



Aylesford Parish Council

23 Forstal Road, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 7AU
Tel: 01622 717084 Email: mel@aylesfordparishcouncil.org.uk
www.aylesfordparishcouncil.org.uk

To All Members of the Environmental Services Committee

Agenda for the Meeting of the Environmental Services Committee to be held on Tuesday 23 June 2020 via a Zoom meeting link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83732701355> commencing at 7.30pm.

AGENDA

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interests

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 25 February 2020

A. FOOTWAYS/HIGHWAYS/LIGHTING MATTERS

1. General Highways Matters

1.1 - **A20 Corridor – Meetings with KCC and TMBC** – A copy of a report setting out the response is attached to the Agenda.

2. Eccles Highway Matters.

2.1 – **Speed of Traffic in Bull Lane** – At the last meeting it was reported that the traffic surveys have been undertaken and KCC have informed the Council that the mean speed at the northern location was 29.9 and 28.8 mph and at the southern location was 32.7 and 34.5 mph. In response to what was the next step KCC have informed the Council that any options could be considered as part of any Highway Improvement Plan discussion. The Council has previously decided not to have a Highway Improvement Plan with KCC. The Committee agreed to note the results of the survey.

3. Blue Bell Hill Highway Matters

3.1 – **A229 Accidents** – The Clerk has asked Peter Homewood if he could obtain from the Director of Highways the accident record for the A229 Blue Bell Hill for the last 2 years.

4. Aylesford Highway Matters

4.1 - **Aylesford Village Square** - The Clerk is awaiting a date for the meeting, from TMBC, to discuss a possible grant funding scheme from Historic England. It has been indicated that this meeting will not be held in the near future due to the current crisis. The Clerk will follow this up in July as restrictions ease.

4.2 – **Aylesford Village Forstal Road Entrance** – Councillor Rillie raised this issue a couple of weeks ago and there was an element of consensus to ask KCC to tidy up the site and look to remove the 2 conifers and look at a replacement such as a bed of crocuses. The Clerk has taken this up with KCC and is awaiting a reply.

5. Walderslade Highway Matters

5.1 – **Walderslade Woods Road 50mph speed limit** – This scheme has been approved and the Traffic Regulation Order introducing the 50mph speed limit is currently out to consultation ending on 6 July.

6. Public Footpaths

6.1 - **Footpaths MR455 and MR456, Aylesford village** – Members have been informed of the position in respect of these footpaths as concerns from the public were being raised. The issue arose following KCC having made an order the effect of which is to temporarily close these 2 footpaths for up to 6 months. The closure was required to enable the Quarry to build their new access road from the quarry to join Rochester Road just north of the village. They have had permission to do this work for many years. However, following discussions with the County Council, the Council had been informed that the works would not take 6 months as stated in the notice and that both footpaths would not be closed at the same time with an alternative route being provided to enable a return to be made to the original paths. The Council had also been informed that this work would not start for several weeks and that in the meantime both paths were still available for use, which is still the current position.

6.2 - **Riverside Footpath between Aylesford and Maidstone** – Members are aware that the riverside path between Aylesford and Maidstone has been closed for a number of weeks because the path has been subsiding into the river and has become dangerous particularly at night time which meant that KCC had to close the path. Despite closing the path with Heras fencing barriers and using chain and padlocks people have continued to use the path. Users of the path have removed the Heras fencing barriers and cut off the padlocks and chains. This means the large hole is yet again exposed with possibly serious or fatal consequences for anyone using the path, particularly after dark, when they cannot see the hazard. Therefore, KCC have had to completely close the route from Aylesford Car Park to Lipscombe Volvo using heavy palisade security fencing and the careful removal of a 4m section of the decking of both the bridge and the boardwalk. The Council has also received from KCC the possible timescale for the work needed to bring the path back into operation with the likelihood that the work will take sometime and might not be completed until Spring/Summer 2021 depending on funding availability.

7. Street Lighting

8. Car Parks

8.1 – Aylesford Car Parks – TMBC have informed the Council that at the Cabinet meeting on 3 June it was agreed that the introduction of charges at the Aylesford and St Martins Square car parks be deferred until further notice. The Clerk will keep an eye on this matter in case it comes back in the future.

9. Bus Services

9.1 – 155 Bus Service – With the current pandemic the new service has not been introduced but following an enquiry, KCC have informed the Council that services are starting to increase again and a conversation over the new service could happen in the coming weeks.

10. Any Other Business/Correspondence.

B. RECREATION AND AMENITIES MATTERS

1. All Sites

1.1 – Litter – There has been a significant increase in litter collected since people have started to exercise much closer to home during this pandemic crisis. The worst sites affected are Ferryfield, Tunbury and Old Bridge Gardens and these sites are worse at and following the weekend. Lee currently collects litter on Saturdays and Mondays and on occasions a further day in the week such as when it is bad weather not allowing any grass cutting or when there is capacity in the current workload. He has indicated that he believes he is keeping on top of the situation because of the action taken by the Council to reduce his grass cutting workload such as allocating the cutting of the grass at the Forstal Road Recreation Ground to outside contractors. If the Council had not taken this action the problem could have been out of control. His major problem has been where to put the bagged rubbish when collected which has been resolved by the new Countrystyle bin.

There has been a particular problem at the Old Bridge Gardens where people have been eating and drinking. This issue is being dealt with by the regular cleaning up operation being undertaken by Lee on Saturdays and Mondays and the Chequers staff on the other days.

It is also a pleasure to report that the Council has been thanked for its actions and in particular Lee has received high levels of praise from the public for the work he has done to ensure that the Council's parks and open spaces are clean and tidy.

2. The Hollow

3. Ferryfield

4. Forstal Road Recreation Ground

4.1 – **Soakaway and Drainage Serving the site** – Two quotes for this work has been received and the Clerk is seeking a third quote.

4.2 – **Football Training** – A request has been received from the Football Club to start training at the earliest opportunity preferably within June following consideration by the Council. A copy of their proposal and how they would undertake their training including how that is incorporated into the operation of a public recreation ground will be circulated as soon as it is available from the Football Club

5. Allotments

5.1 – **Allotment Rents** – Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic and the decision for the staff to work from home it was decided to delay payment of allotment rents until July. The payment of allotment rents is encouraged to be done by BACS transfer though there is still a significant number of people who pay by cash. With July approaching a decision has to be made regarding whether there should be a further delay in payment or to seek payment in July and to indicate that payment must be done by BACS and that in only exceptional circumstances will an alternative payment be accepted. This latter option could work quite effectively but a delay until September might see further restrictions on lockdown eased.

5.2 – **Allotment Tenancies** – Currently there are no allotment tenancy agreements at either the Aylesford and Eccles Allotments. This makes the position of controlling these sites quite difficult and also prolongs the process of ensuring compliance with the Council's regulations more difficult including any eviction process. With these sites now having significant waiting lists of 20 at Aylesford and 10 at Eccles these processes will need to be quickened up. This can be done using either an individual tenancy agreement with each allotment holder; the establishment of an allotments management committee or the establishment of a hybrid of these two options. I am researching into all of these options and should be in position to report back to Members in September with a view to introducing the agreed change by the end of the calendar year.

6. Eccles Recreation Ground

6.1 – **Eccles Memorial Clock Ashes Scattering** - A request has been received for ashes of a former resident of Eccles to be scattered around the Eccles Memorial Clock with a short and small family service being held. The request has been made by the brother of the deceased who indicates that the deceased wished his ashes to be scattered here because both his parent's ashes were scattered here with his father in 1984 and his mother in 2011. There are no records of permission having been given by the Council and nothing in the minutes of the Council at that time in 2011. In fact, the applicant indicates that in respect of the mother the only discussions of which he was aware was with the local branch of the Royal British Legion. The law is fairly relaxed about the scattering of ashes on land indicating that all that is required is the landowner's permission. The issues that the Council has to take into account is that while the Memorial Clock site is restricted access it is next to the main road through Eccles and is within the confines of the public space Eccles Recreation Ground.

7. Tunbury Recreation Ground, Changing Rooms and Car Park

8. Blue Bell Hill Recreation Ground

9. Blue Bell Hill Pond Site

10. Cemetery

11. Churchyard

12. Old Bridge Gardens

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

14. Aylesford Old Pit (Yoakley Land)

14.1 – Tree Work – Work has been completed.

15. Walderslade Open Spaces

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

17. Podkin Meadow.

18. Christmas Lights

19. Planning 21 Day Consultation Period Proposed Changes by TMBC – The Council has been made aware by TMBC that they are looking to change the rules relating to 21-day consultation period on Planning Applications. I have attached to this Agenda the paper sent to TMBC via KALC in response to these changes . This was considered by their Cabinet on 3 June who deferred a decision to their meeting on 30 June for the Parish Partnership Panel. The Panel met on 11 June and the Council was represented by Councillor Tom Shelley and his notes from that meeting and the TMBC official minute are attached to this Agenda.

20. Any Other ESC Business/Correspondence

Neil Harris
Clerk to the Council

Date: 18 June 2020