

Detling Parish Council
The Minutes of the Meeting of Detling Parish Council
held on 15th December 2020 at 7.00pm by Zoom.

***Councillors present: Baker-Anderson
Bowie
Bryant
Clayton
Coles
Finn***

Also, present: Parish Clerk, Mrs Sherrie Babington, MBC Cllr Nick de Wiggondene-Shepperd and Members of the Public.

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Bowie.

Public Comments and Observations.

Prior to the start of the meeting the Parish Council will allow Members of the public to speak, subject to submitting a request to the Clerk, prior to the Virtual Meeting. Each speaker will be given a maximum of three minutes each to raise issues with the Parish Council. Public Comment will be for a maximum of 15 minutes. The minute book will be closed during this item.

No public matters were raised.

1. Apologies.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

Apologies were received from from KCC Councillor Shellina Prendergast.

2. Declaration of Interest.

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

Cllr Clayton declared an interest in Planning Matters.

Cllr Finn declared an interest in Planning Matters.

To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

There were no Dispensations to be considered.

3. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting.

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting and if in order sign as a true record.

The Minutes for the previous meeting were circulated to all members for consideration and approval.

It was proposed by Cllr Bowie to accept the minutes from the previous meeting as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Finn and agreed by all present.

The approved minutes were signed and dated by the chairman of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the previous minutes (not reported elsewhere).

a. Princes Way Footpath.

The Chairman informed members that the Clerk had reported the blocked footpath at Princes Way to Golding Homes, and they were investigating this to establish whether the encroachment was on their land.

She stated that the landowner had the right to close the part of the foot way on his own private land.

b. Cricket Club

Cllr Bowie reported that the grant had now been paid to the Cricket club and this had been well received.

5. Parish Councillor Vacancy.

The Clerk informed members that MBC had confirmed that a By-election would take place in May 2021 to fill the vacancy.

6. Clerks Report.

The Clerks Report was noted by members.

7. Chairman and Councillor Reports.

Cllr Bryant reported that he had joined a Planning meeting with MBC regarding the Local Plan Consultation, he reported on this and confirmed that there were no development plans for Detling and therefore the parish was not affected too much.

Cllr Bowie reported on a Highways Seminar she had attended.

She reported on changes to the online portal and that KCC were trialing interactive cameras at bus stops. She stated that KCC Highway Officers were happy to meet with DPC virtually to discuss the issues relating to Detling.

8. Parish Council Committee Reports.

a. Open Spaces Committee.

Cllr Finn reported on the work of the Open Spaces Committee.

He stated that since the last meeting, a complaint had been received regarding the work being undertaken in Horish Wood and MBC Planning Enforcement had investigated this.

He confirmed that MBC had now concluded their investigation and work had now resumed.

He reported that Forest School was being held in Horish Wood on a Tuesday and Thursday each week, and in January a further school would be held.

He confirmed that the Rural Payments Agency had approved a grant of £6000 for Horish Wood to support the Forestry Commission Management Plan. MVC would be undertaking the work in line with the Management Plan and the PC would be awarded £1000 a year towards this.

He spoke regarding the access track in the woodland and asked members for their approval to spend £200 to extend the gravel track to make it more accessible to vehicles for Forest School, this was approved. (Bowie/Coles)

It was reported that the PC lawn mower had been serviced as agreed and the invoice had been submitted to the PC for payment.

b. Finance Committee.

CLlr Bowie reported that the Finance Committee had held an informal meeting to discuss the set up of the committee and the 2021/22 Budget. She stated that the Finance Committee were in favour of keeping the Band D rate the same for residents due to the pandemic.

c. Highways Report.

CLlr Clayton reported that a meeting was due to be arranged with KCC in January 2021.

He stated that the Highways Working Group was due to meet to discuss matters ahead of this meeting.

CLlr Bowie suggested that delegated authority was given to the Working Group to make decisions regarding highways on behalf of the Parish Council. This was agreed by all present. (Finn/Bryant)

CLlr Coles spoke regarding the letter received from a resident regarding highway matters, she stated that she would draft a response to this. This was agreed.

CLlr Finn reported that an issue had been raised by a resident regarding the large lorries travelling up and down The Street. He asked what the PC was proposing to do about this issue. CLlr Coles stated that this was a matter that the Highways Group would discuss with KCC at their meeting.

The Clerk reported that Thurnham Parish Council had agreed to support the request to have double yellow lines installed at the junction of Hockers Lane and Ware Street, and they would be taking this up with KCC.

9. Financial Matters:

a. To consider the Financial Statement.

The Clerk asked for members approval to add an additional payment of £45 to the statement for the payment of the Villager of the Year Award, this was agreed.

The Financial Statement was approved by Members. (Bowie/Bryant).

b. To consider the 2021/2022 Draft Budget.

The draft budget and report were circulated to members for their consideration.

CLlr Bowie asked that the PC consider not increasing the Band D figure in 2021/22, and she asked for members comments on this proposal and the budget.

Members discussed the reserves held by the Parish Council and the recommended amount by NALC.

Cllr Finn raised concerns about a zero increase in Band D as he felt that the PC should have sufficient reserves for unprecedented and I budgeted items.

This was discussed and debated by members and Cllr Bryant put forward the proposal suggested by Cllr Bowie to have a zero increase on the Band D figure for 2021/22. This was seconded by Cllr Coles and agreed by all present, with the exception of Cllr Finn, who voted against the precept Band D figure remaining unchanged.

Cllr Bowie confirmed that the Band D Tax base figures would be published by MBC in early January, and therefore the precept figure would be calculated, agreed by email, and formally ratified at the next PC meeting.

c. To consider any grant applications received.

The Clerk circulated a grant application received from the Cock Horse seeking a grant of £225 towards their Christmas Dinner event.

Cllr Finn stated that this grant was no longer required due to the lock down restrictions. He suggested that the sum was carried forward.

The Clerk confirmed that should the grant be required for a future event; a new grant form should be submitted to the Parish Council.

d. Community Shop Lease (confidential item).

The Chairman proposed that this matter should be considered as a Confidential Matter at the close of the meeting to the press and public. This was seconded by Cllr Coles and agreed by all present.

10. Planning Matters.

a. To consider all Planning Applications received.

Cllr Bryant reported on the planning applications that had been considered by the Parish Councils Planning Committee since the last PC meeting.

Applications Received

20/504864/FULL Magpie Bungalow White Hill Road Detling Maidstone Kent
Two storey extension together with raising of the roof height to create a first floor. Part conversion of the ground floor to create an annexe.

20/504941/FULL 3 Hockers Lane Detling Maidstone Kent ME14 3JL
Section 73 - Application for Minor Material Amendment to approved plans condition 2 (construction of passing bays) pursuant to 20/501164/FULL - Minor material Amendment to planning application 16/503947/FULL (allowed on appeal) for retention of existing dwelling at No.3 Hockers Lane construction of new single storey dwelling at rear of No.3 demolition of existing dwelling and ancillary buildings including garages at No.1 Hockers Lane and construction of replacement chalet dwelling and garage.

20/505182/REM Land at Woodcut Farm Ashford Road Hollingbourne Kent ME17 1XH
Approval of Reserved Matters (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale being sought) for Phase 1 being landscaping, infrastructure work required to create development platforms across the site, and 22,884sqm of flexible Use Class B1(c)/B8 employment floorspace comprising of 7no. units on Plot A totalling 5,444sqm (Units A3- A9) and 4no. units on Plot B totalling

17,440sqm (Units B1-B4) pursuant to 17/502331/OUT - (Outline application for a mixed commercial development comprising B1(a), B1(b), B1(c) and B8 units, with a maximum floor space of 45,295 square metres (Access being sought)).

20/505195/OUT Land at Woodcut Farm Ashford Road Hollingbourne Kent ME17 1XH
Section 73 - Application for Variation of Condition 3 to allow buildings on the eastern part of the site to have a footprint up to 10,000sqm, and variation of Condition 4 to allow buildings on the western part of the site to have a footprint up to 4,800sqm, a ridge height up to 10.5m, and to remove the requirement for buildings to be orientated end-on to the M20 motorway pursuant to application 17/502331/OUT - (Outline application for a mixed commercial development comprising B1(a), B1(b), B1(c) and B8 units, with a maximum floor space of 45,295 square metres (Access being sought))

20/504673/FULL Land Rear Of 7 The Street Detling Kent ME14 3JU
Erection of a detached 3-bedroom dwelling with ancillary parking facilities, cycle storage and bin storage.

20/505282/TPOA The Old Piggery Scragged Oak Road Detling Kent
TPO Application Ash trees - coppiced and pollard

Other Planning Matters.

Cllr Finn stated that the planning application for Binbury Park was due to be resubmitted in the Spring, and he felt that the Parish Council should be discussing any potential planning gains with the developer.

This was discussed by members and it was agreed that the Parish Council would await an official planning application before considering this further.

Cllr Bowie suggested that the PC should have an adopted Policy to cover such matters and to ensure a consistent approach when dealing with potential developers. This was agreed.

MBC Local Plan.

The Clerk reminded members that the deadline for the Local Plan Consultation was 22nd December and therefore the PC response should be submitted by this date.

This was discussed, it was agreed that the Clerk should submit a response supporting the KALC response on behalf of Maidstone Parishes.

Action: Clerk to action.

b. To note MBC Decisions.

20/502004/FULL

Webbe Cottage The Street Detling Maidstone Kent ME14 3JX

Retrospective application for creation of decked area (resubmission of: 18/505575/FULL).

Application Withdrawn

c. To consider any Appeals and Enforcement Matters.

No matters were raised.

11. Reports from External Parties:

a. KCC Councillors Report.

Apologies were received from KCC Councillor Prendergast.

b. MBC Councillors Report.

MBC Councillor de Wiggondene-Shepperd gave his report to the meeting.

He spoke regarding the Local Plan Consultation and stated that the site at Hempstead was likely to get through, as would the site at Lenham Heath.

He reported that there was currently a 2.4-million-pound gap in the MBC budget and assistance from the government was unknown at present.

He spoke regarding the COVID Pandemic and the support that MBC was giving to the local community.

Cllr Bowie spoke regarding the support and a paper put forward by Cllr Finn, she asked if there was anything that the PC could access to assist its residents.

Cllr de Wiggondene-Shepperd stated that there was nothing currently in place, he was meeting with the MBC Leaders and would raise this with them and come back to the PC.

Cllr Finn spoke regarding the Brexit transition and stated that MBC had previously invited the PC to attend the meetings and he asked if the PC would be involved again.

Cllr de Wiggondene-Shepperd said that he would also take this up with MBC.

d. PC Maintenance Report.

Tony Taylor gave a report on the maintenance he had undertaken in the parish during the past two months.

He reminded members that the defibrillator service and battery replacement was due to be changed in April/May 2021.

He reported on the following matters:

- Electricity pole on Pilgrims Way was overgrown with ivy and this was now leaning into Pilgrims Way.
Action: Clerk to report to UK Power Networks.
- Hedges overgrown on Pilgrims Way/Princes Way, encroaching on pavement.
Action Clerk to report to KCC.
- Drains blocked opposite the VillageHall and The Street.
Action: Clerk to report to KCC.

The Chairman thanked Tony Taylor for his report and work for the Parish.

e. Councillor Reports.

Cllr Clayton reported on the KALC meeting he had attended.

He spoke regarding the Local Plan Review, the Call for Sites and the Remembrance Sunday Services.

12. Parish Council Communication.

a. Facebook Page.

It was agreed that the Clerk would progress the setting up of a closed Facebook Page for Detling Parish Council.

b. Detling News.

The PC pages in the Detling News was discussed. Cllr Finn suggested that the PC should consider what residents wanted to see in the DN each month.

c. Covid Support.

Cllr Finn circulated a paper to all members seeking their support to the following:

This was discussed by members. It was agreed that the PC has a draft Resilience Plan that needed to be finalised and formally adopted.

In addition, the Parish Council would consider putting together a handbook/information pack for residents.

Cllr Baker-Anderson stated that she would take the lead on this project and put a draft residents pack together for consideration.

Members provisionally approved a budget of £500 to produce the information pack.

Cllr Finn stated that he required answers to the points he had raised in his paper.

This was discussed and members agreed that MBC and KCC had taken the lead on Covid support and had produced a leaflet that the PC could circulate to all residents detailing the local support that was available. In addition, Cllr de Wiggondene-Shepperd had stated that he would also take this up with MBC to see if any additional support was available for Detling.

It was agreed that the Clerk would print 500 covid support leaflets for distribution to all residents in Detling.

Action: Clerk to action.

13. Old School Playing Field.

a. Access Gate and Fencing.

The following report was circulated to members for their consideration:

Following the monthly safety inspection of the Old School Playing Field and play equipment, concerns were raised by the Inspector with regards to the access gate leading onto the Playing Field being left open on a regular basis.

The following actions were proposed by Cllr Bryant, seconded by Cllr. Bowie and agreed by all present. Cllrs Finn and Clayton withdrew from voting on this matter.

- ***The Parish Council agreed to the installation of a fence around the shop area, incorporating the access gate.***
- ***The Parish Council would finance the cost of the fence.***
- ***The Parish Council approved the quotation and fencing style submitted by Glebe Fencing.***
- ***There were no legal implications associated with the installation of the fence as this was being erected to safeguard the children using the Playing Field.***

Action: Clerk/Cllr Clayton to action.

b. Dogs on the playing field

The Parish Council Chairman has received a number of complaints regarding the amount of dog mess at the Old School Playing Field.

Previously dogs were not permitted to use the Playing Field, however permission was previously granted to a dog training club to use the field as part of their hall hire, on the proviso that they used a fenced off area at the end of the Playing Field.

The Issue is now more apparent as the play equipment at the Old School Playing Field is not fenced off. In addition, the Community Shop permits dogs on their premises, and therefore users access the shop via the Playing Field with their dogs.

The Parish Council has recently signed up to a Maidstone Borough Council initiative to restrict dogs from using play areas and signage will be erected on the access gates in the coming weeks.

The Parish Council is now asked to make a formal decision as to whether or not they will allow dogs to use the Old School Playing Field.

This was discussed and it was agreed that when the approved fence had been installed, dogs would be prohibited from entering the playing field.

This was proposed by Cllr Bowie, seconded by Cllr Coles, and agreed by all present.

c. Replacement Benches

The three benches at the Old School Playing Field are nearing the end of their life, and in need of repair or replacement.

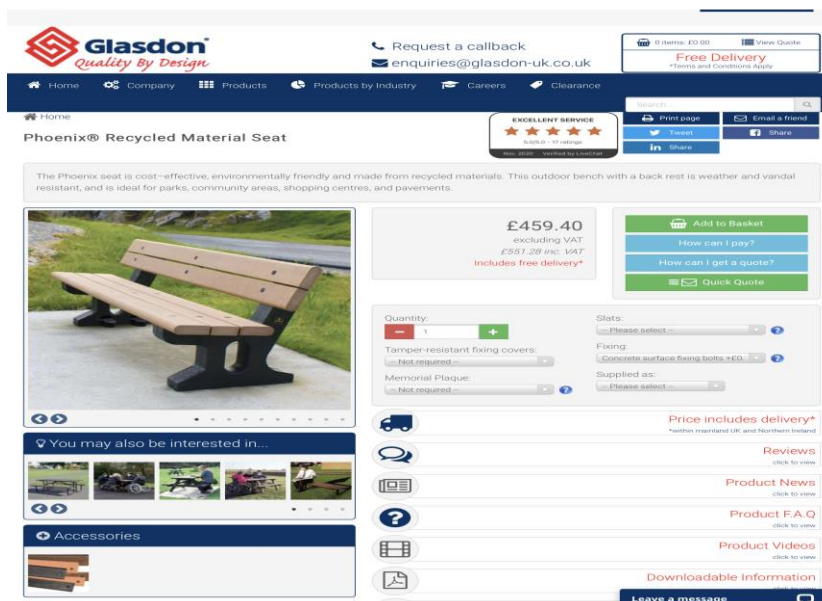
These are Memorial Benches that were donated by residents, and then handed over to the Parish Council, who is now responsible for their maintenance.

It has recently been reported that one of the benches has sustained some further damage.

The benches have been discussed at the Open Spaces Committee meeting, and it has been agreed that these need to be replaced.

Members were asked to consider what action they would like to take regarding the replacement or repair of the benches.

Option for the replacement of the benches made out of recycled materials were circulated – the preferred option is as follows:



This was discussed by members and it was agreed that three benches in the agreed style would be purchased to replace the damaged memorial benches at the Old School Playing Field.

This was proposed by Cllr Coles, seconded by Cllr Bryant, and agreed by all present.

The Clerk stated that she would place the order for the benches when the PC had agreed the installation arrangements and the delivery address.

Cllr Finn stated that he had been approached by two residents who were interested in financing memorial benches for the parish. The Clerk confirmed that she had received one request and advised Cllr Finn to advise the resident to contact the PC officially with the request.

Cllr Bowie suggested that the PC draft a policy to cover Memorial Benches. This was agreed.

Action: Clerk to draft policy to cover Memorial Benches.

14. Villager of the Year Award.

The Clerk informed members that the Parish Council had received 28 nominations for the Community Shop Team to be put forward as the recipient for the 2020 Villager of the Year Award.

In line with the awarding policy the Villager of the Year Award was therefore awarded to the Community Shop in recognition of their work and service to the local community.

This was proposed by Cllr Bowie, seconded by Cllr Bryant, and agreed by all present.

15. Items to be placed on the next Agenda.

a. Parish Council Governance and Policy Review.

b. NHP – Cllr Finn spoke in support of a Neighbourhood Plan being undertaken for Detling.

Cllr Bowie stated that this was an item that would be discussed at the next meeting.

Cllr Clayton stated that he felt that this matter should be thoroughly investigated before the Parish Council determined whether it should take this matter forward.

16. Date of next meeting.

To be confirmed.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed to the press and public at 10.25pm.

Signed: _____

Chairman

Dated: _____