the number of cars parked. The issue that had recently arisen had been exacerbated by a large group of ramblers using the Memorial Hall facilities. Ms Hallett suggested that a grassed area in Chantler's Mead could be used as a square for parking.

Councillor Saunders advised that the Parish Council had previously discussed ways to facilitate communication between the Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground users in order to minimise parking issues. Councillor Millgate agreed to contact the sports clubs to explain the parking issues and to request their co-operation in terms of co-ordinating parking.

Councillor Dickins acknowledged that parking was an ongoing issue and posed two questions to the meeting. Firstly, if parking areas could be introduced, would the intended residents use them and, would residents actually walk to and from the parking areas as people liked to park near to their property.

Referring to the suggestion that the grassed area in Chantler's Mead could be turned into a parking area, Councillor Dickins confirmed that that particular area of land was owned by Sevenoaks District Council. Councillor Dickins discussed the practical and economic factors associated with laying membrane to create a parking area with the costs probably having to be met by residents or West Kent Housing. It was Councillor Dickins' view that the area in question would not create many parking spaces and that the gain versus associated costs would be minimal.

Councillor Dickins went on to discuss whether there were options available which would alleviate the parking issues. He raised the option of the introduction of some form of restriction on parking, however, this would potentially only serve to reduce the availability of parking spaces and simply displace parking issues to other areas of the village. Councillor Dickins also discussed whether there was an option to introduce a residents parking scheme. Such a scheme would, however, only be as good as the enforcement measures that exist. There would not be a traffic warden making regular visits to enforce the scheme. Councillor Dickins reminded those present that there is no legal basis or right for allocated parking on the public highway. Anybody is permitted to park on the public highways as long as an obstruction is not being caused.

Finally, Councillor Dickins stated that he believed that the best that could be hoped for is improved communication with those who use the local area with residents at the heart of that communication.

Councillor Dickins agreed to look at the options within Sevenoaks District Council as to how parking could be improved in Chantler's Mead and to start communications with residents of Chantler's Mead.

Ms Hallett suggested that some of the trees close to the Memorial Hall could be cut down to make more parking spaces and that a village meeting should be convened to discuss parking issues within the village.

Mr Jones, a member of the public, addressed the meeting regarding the Village Christmas Get-Together event and asked whether the Parish Council would consider making another contribution to the event this year. Members advised Mr Jones that his request would be included for consideration on the agenda at the Parish Council meeting to be held in June.

Councillor Lake advised that emergency teams in the area have been tasked with pothole repairs and will be laying tarmac in the local area. Councillor Lake asked the Parish Council if it could provide him with a view of roads within the Parish that were in need of repair.

In terms of education, Councillor Lake reported that 2,000 more applications to attend secondary school had been received than last year. In respect of healthcare out of hours GP services will be impacted as a result of the closure of Sevenoaks cottage hospital. Medical assistance will be provided out of Pembury and Maidstone hospitals.

Councillor Lake also reported that increased charges may be introduced to dispose of building material at tips. Councillor Millgate suggested that this would only encourage more fly-tipping.

Councillor Lake asked the Parish Council if it would consider whether it would have any grant requirements for the current financial year. Members agreed to consider its requirements and advise Councillor Lake.

The Clerk asked Councillor Dickins if he could ask Sevenoaks District Council Planning team to confirm in writing that the Parish Council was permitted to use the Community Infrastructure Levy funds it had received towards the cost of the footpath repairs on the Recreation Ground. Whilst, a verbal in principle, decision had been provided, the Parish Council wished to have this confirmed in writing.

Councillor Dickins advised that there was still no update in respect of planning enforcement matters at Waystrode Manor or the drainage issue in the High Street. Councillor Henley confirmed that there is an ongoing drainage issue with flooding continue to occur when it rains. Councillor Dickins agreed to pursue this matter.

In respect of planning matters, Councillor Dickins advised that Robert Piper (Sevenoaks District Council) would be pleased to meet with Members to discuss Planning matters within the Parish. The Clerk to provide Councillor Dickins with suggested dates for the meeting.

Finally, Councillor Dickins advised that Sevenoaks District Council had secured a prosecution for "fly-tipping".

Note: The above notes do not form part of the Minutes.

MINUTES:

1. Election of Chairman

Resolved: Councillor Henley was unanimously elected as Chairman. Proposed by Councillor Saunders and seconded by Councillor Millgate.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman

Resolved: Councillor Saunders was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman. Proposed by Councillor Boakes and seconded by Councillor Millgate.

3. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved: The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9 April 2018 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

6. Clerk's Report

The Clerk's Report was circulated and noted.

7. Highways

Highways Report previously circulated and noted.

The Clerk to provide Councillor Lake with a list of roads within the Parish that are in need of repair as a result of potholes. These road are:

Cowden Road (from High Street to Kitford Bridge)

Cowden Pound Road

Spode Lane (Waystrode Manor entrance towards Gilridge)

Blowers Hill (Cow Lane to Cowden Station)

8. Aircraft Noise

Councillor Saunders to provide the Clerk with wording for a response to the Flight Performance Team at Gatwick Airport Ltd regarding the data obtained from the noise meter.

9. Financial Matters

(a) Accounts for Payment:

Resolved: Payments approved as set out below:

| Payee | Description | Amount (£) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Mrs C Bizios | Reconciliation Payment & Expenses | 516.44 |
| HMRC | Tax & NI | 352.91 |
| Cowden Memorial Hall | Hall Hire | 36.00 |
| Sevenoaks District Council | Rent Picketts Mead(Allotments) | 5.00 |
| KALC | Annual Subscription | 371.98 |
| Mr K Robertson | Internal Audit Services | 99.55 |
| TOTAL | | 1381.88 |

- (b) **Budget Report:**
Budget Report circulated and noted.
- (c) **Annual Audit - 2017/2018 Financial Year:**
- (i) **Report from Internal Auditor:**
The Parish Council's internal auditor had undertaken the audit of the Parish Council's accounts and financial controls and had raised no matters of concern.
 - (ii) **Approval of Annual Governance Statement:**
Resolved: Annual Governance Statement approved and signed-off by the Chairman.
 - (iii) **Approval of Year-End Statement of Accounts:**
Resolved: Year-End Statement of Accounts approved and signed-off by the Chairman.
 - (iv) **Year-End Bank Reconciliation:**
Resolved: Year-End Bank Reconciliation approved and signed-off by the Chairman.
- (d) **General Data Protection Regulation:**
- (i) **Formal Appointment of Clerk as Data Protection Officer:**
Resolved: The Clerk was appointed as the Data Protection Officer for the Parish Council.
 - (ii) **Approval and adoption of Privacy Policy:**
Resolved: The Parish Council's Privacy Policy adopted and approved by Members.

A copy of the Privacy Policy to be posted on the Parish Council's website. Work to be undertaken to define and develop the procedures supporting the Privacy Policy.
 - (iii) **Adoption of GDPR Reporting Process:**
Work to be undertaken to define the reporting process. In the meantime the Privacy Policy guides to the Information Commissioner's Office for reporting issues.
 - (iv) **Data Audit:**
Data Audit to be undertaken.
- (e) **Future Grant Requirements:**
Members to consider the Parish Council requirements for projects requiring granting funding for discussion at the Parish Council meeting to be held on 11 June.

10. Recreation Ground

Councillor Millgate agreed to undertake the internal safety inspection of the Children's Play Area on the Recreation Ground prior to the annual RoSPA safety inspection.

The Clerk reported that payment had been received from Cowden Lawn Tennis in respect of fees due for use of the Recreation Ground.

11. Allotments

The Clerk reported that there is one new allotment holder, Mrs Celia Berry.

The Clerk to send a further reminder letter to the one allotment holder whose rental payment remains outstanding.

12. Burial Ground Matters

The Clerk reported that herself and Councillor Bishop had undertaken an initial tidy-up in the New Burial Ground. There is, however, still a considerable amount of rubbish clearance required on and around the spoil heap which will require overgrowth to be cleared before it can be accessed and removed. Councillor Henley agreed to inspect this with the Clerk.

The Clerk also reported that there is what appeared to be used bedding on the stone bench in the Old Burial Ground. The Clerk would monitor this over the coming days to assess the situation and would make arrangements to remove and dispose of the bedding if it remains in situ.

13. Asset Repair and Maintenance

Following confirmation of receipt of Kent County Council grant funding into the Parish Council’s bank account, an order for the new notice boards will now be placed.

14. Correspondence Received

Email correspondence had been received from James Castle advising the Parish Council of The Great War Walk, an event organised by the Cowden, Hartfield and District Branch of The Royal British Legion to mark the Centenary of the Armistice. It is intended that the walk will be between the War Memorials at Cowden, Holtye, Hartfield and Colemans Hatch on Saturday 20th October 2018, starting at Cowden at 11am, finishing at Colemans Hatch at about 3pm.

15. Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies

Councillor Saunders has provided Openreach with dates for the meeting it has proposed. A date for the meeting is still to be agreed.

16. Matters for Reporting or Inclusion on Future Agenda

Village Christmas Get-Together Event
Future Grant Funding Requirements

17. Dates of Future Parish Council Meetings

Monday 11 June
Monday 9 July
Monday 10 September

Meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Chairman:

Date: