

Aylesford Parish Council

Meeting of the Council

Minutes of the Meeting held at the Aylesford Football Club Pavilion, Aylesford on Tuesday 11 January 2022

Present: Councillors Shelley (Chairman) and Councillors Base, Beadle, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Eves, Fuller, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Ludlow, Ms Oyewusi, Sharp, Smith, Walker, Williams and Winnett.

In Attendance: Mrs Randall (Clerk)

Also in attendance: 4 members of the public.

Apologies: Councillors Balcombe, Rillie and Sullivan.

1. Declarations of Interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members Interests except for Councillors Base and Williams declared an interest in item 16 as they are Borough Councillors and they took no part in the discussion or decision.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Balcombe, Rillie and Sullivan were received, and the reasons for absence agreed.

3. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced that he has been nominated to be the Deputy Chairman for the Parish Partnership Panel (PPP)

4. Standing Orders – Review

The Clerk informed the Council the only change that is recommended was to the Public Participation part on page five, to reduce it from five minutes per person down to three minutes bringing the Parish in line with TMBC who already permit three minutes. It was **Agreed** to adopt the Standing Orders with the recommendation from the Clerk.

5. Adjournment of the Meeting to allow for Public Participation

A resident asked the Parish Council for its financial support with regards to the Land at Eccles proposal when it is submitted to see if there are any elements within the application that could be objected to or requests made for amendments. They understand that the development cannot be stopped however they stressed that it will dramatically change the village of Eccles and residents would appreciate the support of the Parish Council.

A resident explained they are realistic in their views but the scale and impact on the village will be huge.

The residents have set up a group and are in the process of obtaining views and comments from fellow villagers. The Council was asked to take the residents views into consideration when deciding on its own comment to the application when submitted. The Clerk informed the residents that in order for the Council to take residents views on board they must ensure all residents suggestions are sent to the Parish Office in a timely manner.

The residents thanked the Parish Council for allowing them to speak.

6. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 16 November 2021

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Gadd and seconded by Councillor Ms Dorrington that the Meeting of the Council held on 16 November 2021 be **approved** as a correct record and signed.

7. Matters Arising from the previous minutes

There were no Matters Arising.

8. To Receive and Note the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee

- a) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee on 7 December 2021. There were no matters arising.
- b) It was **Agreed** that the Financial Risk Assessment be adopted as submitted to the Policy & Resources Committee on 4 January 2022, item 5.

It was **Agreed** that the Fees and Charges for 2022/23 be adopted as submitted to the Policy & Resources Committee on 4 January 2022, item 18.

It was **Agreed** that the 2022/23 Budget – Precept Setting be adopted as submitted to the Policy & Resources Committee on 4 January 2022, item 19.

9. To Receive and Note the Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee

- a) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee on 23 November 2021. There were no matters arising.

- b) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee on 14 December 2021. There were no matters arising.

10. To Receive and Note the Minutes of the Planning Committee

- a) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 16 November 2021. There were no matters arising.
- b) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 23 November 2021. There were no matters arising.
- c) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 7 December 2021. There were no matters arising.
- d) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 14 December 2021. There were no matters arising
- e) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 4 January 2022. There were no matters arising.

11. To Receive the Report of the County Councillor

There was no County Councillor present.

12. To Receive the Report of the Borough Councillors

Councillor Base informed the Council of the following

- TMBC have a £2.35m funding gap (two years ago it was about 250k – 300k).
- They have 3 years to find £1.5m either by making savings or increasing income.
- Tonbridge Cemetery now pays for itself.
- The Local Plan is going to cost approx. 750k.
- The cost of the Waste Services contract going forward is likely to be significantly higher and a further £1m has been set aside in reserves.
- Energy costs are rising.
- There will be a £5 (2.3%) rise in TMBC part of Council Tax for the financial year of 2022/23. (*Subject to approval at TMBC Full Council on 22nd February)
- TMBC cannot borrow money to fund essential services hence the need to raise the Council Tax.

Questions to Councillor Base from Parish Councillors

1. Can TMBC not take the Waste Services in house?

Answer: They can but it is probably very expensive to do so, and currently estimated to be about 30-40% more than the Urbaser contract. TMBC were NOT obliged to take the cheapest quote/option; but are obliged to take the cheapest quote that

satisfies the UK Government mandated procurement framework. Urbaser satisfied this framework and were the cheapest by far.

2. Were TMBC not suspicious if Urbaser were so much cheaper than everyone else that they could provide the service and at the level that was required?

Answer: Yes, definitely, but due to having to accept the cheapest quote that satisfied the procurement framework and after challenging them against the framework; there was no possibility TMBC could refuse and go with the company that came in at second place. Urbaser have been having problems since the very start, for example it rapidly became clear that the design of the trucks was not entirely useful or appropriate.

3. Why is there still no recycling for flats, there has been none since Urbaser took over.

Answer: Matt Boughton has been very vocal for recycling for flats in Tonbridge so assumed that was Borough wide, but will check.

4. How long is there left on the Urbaser contract

Answer: We have had Urbaser for 4 years and have another 3 years left. (*Following the meeting Cllr Base confirmed September 2026)

5. Now there is a call for sites, can all planning applications that come in be suspended until that has been completed

Answer: No unfortunately not. The new Local Plan OAHN (Objective assessment of housing needs) is anticipated to be another 3,000 houses across the Borough. There is no 5-year housing land supply either at the current time.

6. Do you know the timetable for the new Local Plan

Answer: It is currently anticipated that submission will be late 2023 and adoption 12 months later.

The Clerk said the Parish Office had not received the Parking Action Plan – Phase 13 from TMBC regarding double yellow lines on Bull Lane Eccles and that she only knows about it from Facebook. Usually, the Parish is sent this information from TMBC but nothing has arrived yet. Councillor Base will enquire as to why it hasn't been received yet.

13. Accounts for Payment

The Council considered the Payment Schedule attached to the Agenda and Councillor Fuller proposed and Councillor Ms Dorrington seconded and it was **Agreed** that 12 payments totalling £4,251.11 be made.

14. Council Vacancies – 1 Aylesford South

The Clerk reported that she had received interest for the vacancies from a member of the public, Bunmi Ogun. All members had received the information about the interested party in advance of the meeting. It was **Unanimously Agreed** to co-opt Bunmi Ogun to the Parish Council.

Closed

15. S101 Delegation of Powers

The Clerk explained that if the Parish had a S101 Delegation of Powers in place it would mean that the Council can still function if for any reason it could not meet and make decisions. It also means that if an urgent decision needed to be made in between meetings, this could still be done. Under the rules the delegation would fall to the Proper Officer (Clerk) who will be required to consult with two nominated members, take their views into consideration before making the final decision. The Clerk must comply with all Council policies and regulations when making any decisions and a Terms of Reference for the S101 Delegated Authority has been prepared which was submitted to members ahead of the meeting. The Clerk suggested that regular reviews are undertaken for the time being every 3-4 months. The Clerk asked that a small committee be set up of four Councillors to call upon if needed, two of which must be the Chairman and Vice Chairman. The Clerk asked for two others to be nominated. Councillor Mrs Gadd nominated Councillors Sullivan and Smith. It was **Unanimously Agreed** to adopt the S101 Delegation of Powers as presented to members, that the nominated Councillors form the committee and a review is carried out regularly. **Closed**

16. Planning Advice

Councillor Ludlow began by talking about the effects Covid has had on people and an inept Local Plan. None of the Councillors on the Parish Council are planning experts, although it is appreciated that some have many years' experience being a Parish Councillor but how do we 'the Parish' know if there is anything to object to unless we obtain professional advice from an independent planning expert. He would like a pot of money put aside in the budget for large applications to be used to enlist the services of an independent planning advisor to look at the application and see if there is any opportunity to object to the proposal or anything within it.

Councillor Ludlow then went on to Move a Motion by proposing the Parish fund independent advice and Councillor Beadle seconding it, however the Clerk stated the motion was not valid because the correct procedure had not been adhered to as per the Councils Standing Orders. The Clerk explained that to move a motion, written notice must be given to the Clerk at least three clear days before the meeting (7 days is good practice). A discussion followed and it became apparent that the correct procedure to move a motion was not known, therefore it was suggested that the Clerk write to all members as soon as possible explaining the correct process.

It was also suggested by Councillor Mrs Gadd that the Clerk see if there are any training courses for Parish Councillors to attend that explains what the Parish Councils role is regarding the planning process.

Motion rejected as correct procedure to move a motion not adhered to. Closed

17. Any other Items of Correspondence

There were no any other items of Correspondence.

18. Duration of Meeting

7.34pm to 8.43pm