

**MINUTES OF THE OTHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY, 12 MARCH 2018 AT 7.45 PM  
IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs R. Gray (Chairman); S. Trench; V. Moon; R. Gardner; K. Hipkins; G. Newton (OPC & MBC); H. Knottley; Cllr G. Cooke (KCC); 2 members of the public.

**1 APOLOGIES:** Cllrs Drake (personal reasons) & Gandotra (family commitment).

Apologies and the reasons for absence were noted and accepted.

**2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEM** – None received.

**3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were no declarations.

**4 RECEIVE POLICE REPORT:** Reports are obtained from e-watch.co

Otham Street - Burglary of dwelling  
Between 4pm on Thursday 1 Feb and 8am on Friday 2 Feb a garage at a residential property was broken into. Nothing appears to have been taken.

Lambert Drive – Theft of pedal cycle  
Between 12.01am on Sunday 11 Feb and 3.41pm on Saturday 17 Feb a pink and black child's pedal cycle was stolen from the rear garden of a property.

The council were also made aware of incidents have taken place in Green Hill and Church Road. It is believed that nothing was taken from either property as the intruders were disturbed.

Cllr Newton offered to facilitate a Neighbourhood Watch group but does not wish to be involved with the running of the group.

It was noted that joy riders are causing a nuisance in the Aldi car park on the Sutton Road.

PCSO Zoe Turner will be replacing PCSO John Boyd in the next couple of weeks.

**5 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**  
A resident enquired about the repair of pot holes. (See Item 8).

**6 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2018:**  
The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings & were duly signed by Cllr Gray.

## **7 RECEIVE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT:**

Bramley update. MBC are following the due process of enforcement. Neighbours are requested to report any incidents of harassment to the police.

MBC achieved a £640,000 one off payment for schemes in Maidstone. This has mainly been allocated to officers for projects, but £225,000 remains and will be divided up into pots for distribution.

## **8 RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:**

Kent has been awarded a government pilot scheme to retain the business rates. KCC will be using it for Social Services to 'narrow the gap'.

A bus review is still ongoing but nothing is happening in this area now.

An additional 2.4 million has been found to assist with pot holes. This gives an overall sum of approximately £8 million for repairs. Contractors that carried out the previous find and fix repairs will be used.

In addition to the above, officers carry a ready mix in their cars to fill holes temporarily, until they can be permanently filled.

Following a FOI request by Cllr Cooke, it was confirmed that prior to Christmas a meeting had taken place between MBC & Golding Homes to discuss the Garden Village proposal for 5,000 homes. It is understood that this project may form part of the Local Plan review.

KCC is undertaking a feasibility study for the Leeds/Langley relief road.

## **9 HIGHWAYS: Traffic Calming: White lining – Church Rd Speed Reduction – Sutton Rd.**

Cllrs Gray & Weeks (DPC) attended a meeting with Cllr Cooke and Susan Laporte on 31 January when the above issues were raised.

- **Reducing the speed limit along the A274 Sutton Road**

The speed limit is currently 40 mph. However, as this was set prior to the new housing, the parish councils would like the limit reduced to 30 mph. Cllr Cooke advised the meeting that he has made a formal request for a reduction and he is prepared to put his weight behind the parishes' request. Clerk to write to Roger Wilkins, Head of Highways, to request the above is implemented down to Langley Church.

**ACTION: Clerk**

- **White lines on the edge of Church Road.**

Cllr Cooke to obtain a couple of quotations for white lines on the edge of Church Road.

**Option 1.** Lines to run from White Horse Lane to St. Nicholas Church.

**Option 2.** Lines to run from Little Squerrys to St. Nicholas Church.

It was made clear that the parish(es) will have to pay for the new lines, but it will need to be clarified who will be responsible for their maintenance – KCC

or OPC/DPC – and how long they can be expected to last will need to be established?

**ACTION: Cllr Cooke**

## **10 COMMUNICATIONS/RAGSTONE/NOTICE BOARD:**

**Communications:** Cllr Trench continues to update the website & Facebook.

**Ragstone:** Thanks to all that helped with delivery. Once the survey data has been processed, another Ragstone will be delivered explaining very clearly that a Neighbourhood Plan can help to protect what is left in the parish.

**Notice Board:** It is understood that the new board is complete. Cllr Gardner to progress.

**ACTION: Cllr Gardner**

## **11 FINANCE.**

### **11.1 Statement of Account:**

**RESOLVED:** The council approved the following payments.

KCC Re. Kent Pension	Employer/Employee Pension (Jan)	121.08
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses (Jan)	415.92
Paul Waring	Village Green	1041.72
KALC	GDPR Training (S. Trench & Clerk)	54.00
KCC Re. Kent Pension	Employer/Employee Pension (Feb)	121.08
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses (Feb)	386.51
MBC	Empty Litter Bin (Jan/Mar)	72.00
NatWest	Safe Custody Hold	25.00

#### **Receipts**

NatWest	Interest - Business Reserve Acct	0.60
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**Balance of Current Account: £14,654.33 credit, after all cheques sent/rec'd**

**Balance of Business Reserve Account: £4,904.50**

**Total Funds: £19,558.83**

**11.2 Update Bank Signatories:** Following several phone calls and visits to NatWest by the Clerk and Cllrs Gray, Trench and Moon, they are all now understood to be authorised signatories.

### **11.3 Donation Requests:**

**Five Acre Wood School** – It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to donate £100 in accordance with LGA 137. **RESOLVED**

**Heart of Kent Hospice** - In view of concerns regarding the high level of staffing involved with fund raising, it was felt inappropriate to make a donation at this point.

### **11.4 Annual Subscriptions: SLCC/KALC/CPRE/ACRK**

With the exception of KALC as the renewal has not yet been received, the above subscriptions were **RESOLVED** as follows.

SLCC – 1/3 contribution @ £55/CPRE @ £36/ACRK @ £50

**11.5 Other Matters to Report:** Due to the changes taking place this year for Smaller Authorities with a total income/expenditure of less than £25,000, the option to request an exception certificate was discussed.

Based on current figures, the council will fall into the above category and can be certified as exempt\*. **This means that a limited assurance review will not be required.** However, a review can be requested for a fee of £200 (in these circumstances the council should not request exemption).

\*There is still a requirement to publish various documents on the website/notice board(s) i.e. publishing the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.

It was **RESOLVED** that providing the council falls within the correct parameters, it will be certified as exempt at a meeting after 31 March.

## **12 PLANNING APPLICATIONS: RECEIVED/GRANTED: Archaeological Survey (West of Church Rd) Update.**

As agreed, the Clerk made enquires when the survey will be undertaken on Church Road

The responses from DHA, MBC and KCC are noted below.

**DHA.** On the archaeology, like all of the technical reports (ecology, contamination, highways etc) these will be undertaken by the expert consultants appointed as we prepare any application. We have not got to that stage yet so these have not been commissioned. We are hopeful the Section 106 for Bicknor Green will be signed shortly which will trigger the start of the preparation work on this site but it is difficult to put an definitive timetable on as yet. Rest assured this will certainly be undertaken and we appreciate the local knowledge passed on which we will make sure reaches the consultant.

**MBC:** We would normally require an archaeological field evaluation survey to be carried out if the application site was in area defined as archaeological potential. This would normally come in at the outline stage and be assessed by the archaeological officer at KCC who will provide comment on the detail. You can view our on-line proposals maps on the MBC website to see if the site is within an archaeological potential area.

**KCC.** I have undertaken a search on the Historic Environment Record and looked at other heritage data we have currently available, such as the early OS maps, aerial photographs etc. On the basis of this quick search I can provide you with some preliminary feedback.

*The site of H1(8) lies in an area of Hythe Beds with a band of Atherfield Clays running North to South following Chapman Avenue with the River Len valley situated to the north. The area is fairly well draining with nearby water source, making it attractive for prehistoric and later activity and occupation. However, there are no indications of prehistoric, Romano-British or Early Medieval activity on this site or nearby. However, this may reflect lack of formal archaeological investigation rather than lack of archaeology.*

*There are indications of medieval activity with the Church of St Nicholas probably having 11<sup>th</sup> century origins. There may have been an earlier settlement here but it does seem possible that a medieval settlement was focused around the church. The Church of St Nicholas is an important heritage asset and although restored in later 19<sup>th</sup> century, it retains elements of 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century date. It is highly likely this church served a community but there are no indications of medieval settlement in the fields south of the church at this present time.*

*Church House is considered to have originally been cottages, dating from 16<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. It may have formerly been a manor house but at present it is described as house, formerly cottages. South of the Site H1(8) is The Rectory, thought to be of 15<sup>th</sup> century date, originally a rectory, now a house. The 1<sup>st</sup> Ed OS map suggests The Rectory included formal gardens and woodland and a farm complex to the west. Recorded as "Parsonage Farm" on the Historic England Farmstead Survey, this complex expanded slightly in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century to include an oast house (now Squerryes Oast) and other outbuildings. Remains of the main farm complex may still be identifiable as vegetation growth in the field beside The Rectory. However, this site is not within H1 (8).*

*Early OS maps and aerial photographs do not suggest any major earthworks in the area south of the church except a linear band running north to south from Longham Copse, past Squerryes Oast and to another outbuilding of Parsonage Farm (at the corner of Woolley Road). This linear feature could be geological, a former field boundary or a former routeway (droveway/hollow-way). Looking more widely at the surrounding area, H1(8) is situated between the historic complexes and parkland of Mote Park and Gore Court. The site may well have been within the original estates of either of these two historic complexes.*

*The site of H1(8) does not contain any designated heritage assets. There are, however, several designated heritage assets surrounding the site which may be affected by development. These would include the Church of St Nicholas and its churchyard, Church House, The Rectory, Gore Court HPG and Mote Park HPG. Squerryes Oast is a historic building and there are identified farm buildings of historic interest noted in the HE Farmstead Survey.*

*With specific reference to your query, there are no clear indications of a medieval settlement being in the fields south of St Nicholas Church. However, it is likely the 11<sup>th</sup> century church was built to serve a community. Any proposals to develop H1(8) should be supported by an Archaeological Deskbased Assessment and there will certainly be a need to consider the impact on the setting of several Listed Buildings and historic parklands.*

*This is a very quick review of the archaeological potential of the proposed Housing Allocation site of H1(8) and is based on current information. It may be that further information on the archaeological potential of the site might arise in the future, especially if the site is subject to formal archaeological assessment.*

The request from Bellway Homes to consider Street Names for Bicknor Wood was previously circulated for consideration.

It was agreed to suggest the names of the following families as they feature heavily in the history of Otham: Ward, Mallet, Vallance, Hendley, Taylor, Forster, Crump, Ellis, Percival, Stephens, Dawe, Boyson, Betts, Wiles, Brenchley, Hunt, Watts and Southey.

**New Applications:** N/A

**Applications Granted**

**17/506113 – 35 Chapman Avenue.**

**17/504758 Bishops, Avery Lane.**

**16/506349/FULL - Bearsted Football**

Cllrs Newton and Hipkins represented the PCat MBC's Planning Committee meeting.

The following decision was reached.

The floodlighting hereby approved shall not be used outside the hours of 15.00 - 21.30 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and not at all on any other day of the week. For no more than four matches each year (and only in connection with competitions registered with the Football Association or Kent County Football Association, where kick off is at 19.45 or later), the floodlighting can be used for an additional hour until 22.30 on Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays only.

**Awaiting Determination by MBC**

17/501449/FULL - Land North of Bicknor Wood, Sutton Road.

15/509015 - Land South of Sutton Road, Langley Park.

**Planning Breaches – Awaiting Action by MBC:**

16/500326 - Madam Taylors

16/506074 - Bramley (see Item 8)

Concerns regarding the BFC banner advertising school holiday coaching to be followed up by Cllr Moon and the Clerk.

**ACTION: Cllr Moon/Clerk**

**13 RECEIVE REPORT OF MEETINGS AND SEMINARS ATTENDED:**

- Cllr Gray – Highways (see Item 9)
- Cllrs Gray, Newton, Cheesman (DPC) and the Clerk attended a meeting with DHA/Bellway Homes on 7 February to further discuss the H1(8) proposal for Church Rd.

The site is still delayed with no plan at present but an outline of the site was provided to give a feel for the development.

- The Church will be the focal point
- Protection/reinforcement of hedgerows
- Buffer zone to be provided at the rear of the site
- Entrance/exit to/from Senacre to be provided for pedestrians

- GDPR Workshop 24.01.18 attended by Cllr Trench and the Clerk – documentation circulated to all.

- JPG Meeting 07.02.198 attended by Cllr Trench when CPRE made a presentation to mitigate their non-success. A committee to address the air quality will be formed as this will be the best defence in the future.

- KALC Meeting 05.02.18 attended by Cllr Gardner. Main items discussed: The reduction in PSS funding & Operation London Bridge (what to do in the event of the death of the sovereign/snr national figure) has been forwarded to the Clerk. This is not for further circulation at present.

#### **14 URGENT MATTERS:**

- **Reschedule Annual Litter Pick.** A new date of Sunday 8 April at 10am was suggested and will be confirmed ASAP.
- A post has been knocked down on the village green.
- Councillor Newton to investigate the absence of litter bin in The Coppice.

**ACTION: Cllr Newton**

#### **15 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.**

- **GDPR – Need for a Data Controller? Appointment of DPO:** It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Satswana as the DPO. Clerk to make enquiries if a data controller is required? **ACTION: Clerk**

- **Litter Bin.** As MBC do not have a bin that they can provide FOC, it was agreed to purchase a column mounted bin at the cost of £49. Clerk apply to KCC for permission to mount the bin on a street column. **ACTION: Clerk**

**16 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE:** A few meetings have been held since OPC's January meeting. Things are progressing well and there will be a better idea of the content when the survey responses are returned. (25% of the electoral role is required for this).

**17 VILLAGE GREEN: Grass Cutting** – It was **RESOLVED** to accept Paul Waring's quotation dated 2 February 2018, as the work is known to be of a good standard & the increase is negligible.

**Replacement Fencing** - Clover Fencing has not submitted a quotation. Cllr Gardner to ask Mr Smith if he would like to quote. To be readdressed at May's meeting.

**Seats**- Article to be included in the Ragstone, asking if residents would like to donate a seat in memory of a loved one?

**18 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 23.04.18/ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 15.05.18** – It was **RESOLVED** that both meetings will be held at 7.30pm in the Village Hall on the dates shown.

**19 RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE:** Various items circulated by email as received.

Request from resident to clear an accumulation of rubbish from end of 3 Tees (plastic sheeting, cans, bottles, etc) to be addressed at the litter pick.

**20      ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING (14  
May 2018): Please contact the Clerk if you have items that you would like to  
be considered for the agenda.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.27 pm.