

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF EAST MALLING AND LARKFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER 2020 AT CHURCH FARM HALL AT 7.30P.M.**

PRESENT: Cllrs. D. Thornewell (Chairman), Mrs. M. Moore (Vice-Chairman), T. Bishop, R. Haffenden, J. Luque, Mrs. J. Manser, S. Millson, R. Mitchell, R. Moore and Mrs. J. Sharpe

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllrs. Mrs. L. Cook, Mrs. L. Hogben, P. Leale, Mrs. A. Oakley, R. Roud, Mrs. M. Tatton and Mrs. C. Woodger
Cllr. Mrs. Trudy Dean

**APPROVAL AND SIGNING OF MINUTES AND APPENDICES OF THE PARISH
COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 7TH OCTOBER 2020**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes and Appendices of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 7th October 2020 be **APPROVED AND SIGNED** by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no Matters Arising.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

(i) **Ratification of Planning Comments Submitted**

The planning comments that had been submitted to the Borough Council since the last meeting had been circulated, the action taken was **RATIFIED**.

(ii) **List of Decision Notices Received since 7th October 2020**

Members attention was drawn to the list of Decision Notices issued by the Borough Council, attached to the Agenda.

The Chairman commented on the Coal Yard application in New Hythe Lane and the legal agreement in respect of the path. Also the Section 106 Agreement in respect of recreational provision and we have written to the Borough Council requesting consideration be given to some monies for replacement playground equipment at Larkfield Recreation Ground.

(iii) **Former Aylesford Newsprint Site**

The Chairman had prepared some notes in respect of the former Aylesford Newsprint site, which was circulated, as follows:-

Redevelopment of Aylesford Newsprint Site

1 This is a brief up-date report on the application for the redevelopment of the Aylesford Newsprint site for employment buildings, Class B, for this site which it may be recalled excludes the area between the railway and the River Medway.

2. We have already submitted comments on the issue of the Ditton Stream, the old Mill Pond, and the public footpaths crossing the site. An extract of Michael Fullers book

on the Mills of the East Malling stream has been submitted dealing with the history of the former Millhall Mill which sat next to the old mill pond.

3. I have also raised the issue at the last meeting of the Medway Valley Line Committee as when the previous application was considered improvements to both Aylesford and New Hythe Stations was on the agenda and these should not be overlooked. There is also the issue of the rail replacement bus when the line is closed for work being able to use Bellingham Way if it is re-opened as proposed.

4, I have also attended two meetings with Aylesford and Ditton parish councils with a view to seeing if we could reach a general agreement as to our stance on the application and what things we could possibly seek to achieve as part of the conditions and legal agreements should planning permission be granted.

5. Since then the County Council has made initial comments as Highway Authority by letter of 29th October 2020 which is now on the Borough website. It supports the idea of looking for improvements at the two stations; the improvement of the public footpath network; and the opportunity of improving local bus services. While the detail needs to be tied down what is said I feel should be welcomed. They do however seek a range of further information about the scheme from a highway point of view including the effects on junctions outside the site. So, as I write their final view is not yet known.

6. As far the parish councils are concerned there was agreement that the use of the land for employment purposes as proposed was agreed and after discussion the opening of Bellingham Way. Aylesford was naturally concerned about HGVs going out via Station Road and as the application proposes it was agreed there should be restrictions imposed to prevent this taking place. But provision for the rail replacement bus/emergency services would be needed.

7 In general the parish reps supported the comments we had already submitted as outlined in para 2 above.

8 It was agreed we should press for improved provision to cross Bellingham Way at the New Hythe Lane roundabout especially now Leybourne Park residential area exists. And New Hythe Lane north of the Bricklayers PH where people cross to the country park.

9 There was a desire that the signing of the site would need to be addressed around the general local road network.

10 Signing for construction traffic would also be an issue so that traffic does not for example use New Hythe Lane south with its width restriction or attempt to go through Aylesford Village with its restrictions.

11. The colour of the buildings should be specified so that the site blends in when seen from say the Downs above Aylesford (Blue Bell Hill Picnic site).

12 there should be engagement with British Rail.

13. The Borough Council seek further comments this week so i propose these be made on the above basis and incorporating any further comments made at this meeting.

The Chairman said he will draft additional comments which need to be submitted before this Friday, 6th November 2020.

Cllr. Moore commented that a good bus route would be along Bellingham Way into Station Road and then through to Forstal Road.

(iv) **Draft Local Plan Update**

The Chairman reported that the Local Plan Examination has hit the buffer as they have serious concerns in relation to legal compliance, so the hearing sessions due to take place this week and next will now not be taking place. A further detailed letter will be sent out soon.

The Sevenoaks Local Plan has also got problems and they have made a High Court Judgement.

The Borough Council missed out of the public consultation process and some of the documents were submitted after the due date. There is also criticism of how some of the sites were chosen, they did not give valid reasons.

(v) **Forty Acres Public Inquiry Update**

The Chairman reported that the Public Inquiry in respect of Forty Acres will commence on 1st December 2020.

The amount to date in the Crowd Justice Fund is £9,390. Richard Buxton Solicitors have submitted an invoice for the preliminary work carried out in the sum of £4,680 and this will be taken from the Crowd Justice Fund.

(vi) **Ditton Edge Development**

The Chairman reported that the above application was adjourned from the previous meeting of Area 3 and will now be considered at the November meeting.

A site inspection has taken place where Area 3 members were invited and a walkaround the site took place.

RATIFICATION OF PAYMENTS MADE SINCE LAST MEETING INCLUDING DIRECT DEBITS

The List of Payments made during the period when meetings have not been held had been **CIRCULATED** with the Agenda and also a list of Direct Debit payments the action taken was **RATIFIED**.

Cllr. Bishop thought it would be useful if the bank balance was provided when this is prepared in future.

The Chairman reported that the interim audit is being carried out remotely and requested documents will be submitted to Stuart Pollard for this purpose.

The Chairman further reported that a meeting will be taking place on 19th November with Derek Kemp from DCK Accounting Services to give help setting the budget for 2021/2022 with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

MARLOWE ROAD TREWORK

The Chairman reported that a quotation from Qualitree for work required to the trees at Marlow Road Green has been accepted and it is hoped the work will be carried out shortly.

TEMPORARY EASEMENT TO S.E. WATER AT LARKFIELD PLAYING FIELD

The Chairman reported that South East Water wish to install ground water Monitoring apparatus at Larkfield Playing Field this is connection with the Ditton Stream and the Aylesford Newsprint site. Richard Brown in Well Street has also agreed to have one installed.

The Chairman said he and Cllr. Mrs. Oakley had met with South East Water.

The Chairman moved that the Licence for the necessary entrance and installation at Larkfield Playing Field be signed this evening by himself and the Clerk, **SECONDED** by Cllr. Luque. The Licence was duly signed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman's Report had been circulated with the Agenda, as follows:-

As in previous reports apart from the day to day running of the Parish Council the issues arising from day to day continue to be those relating to planning and development. In recent weeks there has been a falling off of new planning applications in the parish and it will be interesting to see if this continues. However, we are still involved in work on the big outstanding planning issues and applications.

Local Plan Hearings Cancelled.

The October hearing dates for the draft Local Plan for the Borough duly took place and the November dates fixed included consideration of the proposed extension of the Green Belt between East and West Malling. The statement from our Planner was duly filed in support of the green Belt extension out to Kiln Barn Lane. However as circulated to all members the Planning Inspectors have notified that they have issues arising from the hearings and have therefore cancelled the November dates fixed. They promise a further letter explaining this decision and if received I will report to Council when we meet.

Parkside.

When the Parkside site east of New Road was passed there was an informative about giving consideration to reducing the speed limit in New Road to 30mph given the new access and more people likely to be crossing the road to the schools, playing fields and shops on the other side of the road. We have heard no more so we are taking this up with KCC.

Tree, Martin Square.

We have reported the fallen tree branch near the toilets in Martin Square. It has been moved clear of the pavement and we are told KCC Estates have been asked to remove the fallen

branch off the KCC owned grass. We also continue to wait for KCC to cut back from the pavement the overgrowth from the social service premises.

Protecting Open Spaces.

As a member of the Open Spaces Society we are aware they have written to all 400 local authorities urging them to have policies in their local plan to secure open spaces including new ones where development takes place and also to consider voluntarily registering appropriate open spaces as Town or Village Greens as we have to give them a secure long protection. On the back of this I would propose we raise again the question of TMBC registering Carnation Green. I would be grateful if council would authorize renewing this issue.

Extension of Kings Hill northwards.

The developers of this proposed site as shown on the draft Local Plan are now consulting on their proposals and a leaflet has been issued. The site however is bigger than in the draft Local Plan as it includes playing fields north of Pikey Lane.

They are aiming to lodge a planning application by the end of the year.

Medway Valley Line.

I attended by Zoom the last meeting and there was concern that the through train to Tonbridge now only operates twice a day. Lobbying is taking place to get it re-instated. I also updated them on the planning application for the Aylesford Newsprint site and sought their support for improvements to the stations and associated issues. They promise to call a meeting of interested members about it.

Public Footpaths and Planning.

It appears there may be moves afoot to simplify the procedures regarding the closure or diversion of public footpaths affecting planning application sites. I drafted an email for the Clerk to send to our MP for Tonbridge and Malling as likely development sites are in East Malling where Forty Acres is crossed by two public footpaths and there are also others at Broadwater Farm. It seems the idea is to reduce the possibility of people making objections as they can at present. I will report back on this issue

Planning Changes Come into force.

The Governments changes to planning regulations came into force in September. Planning classes A1(shops); A2 professional and financial services; A3restaurants and cafes; B1 offices and light industry and D1 and D2 are all amalgamated into Class E.

This means a shop could change into an office without permission. Drinking establishments and hoy food takeaways will still need permission. It is suggested by planning commentators that premises could be a shop during the day and a restaurant at night. The Government argue this will give the business community greater flexibility and cut out the "red tape" of having to apply for planning permission to change from one use to another.

It was agreed to renew our request for Carnation Green to be registered as a village green.

REPORT BY BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Mrs Trudy Dean's report was circulated, as follows:-

County Councillors Report November

1. I have authorised spending of £3,000 of my County Councillors' Fund on preparing the design for a 20 mph scheme for the whole of my County Division ie Larkfield, East Malling and West Malling.

Maps have been prepared and are with KCC Highways officers who will then recommend which streets could be included in a 20mph scheme with signage and road markings only, which streets will need additional traffic calming before being appropriate, and which streets they would not recommend for a 20mph limit. The agreed design will then be subject of public consultation and reported to the Joint Transportation Board in 2021.

2. Residents of A20 London Road have suffered a great deal of noise and traffic increase during diversions for resurfacing, smart motorway and Brock related work. Many diversions have been during the night, leading to increased distress. I asked a formal question at the last County Council meeting about what plans KCC has for the road to alleviate this disruption and reduce speeds and traffic noise between Wrotham and New Hythe Lane.

The response was that KCC do not use noise as a reason for resurfacing, and only the section between Castle Way and New Hythe Lane require resurfacing because of the state of the road surface. On the issue of speed, I have agreed to joint fund WITH Mrs Hohler a route study of the A20, and this may help to achieve the lower speeds and quieter surface residents require.

3. KCC has published a list of issues which need resolution before Jan 2nd in order to be sure that Kent avoids disruptive congestion and confusion with Brexit on Jan 2nd.
a) Traffic management for several junctions of M2 and M20, including particularly junctions 10 and 10a Ashford. b) Border readiness to reduce Kent congestion c) a national communications plan for key consistent messages about Dover port, Eurotunnel for customers, residents and businesses, d) and an assurance that the online 'check an HGV is ready to cross the border' will be ready by Jan 2ND.. e) Proper authorisation for the lorry parks and detailed operational plans for each, f) the composition of the prioritised freight to be fast tracked, g) Government plans for dealing with levels of freight beyond Kent's capacity outside Kent, h) Decisions regarding the use of Sevington i) additional resources for Trading Standards at inland Border Facilities j) resources for traffic enforcement, particularly at junctions.

4. The National Transfer Scheme has failed to work effectively, and most other councils have taken few if any Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children to relieve the pressure on Kent staff, accommodation and resources. KCC continues to refuse to

accommodate and care for any further UASC and demanded once again that the Transfer system should be made mandatory.

5. KCC has published its comments and requirements on the Panattoni plans for Aylesford Newsprint

Cllr. Mitchell asked whether consideration could be given to some action being taken in respect of the lay-by when the resurfacing work on the A20 is being carried out.

Cllr. Bishop reported that he attended the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

At the Full Council meeting it was agreed that the Borough Council will go ahead with the Leisure Trust taking over the running of Leybourne Lakes Country Park.

Cllr. Bishop informed members that a Litter Pick took place on Saturday, 17th October 2020 and was very successful.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Mitchell reported that he had made enquiries regarding the purchase of an Unknown Soldier – Tommy from the Royal British Legion at a cost of £125 each, he suggested that one be placed on the green area by Larkfield Fire Station. After discussion it was **AGREED** that Cllr. Mitchell be given authority to make the necessary enquiries at the Fire Station and also two be purchased, the other to be placed at East Malling, this proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr. Moore.

Cllr. Millson reported that CPRE Surrey have a meeting with Teresa May MP as they are contesting the algorithm in respect of housing in the Green Belt.

Cllr. Millson reported that the Royal Society of St. George are trying to retrieve a bust of Rudyard Kipling that was held at Chartwell by the Churchill family which has apparently been removed. If they manage to retrieve the bust then it will be presented to the Churchill family.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, 9th December 2020

CLOSURE

The Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 8.50p.m.

Chairman
9th December 2020

