

ICKHAM & WELL PARISH COUNCIL

Ordinary Parish Meeting 18th September 2017 at 7.30 pm

Minutes of meeting

Present: Councillors de Graft-Johnson (Chair), K Richards, L Shouls, K Tatman, G Wyant; P Heath (clerk)

Public: 8 members of the public present.

2017/086: Apologies
Councillors Hipkin, Hodges, Walker and Northey.

2017/087: Declarations of interest
There were none.

2017/088: Minutes of the Special Parish Meeting held on 21st August
The minutes were agreed as a true record.

2017/089: Matters arising

089/01: Councillor Shouls reported that the damage to the older noticeboard in the village had been suitably repaired by Littlebourne Woodcraft, as had been agreed at the last meeting.

089/02: The correspondence between a parishioner and KCC Highways re the condition of Wingham Lane, particularly at Port Rill, had been satisfactorily concluded when KCC Highways repaired the potholes. The clerk had written on behalf of the Councillors to thank the parishioner for his input.

2017/090: Correspondence
There was none.

2017/091: Planning Application
There were no objections to application 17/01708 to replace the timber windows at April Cottage, Cherville Lane, which was a listed building. Councillor Tatman mentioned that the original windows were deemed too far damaged to repair.

2017/092: Finance

In the absence of Councillor Hipkin, this was deferred until the next meeting.

2017/093: Highways

093/01: A257: Pavement from Duckpitt Cottages to Littlebourne: Michael Heath of Highways had inspected the pavement last June and Councillor Tatman had waited three months but nothing had been done, apart from a little spraying of vegetation. Councillor Tatman had therefore escalated the matter to Councillor Northey and will await his response and, hopefully, progress in rectifying the dangerous situation.

093/02: Potholes at Port Rill, Wingham Lane. Following the inspection that Councillor Tatman and Michael Heath of Highways had undertaken in June, and Mr Mauduit's letter to Highways, there has been a substantial amount of pothole filling, particularly in some of the passing places. This was not the first time that this had been done and it remained to be seen whether these remedial works survived the winter and Councillor Tatman would therefore recommend a wait and see approach on these repairs. On the matter of the passing places, he felt that the Ickham and Well stretch of Wingham Lane provided enough visibility for vehicles being reasonably driven to avoid too many difficulties, bearing in mind that in rural areas there will always be times of the year when drivers can be confronted by large agricultural vehicles. On the Wingham stretch of the Lane there is less visibility but there is also narrowing giving less scope for additional passing places. Note that Councillor Tatman shared Mr Mauduit's letter with Wingham Parish Council and it was read out at one of their meetings without any actions being recommended.

Councillor Wyant mentioned that there was a very large and deep pothole at the passing place near the river in Drill Lane. A nearby pothole had been mended but the larger one had not. Councillor Tatman will report this to Highways.

093/03: Interactive sign opposite Bramling House: No further progress on this matter, although the letter that the Council had previously addressed to Julian Brazier and Craig McKinley, (copied Michael Northey), regarding the A257 speed limit, had been passed to the KCC Highways cabinet member.

093/04: Accidents: Councillor Tatman was not aware of any accident in the parish, although at some stage during early September a pile of broken vehicle glass appeared at the side of the A257 and tyre marks on a grass verge further up also appeared, which could indicate an incident.

093/05: A257 Traffic Group: The September meeting was cancelled due to holiday absences. Next meeting will be in November.

2017/094: River Management

094/01: Councillor Wyant reported on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy produced by Kent County Council. She felt that this was mainly aspirational with few planned actions. Nailbourne Valley was mentioned and it was stated that KCC wished to work with residents to generate ideas to manage flood risk in the future.

094/02: The Environment Agency had cut back the weeds in the Little Stour by the mill the previous week and the stream alongside Drill Lane into Littlebourne had been cleared. The clearing process could continue until November and a parishioner mentioned that the relief channel had not been cleared yet. Councillor Wyant said that she would be attending a meeting of the IDB on Tuesday and would ask the EA about the relief channel if they were present.

2017/095: Meeting with Duke William personnel

095/01: Councillor Shouls reported that she and Councillor Wyant had had a very agreeable and productive meeting with Joshua de Haan, Mark Sergeant and Jack Nimmons and had discussed issues concerning parking, loud music, bins and relationship between the pub and the village.

095/02: Councillor Shouls showed some photographs of the rubbish left for collection and Mr de Haan responded that they would investigate purchasing a carboard compactor. The bins will, in future, be placed outside the pub itself and Viridor, under a private contract, will collect at a specified time early in the morning.

095/03: Councillor Shouls reported that she and Councillor Wyant had fed back to the owners virtually everything reported at last month's Parish Council meeting. The pub managers were receptive to this feedback but also mentioned aggression from a couple of residents. They asked that, in future, if any incident occurred, the residents should ask the name of the member of staff with whom they were dealing so that the matter could be resolved.

095/04: The importance of communicating was discussed and information of events, such as parties, fireworks etc, will be distributed via Facebook, Jacque's email list, or letter if appropriate and, possibly, use the Forge House noticeboard.

095/05: The question of firework displays was discussed. Apart from the usual dates, (November 5th, or nearby, and 31st December), the pub would undertake to inform parishioners. Concern was expressed about the debris left in gardens, car park etc from a previous display, of which the owners seemed unaware. The danger of dry cornfields / thatched roofs was also mentioned and the noisiness of fireworks used in the past. The pub would consider using silent fireworks.

095/06: The gate at the rear of the pub garden was also discussed. It had been agreed that it would be kept locked as people were walking across a private field to access the entrance and children were also using it to exit onto the field and to play in a barn, which could be dangerous. A bolt had been fitted to the gate but, unfortunately, children proved able to climb over the fence. It was pointed out that it was not the pub's responsibility to supervise children.

095/07: One other issue that a parishioner pointed out was that permission had been given to a recent wedding party to have drinks served on the village green but that the pub had also set up music, which had not been mentioned. In the event, rain prevented either taking place but it was indicative of a lack of full communication between the pub and residents who would be affected.

095/08: Parking was, of course, a major cause of concern. At peak times, the Street was virtually a single-track road with some people parking inconsiderately, for example, in the entrance to the Oast Houses, which made it even more difficult for residents to gain visibility when driving out, and in the 'No parking' area in front of the flats. The possibility of staff parking further away from the pub was mentioned and another parishioner suggested asking the pub to install a bicycle rack to prevent cycles being chained to private fences etc. Despite these and other suggestions, there was no easy solution to the parking problem but the hope was expressed that the pub staff and residents could work together more amicably when a badly parked car or rubbish littered around, for example, was reported and could then deal with the problem together, (the business owners had suggested that people simply go into the pub to ask that vehicles be moved, and were told that staff have shown hostility in the past, so that this idea wasn't very attractive at present).

095/09: Other issues, such as deliveries made before staff arrived, which were taken to the back door through a pathway which was not a public right of way; bins being collected too early (should be 8 am), were raised. A member of the public expressed the opinion that there was a disconnect between the pub's words and actions but it was hoped relationships would improve.

095/10: Councillor deGraft-Johnson will draft an open letter to the owners detailing the points raised and how to build a better future relationship. Councillor Shouls also mentioned that she had suggested that the owners, (who selected Jack Nimmons), be invited to attend the next parish meeting to listen to residents' concerns and express their own views.

2017/096: Parishioners' survey

Councillor Richards reported that she will be speaking to Brennan and the others at the end of September / early October with the redraft coming out mid-October.

2017/097: Possible NALC membership

This will be brought forward to the next meeting to discuss when Councillor Hodges is present.

2017/098: Telephone kiosk

098/01: Councillor Shouls had been unable to confirm if the box in the village had been decommissioned. It would also be necessary to check with Offcom and Planning the details of any special maintenance that might be required, lead paint, indemnifying BT etc. According to a parishioner, the box is a 1935 K6 model and it was felt to be a significant part of the village.

098/02: It was suggested that either a use for the box was suggested via the new Parish Plan about to be circulated or from an individual. A parishioner suggested contacted Wickhambreaux who had bought theirs.

098/03: The box is sited on Mr Hayward's land and he offered to investigate whether it was due for dismantling and the options.

2017/099: AOB

The parish council wished to formally recognise the generosity of Mansfield's in allowing the Wickhambreaux School Autumn Fair to take place in a field of theirs off School Lane on the previous Sunday, permission having been sought by Mrs Dwyer. The fair was a great success and well attended.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 8.30 pm.

The next parish meeting will be on Monday 16th October at 7.30 pm.