

Aylesford Parish Council

Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held via Zoom link on 15 December 2020

Present: Councillor Ludlow (Chairman) and Councillors Balcombe, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Ms Papagno, Rillie, Shelley, Smith, Walker, Williams, Winnett and Wright.

In Attendance: Neil Harris (Clerk), Melanie Randall (Assistant Clerk and Finance Officer)

Apologies: Councillors Base, Hammond, Ms Oyewusi and Sullivan.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Base (personal commitment), Hammond (unwell), Ms Oyewusi (personal commitment) and Sullivan (personal commitment), were received, and the reason for absence agreed.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members Interests.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 November 2020

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Aylesford Village Square

The Clerk reported that the work being done in the Village Square is in 4 stages and stage 1 and 2 the felling of the trees and the grinding of the stumps has been completed. The remainder of the work to be done in stages 3 and 4 currently has no scheduled date for this work but it is likely that the laying of the bricks will be undertaken in late March/early April.

5. Street Lighting - Street Light in Forstal Road

The Clerk reported that the Committee agreed to go ahead with the repair but no date for this work has been agreed with UK Power Networks.

6. Car Parks - Aylesford Car Parks

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting the Committee noted that the Council was aware that it had never received a reply to its objection to the proposals to introduce charges at the car parks and in particular its offer to TMBC to lease the car parks off them and for the Parish Council to operate them. It was agreed that the Clerk should follow up on the offer to operate the car parks with TMBC. The Clerk stated that he had written to TMBC and in response they had indicated that the TMBC had agreed that charges be introduced in principle, but that their proposals had been deferred due to the pandemic and would have to be readvertised before any charges were introduced. At that time, they would consider any comments made at the first consultation as well as any further comments made. They would respond to the Council's proposal of leasing the car park at that point.

7. Traffic Speed and the new Sandpit Entrance on Rochester Road Aylesford

The Clerk reported that it had previously been reported that the Council had received a reply from KCC which indicated that as there had been no recorded personal injury crashes at this site in the last 3 years they would not plan to undertake any improvement works at this location. The Committee expressed their disappointment at the response from KCC regarding this new entrance in Rochester Road and the speed of traffic highlighting that it would be impossible to have 3 years of data as the junction had only just been completed. It was felt that KCC needed to act now before a fatal accident happened at this site. Councillor Rillie expressed some further concerns regarding the condition of the speed humps in the vicinity of this junction and also that the speed limit should be reduced from 40mph to 30mph. KCC have indicated that there was nothing that they could do as this was not a safety critical site with no patterns of crashes that relate to speeding. The Clerk has taken the matter up with County Councillor Homewood who is pursuing it with the County Officers.

8. Kits Coty Slip Road Lights and Parking at the Upper Bell Slip Road

The Clerk reported that KCC have indicated that the Kits Coty slip road lights have now been repaired and are working. It was indicated that the first light on the slip road, on the right-hand side, was not working and the Clerk stated that he would take this up with KCC. The matter of the lorries parking on the A229 at the bottom of the slip road potentially blocking the emergency access down this redundant slip road and the actions of the parked drivers has been taken up by Borough Councillor Kennedy with the KCC Cabinet Member but he has not yet received a reply but is continuing to pursue.

9. All Sites – Play Area Inspection Report

The Clerk reported that it has previously been agreed to seek quotes for resurfacing the Forstal Road Recreation Ground Play Area and quotes were being sought from a number of companies. However, the prices within these quotes were high and therefore the Clerk was seeking additional quotes from other companies and was looking at a number of different options. Quotes were still being returned. It is intended that these quotes will be reported back to the next meeting of the Committee.

10. Ferryfield MUGA Quotes for Renewing Lines

The Clerk reported that quotes are being sought from Wicksteed and Mackledens for this work. A quote has been received from Wicksteed and Mackledens was being pursued for their price.

11. Request to park in the Area of Land within the Ferryfield accessed via the Little Preston Gate

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting it had been reported that the Hospital Trust e looking to move a number of staff off the Maidstone Hospital site and were looking to relocate them locally. They had identified a site, Shannon House, which borders the above area of land. While the building itself fits the operating requirements of the Trust there was a shortage of parking on site and few alternative options nearby. The Trust had indicated that the move was being driven by the reduction in staff desk space due to hospital 2m distancing rules and the need for more clinical space within the hospital. The staff being relocated were non-clinical non-patient facing staff who would still require access to a desk for some or all of their working time. The move was being described as temporary though there was no time set on this but the Trust would not expect any agreement with the Council to be anything but time limited and not for an indefinite period. They have not indicated the number of cars that they were seeking space for as the number of vehicles was not set and also discussions were still ongoing with Gallagher's re the number of spaces that they would be able to supply.

The Trust were asking the Council to consider in principle whether they would be able to utilise this land for additional parking with any conditions that the Council would wish to apply. Any necessary improvements and costs for security etc. would be solely borne by the NHS Trust.

The Committee agreed that the request to park in the area of land within the Ferryfield via the Little Preston Gate from the Hospital Trust be deferred to allow the Clerk to obtain further information and to report back to the Policy and Resources Committee on 1 December. The Clerk asked the Trust for this further information for that meeting and it was not received so it was agreed that this matter be considered at this meeting. No response to the request for further information has been received. It was **Agreed** that as there was no response from the NHS to the reasonable questions from the Council and the Council not having all the relevant information that it had to refuse the request from the NHS for parking on an area of land within the Ferryfield accessed by the Little Preston Gate.

12. . Eccles Car Park, Belgrave Street

The Clerk reported that in September 2015 the Council signed a lease with Trenport to lease the land for this car park. It was a 10-year lease and the first 5 years were rent free after which a market rent would be charged. The rent for the year will be £2000 and the invoice for the first 6-month payment of £1000 has been received.

13. Christmas Card Donation

The Clerk reported that each year the Council makes a donation to a charity of its choice in lieu of sending Christmas cards. This year the Chairman of the Council is suggesting a £100 donation to the Heart of Kent Hospice. It was **Agreed** that a £100 donation in lieu of Christmas cards be made to the Heart of Kent Hospice.

14. Brassey Centre Food Bank Micro Grant

The Chairmen of this Committee and Policy and Resources Committee agreed that an item could be placed on this Agenda to consider a request from Councillors Beadle and Ludlow to make a Micro Grant contribution to the Food Bank at the Brassey Centre. It was **Agreed** that a £25 donation from the micro grants of each member, together with Councillor Beadle, present be made to the Food Bank at the Brassey Centre. It was noted that the shortfall In Councillor Shelleys micro grant be made up from a donation from all other members present.

15. Recent Bereavement of Valerie Sullivan

The Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee asked that an item be placed on the Agenda of this meeting to consider a donation to be made to nominated charities of the RNLI and the Salvation Army in memory of Valerie Sullivan, Councillor Sullivan's late wife. It was **Agreed** that a donation of £100, to be split equally between each charity, be made in memory of Valerie Sullivan, Councillor Sullivan's late wife.

16. Duration of Meeting

7.30pm to 8.14pm