

**Meopham Parish Council
Environment & Amenities Committee Meeting
held on 12th November 2019 at 7.30 p.m.
at the Windmill, Meopham Green**

Committee Members

Present:

Cllrs D. Bramer (Chairman), M. Bramer, S. Buchanan, S Gofton, P Luxford, B. Wade (Vice Chairman)

In attendance:

N. Jerram (Clerical Assistant), K.Dare & G.Willsher (Meopham & District Footpath Group), T Seeley, G Shuttlewood (Meopham & District Allotment Association)

Item 1 **To receive Apologies for Absence**

E.59 Apologies were received from Cllr M Mulheran, I. Carey (Pond Warden).

Item 2 **To receive Declarations of Interest**

E.60 There were no declarations of interest

Item 3 **To approve minutes of the previous meeting**

E.61 The minutes of the meeting held on 03.09.19 were approved as a correct record on a proposal by Cllr Buchanan, seconded by Cllr M Bramer and all voted in favour.

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

E.62 **Item 12, E.55** – Members were updated on the query raised by Cllr Luxford. Cllr Luxford asked for the office to monitor the amount of consumables used if the toilets are closed for a period of time.

E.63 Members noted that there is no update on KCC producing a new footpath map for the notice board on Meopham Green, this is work in progress.

Item 5 **Rights of Way, including Footpaths Groups**
5.1 Update from Meopham & Districts Footpath Group

E.64 Cllr D Bramer proposed a motion to suspend standing orders to allow Ken Dare (KD) of Meopham & District Footpath Group to speak. This was seconded by Cllr M Bramer and all voted in favour.

KD reported as follows:

- (1) 90 hours of path clearing has been carried out this year.
- (2) Report any footpaths in the parish that need attention to him.

(3) There are issues with insurance coverage regarding age of members

(4) "Collection Walk" to be organised for the VE Day Celebrations next year

Standing orders were then reinstated

With reference to point (3) it was agreed to investigate the parish council's insurance policies regarding volunteers and age restrictions.

Action: Clerk

5.2 Update on footpath issues reported

E.65 Members noted the above which had been previously circulated.

Cllr D Bramer proposed a motion to suspend standing orders and bring forward Item 7.1 to allow Theresa Seeley (TS) of Meopham & District Allotment Association to speak. This was seconded by Cllr M Bramer and all voted in favour.

7.1 To consider request from the Allotment Association to be able to close Southdown Shaw to members of the public in light of recent thefts and damage at the site

E.66 TS informed members of problems some allotment holders are experiencing with theft of produce and she explained the report which had been previously circulated logging the plots targeted.

Cllr D Bramer explained that not all of Southdown Shaw is leased to the Allotment Association and that there is no record of a deed of covenant relating to possible closure of the site to members of public. Discussions followed on ideas for security measures which could be added to the main gate.

TS confirmed that the Allotment Association would be arranging an event in support of the VE Day celebrations next year.

Standing orders were then reinstated.

With reference to **E.66** members agreed to consider added security measures for the main gate, in particular adding wire mesh and asked the Allotment Association to forward any other suggestions they may have to the office. **Action: Clerk**

7.55pm – Members of M&DAA left the meeting

Item 6 Village Greens/Harvel Pond

6.1 Update on the pond (Pond Warden)

E.67 Cllr Bramer read out a report from the Pond Warden as follows:

- (1) The pond is in very good shape and the ducks, having left once, have returned so they must be very comfortable there.

- (2) I will soon make a start on tidying the banks, cutting back excess vegetation and removing brambles.
- (3) The duck houses could do with some restorative attention which will be addressed during the winter months.
- (4) The water depth is currently five feet - not surprising given the amount of rain in the past few weeks
- (5) I will keep the committee updated with progress

6.2 To note the results of the annual survey of the Village Greens, Harvel pond, Judson's Recreation Ground & Car Park and Southdown Shaw to approve any work required

E.68 Members noted the results of the survey. It was agreed there are a number of issues to be addressed and that the clerk and the chairman would compile a schedule of works.

Action: Clerk/Chairman

There was further discussion on the following:

Judson's Recreation Ground:

1. Play Area – The service contractor to be asked to treat and remove the moss on the safety surface.
2. Replacement of the Sorbus tree which has died.

Steeles Green - it was noted that it is now a byway and vehicles drive on the green.

Allotments – Look into trees to be added to the tree survey for monitoring.

Action: Clerk

6.3 Village Green Signs

E.69 Discussions followed on the replacement of the sign for Priestwood Green and members noted that prices are currently being investigated. Further discussions followed on displaying by-laws on all the village greens and the cost implications. Cllr M Bramer suggested the clerk liaise with other parish clerks on the value of having by-laws displayed.

Action: Clerk

6.4 Trees

6.4.1 Poplar tree felled– consider request from resident for the stump to be removed and offer to plant another tree here

E.70 The above item was considered as follows:

- **Stump removal** – Members discussed the expense involved in removing the stump and also agreed that the tree stump benefits wildlife. Following which Cllr Luxford proposed a motion to leave the stump in situ. This was seconded by Cllr M Bramer and all voted in favour.
- **To plant another tree** – Following consideration of future tree maintenance and limited space at this location, Cllr Luxford proposed not planting another tree. There were 4 voted in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. It was therefore agreed not to replace the tree.

The clerk was asked to inform the resident of the committee's decision.

Action: Clerk

6.4.2 Trees on Hook Green – request from resident for 3 trees to be cut back by Weavers Cottage and a beech tree overhanging Melliker Lane

E.71 Councillors had looked at the trees but it was agreed to consult the Arboriculture Officer at GBC before further action is taken.

Action: Clerk

6.4.3 To note NALC Tree Charter and to consider a tree guidance policy

E.72 Members noted the Tree Charter and considered the draft policy prepared by Cllr D Bramer. Discussions followed and on a proposal by Cllr Luxford, seconded by Cllr Gofton, all members voted in favour of adopting the proposed tree policy with guidance from the tree surgeon. Cllr D Bramer then proposed the draft policy is recommended to the A&R Committee for approval on 26th November, this was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

Action: A&R Committee

6.4.4 To consider advertising for a volunteer tree warden

After consideration of the above, Cllr Gofton proposed the clerk contact the Woodland Trust and enquire if any of their members would be interested in being a tree warden for Meopham. This was seconded by Cllr Wade and all voted in favour.

Action: Clerk

Item 7 **Allotments**

7.1 To consider request from the Allotment Association to be able to close Southdown Shaw to members of the public in light of recent thefts and damage at the site

E.73 This above item was addressed earlier.

Item 8 **Bus Shelters**

8.1 To consider the installation of a bench seat in the shelter opposite Meopham Primary School

E.74 Following discussions Cllr M Bramer proposed investigating the installation of a 'perch' seat in the shelter opposite the primary school. This was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

Action: Clerk

Item 9 **Recreation Ground and Playground Equipment**

9.1 To note GBC's PR6 Quarterly Playground Inspection report and consider any work required

E.74 The report was noted. Members agreed some aspects of the play site require reviewing next year when the rebuild of the Pavilion is completed. It was agreed to investigate safety surface specifications and to contact the clerk at Vigo Parish Council regarding their equipment.

Action: Clerk

9.2 Twin Spring Rocker - Update

E.75 The Parish Council's insurance company is currently processing the claim for replacement equipment which was vandalised.

Item 10 **Litter Pick**

10.1 Update on litter pick 26th October 2019

E.76 Cllr D Bramer reported that overnight rain and leaf fall did not make the litter picking easy. 13 volunteers attended and 10 sacks of rubbish were collected.

10.2 To agree dates for litter pick 2020

E.77 Bi-monthly litter picks from January 2020 with a minimum of 2 councillors co-ordinating the event had previously been approved at Full Council (29.10.19).

Discussions followed on the commitment involved in the organisation of bi-monthly litter picks and the extra work this impacts on the office. Cllr Gofton then proposed a motion to continue with quarterly litter picks with either herself or Cllr Madgwick

leading the event. This was seconded by Cllr M Bramer and all voted in favour. Cllr Luxford volunteered to help if needed.

Item 11 **Toilets**

11.1 Update on urinal sensors

E.78 Cllr D Bramer advised members that a contractor had been instructed to proceed with the installation of 2 water saving infrared sensors and had discovered an obsolete system in place. The clerk was asked to contact GBC to establish if there are any wiring drawings available to view.

Action: Clerk

1.2 Water Bills

E.79 It was noted that the water bill issue had been resolved.

Item 12 **Financial Matters**

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

E.80 All payments had been previously approved.

12.2 To note the Environment and Amenities Committee expenditure up to 04.11.19

E.81 Members noted above.

12.3 To consider and approve the proposed E&A Committee Budget for 2020/2021 Financial Year

E.82 The above was approved on a proposal from Cllr Luxford, seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all members voted in favour.

Item 13 **Correspondence**

13.1 To note correspondence received

E.83 Members noted the correspondence list.

Cllr Buchanan proposed a motion to move into closed session. This was seconded by Cllr M Bramer and all voted in favour.

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 14 **To consider and approve the small grant applications submitted**

1. The Association of North Kent Neighbourhood Watches - £300

Cllr Luxford proposed approval of the above on the proviso the funds are used to promote activities in Meopham. This was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

2. Meopham & District Footpaths Group - £340

Cllr M Bramer proposed approval of the above, this was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

3. Harvel Cricket Club - £350

Cllr D Bramer proposed approval of the above, this was seconded by Cllr M Bramer and all voted in favour.

4. St. John's Community Café - £100

Cllr M Bramer proposed approval of the above, this was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

5. Meopham Ladies Hockey Club - £500

Cllr D Bramer proposed approval of the above, this was seconded by Cllr Buchanan. There were 5 votes in favour and 1 abstention.

6. Harvel Village Hall - £500

Cllr D Bramer proposed approval of the above, this was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour

Item 15 **Trees – update on legal case in regard to Edmund close**

The above is currently in the hands of the Parish Council's Insurance Company.

Meeting closed at 9.35pm

E&A Committee Meeting 12.11.19 - Payments up to 4.11.19

MPC - Direct debits - CASHBOOK 2019-2020 (Lloyds Bank Treasurers accounts)

DD/SO	DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	GROSS	VAT	NET
DD	24.08.19	SSE Southern Electric	Electricity Bill, toilets - up to 05.08.19	£34.61	£1.64	£32.97

MPC CASHBOOK 2019-2020 (Unity Trust Bank)

Ref	DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	GROSS	VAT	NET
066/020919	16.09.19	Clearwater Technology Limited	Legionella testing - Pitfield toilets	£ 225.00	£37.50	£ 187.50
			Legionella Testing - Water Fountain	£ 75.00	£12.50	£ 62.50
069/020919	16.09.19	Element UK Limited	Bus Shelter cleansing - 30.8.19	£ 214.20	£35.70	£ 178.50
070/020919	16.09.19	Business stream	Water Bill - Drinking Fountain - 31.01.19 to 09.08.19	£ 23.51		£ 23.51
071/020919	16.09.19	May Harris	Pitfield Toilets - cleaning - August 2019	£ 682.59	£113.77	£ 568.82
072/020919	16.09.19	Highview Tree Services	Service contract - up to 14.07.19	£ 475.00		£ 475.00
073/020919	16.09.19	Highview Tree Services	Service contract - up to 14.08.19	£ 475.00		£ 475.00
084/200919	20.09.19	Highview Tree Services	Ad hoc work - putting up / taking down banners	£ 30.00		£ 30.00
085/200919	20.09.19	Highview Tree Services	Service Contract - 15.8.19 to 14.9.19	£ 475.00		£ 475.00
086/200919	20.09.19	Howard Antwiss	Christmas tree cover - rebuild surround & secure - H&S issue	£ 245.00		£ 245.00
090/171019	17.10.19	Business stream	Water Bill Public Toilets - 29.4.19 to 4.10.19	£ 548.30		£ 548.30
091/171019	17.10.19	Howard Antwiss	Allotment fence repair	£ 345.00		£ 345.00
095/171019	17.10.19	Cherish Trees	Tree work - Meopham Green	£ 850.00		£ 850.00
099/311019	31.10.19	May Harris	Pitfield toilets Sept (includes consumables)	£ 730.39	£ 121.74	£ 608.66
100/311019	31.10.19	May Harris	Pitfield Toilets - Oct 19 (consumables deducted)	£ 595.40	£ 99.24	£ 496.16

MPC CASHBOOK 2019-2020 (Unity Trust Bank) - Standing Orders/Direct Debits

Ref	DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	GROSS	VAT	NET
006/151019	31.10.19	Highview Trees	Service Contract - 15.9.19 to 14.10.19	£ 475.00		£ 475.00

MPC CASHBOOK 2019-2020 (Lloyds Bank Treasurers accounts - Debit card)

REF	DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	GROSS	VAT	NET
015/221019	22.10.19	Royal British Legion Industries Limited	Judson's Play area signage	£70.85	£11.81	£59.04