

# Aylesford Parish Council

## Environmental Services Committee

### Minutes of the Meeting held in the Capel Morris Centre on 23 November 2021

**Present:** Councillor Ludlow (Chairman) and Councillors Balcombe, Mrs Eves, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Ludlow, Rillie, Sharp, Shelley, Smith, Sullivan and Winnett.

**In Attendance:** Melanie Randall (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Councillors Fuller, Ms Oyewusi, Walker and Williams.

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#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Fuller, Ms Oyewusi, Walker 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 19 October 2021

It was Agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 October 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed.

#### 4. Small Works Programme

The Clerk reported that no further work had been carried out as the weather at this time of the year is not suitable for painting. She will instruct the contractor to lay the already agreed type 1 to the entrance of Podkin Meadow as KCC will not be moving the sign post for the footpath. **Ongoing**

#### 5. Parking at the Upper Bell Slip Road

The matter of the lorries parking on this slip road is still an ongoing problem. The Clerk has not had a response about erecting signs. There is a road Traffic Regulation Order dated 9 March 2005 which prohibits driving on the slip road, but it seems to be this that no-one will

not enforce. The Clerk will make some enquiries with TMBC as they had a meeting recently with Kent Police regarding the enforcement of the Traffic Regulation Order. She will also contact KCC again and ask about erecting a sign. **Ongoing**

## **6. Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)**

The Clerk had asked KCC for an update on the plan and reported the following

1. Tunbury Avenue, Walderslade, near School – KCC have asked the Clerk for a site meeting as although they do not have any available funds in their 2021/22 small works budget, they are looking at what can be put on their 2022/23 small works budget. The Clerk will arrange a site meeting with KCC. **Ongoing**
2. Bull Lane, Eccles – KCC carried out a speed survey at this location and the results show that the existing 30mph speed limit is being well complied with and current speeds do not support a reduction to 20mph. After discussion it was **Agreed** to remove this item from the plan as it is clear KCC will not make any alterations/improvements here due to the speed survey report. **Closed**
3. Rochester Road, Aylesford, new sandpit entrance – KCC have asked for a map to be sent to them showing the exact location of the site and asked if a site meeting was needed. The Clerk will send a site location and arrange a site meeting if she feels it is needed. **Ongoing**
4. Forstal Road, Aylesford, entrance to High Street – there was a misunderstanding in that KCC thought the Aylesford Football Club were having a speed survey done but it was a traffic survey, mainly of the car parks and permitted parking on Forstal Road. Therefore, this data is not relevant to be given to KCC. KCC have asked if the Parish Council would like to fund a speed survey but after discussion it was **Agreed** to decline this offer on the grounds that as KCC have stated themselves there is no money in the current years small works budget it would be a pointless exercise and a waste of Parish money if there is no chance of any improvements being made at the moment. The Clerk will decline the offer. **Ongoing**
5. Blue Bell Hill Slip Road – KCC are currently looking at all options regarding the ongoing issue of HGV's parking on this slip road and are working with County Councillor Kennedy copying in the Clerk. The installation of signs to prohibit parking was spoken about again and the Clerk was asked to follow this up with KCC and push for an answer. The Clerk also said she would ask TMBC how the meeting went that took place recently with Kent Police regarding the enforcement of the Traffic Regulation Order dated 9 March 2005 that prohibits driving on the slip road. **Ongoing**

## **7. Bus Services**

**7.1 155 Bus Service** – Councillor Gledhill gave a brief update; Arriva are having some difficulties as there is a lack of drivers. However, Nu-Venture are very happy with their evening service. Councillor Ludlow sought the Councils permission to arrange a Zoom meeting with Arriva and a few residents to discuss residents' concerns. It was **Agreed** that Councillor Ludlow contact KCC to arrange the meeting. **Ongoing**

**7.2 Free Tesco Bus Service** - Councillor Ludlow reported that Theo from Tracey Crouch's office is still pursuing Tesco's for a full explanation of why this service ceased. The timetable for this service is still displayed in the bus stops. **Ongoing**

## **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 Clerk informed the Committee that the £1,000 grant for the purchase of a bench in Old Bridge Gardens was used to purchase two picnic benches, one having already been installed. The second bench needs a concrete base installed which is scheduled to be done within the next few weeks. **Ongoing**

## **10. Floodlights in Old Bridge Gardens**

The Clerk reported that the Council is still waiting for the repairs to be carried out under warranty. **Ongoing**

## **11. Eccles See-Saw Repair**

The Clerk reported that the lead time for this repair from the point of order on 7 October was 8-10 weeks, however it was completed on 26 October. **Closed**

## **12. Planting of Trees in Podkin Meadow**

There had been a suggestion from local residents that some trees were planted around the play area and benches to give shade. The Clerk sought advice from the Council's tree surgeon on the type of trees that would be best suited to the ground conditions at this site. Six trees were recommended and after discussion it was **Agreed** to go ahead with the purchase and planting of the trees. **Closed**

In addition, the Clerk informed members that she had a site meeting at Podkin Meadow with the current grass cutting contractor and an Amenity Specialist to start the discussions around a possible wild flower area and to seek professional advice as to whether to carry on with the current maintenance schedule as it is or whether the time is right to make some adjustments. She will report back when she has received the advice.

## **13. Possible future Flooding in the Parish**

Councillor Shelley gave a verbal report on the concerns around the future of flooding in the Parish. He stated he had not read the current Flood Plan, the Clerk informed him there were about ten copies in the Parish Office of which he may have one. Councillor Shelley will collect one from the office. **Closed**

## **14. Any Other Correspondence**

### **Resignation**

The Clerk reported that the resignation of Mrs Papagno had been received. The Council expressed their regret but understood and accepted the resignation.

### **Blue Bell Hill – Christmas Tree Request**

The Clerk reported that the Friends of Blue Bell Hill Village had asked if the Council could purchase and install a Christmas Tree for them. The Clerk confirmed with them that KCC had granted permission for the tree to be erected on their land but they are not permitted to make any holes in the ground. It must be securely roped down and daily safety checks carried out by the residents. The Clerk obtained a price of £175 for a 10-foot tree and agreed to purchase it only, any installation and safety checks will be down to the residents which they had already agreed to do with KCC. The tree will be delivered to a house in Maidstone Road on 1 December.

**Closed**

### **Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award**

There have been two enquiries from residents whose sons are doing this award, they have to do one hour of volunteer work per week for three months. Due to their age, they are very restricted as to what they can do. The enquiries were around litter picking in the Parish, so the Clerk has offered them to borrow a litter picking set that was donated by Councillor Kennedy for residents use in addition to offering to dispose of their rubbish in the Parish Councils euro bin, she will also provide them with black sacks to use if they need them. Both families were very grateful for this and have collected the equipment.

**Closed**

## **18. Duration of Meeting**

7.47pm to 8.30pm