



Cowden Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF COWDEN PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 8 MAY 2017 AT COWDEN MEMORIAL HALL

PRESENT: Councillors: Valerie Bishop, Glyn Henley, Stephen Boakes, Lorraine Millgate and Andrew Saunders.

Also present: Caroline Bizios (Parish Clerk), Councillor Matthew Dickins (Sevenoaks District Councillor) and Mr Stewart Fry (representing Mr John Jarrett).

Public Question Time:

Councillor Dickins reported that parking charges have been implemented at Station Approach and there are now more cars parked on Station Road. Councillor Dickins continues to chase Southern Rail for a response to his correspondence from last year.

In respect of planning matters, Councillor Dickins advised Members that the applicant for the current planning application in respect of development at “Betty’s Meadow” had submitted further comments to Sevenoaks District Council.

Councillor Dickins asked Councillor Saunders if he was aware of any locations, other than the already identified areas of Moat Lane, Basings and Crippenden, that needed to be included in initiatives to improve broadband speeds. Councillor Saunders advised Councillor Dickins that he is still in communication with Kent County Council regarding the implementation of broadband speed improvements to those areas identified within the Parish.

Mr Stewart Fry, representing Mr John Jarrett, addressed Members on behalf of the Sports Association. The Sports Association wishes to ask the Parish Council if it would be possible to construct a small wooden storage unit behind the Pavillion on the Recreation Ground. The erection of such a storage unit would require planning permission. The Sports Association had funds available to cover the costs. Whilst, in principle, Members had no objections to this request, they would require visibility of detailed drawings of the storage facility before formal approval could be provided. Mr Fry agreed to draw up the relevant plans and forward these to the Parish Council for consideration.

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 Bishop 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 Bishop.

3. Co-option of Parish Council Member

Agenda item to be deferred to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

4. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

5. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Boakes is now a cheque signatory for cheque payments made by the Parish Council. In view of the fact that Councillor Boakes is the Honorary Treasurer for the Memorial Hall Committee, he will not sign cheques payable from the Parish Council to the Memorial Hall Committee.

6. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved: The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 10 April 2017 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

7. Clerk's Report

The Clerk's Report was not available for the meeting.

8. Highways

Highways Report:

Highways Report circulated and noted. The Clerk to check if the Highways Report has been updated as there had been no new faults logged within the Parish since the end of March.

The Clerk was requested to log a highways fault in respect of road erosion on Blowers Hill near to Station Cottages.

9. Aircraft Noise

The Clerk was requested to contact Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) to follow-up the Parish Council's request to be provided with the latest data from the noise meter situated within the Parish. GAL had also advised that it would provide the Parish Council with a copy of the noise climate report that had been produced by its independent acoustic consultant. This had not yet been provided and the Clerk was requested to make a further request for the report.

A reminder to residents to be included in the next edition of "Cowden Matters" of the importance of individual residents contacting GAL directly to register their concerns in respect of aircraft noise as the number of individual complaints received by GAL are the key indicator used to assess the impact of aircraft noise upon local communities.

Members agreed that the Parish Council would not be renewing its subscription to Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC).

10. Financial Matters

(a) Accounts for Payment:

Resolved: Payments approved as set out below:

Payee	Description	Amount (£)
Mrs C Bizios	Reconciliation Payment & Expenses	387.88
HMRC	Tax & NI	262.43
Sevenoaks District Council	Rent Picketts Mead Allotments	5.00
Eden Valley Museum Trust	Annual Subscription	75.00
Cowden Memorial Hall	Hall Hire	48.00
TOTAL		778.31

(b) Year-End Audit

(i) Approval of Annual Governance Statement:

Resolved: Annual Governance Statement approved and signed-off by Chairman.

(ii) Approval of Year-End Statement of Accounts

Resolved: Year-end Statement of Accounts approved and signed-off by Chairman.

(c) Budget Report:

Budget Report circulated and noted. It was agreed that £200 from last year's budget be carried forward to this year's Grant budget line as cheque payments to Kent Air Ambulance and EVTS were raised for approval at April's Parish Council meeting but should have been accounted for from last year's budget.

(d) Asset Register:

The review of the Parish Council's Asset Register remains ongoing.

(e) Village Christmas Get-Together Event:

Members considered the request from Mr Jones for a financial contribution from the Parish Council towards to the cost of holding the village Christmas Get-Together Event. Members agreed and approved a contribution of £100 towards the cost.

Resolved: Financial contribution of £100 to be made to organisers of the village Christmas Get-Together Event.

(f) Provision of Bulk Waste Lorry:

Councillor Dickins had provided the Parish Council with the costs associated with the provision of the bulk refused freighter. The Clerk will contact Councillor Dickins to request clarification in respect of any options available to share the route with other parishes.

11. Recreation Ground

(a) Play Area Fencing:

Members agreed the Parish Council's requirement in terms of the colour of the new fencing to be erected around the Children's Play Area on the Recreation Ground. Bow top metal fencing with two matching gates in colour blue to be ordered as per quotation received from Kevin Agate on 11 November 2016 for £5642 plus VAT.

12. Allotments

The Clerk advised that Kevin Agate has been requested to undertake repairs to the fence/gate post at the entrance to the allotments from the High Street and to provide a quotation in respect of the cost of a new kissing-gate at the Church Street entrance.

13. Burial Ground Matters

The Clerk had received an email from Mr Laine requesting information from the burial records. Mr Laine was undertaking an audit of the graveyards in Cowden. Mr Laine’s email contained a significant amount of information which the Clerk had not had the opportunity to fully review. The Clerk would review this in due course. The Clerk was requested to ask Mr Laine what the purpose of his audit is and to make clear that there would be a cost to him in respect of any searches of the burial records undertaken by the Clerk.

Council Boakes reported that the standpipe and tap in the graveyard owned by the Church had now been fitted.

14. Asset Repair and Maintenance

Councillor Millgate commented on the condition of the footpath running from the Memorial Hall to the gated entrance of the Recreation Ground and expressed concerns in respect of its poor condition. The Clerk to contact Smithers & Sons to discuss possible options for repairs.

15. Correspondence Received

The Clerk had received email correspondence from Edenbridge Voluntary Transport Service (EVTS) advising the Parish Council that Kent County Council (KCC) would be withdrawing the grant funding that it receives. The grant funding received from KCC is approximately £4500 and is crucial to the running of services it provides. EVTS has asked local Parish Councils whether they would consider increasing the amount of grants approved to EVTS in future years. Members agreed to raise this matter with Peter Lake when he formally takes office as a Kent County Councillor.

16. Reports from Councillors on Outside Bodies

Councillor Saunders reported that he had collated documents relevant to Sevenoaks District Council’s planning policy which may be of assistance to Members when considering planning applications and making recommendations. Councillor Saunders agreed to provide copies of the documents to all Members.

17. Matters for Reporting or Inclusion on Future Agenda

Asset Register
Grant Requirements

18. Dates of Future Parish Council Meetings

Monday 12 June
Monday 14 July

Meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Chairman:

Date: