

# Aylesford Parish Council

## Environmental Services Committee

### Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held via Zoom link on 26 January 2021

**Present:** Councillor Ludlow (Chairman) and Councillors Balcombe, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Ms Papagno, Rillie, Shelley, Smith, Sullivan, Walker, and Wright.

**In Attendance:** Neil Harris (Clerk), Melanie Randall (Assistant Clerk and Finance Officer)

**Apologies:** Councillors Hammond, Ms Oyewusi and Williams.

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#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Hammond (unwell), Ms Oyewusi (work commitment) and Williams (TMBC Meeting) were received, and the reason for absence agreed.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members Interests.

#### 3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 December 2020

It was **Agreed**

- (1) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed.
- (2) That the Clerk seek an update on the issue of the parking at the Upper Bell Slip Road and ensure that the item is put back on the Agenda for the next meeting.

#### 4. Aylesford Village Square

The Clerk reported that the work being done in the Village Square was in 4 stages and Stage 3 the planting of the trees the Council was still awaiting a date. He had been informed by KCC that the trees were expected to be delivered to them in early February but that there was a delay on the tree grilles.

## **5. Street Lighting - Street Light in Forstal Road**

The Clerk reported that the work had been completed.

## **6. Traffic Speed and the new Sandpit Entrance on Rochester Road Aylesford**

The Clerk reported that the Council had heard nothing directly further since County Councillor Homewood took the matter up with the County Officers. However, he had seen an e mail that indicated that KCC had no plans for work at this site and that it should be included in Parish Highway Improvement Plan which Aylesford had not set up.

Councillor Rillie reported that the Quarry had started working on their new entrance road which had resulted in the footpaths being closed and people walking along Rochester Road to access the footpath network further along that road. He wondered whether a temporary speed limit could be introduced whilst this work was taking place. The Clerk indicated that he had had discussions with the Quarry owners re the paths opening at the earliest opportunity and during periods when no working was taking place. It was **Agreed** that the Clerk take the matter of a temporary speed limit with KCC and also have further discussions with the Quarry owners re the opening of the paths.

## **7. Forstal Road Recreation Ground Play Area**

The Clerk reported that he had sought and received a number of quotes from various companies for this work. Originally quotes were received for undertaking the surfacing of the whole area including the grass but these proved very expensive and during discussions the companies were asked to price for a number of alternative options which some of the companies quoting have done. The Council having now received quotes for a number of different options and comparison being quite difficult the Chairman of the Council is reviewing the quotes received to determine the approach going forward to complete this project satisfactorily and at a reasonable cost. This matter will be reported back to Committee once the review has been completed.

## **8. Forstal Road Car Park Yellow Lining**

The Clerk reported that the yellow lining in the car park needed refreshing and the works required were:

### **Refresh existing**

3x disabled bays with symbols

3x separate areas of hatching (approx. 95 sqm)

12 x speed hump triangles (3 speed humps with 4 triangles on each)

1 x NO PARKING letters (down by the bollards next to the public toilet)

### **New Work**

2x 5 mph roundels on the road (one at the entrance as you come in and one as you drive out maybe level with the Community Centre bins)

1x NO PARKING letters in front of hatching area outside garage

Four quotes have been received as follows

1. Mackelden Civil Engineering - £895.00 + vat. They will sweep the areas to be re-lined and recommend cleaning it if we think it's quite dirty
2. Archway Highway Services - £580.00 + vat. The surface preparation i.e., sweeping etc is included.
3. KDM Highways - £650.00 + vat. The quote says any lines laid on dirt or debris, wet or sub-standard surfaces cannot be guaranteed. Site to be clean prior to their arrival. They have confirmed that they will carry out a broom sweep of the areas to be lined.
4. A1 Road Markings - £550.00 + vat. They will sweep it beforehand themselves and blow the dust off before painting. They did not carry out a site visit, the quote was provided by email and they said our requirements fall within their call out charge.

It was **Agreed** that as A1 Road Markings did not come and visit the site that the quote from Archway Highway Services in the sum of £580 be accepted.

## **9. Ferryfield MUGA Quotes for Renewing Lines**

The Clerk reported that three quotes had been obtained as follows

1. Wicksteed - £665.00 + vat - Wicksteed are the company who put the MUGA in and obviously are fully aware of the site and type of paint that has to be used.
2. Mackelden Civil Engineering - £950.00 + vat. They state works would need to be carried out in the Spring when the weather is better so that the marking paint would stick to the existing surface.
3. Archway Highway Services - £765.00 + vat. They state they would use chlorinated rubber paint which is flat and slip resistant.

It was **Agreed** that the lowest quote of £665 from Wicksteed be approved.

## **10. Blue Bell Hill Picnic Site**

The Clerk reported that at the Council meeting the Council discussed the concerns of local residents about the Kent Wildlife Trust's proposal to introduce charges at the car park at the Blue Bell Hill Picnic site in line with the concerns raised by Borough Councillor Kennedy and wrote accordingly to the Trust. The Kent Wildlife Trust had now replied stating that they did not as yet have a fixed timeline for the installation of parking charges at Bluebell Hill, although they were hoping to begin soon. They appreciate the concerns of local residents, but stated that the issues of people parking along these roads were not new and were not being created by the introduction of parking charges in the car park. However, they would welcome discussion about measures to prevent parking along these roads, namely to create chalk banks (which would have the added benefit of being positive for wildlife) along with wooden posts and double yellow lines to prevent parking.

Councillor Kennedy was also looking at setting up a meeting with the Kent Wildlife Trust and TMBC to see the best way forward. It was **Agreed** that the Council would take no further action on this matter

## **11. Podkin Meadow**

The Clerk reported that at the Council meeting Councillor Shelley reported that he had recently visited the site with a colleague who manages a wild meadow for him and his wife. Mr Nick Green of A E Green Services had subsequently written to Councillor Shelley in the following terms:-

“Further to our meeting on Monday I would make the following suggestions to make improvements to podkin meadow. The biggest problem you have is getting on top of the brambles, docks and competitive grasses.

As I see it you have two options; spray it off and start again ( I think that this would be extreme!). Or, the more appropriate method would be to cut and remove the material that is cut preferably twice in early spring as this will do two things, firstly the docks and bramble will not enjoy the experience and in removing the cuttings you further reduce the fertility of the soil making it easier for the wild flower species to compete with other plants. It may be an idea to top up the wild flower seeds on some of the bare patches so that it doesn't allow weeds to thrive. Once these cuttings have been done allow the meadow to flower and then cut and remove again in the autumn. After two years of their management the meadow should become more self-sustaining. But will probably need cutting at least once a year.”

It was **Agreed** that that the Council continue with its current regime for maintaining this site.

## **12. Speed Limits in Larkfield Order by KCC**

The Clerk reported that the Council had been informed by East Malling and Larkfield Parish Council of a KCC proposal to create a 20mph Zone in Larkfield and a copy of the details of the scheme were attached to the Agenda. In forwarding this to the Council they had commented that this scheme potentially affects New Hythe Lane, including the section between the Bellingham Way roundabout and the Papyrus Way roundabout and parts of Leybourne Way and Bellingham Way where traffic calming measures would be required. At the very least East Malling and Larkfield Parish Council would wish that the whole of Bellingham Way right out to Station Road be made subject to a 30mph limit together with the approach along Leybourne Way to the Bellingham Way roundabout so that the whole of that roundabout was covered by at least a 30mph limit. This would help reduce the speeds of vehicles that approach the roundabout from the west and in their opinion drive too fast across it into Bellingham Way. This makes crossing Bellingham Way for those going to Leybourne Park residential area difficult as well as those walking north/south along New Hythe Lane. The Committee considered the scheme and whether they would wish to comment on the proposal including the comments received from East Malling and Larkfield Parish Council. It was **Agreed** that no action be taken.

### **13. Grounds Maintenance**

The Committee considered the report of the Clerk which included a further attached document setting out the details of the quotes received in respect of the grounds maintenance work.

It was **Agreed**

1. That the recommendations for the allocation of the grounds maintenance work as set out in the attached document to the report of the Clerk be approved
2. That a 3-year contract be awarded to Greenland's in respect of the work at The Hollow and Day Work
3. That a 3-year contract be awarded to Greenland's in respect of the cemetery taking into account the quality of workmanship and compliments received in the past year about its work at this site.

### **14. Duration of Meeting**

7.30pm to 8.13pm