

# Aylesford Parish Council

## Meeting of the Council

### Minutes of the Meeting held in St. Marks School, Eccles on Wednesday 18 September 2024

**Present:** Councillors Sullivan (Chairman) and Councillors Balcombe, Mrs Birkbeck, Mrs Eves, Ludlow, Rillie, Sharp, Shelley and Smith

**In Attendance :** Mrs Randall (Clerk).

**Also in Attendance:** Borough Councillors Cannon, Davis and Dalton. Police Officer David Warner and 10 Members of the Public

\*\*\*\*\*

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for Absence from Councillors Chapman, Craig, Ms Dorrington, Fuller, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Mrs Ogun, Ms Oyewusi and Walker 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

The Chairman informed those present that he has been trying to locate the funds, in the name of The Eccles Village Hall Fund, that were deposited with the Halifax some years ago with two residents from Eccles being the signatories. The money was raised or donated by residents to contribute towards a Village Hall for Eccles.

The Halifax Passbook showed that this was 'a two to sign' account and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1997 there was a balance of £4,470.98. On 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1999 this account was closed and a new account opened with the same name 'The Eccles Village Hall Fund' c/o one of the signatories and their Eccles address. All the money in the old account was transferred to a new account.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2012 the new account was closed, and the money withdrawn. By this time, with interest, the balance withdrawn/transferred on closing was £5,693.12.

The issue is that one of the signatories passed away in December 1997 and as this was a "two to sign" account how was it possible to close the account and open a new one on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1999 in the name of The Eccles Village Hall Fund c/o the deceased person and their address.

Halifax cannot explain this.

The Chairman has written to the Halifax who said they do not hold records back to the dates in question. He also contacted the local branch in Maidstone who confirmed that all signatories to the account would be recorded in the Passbook. There were just two signatories recorded.

The Chairman contacted the Financial Ombudsman Service on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and after many months the Financial Ombudsman on the 8<sup>th</sup> August 2024 confirmed she did not uphold the complaint. She did not consider it to be unreasonable that Halifax were unable to provide records dating back to 1997.

The Chairman has responded that he does not accept the decision.

The Council feels that the money has been accessed fraudulently and that Halifax should accept responsibility. Tracey Crouch fully supported the Chairman while she was the MP and feels very strongly that it should be paid back using the bank's Community Fund for the benefit of the Eccles Residents.

The Chairman thanked Tracey for all the help she had offered and with her input will write to the Halifax once more to request a financial closure on the matter.

#### **4. Adjournment of the meeting to allow Public Participation.**

A resident raised the issue of buses, coaches and HGV's such as sewage lorries going through Aylesford Village which breach the weight restriction of 7.5 tonne. The buses seem to be using the village as a shortcut and sometimes double-decker buses go through with only a handful of people on it. The Borough Councillors will raise this with KCC and County Councillor Kennedy as this would fall under their jurisdiction.

Another resident elaborated on the sewage lorries that go through Eccles, at speed, they do not stop, and they go through the night which Southern Water say are emergencies. Tankers are coming through the village at 6.15pm on a Sunday. Borough Councillor Dalton confirmed that he is talking to Southern Water about this issue. He has the contact details for the Transport Manager at MTS, who he has found to be very helpful.

The Parish Council has very limited powers in this area, but it can certainly offer its support to the Borough Councillors who will try and get the right people together round the table to help resolve this.

A resident asked about the flashing speed sign that broke and KCC refused to replace it due to limited funds. It was near the pub in Eccles, and it was an effective tool at deterring motorists. She also pointed out that Neighbouring villages are limited to 20mph, yet Eccles is 30mph. Both these matters will be discussed further with the County Councillor and Borough Councillors.

A resident asked whether there was an update on the Bushey Wood Application. The Clerk answered that she had emailed Transport in preparation for this meeting and they replied that they do not have any updates and could she contact them again in 2-3 months' time, which will be November.

Councillor Ludlow said he was waiting for a date to be set for a meeting to be held with residents and Borough Councillor Dave Davis to discuss Bushey Wood and in particular

what residents would like to see as enhancements to the village keeping in mind the constraints of the Parish Council.

A resident asked the Clerk where the pedestrian gate had gone from Eccles Recreation Ground. The Clerk said it was broken and laying on the ground, so it was removed. A quote has been obtained to replace it and that will be done in the next couple of months when the contractors can schedule it in.

#### **4.1 Police Report**

PC Warner introduced himself as the new Beat Officer, he has been a Police Officer for five years. He said he may be able to help with the speeding motorists and suggested he may be able to attend with a speed gun or even just as a visual deterrent in the village so vehicles can see him. He might also be able to help with the large vehicles coming through Aylesford Village that shouldn't.

There should be one more officer joining him at the end of the month, which will be a great help because he is often dispatched to other areas.

#### **4.2 To receive the report of the County Councillor**

No report was received.

#### **4.3 To receive the report of the Borough Councillors**

The report (attached at Annex A) was pre-circulated and tabled. Councillor Davis said the Parish Council's Highway Improvement Plan would be very useful for speed signs etc. Borough Councillor Canon gave a verbal report (attached at Appendix B)

### **5. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 23 July 2024**

It was proposed by Councillor Balcombe and Seconded by Councillor Smith that the Minutes of the Council held on 23 July 2024 be **approved** as a correct record and signed.

### **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 6 August 2024. There were no matters arising.
- b) It was Agreed to note the Minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee on 3 September 2024 (draft). There were no matters arising.

## 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 6 August 2024. There were no matters arising.
- b) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee on 3 September 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 23 July 2024. There were no matters arising.
- b) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 6 August 2024. There were no matters arising.
- c) It was **Agreed** to note the Minutes of the Planning Committee on 3 September 2024 (draft). There were no matters arising.

## 10. Accounts for Payment

The Council considered the Payment Schedule attached to the Agenda and Councillor Balcombe proposed and Councillor Sharp seconded and it was **Resolved** that 21 payments totalling £14,491.73 be made.

## 11. Council Vacancies

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

## 12. Decisions taken under S101 Delegated Authority

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

## 13. To consider the removal of the Outdoor Gym Equipment in Forstal Recreation Ground

Some photos were circulated of the equipment and the Clerk explained that the Annual Playground Inspection report had identified these pieces of equipment as needing to be removed, replaced or repaired (if possible). She reminded members that in October 2022 the Council agreed to remove two pieces of equipment on the same site and it agreed to remove the remaining items once they reached the end of their life. However, as it has been two years since the Council made that decision it is only right that this is brought back to the Council for further discussion and decision. It was **Resolved** that the Clerk should obtain a quote to repair the items, if possible, a quote for removal and a further quote for replacement. She will also look for any grants that may be available to fund possible replacement and ask TMBC if there is any S106 monies that could be used for this purpose. The Clerk will report back when she has the required quotes, which can be done at the Environmental Services Committee.

**14. Consider Any Other Items of Correspondence**

A Councillor expressed how nice it was to see the Supervisor back to work after a period of sick leave.

**15. Duration of Meeting**

7:23pm to 7:52pm

## **REPORT TO AYLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL 18<sup>th</sup> September 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**

#### **LOCAL PLAN -REGULATION 18B CONSULTATION**

1. Since our last report, there have been some government planning statements but there can be no change until these have been fully assessed by our planning officers. TMBC have had to delay their 18B consultation until the position is clearer. More information can be got from the following press release but that has not been changed since our last report:

<https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/news/article/143/council-to-assess-impact-of-planning-changes-announced-by-new-government>

#### **AGILE**

2. Work is still progressing between our planning and IT departments.
3. The next step is to prove the communication program with selected TMBC Councillors and, when that is successful, to migrate the information onto an Excel spreadsheet for distribution round parish councils.

#### **PHOENIX SURGERY MOVE TO PETERS VILLAGE**

4. It is with some concern that we note that the area on Village Road in Peters Village earmarked for the new Phoenix Surgery has been turned into a car park. The matter is one between the Integrated Care Board of the NHS and Trenport but is of concern to many of our residents and us.

#### **ASB ENFORCEMENT TEAM ASSESSMENT**

5. The ASB Enforcement Team will cease their current activity at the end of September. A comprehensive review of their function and cost effectiveness will take place over the autumn. Des Keers would welcome any input you wish to make on this. On completion of the review, a decision will be made as to how we move forward next year at peak ASB times.

## **AYLESFORD NORTH & NORTH DOWNS ISSUES**

### **ROCHESTER ROAD CLOSURE ON ALEX HILL 26<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER.**

6. We have forwarded the KCC notification, to your clerk, that Rochester Road will be closed between the Bull Lane and New Court Road junctions on 26<sup>th</sup> September and ask that this be given maximum publicity. Any closure of that 200 m length of road will result in a 10 mile detour.

### **ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS IN PROGRESS**

#### **Nursery Rochester Road Aylesford**

7. There is no change on the application which has been appealed and is with the Planning Inspectorate. All other enforcement action must wait for the outcome of that appeal.

#### **Land Rear of Mackenders Lane Eccles Aylesford Kent**

8. There is a farm building that has been largely built. It is a building for farm use such as storing farm machinery. This building is permitted development.

9. There is also a caravan on site that is been occupied during the period of construction of the permanent building above. A meeting has been held with the owner and TMBC Enforcement Officers and there is still work going on the approved building. As such continued use of the building is lawful until that work stops.

#### **Land On Former Scout Camp Warren Road**

10. There is no change on this which is in the hands of the over stretched court system awaiting further prosecution.

#### **Land North of Lower Warren Road and East Of Warren Road**

11. You will recall that there have been 3 applications for the land:

- a. 20/01125/FL - Extension to existing stables - Approved
- b. 20/01845/RD - Drainage conditions for above - - Approved
- c. 22/00417/NMA - Addition of windows change of openings - Refused 25 Mar 22.

12. The last application resulted in two Enforcement Notices being served on 14<sup>th</sup> April 22 to two different people for the same reasons. This in turn led to two appeals to the Planning Inspectorate.

13. The appeal decision came in with the Enforcement Notices upheld with a slight variation. This means their appeal has been dismissed and they must still carry out all necessary internal and external works so that the stable building is in accordance with the terms and conditions of approved planning permission TM/20/01125/FL.

14. Technically that does not mean that he can't live in the stables but all the work to make it habitable must stop and be rectified as per the refusal of 22/00417/NMA.

15. The site was inspected on 2 September 2024 and meeting held with the owner. Clear work has started to comply with Notice but not yet complete. The owner has been given a further month to fully comply and has been made aware that prosecution action can still be taken until full compliance with the requirements of the Enforcement Notice has been met.

### AYLESFORD SOUTH AND DITTON

16. All being well, Cllr Rob Cannon intends to be at your meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September and will update you then on any wards matters.

### WALDESLADE WARD

#### MEDWAY COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATION MC/21/1296 |

17. Medway Council have granted planning application for 450 houses close to Walderslade. The application out line details are:

*Outline Application (with all matters reserved except access) for the erection of up to 450 market and affordable dwellings, nursery and supporting retail space up to 85sqm, with provision of main access to Ham Lane; estate roads; cycle and pedestrian routes; residential and community open space and landscaping; new junction for Lidsing Road/Hempstead Road and realignment and widening of Lidsing Road. Off site related highway works to Westfield Sole Road, Shawstead Road, Hempstead Road, Chapel Lane, Hempstead Valley Drive, Hoath Way roundabout, Hoath Way and M2 Junction 4 - Re-submission of MC/19/0336 | Gibraltar Farm Ham Lane Hempstead Gillingham Medway ME7 3JJ.*





**AYLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL 18/09/2024****AYLESFORD SOUTH BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**CASTOR PARK, ALLINGTON

Colin and I were invited to a site tour of this site on 6 September. I am pleased to say the developers Penenden Heath are a Kent based construction company and they are working alongside West Kent Housing Association. Groundworks are well underway and they anticipate inviting us back in mine months or so by which stage building proper will be well advanced. It is encouraging to see a local firm being used and the way they are keeping up regular close communication with borough councillors and other local stakeholders.

BUNYARDS FARM VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATION

Unfortunately the inspectors report from the public enquiry has recommended that the application should not be accepted. It is likely now that the KCC Regulation Committee will accept this recommendation at best guess around November/December 2024 and effectively permit development on this land. Without prejudging the outcome of any planning application that might come before Area 3 afterwards there is still work that can be done to limit the impact of this development. Examples of areas to think about are maximising green space, the access to the A20 via Beaver Road and whether the paths used by walkers and others can be created public right of ways.

ANTISOCIAL DRIVING

We have contacted by concerned residents about the issue of cars using Hall Road and Station Road as a racetrack, particularly after 9pm. Not surprisingly since the opening of the cut-through to Panattoni Park the traffic has considerably worsened and it seems vehicles increasingly speed up Hall Road and down Station Road at all hours. This is an issue in terms of signage etc we will take up with KCC via our County Councillor Andrew Kennedy but with TMBC and the police in terms of stepping up the police presence.

YELLOW LINES

This is a perennial problem with complaints coming in to us occasionally from those who want new double yellow lines installed but more so from those who want them removed. Currently for example Aylesford Medical Centre has asked us to have them removed from Admiral Moore Drive outside the surgery.

COLDHARBOUR ROUNDABOUT

At the Joint Transport Board on Monday we received an update about this scheme. Broadly we are still on track for completion by early December. There will be some more night closures in mid October to enable resurfacing and white lining works to be carried out, exact dates to be announced nearer the time. The existing trees on the roundabout are being removed to be replaced by 70 young trees.

STREET NAME CONSULTATION

I am happy to assist with a list of names for the second phase of the Poppies development.