

Aylesford Parish Council

Meeting of the Council

Minutes of the Meeting held at Eccles Methodist Church, Eccles on Tuesday 12 March 2024

Present: Councillors Sullivan (Chairman) and Councillors Balcombe, Mrs Birkbeck, Chapman, Craig, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Eves, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Ludlow, Ms Oyewusi, Rillie, Sharp, Shelley and Smith.

In Attendance : Mrs Randall (Clerk).

Also in Attendance: Borough Councillors Davis and Dalton and five members of Public.

Apologies: Councillors, Fuller, Mrs Ogun, Walker and Borough Councillors Canon and Williams.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for Absence from Councillors Fuller, Mrs Ogun, Walker and Borough Councillors Canon and Williams were received, and the reasons for absence agreed.

2. 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.

3. Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

4. Adjournment of the meeting to allow Public Participation.

Members of the public raised points around the following

- The Bushy Wood development and the general disappointment felt in the village – the Chairman informed those present that the Parish Council has an informal meeting scheduled with Trenport on Monday 18 March. This is to start the discussion around the plans for the existing allotments, the proposed new allotment site, S106 money and the Community Hub they plan on building. It is also an opportunity to see where they are with their plans and what the timescale

is for further applications to be submitted. The Clerk has asked Councillor Ludlow to collate responses from residents regarding what enhancements they would like to see for the village. This request has been put on the Eccles Action Group Facebook page and the Clerk has asked Councillor Ludlow to ensure it is on the normal Eccles Facebook page too.

- It was suggested by a resident that an update from Trenport to all residents through their letterbox would be helpful as since the appeal there has been no further communication about this development.
- A resident asked if we could ask Trenport at the meeting on the 19th if there could be a public meeting held in the Eccles school hall. The Chairman confirmed we would raise it with them.
- Borough Councillor Dave Davis stated that its absolutely vital that Eccles residents work with the Parish Council to try and get the absolute best for residents. Burham worked with Trenport and got a lot and Wouldham fought them and didn't get a lot.
- A resident raised questions around the recent by-election that was called by Eccles residents. The resident stated she knew nothing about it and wished to know why a by-election was called if there was no-one to stand. Questions were also raised regarding the costs the Parish Council are expected to pay to TMBC for work done concerning the by-election. Councillor Ludlow stated that a by-election was called because the Parish Council had refused his first request to be co-opted back onto the Council. In the meantime, he submitted his second request for co-option presuming that it would be refused again, but it was accepted, therefore meaning the by-election was not needed as there was no-one else who wished to stand. Councillor Ludlow's co-option was for the vacancy created by Duncan Rowe, the by-election was called for the vacancy created by Stephen Beadle.
- A resident asked why the teenage shelter was removed from Eccles Recreation Ground. It was explained that there were a number of incidents where dog poo bags were being ripped open and tipped all over the shelter, its table and roof that staff were having to clean off. It was monitored over a period of time and members instructed its removal as it is a health and safety hazard for everyone including staff who have to clean it off. Advice was also taken from the Police who said that unfortunately these shelters are no longer used for the intended purpose. The teenage shelter in Tunbury Recreation Ground was also removed due to persistent drug taking and reports of residents feeling unsafe walking past when there is a group of teenagers in there.

4.2 Police Report

There was no representation from Kent Police and no report.

5. Minutes of the Meeting of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 16 January 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Balcombe and Seconded by Councillor Mrs Gadd that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 16 January 2024 be **approved** as a correct record and signed, subject to the following amendments:

6. Any Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no Matters Arising.

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

- a) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee on 13 February 2024. There were no matters arising.
- b) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee on 5 March 2024 (draft) and to approve Minute 5 – Statement of Internal Control.

8. 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 January 2024. There were no matters arising.
- b) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee on 20 February 2024 (draft). There were no matters arising.

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

- a) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 16 January 2024. There were no matters arising.
- b) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 23 January 2024. There were no matters arising.
- c) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 13 February 2024. There were no matters arising.
- d) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 20 February 2024. There were no matters arising.
- e) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 5 March 2024 (draft). There were no matters arising.

10. To Receive the Report of the County Councillor

There was no County Councillor present, and no report was provided.

11. To Receive the Report of the Borough Councillor(s)

See attached report at Appendix A written by the Borough Councillors for Aylesford North and North Downs Ward. **Noted**

12. Accounts for Payment

The Council considered the Payment Schedule attached to the Agenda and Councillor Balcombe proposed and Councillor Mrs Gadd seconded and it was **Resolved** that 17 payments totaling £1,551.48 be made.

13. Council Vacancies

There is currently one vacancy for Eccles Ward. **Noted**

14. Decisions taken under S101 Delegated Authority

No decisions have been taken under S101 Delegated Authority. **Noted**

15. Consider Any Other Items of Correspondence

A Councillor asked if everyone was aware of the monthly report from County Councillor Kennedy that you can sign up to.

Borough Councillor Dalton asked if the Parish Council had any thoughts on the possibility of TMBC introducing parking charges in its two public car parks in Aylesford. The Chairman said that the Parish had returned its comments to TMBC but was against the implementation of these charges.

16. Duration of Meeting

7:37pm to 8:27pm

REPORT TO AYLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL 12th March 2024
By the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councillors for

Aylesford North and North Downs Ward
Councillors Dave Davis, Alex McDermott and Roger Dalton

Aylesford South and Ditton Ward
Councillors Rob Cannon, Steve Hammond and Colin Williams

Walderslade Ward
Councillor Des Keers

ALL WARDS ITEMS

NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. The process for finding a successor to Julie Beilby is well underway and there were over 40 applicants for the post which have since been trimmed down to a shortlist of 10. It reflects well on the Council that so many have applied because it can be difficult to attract suitable candidates for this role at tier 2 council level. It is expected the new Chief Executive will be in place by Annual Council in May.

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARY CHANGES

2. The new parliamentary boundaries covering your parish are at Annex A for Chatham and Aylesford and at Annex B for Maidstone and Malling. Better details can be found at: <https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/interactive-map/>

3. **Tracey Crouch.** As you will be aware Tracey Crouch will not be seeking re-election for Chatham and Aylesford. She been an exceptional champion for our community and had a national reputation through her work on loneliness, fixed odds betting terminals, cancer and her Independent Review into Football Governance. We have always found her willing to help or give advice on ward matters and casework and she will be greatly missed by many of our residents.

REMOVAL OF PLASTIC CAN AND BOTTLE BANKS FROM TMBC SITES

4. At the TMBC Cabinet of the 13th February the decision was made to remove all the Borough's bring sites for glass, cans and plastics including the ones in Aylesford and Burham.

5. Within our wards all the properties have green lidded bins for the recycling of these items except for about 23 properties in Aylesford High Street where each of these households have three very robust blue bags for recycling these items.

6. The flats opposite the Hengist were added to the recycling collections during the roll out. If there are problems here, inform TMBC Waste Services and they will be fixed.

7. The removal of the sites will result in a saving of about £100,000 per annum to the Council or a saving of about £1.75 per household per year across the Borough.

8. There will be a loss of the receipts for the material being recycled but this will be compensated by a corresponding increase in the recycling of glass, cans and plastics through the green bins or blue bags.

COUNCIL TAX

9. Residents will have received their Council Tax bills by now. This bill covers the tax due to KCC, KCC Adult Social Care, TMBC, Aylesford Parish Precepts, Kent & Medway Fire Authority and Kent Police including the Police and Crime Commissioner.

10. Council Taxpayers can pay in 12 monthly instalments, if they wish, instead of the normal ten monthly payments by emailing: revenues@tmbc.gov.uk. This must be done by 31st March 2024 to take effect in the coming financial year. Anything coming after that will apply for the following financial year. Once the request is made there is no need to make it each year it will roll over.

11. TMBC Element of Council Tax 2024/25.

a. At the last full Council meeting on 20 January members unanimously approved a budget for the new financial year starting in April. TMBC part of the Council Tax bills will increase by just under £7 to £238 a year or £4.58 a week for a typical Band D property. This is an increase of 3 per cent on the current year which compares to 5% increases for KCC and Kent Police whose budgets continue to make up the bulk of the average annual Band D Council Tax in the Borough of £2266.

b. TMBC's medium term financial strategy is addressing a forecast funding gap of £1.7m over the next four years. Savings and efficiencies in the current year totalled £195,000 with a further £305,000 planned for the next financial year. Unlike many councils, as has been widely reported in the media, TMBC is debt free and in a good position to invest in both core services and schemes to deliver improvements for the Borough's residents.

AGILE

12. In our last reports we have explained the move over to Agile as the administrative computer program for much of TMBC's work.

13. This is very much work in progress and things are improving but the work is complex and slow.

AYLESFORD NORTH & NORTH DOWNS ISSUES

LAND AT ECCLES, EAST & WEST OF BULL LANE ECCLES

14. In our last report, we were waiting for the award of appeal costs as final closure on the Trenport's successful appeal to build on the Land at Eccles and West of Bull Lane. Costs have not been finally resolved but is nearing a conclusion.

15. Our advice from the TMBC planners is that there is a 3 to, possibly, 6-month period from now in which to get any requests in for "Enhancement to Community Facilities" to the TMBC S106 officer and ourselves so that TMBC planners are clear what facilities are needed in Eccles.

16. There is not a limitless pot but there is an opportunity to bid for improvements to Eccles.

17. If your Council have anything that should be considered please inform us ASAP as well as the S106 officer.

ASB SURVEY IN BLUE BELL HILL

18. The survey of residents has been completed and residents who have responded have been issued with diary forms to log ASB events.

19. This is ongoing work and we will keep you updated at future meetings.

20. We have also had a request from a resident for restrictions to be put in on the motorway footbridge in Robin Hood Lane to stop its use by motorcycle trail bikes which he had witnessed. This was passed to KCC but Andrew Kennedy reports that KCC are unable to do anything without effectively denying access to push chairs and mobility scooters which is not allowed.

21. This then becomes a police matter. If there is dangerous and reckless activity then a 999 call to the police is appropriate. If the activity has ceased it should still be reported on 101. In either case the witness should pass over as much detail as possible especially number plate information and what the riders are wearing and doing.

REVIEW OF CHARGING AT TMBC CAR PARKS

22. The TMBC Parking Charge Consultation, which affects the two Aylesford car parks, ran from 24th November to the 7th January. There have been more than 4000 responses and these are still being analysed and will go to Cabinet on 2nd April.

NURSERY ROCHESTER ROAD AYLESFORD

23. We reported to your last four meetings on planning application TM/23/01072/FL. Proposed change of use of land, on Rochester Road, Aylesford, from a nursey (plants) to mixed equestrian and a holiday park comprising 7 mobile homes, 4 serviced camper van places and a recreational area.

24. We regret to inform you that there is still no decision on this application and as such enforcement action cannot proceed.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS IN PROGRESS

Land Rear of Mackenders Lane Eccles Aylesford Kent

25. No progress since last report. Officers are still seeking advice on legal matters that complicate this case.

Land On Former Scout Camp Warren Road

26. No further progress to report.

Land North of Lower Warren Road and East of Warren Road

27. No further progress to report.

28. This matter is out of TMBC hands until the Inspectorate have decided it.

AYLESFORD SOUTH AND DITTON

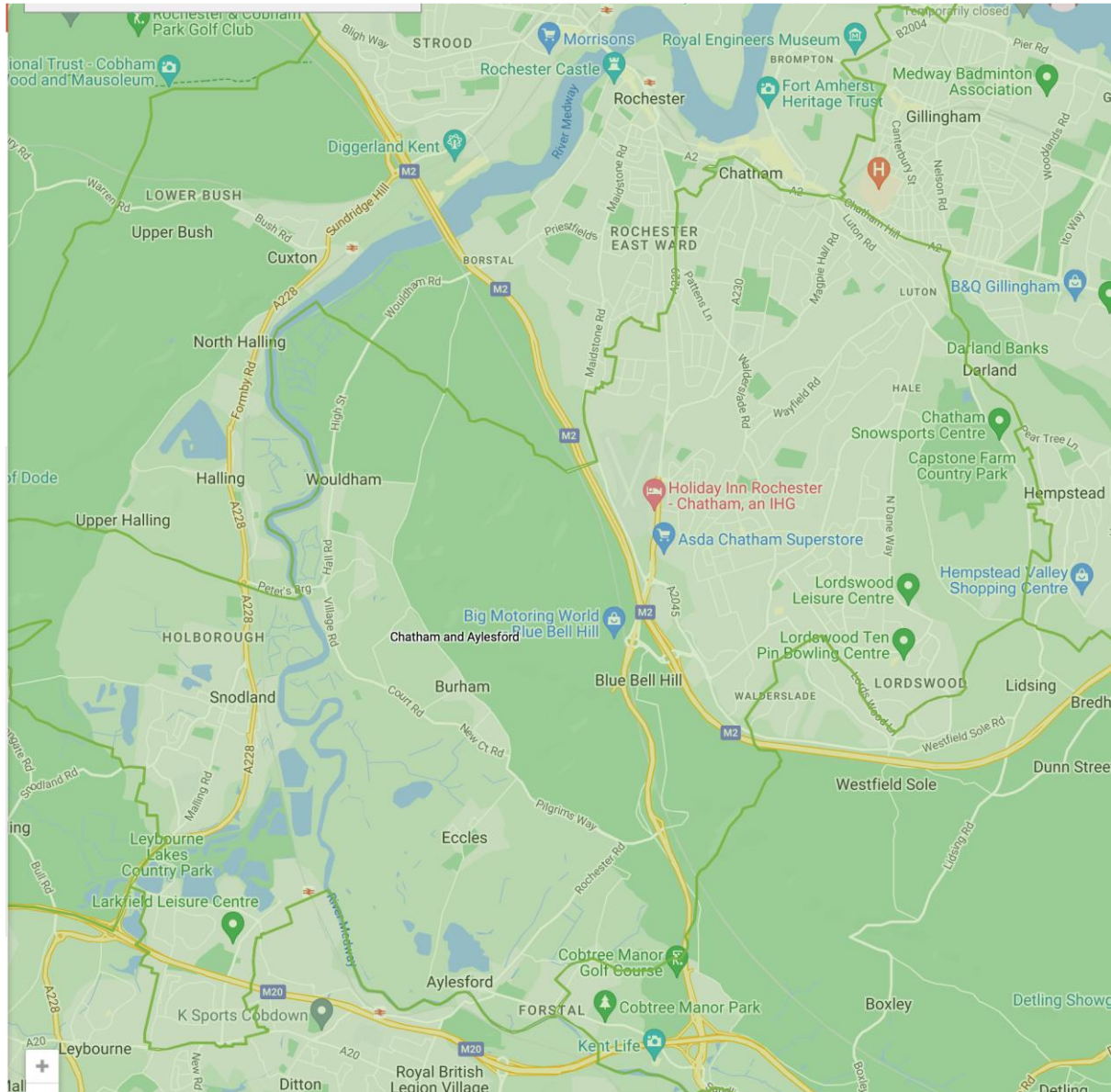
29. There are no specific Aylesford South and Ditton items to report this time.

WALDESLADE WARD

30. There are no specific Walderslade items to report this time.

**ANNEX A TO
REPORT TO
AYLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL
12TH MARCH 2024**

CHATHAM & AYLESFORD PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY MAP



**ANNEX B TO
REPORT TO
AYLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL
12TH MARCH 2024**

MAIDSTONE & MALLING PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY MAP

