

**Meopham Parish Council
Environment & Amenities Committee Meeting via Zoom
held on Tuesday 26th January 2021 at 7.30pm**

Committee Members Present: Cllrs A Bourke, D Bramer (Chairman), M Bramer, S Buchanan, S Gofton, P Luxford, B Wade (Vice Chairman)

In attendance: N Jerram (Clerical Assistant)

Item 1 **To Receive Apologies for Absence**

E.77 No apologies had been received. Members noted reports had been received from I Carey (Pond Warden) and K Dare (Meopham & District Footpaths Group)

Item 2 **To Receive Declarations of Members' Interests**

E.78 There were no declarations of interest.

Item 3 **To Approve the Minutes of Previous Meetings (10.11.20) & (21.12.20)**

E.79 The minutes of the meetings held on 10.11.20 and 21.12.20 were approved as a correct record on a proposal by Cllr Buchanan, seconded by Cllr Wade. All voted in favour.

Item 4 **To consider matters arising from the above Minutes**

E.80 Cllr D Bramer gave an update on matters listed from the Minutes dated 10.11.20 & 21.12.20 as follows:

Minutes 10.11.20

E.43 – Job Description for Footpaths Officer vacancy was posted on website, facebook & twitter. The position has not yet been filled.

E.46 – Memorial plaque & tree on Harvel Green – Site meeting has been delayed due to Covid.

E.47 – Village Green Survey work is progressing. The Clerk has submitted all the relevant documentation to register the greens.

E.52 – Dog Fouling stickers – Councillors can collect from the office.

E.58 – Judson's Recreation Ground leaflet drop – on hold due to lockdown.

E.59 – Judson's Recreation Ground signs – Delivered and have been installed.

E.60 – Contacting school regarding litter picks – delayed until schools return.

E.61 – Community organised litter picks – currently on hold due to lockdown.

E.62 – Neville Parade notice board has now been installed.

E.63 – Youth Club on hold due to Covid. The Clerk has been in touch with The Grand regarding the contract between The Grand and The Colts.

E.67 – E&A budget was approved at Full Council.

E.69 – The tree survey work by our tree surgeon was carried out in December and January.

E.70 & E.76 – Grants have been paid to all approved applications.

E73 – Pond vegetation work has been completed.

Minutes 21.12.20

Extraordinary E&A Meeting – Grant for The Colts approved.

Members discussed litter picking and Cllr Luxford advised members that GBC had agreed to a one off delivery of a dozen litter pickers and orange sacks to Harvel Village Hall following concerns raised on the amount of rubbish littering the lanes.

Concern was also raised on the amount of litter in the verges on the stretch of the A227 between Meopham and Istead Rise and the Clerk was asked to approach GBC and ask if there are any plans to address this.

Action: Clerk

Item 5

Rights Of Way, including Footpaths Groups

5.1 Update from Meopham & Districts Footpath Group

E.81

Cllr D Bramer read out a report from M&DFG which included the following points:

- The Group has been successful in providing a restricted walks programme despite the constraints imposed resulting from the pandemic but that situation has, of course, now been over turned by the current 'lockdown'. There is no feasible way by which we can continue Group walks at present.
- Members are grateful to Walks Secretary, Bill Reed, and the various leaders for the part they have played during these unprecedented challenging times. Hopefully it will not be too long before we can reintroduce a regular programme.
- We have so far been unable to recruit anyone to fill our vacancy for a Footpaths Officer. The assistance offered by MPC towards advertising the position was much appreciated.

Item 6 **Village Greens/Harvel Pond**

6.1 Pond

6.1.1 Update on the pond (Pond Warden)

E.82 Cllr D Bramer read out a report from the Pond Warden as follows:

- The pond is looking less overgrown now and the water level is remaining steady at a depth of five feet.
- The overflow drains seem to be coping better since K.C.C. inspected them during the summer - so far, the pond has not flooded the gardens at Old Pond Farm.
- Currently there are approximately twelve ducks (Mallard) overwintering there.

Cllr D Bramer mentioned that the Pond Warden had checked the Harvel Village sign for any signs of deterioration. The results have been reported to the Harvel Village Hall Committee who own the sign.

6.2 Trees

6.2.1 To consider and approve if appropriate to remove the Holly/Hawthorn tree from Edmund Green (cost to be discussed in closed session)

E.83 Cllr D Bramer reported that following concerns raised regarding site lines, the tree has been surveyed and pruned back by a professional tree surgeon. Further professional advice concluded that the tree is healthy and a good nesting site for birds. Cllr M Bramer proposed the tree is not removed at the present time but will be monitored and reviewed in the future, this was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

6.2.2 To consider and approve a 10 year schedule of works for the Beech Trees on Edmund Green and how it will be funded

E.84 Members considered the above schedule which was drawn up following professional advice obtained from the arboricultural officer at GBC and also bearing in mind advice from the tree preservation officer at GBC and the professional tree surgeon who carried out a survey of all the trees in the parish in September 2020 and a climbing survey of the Beech trees.

In view of the above plan, the beech trees will be crown reduced no more than 20% in 2023 and the necessary considerable funding will be allocated to the project in the 2022-2023 budget. Cllr Bourke then proposed approval of the 10 year schedule of works, this was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

The clerk was asked to inform the residents of Edmund Green accordingly.
Action: Clerk

6.2.3 Tree work from the Village Green Survey, to delegate to the Clerk to spend up to £400 on the work from the Village Greens Budget

E.85 Members considered the works listed from the Greens Survey and after discussion Cllr D Bramer proposed delegating to the Clerk to spend up to £400 on the work from the Village Greens Budget, this was seconded by Cllr Wade and all voted in favour.

Discussions followed on the Hawthorn tree in need of attention. The clerk was asked to clarify with the tree surgeon the extent of the work he is planning to carry out to the Hawthorn on Priestwood Green.

Action: Clerk

6.3 Community Woodland – update

E.86 Cllr D Bramer advised members that this is work in progress. The Clerk is in the process of contacting the Business Manager at the school.
Action: Clerk

6.4 Post work from the Village Green Survey, to delegate to the Clerk to spend up to £500 on the work from the Village Greens budget

E.87 The above motion was proposed by Cllr D Bramer, seconded by Cllr Luxford and all members voted in favour. It was noted that some maintenance works have been delayed due to Covid restrictions preventing site visits with the contractor.
Action: Clerk

6.5 Fowlers Stone Green name sign – (cost to be discussed in closed session)

E.88 Members noted discussions to be held in closed session.

Item 7 Allotments

7.1 Main gate security work – to report on extra cost of £75

E.89 Cllrs D Bramer reported on the above. The Allotment Association is liaising directly with the contractor who is carrying out added security measures to the main allotment gate.

Members discussed the Allotment Association rent review due April 2021. It was agreed that the Administration & Resources Committee will consider a potential increase in rent to be agreed in line with inflation. Calculations are currently being investigated by the Clerk.

Action: Clerk/A&R Committee

7.2 To note Allotment Chairman/Allotment Secretary vacancies in near future

E.90 Members noted the above.

Item 8 **Recreation Ground and Playground Equipment**

8.1 To note GBC's annual playground report is delayed due to Covid-19 to approximately the end of February 2021.

E.91 Members noted the above.

8.2 To approve the replacement climbing net, in addition to the flat swing seat (costs to be considered in closed session)

E.92 Cllr D Bramer proposed approval to proceed with purchasing a replacement climbing net and flat swing seat. This was seconded by Cllr Wade and all voted in favour. Costs to be considered under Closed Session.

8.3 Wetpour – to consider quotations received for resurfacing of the safety surface and to approve funding the work from the sinking fund (to be considered in closed session)

E.93 Cllr D Bramer proposed to proceed with the resurfacing of the safety surface and approval of funding the work from the Judson's Play Area Sinking Fund. This was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour. Costs to be considered under Closed Session.

8.4 To approve membership to Kent County Playing Fields Association at a cost of £20 pa – www.kentpfa.org.uk/

E.94 Cllr D Bramer advised members that the Kent County Playing Fields Association offers advice and access to funding opportunities. Cllr D Bramer then proposed the above motion, this was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

Action: Clerk

8.5 To agree to seek quotations for the trim trail equipment and to delegate to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to apply for any relevant grants available

E.95 The above motion was agreed on a proposal by Cllr D Bramer, seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

Action: Clerk/Cllrs D Bramer/B Wade

8.6 Signs for the Recreation Ground – to delegate to the Clerk to spend up to £100 for securing the signs at the two agreed locations

E.96 Cllr D Bramer explained that the signs had been installed by the contractor at a cost of £55. The above motion was therefore retrospectively approved on a proposal by Cllr D Bramer, seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

Item 9 **Judson's Pavilion**

9.1 To note agreement to the closure of the Judson's Pavilion Committee and hand over to the Environment and Amenities

Committee to deal with the future maintenance issues regarding the pavilion

E.97 Members noted the above.

9.2 Update on work already agreed for noticeboard, car park resurfacing, signage at the main road and extra litter bins

E.98 Update as follows:

- Notice board – delivery end of March 2021 – to be installed by A Day
- Resurfacing work – Members discussed the guarantee for the work and on a proposal by Cllr D Bramer, seconded by Cllr Wade, all voted in favour to proceed with Hooper & Sons quotation
- Signage – work in progress with Visit Kent
- Extra litter bins – GBC have supplied one litter bin close to the Pavilion. They are awaiting a delivery of litter bins which has been delayed due to Covid.

Item 10 Litter Pick – On hold due to Covid 19 to be reviewed when current government restrictions are lifted

E.99 The Clerk was asked to contact GBC regarding the distribution of orange litter sacks and if it is appropriate in view of current guidelines to advertise that residents can collect the litter sacks from the parish office.
Action: Clerk

Item 11 Noticeboards - To consider a replacement noticeboard at Camer Parade

E.100 Members agreed that the current notice board is in a bad state of repair and needs replacing.

11.1 To approve using the remaining funding in the noticeboard budget and earmarked noticeboard budget

E.101 Cllr Buchanan proposed the above motion which was seconded by Cllr Wade and all voted in favour.

11.2 To delegate to the Clerk to investigate into design options suitable for the location to present to the next committee meeting

E.102 Members discussed the above and Cllr Wade proposed delegating to the clerk to investigate a notice board of a similar design to the Neville Parade notice board but wider. This was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.
Action: Clerk

11.3 To check if any permission is required from the land owner or planning authority

E.103 Cllr Buchanan proposed the above which was seconded by Cllr Wade and all voted in favour.
Action: Clerk

Item 12 **Youth Club - Update**

E.104 The Youth Club cannot go ahead in the Pavilion at the present time due to current restrictions. Clarification on terms of The Grand hiring the hall for the Youth Club when government guidelines allow is currently work in progress.

Item 13 **Street Lights – Update from Cllr Buchanan following the GBC Chairman’s Meeting**

E.105 Cllr Buchanan had previously circulated a report from the meeting. Members considered joining Higham and Vigo parish councils in drafting a letter to GBC regarding a time extension. This motion was proposed by Cllr Buchanan and seconded by Cllr D Bramer. 6 members voted in favour and 1 voted against. The motion was therefore approved.

Action: Clerk

Item 14 **Service Contract – To delegate to the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman and Vice Chairman to review the service contract work specification for renewal on 14.09.21**

E.106 Cllr D Bramer proposed the above motion which was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

Action: Clerk/Cllrs D Bramer/B Wade

Item 15 **Financial Matters**

15.1 To approve the Environment and Amenities Committee Schedule of Payments in accordance with the Financial Regulations, 5.2 (Appendix 1)

E.107 On a proposal by Cllr Buchanan, seconded by Cllr D Bramer, all voted in favour of approval of the above.

15.2 To note the Environment and Amenities Committee expenditure up to 25.01.21

E.108 The above was noted.

Item 16 **Correspondence**

16.1 To note correspondence received

E.109 Members noted the correspondence list.

On a proposal from Cllr M Bramer, seconded by Cllr Wade, all members agreed to move into Closed Session

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that due to the confidential nature of the next item, the public and press will be asked to leave the meeting

Item 17 **To consider and approve the following quotations:**

17.1 To consider the quotations submitted for resurfacing the play area and approve, if appropriate, a contractor (to be paid from the Judson's play area sinking fund budget)

E.110 Cllr D Bramer proposed proceeding with Quote 2 from M&M Contractors to be paid from the Judson's Play Area Sinking Fund Budget, subject to obtaining some indication to guarantee. This was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

Action: Clerk

8.53pm - Cllr Gofton left the meeting.

17.2 To consider the quotations submitted for replacement of climbing net and flat swing seat approve, if appropriate, a contractor (to be paid from the Judson's Play Area Maintenance budget).

E.111 After consideration Cllr D Bramer proposed proceeding with the quotation from Playdale. This was seconded by Cllr Bourke and all voted in favour.

The Clerk was asked to check with Playdale if the replacement climbing net should be installed before or after the resurfacing work is carried out and to check the guarantee for replacement equipment.

Action: Clerk

17.3 To consider and approve, if appropriate, quotation for removal of Holly/Hawthorn tree on Edmund Green and to then agree to a virement from the Bus Shelters maintenance budget to the Trees budget for costs above £295 (remaining tree budget)

E.112 This item was addressed earlier under Item 6.2.1.

17.4 To consider and approve if appropriate, quotation received from Plaswood Signs for Fowlers Stone Green name sign. To approve a virement for the costs from the Grants budget to the Village Greens Budget

E.113 Cllr D Bramer proposed approval of the quotation received from Plaswood Signs and a virement of £400 from the Grants budget to the Village Greens budget to cover the cost of the sign and installation. This was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

Action: Clerk

Item 18 **Edmund Green – to receive an update on the potential claim**

E.114 Further information is awaited from the insurance company.

Item 19 **Pond Green – to discuss further action regarding unauthorised materials on site**

E.115

Following discussions Cllr D Bramer proposed writing to the resident expressing the Council's concern for the continuing building material left on the village green and ask when it will be removed. This was seconded by Cllr Wade and all voted in favour

Action: Clerk

Meeting closed 9.05pm

DRAFT

Appendix 1**Meopham Parish Council – Payments for approval (in yellow)**

Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Amount (gross)
Lloyds Bank Direct Debit Payments				
DD	16.11.20	SSE	Electricity Bill toilets up to 29.10.20	£38.91
Unity Bank – online payments				
120/131120	13.11.20	H. Antwiss	Rack/Reseed Hook & Harvel Gr. Emergency work	£130.00
122/131120	13.11.20	A Day	Post Installation Work – Meopham Gr.	£1,373.00
123/131120	13.11.20	Highview Trees	Service Contract 15.9.20-14.10.20	£475.00
124/141120	13.11.20	Highview Trees	Service Contract 15.10.20-14.11.20	£475.00
127/241120	26.11.20	St Johns Ch	MPC Grant	£500.00
128/241120	26.11.20	Harvel VH	MPC Grant	£500.00
129/241120	26.11.20	M&DFG	MPC Grant	£340.00
130/241120	26.11.20	Alzheimer Support	MPC Grant	£400.00
134/111220	11.12.20	Special Banch Tree & Garden	Harvel Pond	£210.00
136/111220	11.12.20	Signs of Chesh	Notice Board Neville Parade – 2 nd payment	£342.96
137/111220	11.12.20	Element UK	Bus Shelter Cleansing – Dec 20	£228.00
138/111220	11.12.20	May Harris	Pitfield Toilets – Cleaning Nov 20 plus credit For Sept	£540.00
139/111220	14.12.20	Highview Trees	Service Contract 14.11.20-14.12.20	£475.00
143/171220	17.12.20	A Day	Notice board installation Neville Parade	£100.00
144/241220	24.12.20	Highview Trees	Bus shelter emergency repair – Culverstone	£ 95.00
147/241220	24.12.20	Meopham Colts	MPC Grant	£500.00
149/080121	14.01.21	May Harris	Pitfield Toilets cleaning Dec 20	£702.82
150/140121	14.01.21	OTS	Tree work from tree survey	£3,246.00
153/200121	20.01.21	Maidstone Sign	Judson's Play Area signs x 2	£77.40