

HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 16TH JANUARY 2023 AT 7:30PM AT HUNTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr D Heaton in the Chair, Cllrs A Trought, J Fuller, M Summersgill and I Simmons, and Mrs S Goodwin, Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: County/Borough Cllr Simon Webb was in attendance until Item 9.5.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs T Stanbridge and J Goddard.

2. FILMING, RECORDING AND PHOTOGRAPHING

The member of the public did not wish to film, record or photograph the meeting.

3. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

3.1 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

3.2 Dispensations

There were no requests for dispensations.

4. MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21ST NOVEMBER 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st November 2022 had been previously distributed. The Chairman signed the official copy of the minutes.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES NOT INCLUDED IN THE AGENDA

Item 11.6 – The quote for the permissive footpath hedge and verges maintenance contract has been accepted.

Item 11.11 – An application has been made for grants from the South East Water Community Fund on behalf of the sports clubs and the village hall.

6. POLICE

6.1 Police

No crimes have been logged on the e-watch website since the last Parish Council meeting.

6.2 Huntonwatch

Nothing to report.

7. LOCAL COMMUNITY

7.1 King George V Playing Field Committee

The Chairman of the Committee, Simon Taylor, was unable to attend the meeting but provided the following report:

- There has been no real activity at the Field since the end of October due to the weather.
- We are shortly to take delivery of a (miniature) tractor on springs to be installed in the play area in the Spring.
- A quotation is being obtained for a new post and rail fence to close off the area where the old pavilion used to stand, and for fence panels to tidy up the area between the old changing rooms and new pavilion. This work will be carried out in the Spring.
- The beech hedge between the Bowls and Cricket clubs is to be pruned shortly.
- The Parish Council have applied for grants from the South East Water compensation fund which ideally will cover a new water pump for the Bowls Club, a new scarifier for the Cricket Club and a new boiler for the Football Club.

- A rota and checklist will be established to undertake monthly health and safety inspections of the play area and equipment once Maidstone Borough Council cease to carry out this work from April 2023.

7.2 Traffic & Road Safety Working Party/Highways

Cllr Summersgill informed Members that the next Traffic & Road Safety Working Party (T&RSWP) meeting will be held in February. He provided the following update:

Cllr Summersgill has sent the map of 7.5T limits to County Cllr Webb so he can liaise with KCC Highways to correct their map. No response received yet.

Cllr Goddard has excavated the ditch at the end of Grove Lane with a digger.

Cllr Summersgill will speak to the resident whose hedge is encroaching on Redwall Lane. The snow took some of the hedge down.

Cllr Summersgill has spoken to Linton Parish Council (LPC) about the signage at Wares Farm; LPC are pursuing Wares Farm to take action.

The Parish Council has received a response from the school about parking on West Street. The headteacher referred to the T&RSWP or Parish Council sponsoring road safety 'buddies' or other signage, but no contact has been received on these issues so far. Cllr Summersgill will contact the school.

ACTION: CLLR SUMMERSGILL

Members agreed that it was positive to receive a response back from the school. Cllr Simmons advised that the school contacts parents about parking and there is a large sign in reception about it, so there is not much more the school can do. As Hunton Court has not been sold yet, there is no progress on use of the land at the back of the school for access in and out of the school. Cllr Trought recollected that the Year 6 children were to be incentivised to use the permissive footpath in good weather, but it never happened. As the school has expanded, the parking creates a safety issue which the school would be expected to mitigate. Cllr Summersgill advised that some Bensted Close residents are unhappy about the parking and are noting registrations. If there were double lines it may act as a deterrent but there would be no one to police them; PCSOs do not have the powers. Cllr Simmons suggested that the T&RSWP should consider gathering data on parking for a period of two weeks for example; to be considered at the next T&RSWP meeting. An article could also be placed in the Hunton Herald to ask people to contact the school if they have an issue with the parking. County Cllr Webb would be happy to come out at key times with his KCC badge on.

The Clerk will write back to the school to acknowledge the response.

ACTION: CLERK

Cllr Summersgill affirmed that there are five salt bins in Hunton but there are several other locations which would benefit from having a salt bin: the bottom entrance to Amsbury Farm; by Stonewall; and on Redwall Lane. KCC will fill the bins but the Parish Council would have to pay for the actual bins. It will be added to the T&RSWP list for KCC.

There is consistent flooding on Grove Lane/West Street; Cllr Goddard has contacted KCC. The culvert is blocked and the road is breaking up which is the responsibility of KCC Highways. There is a similar situation on East Street.

Cllr Summersgill is the SpeedWatch Coordinator. There are volunteers who are interested in taking part in SpeedWatch (a minimum of three is required), but the locations need to be authorised first.; the entrance near North Lodge would be a good location. Cllr Summersgill will be attending a SpeedWatch conference in March.

7.3 Tree & Pond Warden

Trees: Cllr Summersgill has been involved in a problem which started as a boundary issue between the Wilson's Yard development and a neighbour. However, the developer has excavated in a tree protection zone, which is not allowed according to the planning permission. Cllr Summersgill will speak or write to the developer.

Ponds: South East Water found newts in two ponds down Redwall Lane. Cllr Summersgill contacted the Medway Valley Partnership (MVP) who carry out newt surveys for £270. It could be a possible use of some of the CIL money. MVP can also carry out pond renovations.

8. COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

8.1 County Councillor

County Cllr Simon Webb reported that the focus at KCC is on the budget for 2023/24. The revenue budget requires £39.1million in savings which will be from staffing restructures and cut backs on non-statutory grants. To balance the budget, £15million will be taken from reserves. There will also be a 5% increase in council tax to bring in £47.1million. Cllr Heaton asked what would happen if KCC goes bankrupt. If this were to happen, someone from central government would step in and cut services down to statutory

services only.

8.2 **Borough Councillors**

Borough Cllr Webb reported that MBC will receive a 3% funding guarantee allocation from central government for 2023/24 and council tax will increase by 2.99%, so the MBC budget is easily balanced. MBC is in a much better position than KCC and has a good cash reserve.

Cllr Summersgill asked what is happening with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme once the 6-month period ends. Cllr Webb advised that no more money will come forward from the government. Some Ukrainians are returning to Ukraine. A bigger issue for MBC is housing; there was a significant number of affordable houses which have all been taken homeless people. Housing the refugees who have crossed the Channel is a big problem; the government is using a consultant to identify residences in the borough. They want 140 males to reside in flats in Maidstone; rent and food will be paid by the government. A letter has been written to the government.

9. **PARISH MATTERS**

9.1 **Parish Councillors**

No issues raised.

9.2 **Flooding**

Cllr Summersgill noted that there was flooding on New Year's Day, but it was not bad enough to put out the road signs and close West Street.

Two residences have had Environment Agency defences installed.

Two residents have become flood wardens.

No further communication has been received regarding flooding at The Square.

9.3 **Climate Change and Sustainability**

Cllr Summersgill advised that the Parish Environmental Group will be meeting in two weeks' time.

Cllr Heaton noted that the Parish Council recommends that green issues are considered for new build properties in the parish but MBC does not always make them conditions; Cllr Summersgill advised that they do in some circumstances. Cllr Fuller suggested that Cllr Summersgill could write an article for the Hunton Herald about the ways the Parish Council is being more 'green' with regard to planning applications.

ACTION: CLLR SUMMERSGILL

9.4 **Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Simmons has looked further into neighbourhood planning and the risks to Hunton of not having a Neighbourhood Plan are low. Resources would be better spent on climate change/sustainability and would be more beneficial to the community. Members **Agreed** to take the Neighbourhood Plan off the agenda. Cllr Simmons advised that the school is engaging with the community through articles in the Hunton Herald and suggested that the Parish Council puts an article in the Herald twice a year to share what it is doing.

9.5 **Coronation of King Charles III**

Cllr Heaton has submitted an article for the Hunton Herald to say that the Parish Council will be sponsoring an event at the village hall on Sunday 7th May, asking anyone who wants to volunteer to help to contact the Clerk. It will be an afternoon tea, with no charge but there will be a paid bar. Entertainment will include music, possibly a bouncy castle and games such as bowls and cricket. Cllr Simmons will contact the school to ask if the children would like to be involved.

ACTION: CLLR SIMMONS

Members **Agreed** a budget of £2,000 for the event.

9.6 **Remembrance Figure**

Members **Agreed** the style and wording for the remembrance figure, which will be located on the grass near the church. Cllr Trought will inform the individual who is donating the figure.

ACTION: CLLR TROUGHT

9.7 **KALC Community Awards Scheme 2023**

The 2023 KALC Community Awards Scheme was launched in December 2022, with Member councils having the option of adopting the Scheme in their local area. Member councils that adopt the Scheme make their own decisions about how they want to identify a person or group in their community that has

made a significant contribution to the local community. There are no pre-determined criteria for what the contribution to the community might be.

Members **Agreed** to put an article in the Hunton Herald to obtain nominations from parishioners. Cllr

Simmons will email Members with the response.

ACTION: CLLR SIMMONS

9.8 Clerk's Report

A response has been received from South East Water regarding the Parish Council's application on behalf of the sports clubs and village hall for grants from the Community Fund, indicating that the Parish Council will receive some money. However, it does not specify how much, merely stating that more information will be provided.

Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK) is in the process of being wound up due to lack of funding. The national organisation, Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE), is still in place if advice is required.

Mazars LLP have been appointed as the external auditor for the Parish Council for the next five years.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 Maidstone Borough Council – Community Governance Review

Maidstone Borough Council is carrying out a Borough-wide Community Governance Review. A survey is open to gather views on parish boundaries and the creation of new parishes.

Members **Agreed** the response to the survey.

ACTION: CLERK

11. FINANCE

11.1 Budget Monitoring Report

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st December 2022 was **Noted**.

11.2 Income Received

Members **Noted** that the following income has been received since the last meeting:

Maidstone Borough Council – CIL Neighbourhood Receipts	£6,107.37
E.ON – Refund of credit balance (netted off streetlighting expenditure)	£3.61

The bank reconciliation was reviewed and signed by Cllr Trought.

11.3 Payments Made

Members **Approved** the following payments made since the last meeting:

SO – Sharon Goodwin – Salary & office allowance – November	£508.95
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Unity Trust Bank – Service charge	£18.00

The following payments were authorised at the Planning Committee meeting on 19th December:

J Goddard – Chairman's Allowance – Reimbursement for food for Christmas event	£333.00
Hunton Village Club – Chairman's Allowance - Drinks for Christmas event	£200.00

11.4 Electronic Payments

Members **Approved** the following payments. Cllrs Summersgill and Heaton will authorise the payments set up in Unity Trust Bank using online banking:

James Forster – Reimbursement for litter picking equipment	£103.43
Npower – Street light electricity	£14.79
Sharon Goodwin – Travel expenses / Postage / Items for Christmas event / Mirrors	£111.04

11.5 CIL Neighbourhood Receipts

Cllr Summersgill will prepare a proposal for the 30th January Planning Committee meeting on new surveys.

ACTION: CLLR SUMMERSGILL

Other ideas for use of the CIL monies included jetting culverts and biodiversity/sustainability. Views will be obtained from parishioners at the Annual Parish Meeting.

11.8 Entertainment Fund

Members **Agreed** that the Entertainment Fund should be used for any local community event that brings the village together, such as gigs, talks or a fete.

11.7 Budget and Parish Precept 2023/24

Members received the budget papers produced by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Members **Agreed** the budget for 2023/24.

Members **Agreed** that the Precept should be set at £26,338, the same amount as the last four years. This creates a tax of £81.21 per property, a decrease of £1.27. The Chairman and Clerk signed the Parish Precept Requirement 2023/24 form for submission to MBC. ACTION: CLERK

12. PLANNING

12.1 Planning Applications

12.1.1 Burford Farm, Redwall Lane, Linton – 22/505947/FULL

Demolition of The Granary building and erection of a four bedroom residential dwelling including landscaping, parking and access.

Parish Council recommendation: Permit. If the Planning Officer is minded to refuse the application, the Parish Council requests that it is referred to the MBC Planning Committee for determination.

12.2 Planning Decisions

Members **Noted** the following planning decisions made by Maidstone Borough Council since the last Planning Committee meeting:

12.2.1 The Elms Hopper Huts, Redwall Lane, Linton - 22/505392/FULL

Erection of lean-to side extension, single storey rear extension, retaining wall and patio area, workshop outbuilding, entrance with access gates and driveway, new brick wall with fence panels and landscaping works (Retrospective Application).

Parish Council recommendation: No objection to the extension itself in the retrospective planning application. However, the Parish Council would like answers to the following questions:

- Foul drainage - the application form states that this will be dealt with by a 'packaged treatment plant'. Where is this installed on site? How does the effluent discharge, to soakaway and/or to which watercourse? This would require an Environment Agency consent; has this been applied for?
- Surface drainage - given the past overland flooding onto Redwall Lane from the site and the piped inlet to the chamber on the roadside, what measures have been designed to reduce the flooding onto the highway?
- Why does the application state that the proposal is not within 20 metres of a water course when the Site Layout Plan shows a pond within 20 metres?
- What is the time frame for the landscaping work?

If Maidstone Borough Council is minded to approve the application, the Parish Council would like consideration to be given to conditions to cover:

- Provision of renewable energy sources such as air / ground source heat pumps or photovoltaics
- Provision of EV charging points
- Native planting within the landscape plan
- Provision of swift and bee bricks, bat and bird boxes
- Wildlife friendly boundaries
- Encourage higher levels of thermal insulation and airtightness
- Permeable parking and footway surfaces
- Minimal light pollution in external lighting design

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Permitted.

12.2.2 The Elms Hopper Huts, Redwall Lane - 22/505283/SUB

Submission of details to discharge condition 2 (Closure report) of planning application 18/500669/PNQCLA.

Parish Council recommendation: Condition 2 states that the Closure Report should include details and documentation relating to materials brought onto or removed from the site. There is documentation relating to the topsoil added to the garden, but there are no details of the soil removed from the site and no waste disposal tickets, which should be included in the report.

Maidstone Borough Council decision: Permitted.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next full Parish Council meeting will be held at 7:30pm on Monday 20th March 2023 at Hunton Village Hall.

There being no further matters to discuss the meeting closed at 10:09pm.