

AYLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2015
7.30pm – Parish Office

AGENDA

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1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interest

A. FOOTWAYS/HIGHWAYS/LIGHTING MATTERS

1. General Highway Report

2. Eccles Highway Matters

Proposed pedestrian crossing in Bull Lane. It was agreed at Council on 15 September 2015 that the Parish Council would offer to fund 50% of the cost of the crossing up to maximum of £10,000.

3. Blue Bell Hill Highway Matters

3.1 - Milestone – Stonemason now has stone and will carry out work as soon as workload allows.

3.2 – A229 slip road to Common Road – Request made for vegetation at ground level to be cut back.

4. Aylesford Highway Matters

4.1 - **Old Bridge Lighting Project.** Clerk has met with the TMBC Tree Officer and a tree application is being submitted. Next step is to open up discussions with KCC.

4.2 - Aylesford Village Square

- Enhancement Project – Clerk has met with potential new supplier of street furniture, Marshalls. Awaiting their proposals.
- Lighting – Awaiting: repair of lighting column in the centre of village

Completed: replacement of damaged ‘roundabout’ sign outside Village
Pantry
removal of ‘modern’ style column installed in error

4.3 – **A20 congestion between Larkfield and Aylesford** – Meeting with Kent Highways and TMBC and local parish council representatives (Cllr Balcombe and Clerk attending for APC) arranged for 14 October.

5. Walderslade Highway Matters

6. Public Footpaths

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS FOR THE CREATION OF BRIDLEWAYS IN THE PARISHES OF AYLESFORD AND BURHAM

Members will recall that last year they objected to a number of Definitive Map Modification Orders in the following terms.

“The Council objects to the above Orders on the following grounds:-

- 1) As a justification of accepting the number of witness statements supporting the making of these Orders it has been argued by the Kent County Council that the level of witness statements required in a rural area should be less but it could also be argued that the number of users in a largely rural area could be potentially greater.
- 2) These Orders have been made on the basis of untested witness evidence which is largely provided by supporters of bridleway rights who appear to be taking part in a well organised campaign for equestrian use. This evidence has not been subjected to proper detailed scrutiny and has been accepted at face value.
- 3) It is felt that taking into account the point made in 2) above that the appropriate weight has not been given to the detailed witness statements which cast serious doubt on the extent of equestrian use claimed by those supporting bridleways and their ability to use the ways unimpeded by obstacles.
- 4) The view of this Council and its local residents is that the majority of the rights of way in this area are seen as footpaths and not bridleways. The Council is supported in this view by local Councillors who are long term residents of this area and in the views expressed to them by their constituents.

The Council also felt that the issues set out above should be properly addressed and examined by a Planning Inspector considering this case at a Public Inquiry.

The Council has now received notification from the Planning Inspectorate that the public inquiry into these Definitive Map Modification Orders will be held on 23 February 2016 at Burham Old School Community Centre and is scheduled to last 6 days. **Attached** to this report is the official notice for this inquiry including the timetable for sending in statements of case and proofs of evidence. Clerk will take Members through this in more detail at the meeting.

7. Lighting

York Avenue and Victoria Road, Walderslade – Awaiting clarification that these two roads have been formally adopted by Kent Highways following upgrading carried out several years ago. There is a responsibility for maintenance issue now as one of the lights in Victoria Road has been reported as out.

8. Car Parks

New Eccles Car Park – Work due to commence 21 September.

9. Any Other Business/Correspondence

B. RECREATION AND AMENITIES MATTERS

1. All Sites

1.1 - **Local history signs** –Clerk will be looking at methods of updating historical content of original signs before contacting potential suppliers. These will be considered in conjunction with the Aylesford Village Square enhancement project – see A.4.2 above.

1.2 – **Prevention of Dog Fouling** – Consideration following discussions at Council on 21 July 2015.

The Council has asked the Clerk to look into whether it has any enforcement powers to prevent dog fouling or powers that exclude dogs from certain areas or to ensure that dog owners must keep their dogs on leads on its recreation grounds. The very simple answer is that these powers rest with the Borough Council.

In respect of the enforcement of dog fouling legislation the Council works with and supports the Borough Council with many of its initiatives and also in providing dog bins.

In respect of dog exclusion areas and dogs being kept on leads the Borough Council has the power to make a Public Spaces Protection Order. However the Borough Council in making such an order has to ensure that any persistent and unreasonable activity it is seeking to prevent is in a public place and has a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality. The Borough Council would also have to provide other suitable dog walking areas in the locality. Therefore this Council could ask the Borough Council to make such an order

but in so doing should apply the tests the Borough Council would need to apply otherwise there would be no chance of success.

1.3 – Annual play equipment inspection by Wicksteed of all 6 sites ordered.

1.4 - Children’s Play Areas – Smoking Ban

The Committee has asked the Clerk to look into whether it is possible to introduce a no smoking ban in and around the Council’s children’s play areas. There is no legislation which enforces this so there is no enforceable action that the Council can take. The Council could introduce a voluntary ban by putting up signs requesting people not to smoke but with no means of enforcement other than the request through the sign. The Council would need to consider will it stop anyone from smoking and is there any negative feedback to the authority due to no enforcement of these signs. The cost of the signs would not be significant.

2. The Hollow

Surfacing repair under multiplay agreed - £275. Work awaited.

3. Ferryfield

4. Forstal Road Recreation Ground

4.1 – Multi sports courts - Formal opening, sign and litter bin installation all completed.

4.2 – Fencing behind multi sports courts completed. Additional work to remove old concrete posts has been authorised by the Clerk - £160

4.3 - Football Club Tournament – 5/6 September 2015.

The Council received a complaint from a local resident about the recent football tournament held by Aylesford Football Club. The Clerk has asked the football club to comment on the issues raised and will report in full detail at the meeting.

4.4 – Rabbit hole damage. The Aylesford Football Club have brought to the Council’s attention a problem with regard to rabbits which are coming on to the recreation ground and digging numerous holes on 3 of the 4 pitches, which means the football club then have to fill the holes because to leave them creates a safety hazard for players including children as young as 10. There is a significant cost to the football club for filling these holes. The football club have made an initial contact with a pest control company on what can be done and the Clerk is following up on their initial discussions. He will report in detail at the meeting.

5. Allotments

Aylesford - New numbers still to be installed.

Eccles – Gate refurbishment in progress

6. Eccles Recreation Ground

6.1 - Skateboard park bench and plaque installed.

6.2 - Fencing of play equipment – Updated quotations awaited. Expected cost to be in the region of £11500.

7. Tunbury Recreation Ground, Changing Rooms and Car Park

7.1 – **Damaged play equipment gate** – Quote received to replace existing gate - £885. To be set immediately in front of present posts so as not to interfere with fencing.

7.2 – Additional Play Equipment

The Council has previously agreed to put funding in for some additional play equipment in the Tunbury Recreation Ground. The local members have now met and considered what equipment they would wish to place in this area. They met with the representative from Wicksteed on site and with them developed a proposal for submission to the Council. They developed a proposal which aimed more at children above the toddler age group and moving into teenagers, as they felt this was the group of youngsters least catered for in the recreation ground. They felt the right location was close to the existing toddler play area and decided that it would not require fencing.

They considered a number of pieces of equipment but felt that the best combination was a basket swing, a rota bounce and a multiplay unit (of which there are none in this recreation ground). They felt that this would provide the best facilities for the age group they were trying to cater for. Pictures of the units will be available at the meeting.

The detailed costings of these pieces of equipment with surfacing and including a negotiated discount of 15% is as follows:-

Viking Basket Swing - £4,297.70

Matrix Agility System – the multiplay unit - £17,536.75

Rota Bounce - £8,442.19

Additional costs - £1241

Total Cost of the Proposal - £31517.64

The initial allocation for this project in the budget was £15000 and therefore an additional allocation of £16517.64 is required for this scheme. There is sufficient funding in the Council's Development Programme.

Of the Council's recent spending the Walderslade ward has only been allocated just under £2k for its Christmas lights scheme and therefore the addition of this new play equipment, for a group of children not currently catered for in the recreation ground, would be useful addition to this ward. The scheme itself provides good value for money.

7.3 – Two complaints received re increased **dog fouling** issues and perceived deterioration of whole site. TMBC would be happy to support a 'bag and flag' initiative similar to that held

recently in Eccles. Would like to see Tunbury Primary School involved. To be considered in line with 1.2.

8. Blue Bell Hill Recreation Ground

9. Blue Bell Hill Pond Site

10. Cemetery

11. Churchyard

Ragstone wall repair authorised at Council on 15 September - £580. Report also requested on condition of the remainder of wall.

12. Old Bridge Gardens

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

Some tree removal may be required in conjunction with proposed Old Bridge lighting project at A. 4.1 above.

14. Yoakley Land

Work on a long term plan and strategy for the area as a whole being considered by the Clerk for further discussion with Members at a future meeting. Clerk has approached Kent Wildlife Trust to become involved.

15. Walderslade Open Spaces

One bollards received from Kent PROW. To be installed in house.

16. St Marks Square, Car Park and Surrounds

17. Podkin Meadow

Request for Toddler Play Equipment

The Council has recently received a request from a local resident that as the nearest toddler play equipment is located in the Tunbury recreation ground could the Council consider putting in a toddler climbing frame and 2 toddler swings on the Podkin Meadow. The Clerk has consulted the 2 local BBH members who were supportive of the idea and contacted Wicksteed to see what could be installed at this site. Clerk is awaiting details of their proposal and will update members at the meeting

18. Any Other ESC Business/Correspondence