

ICKHAM & WELL PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Meeting – 16th November 2015 at 7.30pm

Minutes of meeting

Present: Councillors J deGraft-Johnson (Chair), S Hipkin, P Hodges, L Shouls, K Tatman, G Wyant; P Heath (clerk).

Councillor Stuart Walker also attended.

Public: 3 members of the public

2015/96: Apologies:

Councillor Richards was unable to attend for personal reasons.

2015/97 Declarations of interest

As at previous meetings, Councillors J deGraft-Johnson declared his interest in Carpenters Lodge, as the owner was a supplier to his business. Councillor Tatman declared an ongoing interest in the mains replacement as his property was at risk from flooding.

2015/98 Minutes of meeting on 19th October 2015

The minutes were signed as a true record, with a minor adjustment in section 91/03 that 'Stephen Twyman' had '*stepped down as representative on the Internal Drainage Board*' rather than 'retired'. The minutes will be placed on the web.

2015/99 Matters arising

91/01 – Having listened to Councillor Wyant's talk about the Environment Agency, all members agreed that it would be worthwhile asking them if they would make a presentation at next year's AGM.

2015/100 Carpenters Lodge

100/01: Councillor deGraft-Johnson absented himself from discussion.

100/02: Councillor Tatman reported that he had been informed on November 9th by Canterbury Planning that a resubmission for planning permission on this property had been received by them, Application CA//15/02346/FUL, subsequently received by the clerk for the Councillors to review. He had

emailed the residents on November 12th to inform them that the revised application would be on the Agenda for review and discussion this evening. They had responded that they would not be able to attend but that they would like to “re--affirm that any alterations to Carpenters Lodge are purely designed to enhance both the appearance and living condition of the house and every penny we spend we will do with this in mind.”.

100/03: There were no objections and the clerk was asked to inform the planning department of this. The matter is now solely between the owners, who have offered to keep the Parish Council informed, and the City Council and is no longer a concern of the Parish Council at this time.

2015/101 Finance

101/01: It was pointed out that the CCF application for funding for 2016-7, (total £3,290) did not take account of the money needed to cut the churchyard grass, (£700), which was offset against the CCF funding. We had provisionally been awarded 72.8% of the amount requested.

101/02: Councillor Walker commented that the six smaller parishes had been awarded a higher percentage of the application amount than the larger parishes and that there would be a closer inspection of parish accounts in the coming year.

101/03: The question of whether we can build up a reserve fund of approx. £1.2k pa to meet the costs of the three-yearly maintenance of the protected trees on the village green was raised. Councillor deGraft-Johnson mentioned the clawback made by the Canterbury five years ago and stressed the need to balance the books with the approval of the City Council. Councillor Hipkin will contact Canterbury to discuss the need to create a tree maintenance fund.

101/04: Councillor deGraft-Johnson reiterated the need to balance the books and to keep an adequate reserve as well as building up the fund to maintain the protected trees, if Canterbury allowed us to do this. We would not be able to build up reserve funds, as had been planned, but would not overspend.

101/05: It was stated that the accounts / budget should be inspected carefully so that the application amount for the precept, which had to be made by 30th December, would be adequate to cover all costs.

101/06: Councillor Hipkin queried whether we could utilise any funds for other matters – such as maintenance of the village not covered by highways / litter picking etc. Councillor Walker pointed out that major littering following rubbish collections would be dealt with by Serco but that day-to-day clearing was down to the residents. It was noted that Littlebourne, a considerably larger parish on a main road, has a paid litter picker. It was suggested that there should be a program of village tidying, such as clearing weeds from walls, gutters etc. and Councillors were requested to ask their allocated parishioners if they thought that this was a good idea.

2015/102 Ramp funding

In the absence of Councillor Richards, Councillor Tatman said that he would forward his comments on the draft flyer to her. The flyer is due to be distributed to parishioners early in the new year.

2015/103 Highways

103/01: **A257 Group** Councillor Tatman reported that the group had “rehearsed” their presentations for the meeting with KCC on 27th November and these are being tuned accordingly.

103/02: **Interactive Signs** One of the two signs in Bramling, which light up to warn speeding cars of the bend, had gone missing. Councillor Tatman had managed to track it down to Kent Highways who had taken it away for maintenance, as it was, apparently, broken. They said that it would be returned if it could be fixed but Councillor Tatman thought that they probably did not have a budget to replace it. It was suggested that Councillor Northey might be willing to replace the sign, which is actually the property of KCC, and it was agreed that he should be informed. Councillor Tatman will also ask KCC if the sign is covered by their insurance.

103/03: **Pot Holes** Councillor Tatman commented that the stream of pot holes at Port Rill on Wingham Lane had apparently been fixed, but not particularly adequately, and that some had not been fixed at all. Councillor Wyant pointed out that some pot holes, particularly one on a blind corner, were extremely dangerous. Councillor Tatman responded that he would escalate the matter and would also report the large hole outside New Place Farm.

103/04: **Water Mains Replacement** Councillor Tatman had issued a letter to the parish detailing the proposed plan of works, which start on November 23rd in Bramling Road, which will be shut for 3 weeks. After Christmas, Bramling Road will be shut again for 3 weeks, as will Wingham Well Lane as the work progresses from Bramling to Littlebourne over the following 6 months. Work will then skip to Wingham Well Lane for, up to, another 6 months.

103/05: **Accidents** There have been no accidents in the Parish reported to Councillor Tatman since the last meeting.

103/06: Councillor deGraft-Johnson queried the possible impact of the temporary traffic lights during the mains replacement and was assured by Councillor Tatman that these would be manned lights and that he was fairly confident that they would be adjusted to cope with the actual traffic flow.

103/07: It was agreed that details of the roadworks / closures should be posted on the parish website, as well as circulated via email, as had already been done

2015/104 Mansfield's caravan site

Following a recent program on Channel 4 condemning the living conditions at a Mansfield site, Councillor Wyant, who is the landlord of the site at Ickham, spoke to the managers there who told her that the sites were clean, well maintained and adequate. Councillor Wyant also paid an unannounced visit to the site and found that the kitchen, showers and toilet were all clean and in good condition. The suitability of the site was both reinforced by, and attributed to, the fact that the same workers return year after year, whereas the workers on the site featured in the television program were temporary ones, recruited at short notice. A member of the public living opposite the Ickham site confirmed that there were absolutely no problems with the site or the workers.

2015/105 Street lighting

In the absence of Councillor Richards, the clerk confirmed that there had been no feedback to the flyers distributed by Councillor Richards along Treasury View.

2015/106 Councillors' Code of Conduct

106/01: Councillor Hodges reported that she had prepared a redrafted Code of Conduct, taking account of the 2011 Localism Act and the NALC Strategy.

106/02: It was planned that the draft code would be sent to the lawyer at KALC for comment and then distributed to the other Councillors sometime the following week.

106/03: Councillor Hodges mentioned that the definition of what constituted a 'non-pecuniary interest' was an important issue to clarify.

106/04: Councillor Hodges said that it would be necessary to find out if the individual Code 'had teeth' and Councillor Shouls queried who would have the power to deal with deviations from the Code.

106/05: A member of the public suggested speaking to Mark Ellender, former head of Canterbury CC Legal Services, for advice but that it was primarily a question of public perception.

106/06: Councillor Hodges concluded by stating that the draft Code would be discussed at the next meeting with a view to finalising it at the January meeting.

2015/107 Contact list for parishioners

107/01: The process of asking residents about their preferred method of contact was still underway.

107/02: It was agreed that a list of Councillors and the areas that they were responsible for should be placed on the website and also featured annually in

Church & Village so that parishioners knew who their Councillor was and how to best to contact them.

2015/108 Start times for future meetings

It was unanimously agreed that all future meetings would start at 7.30pm both for convenience and consistency, instead of the alternate former planning meetings starting at 6.30pm. The clerk will redraft and circulate / redisplay the calendars.

2015/109 AOB

109/01: Councillor Hodges mentioned the KALC 2016 Community Award Scheme and asked if members had any suggestions of suitable nominations. Councillor Shouls cautioned that the scheme could be divisive. Councillor Tatman said that Wingham had its own scheme and that a locally run scheme would be preferable. The matter will be further discussed at the next meeting.

109/02: The recent Kent Resilience Forum Emergency Handbook was mentioned and the need to draft some sort of emergency plan for the parish. Councillor Wyant showed a simple card plan which could be circulated to residents and was asked to send it to the Councillors so that the matter could be further discussed at the next meeting.

109/03: The custodianship of the local fire hydrants was queried as the yellow box in Bramling Road had been destroyed and had not yet been replaced. We do have a map of existing hydrants and allocating responsibility for checking them should be agreed at the next meeting.

109/04: Councillor Tatman also mentioned that the fire service was asking for community facilities, such as a village hall, to be made available to them in the event of a protracted incident and that this should also be discussed at the next meeting.

109/05: Councillor Wyant mentioned the forthcoming meeting of the Little Stour and Nailbourne group to be held on Saturday 21st November. The relief channel, which runs under Wickham Lane, might be widened. At present, the channel is adequate for the flow but was blocked last year, causing local flooding. If, however, the channel was widened to reduce this risk, the hole under the road might not cope with the increased flow. Councillor Shouls expressed a concern that the channel was not kept clear of vegetation but was assured that the water flowed easily over the weeds.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 9pm.

The next parish meeting is on Monday 21st December at 7.30pm