

Aylesford Parish Council

Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Capel Morris Centre on 22 February 2022

Present: Councillor Mrs Gadd (Chairman) and Councillors, Balcombe, Beadle, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Eves, Fuller, Gledhill, Mrs Ogun, Rillie, Shelley, Smith, Sharp, Sullivan, Walker and Winnett.

In Attendance: Melanie Randall (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillors Hammond, Ludlow, Ms Oyewusi and Williams

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Hammond, Ludlow, Ms Oyewusi and Williams 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 25 January 2022

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 January 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Small Works Programme

The Clerk reported that no further works had taken place and is not expecting anything to happen until the weather is more suitable for painting and staining etc. Work is expected to restart around mid to late March. **Ongoing**

5. Parking at the Upper Bell Slip Road

The matter of the lorries parking on this slip road is still an ongoing problem. No further correspondence received from any other authority involved. **Ongoing**

6. Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)

The Clerk reported that she had not received any further correspondence. **Ongoing**

7. Bus Services

7.1 155 Bus Service – The Clerk explained that she had received notification that Arriva have served notice on KCC to withdraw from their 155 contract and they will cease to operate the Wouldham to Maidstone part of the service from 17 April 2022. The decision has been made by Arriva on grounds of commercial profitability and not by KCC. There are a number of meetings planned between County Councillor Kennedy, Tracey Crouch MP and KCC to work on a solution. The Clerk will continue discussions with Councillor Kennedy who will report back to the Parish Office with further information as it becomes available. **Ongoing**

7.2 Free Tesco Bus Service – The Clerk informed the committee that Councillor Ludlow had written to the office of Tracey Crouch MP in August 2021 who in turn contacted Arriva. Tracey Crouch’s office is still waiting on a response from Arriva. After discussion it was **Agreed** to remove this item from the agenda as it has been ongoing for six months and it is now unlikely Arriva will respond. If, however a response is received in the future the committee will be informed. **Closed**

8. Gap between Ferryfield and Rugby Club

The Clerk reported that the installation of the gate has been put on hold until the early part of 2022. **Ongoing**

9. KCC Members Grant Request from Councillor Kennedy

The concrete base had been put in and the bench will be erected mid-end of March. **Closed**

10. Floodlights in Old Bridge Gardens

The Clerk reported that the Council is still waiting for the repairs to be carried out under warranty. The Streetlighting Contractor has contacted the manufacturer for an update. **Ongoing**

11. Request from Aylesford Rugby Club to use Ferryfield for parking on 13 March 2022.

It was **Agreed** that the Aylesford Rugby Club be permitted to use Ferryfield for parking on 13 March 2022 subject to the usual conditions around the weather and the Rugby Club are responsible if any damage is caused to the ground. **Closed**

12. Request to use Old Bridge Gardens for the Aylesford Big Lunch on 12 June 2022.

It was **Agreed** that Old Bridge Gardens can be used for the Aylesford Big Lunch on 12 June 2022 subject to the usual conditions around the weather and that residents are responsible for any damage that may be caused to the ground. Permission is also subject to the organising resident providing their own insurance and Risk Assessment and anything else the Clerk sees fit to receive copies of. **Closed**

13. Possible Salt Bins in Eccles – request to be made to KCC

The Clerk reported that she had received correspondence from KCC regarding requests for new salt bins. KCC have decided that at the current time they will not be funding or installing any more new salt bins as it is believed there are ample salt bins around the area. If this were to change then any new requests must be submitted by the end of July so as not to miss the opportunity should the KCC policy change.

Currently the options are:

- That the Parish submit a request for a new salt bin(s) in the hope that the policy changes;
- Consider whether an existing salt bin within the Parish can be relocated;
- Ask the local County Member if they are willing to fund the new salt bin(s) from their Members Grant

After discussion it was **Agreed** that the Clerk would approach the County Member and ask if this would be something he would fund from his Members Grant. **Ongoing**

14. Christmas Lights Review

The Clerk reminded the Committee that last year the Council wanted to review its Christmas Lights early this year in preparation of the 2022 display due to the ever-increasing costs. The Clerk explained there didn't seem to be many issues with the Christmas Lights this year which was reassuring and once all the invoices have been paid it is anticipated that the Council will go over budget by around £50-60. The Parish claims a grant from TMBC each year for £1,000 and this has already been received. After discussion it was **Agreed** that the Clerk would obtain prices for two new sets of lights to go back in the trees in the central reservation in Blue Bell Hill as these were removed due to them not working. It will also involve getting the right permissions/permit from KCC in order to be able to put them back as the trees belong to KCC. The Clerk will report back once she has the necessary information.

Ongoing

15. Arch Lights on the Old Bridge Aylesford – Review

The Clerk explained that only two of the five Arches on the Old Bridge are working and they are quite dull now. There is a problem with the Transformer in that the water level rises and submerges it in water. Every year the contractor has to estimate the river levels and every year it goes beyond therefore submerging the Transformer. Manufacturers are working on a new style of Transformer but we won't know until the end of March if it is successful or not. The Old Bridge is not the responsibility of the Parish Council so there is no obligation to

provide/renew the arch lights, however it is very much a loved and photographed feature of Aylesford and the Council would not want to see the lights go. After discussion it was **Agreed** that the Council wait and see if the new style Transformer is successful then decide on how to proceed with regards to replacing the lights if the other three arches do not come back on with the new Transformer installed. Early indications on costings are suggesting a fee of around £13,400 therefore it is quite possible that the Council will need to try and obtain a grant(s) in order to fund any replacement if needed and may look for sponsorship from local businesses as this would be difficult for the Parish to fund itself. The Clerk will report back in due course. **Ongoing**

Any Other Correspondence

There was no Any Other Correspondence

16. Duration of Meeting

7.37pm to 8.10pm