

Aylesford Parish Council

Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Capel Morris Centre on 26 April 2022

Present: Councillor Ludlow (Chairman) and Councillors, Ms Dorrington, Fuller, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Ludlow, Ms Oyewusi, Rillie, Shelley, Smith, Sharp, Sullivan and Winnett.

In Attendance: Melanie Randall (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillors Balcombe, Beadle, Eves, Hammond, Walker and Williams.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Balcombe, Beadle, Eves, Hammond, 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 22 March 2022

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 March 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Small Works Programme

The Clerk reported that more painting work had been completed but it is likely it will now stop for a while due to the contractor's priority being the Parish Councils grass cutting

Ongoing

5. Parking at the Upper Bell Slip Road

This item is covered under Agenda item 6

Ongoing

6. Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)

The Clerk reported that she had received an update on two items as follows.

Forstal Road at entrance to Village – KCC is to fund HGV counts which was going to be commissioned in April 2022. However; this was delayed due to survey programming. It has now been arranged for May 2022.

Blue Bell Hill Slip Road – KCC have now ordered the signage which is due to be installed during the summer high speed road closure in August 2022. The signage will be clear that parking on the slip road will be a prosecutable offence with automatic fines and penalty points on the driver's license. Kent Police have reassured the County Councillor that it will be regularly policed in the early stages to ensure the consequences are known within the HGV community. The success of the scheme will be reviewed after six months and KCC will consider further measures if necessary. **Ongoing**

7. Bus Services

7.1 155 Bus Service –

Councillor Gledhill reported that Nu-Venture are now providing two services a week on a Tuesday and Thursday with Arriva having committed to providing the school run service until the end of the academic year in July 2022 at which time Arriva will cease this service. **Ongoing**

8. Gap between Ferryfield and Rugby Club

The Clerk reported that the Maintenance Supervisor has come up with a different option for this issue instead of the original one. He has suggested that the Council gets a price for approx. 3ft high chestnut paling fencing instead of installing the gate, as putting the gate in will not stop people walking from Ferryfield through to the Rugby Club as they will just walk up a little further and go round the gate. It was **Agreed** that the Clerk obtain prices. **Ongoing**

9. Floodlights in Old Bridge Gardens

The Clerk reported that the Councils Streetlighting Contractor has received correspondence from the manufacturer stating the light that was sent back for repair is no longer under warranty. This is somewhat disappointing as it has been ongoing for some time. The options are, to replace the one on the Station Road side with a new light facing away from the river over the river path at a cost of £325 net including installation. The one on the opposite side of the bridge could have a small lantern style light to match the rest on the path in Old Bridge Gardens with output aimed at the bridge in general, costing £275 net. This is a reduction from the £945 net that it should be due to the unsatisfactory performance of the floodlight that was returned to the manufacturer. After discussion it was **Agreed** to proceed with both options. **Closed**

10. Arch Lights on the Old Bridge Aylesford – Review

There was no further update to report.

Ongoing

11. Request received from AVCC (attached to Agenda) – to plant various plants on Forstal Recreation Ground

A request was received from the Aylesford Village Community Centre to plant various plants on Forstal Recreation Ground just behind their blue fence. While the Council appreciates and understands what is trying to be achieved, after discussion on each request it was **Agreed to refuse** permission for the planting of roses as the Council is concerned it will create a health and safety issue to the public due to the thorns, the Council feels that these are not the best type of plant to be on the recreation ground especially in a high use area where children play. It was **Agreed to refuse** permission for rhubarb plants to be planted particularly as concerns were raised around the AVCC's intention to grow them as an edible crop for local residents to enjoy, as their leaves are toxic to humans if eaten, the point was also raised that if someone falls ill and happens to have had some rhubarb it is likely to be the rhubarb that is blamed. It was further **Agreed to refuse** permission for the placement of water butts along the back of the AVCC building as they will be a magnet for vandalism and also as the AVCC do have their own outside water tap to use as well as access to water from inside the building the Council felt they are not necessary.

The Council reiterated that it must be remembered that this is a public recreation ground not a community garden, an AVCC garden or any other sort of garden. Despite the refusal of the specific requests, the Council has no issue with the AVCC planting the same plants that have already been planted by their Trustees at the side of their building, in fact they would welcome those therefore becoming a mirror image of the existing planting variation. The Council does not want anything with thorns, spikes, prickles or stingers etc on the recreation ground and nothing edible or toxic. The AVCC will be asked if they would like to accept this option of using the same plants as they have planted at the side of their building. With regards to the possible community gardening volunteer team, if this were to proceed in order to comply with its own insurance policy the Council will require sight of public liability insurance that covers volunteers for this type of activity

Closed

12. Aylesford Football Club request to train outside of football season

The Clerk reported that she had received a request from the Aylesford Football Club to train on Forstal Recreation Ground during the months of July and August. The recreation ground will not be used in June for any type of football activity as this is when the ground maintenance and pitch repairs are carried out along with the resting of the pitches to ensure they are ready for the start of the season in September. Further discussions took place around pitch use at the Council's other sites and it was **Unanimously Agreed** that from September 2022 K Sports will no longer be given permission to use Ferryfield, the Council feels K Sports have a state-of-the-art 3G facility for their own teams as the Parish Council should be ensuring it is prioritising the football club(s) based within its Parish, particularly as they are in desperate need of more sites to use. It was also **Agreed** that Real 60 will have to share

Tunbury Changing Rooms and pitches with Aylesford Football Club. The Clerk will discuss with the football club when this should happen, either now or from September.

Blue Bell Hill Recreation Ground was also discussed and it was **Agreed** that if this was seen as a viable site for football use then the Council would support this option.

13. Any Other Correspondence

Councillor Ludlow wished to mention the recently published Fan-led review of Football Governance carried out by Tracey Crouch, in that it is a very good report.

14. Duration of Meeting

7.41pm to 8.36pm