

# **ICKHAM & WELL PARISH COUNCIL**

**Parish Meeting – 21<sup>st</sup> December 2015 at 7.30pm**

## **Minutes of meeting**

**Present:** Councillors J deGraft-Johnson (Chair), P Hodges, K Richards, L Shouls, K Tatman, G Wyant.

**Public:** Two members of the public

### **2015/110: Apologies:**

Councillor S Hipkin, P Heath (clerk).

### **2015/111 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Tatman declared an ongoing interest in the mains replacement as his property was at risk from flooding.

### **2015/112 Minutes of meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

The minutes were signed as a true record and will be placed on the web.

### **2015/113 Matters arising**

There were none.

### **2015/114 Finance**

113/01: In the absence of Councillor Hipkin and the Parish Clerk, Councillor deGraft-Johnson presented the budget estimates for 2016-7.

113/02: It was necessary to submit the amount of the precept requested for 2016/7 to Canterbury City Council by the 31<sup>st</sup> December.

113/03: The Concurrent Funding grant for 2016-7 had been provisionally agreed at £2249.52. With council tax support grant of £67.82 and estimated expenditure of around £7k, the precept requested was calculated as £4700.68, (very slightly higher than the previous year solely due to a reduction in council tax support grant, calculated by Canterbury CC, from £90.42 in the current year to £67.82 in the following year).

### **2015/115 Maintenance of trees under TPO**

All agreed with Councillor deGraft-Johnson's recommendation to maintain one tree per year. It was agreed that one tree should be maintained in the current financial year and Cllr Richards was tasked with arranging this with the tree surgeon.

### **2015/116 Ramp funding projects**

Councillor Richards will redraft the flyer and recirculate to members for their comments as soon as possible as she would like the flyer to be sent to parishioners in the first week of January. The idea about the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration will be reinstated and she will refer to 'Ickham', rather than 'the village'.

### **2015/117 Highways**

117/01: **A257 Group** met at County Hall Maidstone on Nov 27th with Matthew Balfour (KCC cabinet member for transport), Andy Corcoran (Traffic Schemes Manager KCC) and Tim Read (Head of Transportation KCC). Each of 5 Parish representatives from the A257 from Canterbury to Ash put the case to KCC about the accident rates and congestion on that road – e.g. 35 crashed on the Bramling Bend mostly in the last 6 years. Councillor Tatman stated that he was bitterly disappointed that absolutely nothing positive came out of that meeting. Kent Highways will not spend a single penny on road safety unless there have been deaths in the last 3 years.

117/02: **Interactive Signs:** Highways have confirmed that the interactive sign at Bramling, warning eastbound traffic of the sharp bend, is broken and irreparable. It will not be replaced unless some money comes from somewhere which is not envisaged. Until then it's on a "wish list".

117/03: **Accidents:** There have been two more accidents on the Bramling bend since the last parish council meeting. An ambulance was called on both occasions. Both accidents appear to have been caused by cars approaching the bend at excessive speed and not reacting in time to stationary vehicles. These are similar to many other such accidents and Councillor Tatman expressed the hope that someone in authority would act to prevent further occurrences.

117/04: **Pot Holes:** The stream of pot holes at Port Rill on Wingham Lane have been partially fixed, the remainder having been deemed to be in the category that "does not meet intervention criteria". KCC Councillor Northey agrees that, with budget constraints, such criteria had to be applied.

The pothole near New Place Farm apparently also met with "does not meet intervention criteria". Councillor Tatman contacted Highways to ascertain these criteria and was told that a pothole should be at least 22mm deep, which this one wasn't, and in any case it appeared to be road erosion rather than a

pothole. He suggested that, as the hole in question was 3' long, 18" wide and up to 1.75" deep, then perhaps they were looking at the wrong hole. Highways agreed to re-book the issue, (as opposed to re-opening the previous one), but refused his request to meet the Highways Steward on site to make sure that they were looking at the right hole.

Councillor Tatman has booked two new potholes in Drill Lane, near the electrical sub-station. The status of one has been set to "works being programmed" whilst the other has been set to "issue resolved with customer". He has not yet had a chance to chase up the outrageous nature of the latter - which is certainly not the case.

117/05: Councillor Tatman has booked the **Treasury View street sign**, which had been demolished, presumably by a vehicle of some sort. Highways have referred the matter to Canterbury, under whose jurisdiction it apparently lies.

117/06: A BT inspection hatch cover which was sinking against the road surface, causing undue noise and vibration, has been rectified.

117/07: **Water Mains Replacement Works** have been fully underway for 4 weeks in Bramling Road and have now closed for Christmas. Works will be continued from Mid-January onwards with a further 3-week closure of Bramling Road and Wingham Well Lane junctions with the A257, plus temporary traffic lights on the A257 as works head towards Littlebourne over the following 6 months. The Clancy Docwra sub-contractors on-site have been extremely accommodating to residents, including removing vehicles and signs to make access available at short notice, reducing noise outside the Haywain during opening hours, and making special arrangements with Serco for bin collections.

117/08: **Bramling Road Bicycle accident 12/04/15**

A cyclist, Terry Blackman, came off his bike in Bramling Road when re-entering the road from one of the passing places on the single carriage section of the road. The cyclist broke his neck in the incident and has been slowly recovering ever since. His wife, Mrs Blackman, has contacted the council to find out if we can help in establishing under whose jurisdiction the incident occurred and, hence, if there was an element of blame to assign. She said that she had booked the pothole with Highways soon after the incident but it has not yet been fixed. She also wondered if Ovendens are responsible for their lorries creating the pothole during their quarry filling operation a few hundred metres away.

The cyclist does not live in the Parish, nor does the Parish Council have any responsibility for the maintenance of the roads in the Parish, nevertheless, as

the incident occurred within the Parish, Councillor Tatman agreed to obtain as much information for Mrs Blackman as he could.

Councillor Tatman checked on line with Highways, using the issue number that had given Mrs Blackman regarding the pothole and ascertained that the issue had been assigned the status “does not meet intervention criteria”. He then contacted Highways by phone, although they were reluctant to speak to him as he had not booked the original incident. He was told that the pothole on the road itself was not deep enough to constitute a pothole, and hence would not be fixed, whereas the pothole in the passing place was not on Highways land and was therefore outside their jurisdiction to fix. Councillor Tatman remarked that he found the latter statement incredible as it was not a new passing place created by Ovendens’ lorries and others, but had been there for years, and, given the lack of sight-line to the next passing point, was essential for traffic to be able to use the single carriageway at all. He stated that he had previously booked fly-tipping in other passing places, which had then been cleared away by the council. He suspected that Highways might have inspected the wrong passing place, although the description that Mrs Blackman had given them was unmistakable.

Mrs Blackman asked what records we had of potholes on that section of road and whether Highways had had prior warning. Councillor Tatman had not personally booked an issue on that section and nor has anyone else that he knew of, (including another resident of Bramling Road who does occasionally book potholes with Highways). He asked Highways if they could provide him with any such information and they were unable to, suggesting that he would need to put in an FOI request. Mrs Blackman has gone onto Google Maps Streetview to see if the pothole was previously visible, (and Councillor Tatman had done the same), but there was a white van stationary in the pull-in thereby obscuring any relevant view.

Councillor Tatman has relayed all this information to Mrs Blackman, who was grateful, but asked if there was anything else that we could, and would, do. As a Parish Council, however, Councillor Tatman believed that there was very little more that could be done. Certainly it is not up to the council to advise Mrs Blackman on a legal course of action. He did not believe that it would benefit anyone to pursue Ovendens as being a contributor to a particular pothole, as there are many vehicles, both big and small, that use that road and the passing point in question cannot have been created by Ovendens lorries – even if they did make it worse. He will re-book the particular pothole and pursue Highways as to why they think it does not require intervention but that the information recorded on their computer system is probably in insufficient detail to gain any value from an FOI request. The council agreed.

#### 117/09: Bramling Road – Ovendens

There have been various discussions and correspondence regarding the Overnden's usage of the chalk pit at the bottom of Bramling Road near the railway line for land fill. The main operation was completed sometime ago and Ovendens were allowed to "top up" every so often to allow for landfill sinkage. Following this the land itself was to be returned to farming use, and Bramling Road "made good" after years of Ovenden lorries, in some views, devastating it and the road to be reinstated where additional passing places had been created. The council had written to Ovenden regarding this reinstatement and received a reply dated 17 Feb 2014, stating that the landfill site would be restored by spring that year, weather permitting, and the Road reinstatement undertaken soon after that. This has not yet happened. The council wrote back on the 19<sup>th</sup> May requesting a site visit to be attended by the council, local residents and representatives of Adisham Council. Councillor Tatman did not think that anything else had happened since that letter. He felt that not only should Ovendens be pressed to complete their reinstatement but should also deal with a matter reported to him that, at times, water rushed out of the gated area leading to the landfill site and onto the Bramling Road. This apparently causes potholes to occur in the area and localised flooding, due to inadequate drainage gullies either side of the road. Councillor Tatman will forward the information that he has plus correspondence to the parish clerk with a view to a follow up letter being sent.

#### **2015/118 Access to rear gate of The Duke across field**

Councillor deGraft-Johnson offered to speak to the owners again as the gate is still wide open and the 'Do not use gate' sign has disappeared. Other than this, members agreed that it was up to the Church Commissioners and their agents, Strutt & Parker, to resolve.

#### **2015/119 Emergency Services – use of Village Hall in emergency**

Village Hall Committee members present, (constituting a quorum), agreed that the village hall could be used by emergency services in an emergency. The parish clerk will contact the Services and inform them of this agreement and set up suitable contact details with them, according to their requirements.

#### **2015/120 Hydrants – allocation of responsibility**

Councillor Tatman will circulate a map of the hydrants again and apportion responsibilities for checking them to individual members.

**2015/121 Southern water – free fat funnels**

Councillor Wyant offered to ask Jacque Grimsley to announce the availability, without cost, of fat funnels for residents so that excess fat could be collected in a bottle and disposed of without clogging drains.

**2015/122 Residents – keeping property boundaries clean**

Councillors felt that they themselves should ensure that their own properties were well maintained, effectively ‘leading by example’.

**2015/123: Defibrillator for village**

Councillor Hodges offered to ask Kent Ambulance Service to come and give a talk / demonstration to members so that a decision on whether to get a defibrillator for Ickham could be based on greater knowledge.

**2015/124: Councillors’ Code of Conduct**

Councillor Hodges had circulated draft copies of the Code to members prior to the meeting but, as only one member had commented so far, the item was deferred until the January meeting so that all members could express their views.

**2015/125: Contact list of preferences for parishioners**

Deferred

**2015/126 AOB**

None

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 9:15 pm.

**The next parish meeting is on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 7.30pm**