

Aylesford Parish Council

Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 July 2019

Present: Councillors Ludlow (Chairman), and Councillors Balcombe, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Oyewusi, Rillie, Shelley, Smith, Walker, Williams, Winnett and Wright.

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

Apologies: Councillors Ms Dorrington, Hammond and Sullivan

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Ms Dorrington (Personal Commitment), Hammond (TMBC Meeting) and Sullivan (Personal Commitment) were received, and the reasons 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 25 June 2019

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. General Highway Matters – Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)

The Clerk reported that he had taken up this matter with the Local KCC Highways team and was now awaiting a response to a number of detailed questions after which he would be in a position to report to Members for them to determine whether they wished to enter into a HIP with KCC.

5. Eccles Highway Matters – Speed of Traffic in Bull Lane

The Clerk reported that at the Council meeting it was indicated that the Council would ask KCC to undertake a traffic survey to ascertain the speed of traffic in Bull Lane. It was stated by local Members that there may have been a recent traffic survey undertaken.

It was **Agreed** that the Clerk would ascertain whether a traffic survey had recently been undertaken by KCC and that whole issue of the speed of traffic in Bull Lane including a traffic survey be included in the Highway Improvement Plan.

6. Blue Bell Hill Highway Matters – A229 Slip Road Lights

The Clerk reported that KCC had indicated that works had taken place but the local member indicated that the lights were still not working. The Clerk is continuing to press KCC for a conclusion to this project.

7. Blue Bell Hill Highway Matters – A229 Accidents

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting it had been agreed that the Council should push for a 50mph speed limit that should run the whole length of the A229 from Blue Bell Hill until the 50mph zone as you enter Maidstone. The Clerk has written and is awaiting a reply.

8. Aylesford Highway Matters – Aylesford Village Square

The Clerk reported that previously it was agreed that with the cost of the whole scheme, including the Consultants fee, being in the region of £40k-50k that it was too much for the Council to fund on its own. It was felt that the right approach was for the Council to look for funding from other bodies to enable the scheme to proceed. The High Street Heritage Action Zone funding was not available to the Council but the matter of potential funding had been referred to English Heritage London and South East Regional team. The Clerk is following this up.

It was **Agreed** that the approach outlined above should continue to be pursued but that the Council should also seek to place this scheme in the Highway Improvement Plan.

9. Aylesford Highway Matters – Closure of Forstal Road

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting a local resident, speaking on behalf of other residents had commented to the Council how much better have been the roads in the village with the stretch of Forstal Road entering the village being closed. It was also reported that Councillor Base had taken up this matter with the KCC Cabinet Member who had asked his Officers to look at the possible options. The KCC Cabinet Member has now replied to Councillor Base indicating that they would not be taking any further action on this matter.

It was **Agreed** that the matter of the possible closure of Forstal Road be taken up as an issue for possible inclusion in the Highway Improvement Plan.

10. Walderslade Highway Matters – Pedestrian Crossing at Tunbury Avenue

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting it was agreed that the Clerk should continue to follow up with KCC the matter of the pelican crossing. This has been done including corresponding with Borough Councillor Keers and it is clear that KCC are going to take no further action re the introduction of a pelican crossing.

It was **Agreed** that the provision of a pedestrian crossing in Tunbury Avenue be included in the Highway Improvement Plan.

11. Walderslade Highway Matters – Walderslade Woods Road

The speed of traffic in Walderslade Woods Road was raised at the meeting and it was felt that the Council should be looking to raise with KCC that the speed limit on this road should be reduced to 50mph. The Clerk indicated that he believed that this matter had been taken up by Boxley Parish Council. It was **Agreed** that the Clerk should ascertain what action, if any, had been taken by Boxley Parish Council and take this matter up with KCC as appropriate.

12. Public Footpaths

There were no public footpath matters reported to the meeting.

13. Street Lighting

There were no street lighting matters reported to the meeting.

14. Car Parks

There were no car parks matters reported to the meeting.

15. Bus Services – 155 Bus Service

The Clerk reported that a further meeting had taken place at which an approach had been agreed and which was being taken up by KCC and Arriva to see if it could work and that a further meeting would be held to confirm the actions moving forward.

16. TMBC Parking Action Plan Formal Consultation

It was **Agreed** that no objection be raised in respect of the proposals for Barling Close and Thorn Close, Blue Bell Hill.

17. All Sites – Caloo Outdoor Gym Equipment

The Clerk reported the equipment at Both Eccles and the Forstal Road sites were in a reasonable condition and the last inspection had only highlighted minor repairs which had been undertaken. However, at Tunbury the position was different in that the Leg Press was

completely out of action and to repair it would cost approximately £1000. The Clerk also indicated that historically Tunbury was the site at which most major repairs had been undertaken.

In respect of the Leg Press the options open to the Committee was to repair the Leg Press or to remove it from the site. Going forward the Clerk indicated that the options available to the Committee in respect of the maintenance of these sites was to undertake no maintenance and take out the machines as they break down or to continue with regular annual maintenance at a cost of approximately £1000 making decisions re individual machines as major repairs come forward. In terms of going forward the Clerk suggested that the continuing maintenance programme would be the best option.

It was Agreed

- (1) That the Leg Press at Tunbury Recreation Ground be repaired at a cost of approximately £1000.
- (2) That annual maintenance for this equipment be continued at a cost of approximately £1000.
- (3) That the position regarding damage to the machinery be monitored.

18. All Sites – Resurfacing Works

The Clerk is seeking a further quote on the required surfacing work and will report to a future meeting.

19. The Hollow

There were no matters relating to The Hollow reported to the meeting.

20. Ferryfield – Play Equipment

The Clerk reported that he had held discussions with Kompan that day. Kompan had indicated that it would not be possible for them to do the work this calendar year and taking half in part payment this year with the remainder being deferred for payment in 2020/21. They indicated that if the scheme was not to be done as one project and paid in one payment the scheme would have to be done in 2 phases.

Kompan indicated that the cost of Phase 1 as set out in a plan circulated at the meeting and including the major piece of the Dome, the moving hammocks and swings could be installed at a cost of £59,020.90 and if ordered immediately would be installed by late September/early October. They indicated that Phase 2 would include the remainder of the scheme costing approximately £75000 and that if an order was placed before the end of January the original prices could be maintained if the remainder of the scheme was installed in early 2020/21. However, if Phase 2 went ahead there would be additional costs for site security and inspection of £3655 which would be added to the approximate cost of £65000.

In addition, the offer of a free of charge inspection service costing £3607.50 for 1 year would be withdrawn if the Council went ahead with Phase 1 only but that if the Council went ahead with Phase 2 the cost of the inspection service would be reimbursed to the Council.

It was **Agreed** that the Council should proceed with Phase 1 only at a cost of £59,020.90 and that Phase 2 of this scheme be considered when funds permit. It was **Further Agreed** that the Council would not take up the Inspection and Maintenance package as proposed by Kompan and that the Clerk look at alternative options and report back.

21. Forstal Road Recreation Ground – Aylesford Football Club

The Clerk reported that he had received a request from Aylesford Football Club to meet with the Council to discuss the length of tenure for the leasing of the pitches from the current annual agreement to a longer period thereby giving a greater surety of use to the Club. The Club felt that this would give a greater clarity to them as they expand their numbers of members and also their involvement in the local community.

It was **Agreed** that the Council were happy to meet with the Aylesford Football Club to consider the length of tenure for the use of the pitches at the Forstal Road Recreation Ground.

22. Allotments

There were no matters relating to allotments reported to the meeting.

23. Eccles Recreation Ground

There were no matters relating to the Eccles Recreation Ground reported to the meeting.

24. Tunbury Recreation Ground, Changing Rooms and Car Park

There were no matters relating to the Tunbury Recreation Ground, Changing Rooms and car park reported to the meeting.

25. Blue Bell Hill Recreation Ground

There were no matters relating to the Blue Bell Hill Recreation Ground reported to the meeting.

26. Blue Bell Hill Pond Site

There were no matters relating to the Blue Bell Hill Pond Site reported to the meeting.

27. Cemetery

There were no matters relating to the Cemetery reported to the meeting.

28 Churchyard

There were no matters relating to the Churchyard reported to the meeting.

29. Old Bridge Gardens

There were no matters relating to the Old Bridge Gardens reported to the meeting.

30. Mill Hall (Beside Rose Cottage/Old Bridge)

There were no matters relating to Mill Hall reported to the meeting.

31. Aylesford Old Pit (Yoakley Land)

The Clerk updated the committee on the progress on works on the enhancement project with the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership. He indicated that the Council had received the report from the Medway Valley Countryside Project Team on the invasive plant survey at which a number of species had been identified with the small amount of works required to be undertaken to be funded from within the existing budget for this work.

32. Walderslade Open Spaces

There were no matters relating to Walderslade Open Spaces reported to the meeting.

33. St Mark's Square, Belgrave Street car park, new car park

There were no matters relating to St Mark's Square, Belgrave Street car park, new car park reported to the meeting.

34. Podkin Meadow

There were no matters relating to Podkin Meadow reported to the meeting.

35. Christmas Lights

The Clerk has discussed with Gala Lighting a possible expansion of the Christmas lights scheme and reported that the cost of the proposed scheme was more than the current budget allocation and that consideration of whether to proceed with this scheme should be taken at budget time with a view to allocating funds in the next financial year for implementation from 2020 Christmas onwards.

36. Aylesford Flood Plan

The Clerk reported that following the Flood Plan Exercise held on 27 June there had been some interest expressed in being Flood Wardens by local residents. The Clerk also indicated that there was quite a bit of work required to update the Plan which he would do in conjunction with TMBC and the Resilience Team.

37. Parish Site Visit

The Clerk reported he was consulting on dates with Members.

38. Hengist Beer Fest – August Bank Holiday

The Clerk reported that the manager at the Hengist had been in touch regarding the advertising of the Hengist Beer Fest by use of a banner on the Forstal Road Recreation Ground fence from 1 August up to and including the event on the August Bank Holiday. The Clerk indicated that it was Council policy to support local events but that the agreed period was 2 weeks before the event.

It was **Agreed** that the Hengist be allowed to place their banner advertising the Hengist Beer Fest on the Council fence for 4 weeks before the event.

39. Duration of Meeting

7.30pm to 8.58 pm