

LAMBERHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 12th January 2016

Members present:

Cllr Denis Cruse	DC
Cllr John Uren	JU
Cllr John Francis	JF
Cllr Steve Cannella	SC
Cllr Clive Stott	CS
Cllr Ian Mephram	IM
Cllr Hurst –Brown.	DHB
Cllr Rolf Smith	RS

In attendance:

Barbara Uren (Parish Clerk)	BU
Chris Hamilton (Minutes Secretary)	CH

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the councillors and those in attendance to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

These had been received from Borough Councillor Edmund Hastie

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF 10TH NOVEMBER 2015

The minutes of this meeting were approved with no amendments.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 10TH NOVEMBER**Old School Clock**

RS had all the necessary information and was ready to meet with an interested parishioner who wished to see the matter resolved and would hopefully help to move things forward with ViewDecor.

Lights on the Village Green.

The lights, which the contractors had rehung before Christmas, had met with mostly favourable comments. However, they had cut out continuously over Christmas and were currently not considered fit for purpose. The cause appeared to be that the two junction boxes in the trees were getting wet. The clerk had emailed and not yet received a response. The following course of action was agreed: DHB would phone the chief executive of the company, explain the history of the lights so far and insist that the problems be resolved so that the lights were working and could be left on for a prolonged period for testing. If after 28 days from his call there had been no such resolution, the clerk should send a recorded delivery letter before further action.

Gullies at Hook Green

IM reported that the outfalls were still not cleared, despite promises four weeks previously. Alex King had been copied in to IM's original email. The clerk would chase this again, this time copying in Paul Carter.

Footpaths

There had been no further news. CH would pursue this.

Defibrillator

Caroline Price was organising a training session for 25th February and currently looking for a venue. It was hoped any parishioners who had missed the Lamberhurst training might be able to join this.

Civic Amenity Refuse Vehicle

TWBC's arrangements for this service, as outlined at the previous meeting, were in hand.

20's Plenty Campaign

DC had written but as yet had no reply.

Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth

After discussion it was agreed that a flag pole was desirable in the centre of the village, that the War Memorial Hall was the best location and the hall managers would be minded to agree to the installation. The pole should be erected from the building, either at an angle on the front of the building at first floor level, or vertically from the roof upwards, to discourage climbing on it. CS agreed to investigate what was best and to look at prices of flags of various kinds. BU would find out where the particular commonwealth flag could be obtained and other pertinent details. As there was no meeting before March, a decision could be reached via email.

Fun Run

This had been an excellent occasion, well supported and well-organised. Even our MP had taken part! IM would express pleasure and congratulations on behalf of LPC and the Bonfire Society.

British Legion Display Cabinet

This had now been set up and was looking good.

Public Conveniences

JU had spoken with Lesley Peters and envisaged a meeting with her in February. She would obtain quotes for various improvements she thought appropriate, to discuss at the meeting, after which a specification could be put together and further quotations would be sought as required by standing orders. The extent of repairs that might be needed on the roof remained unclear until closer investigation.

4. ACCOUNTS

JF proposed a precept of £40,000 for 2016-17. This was £500 more than the previous year, or an increase of 1.3%. This would be counteracted by a 0.6% improvement in the tax base this year, leaving an overall increase on a band D property of 0.7%. JF envisaged breaking even on this precept.

DC proposed acceptance of the precept and this was agreed unanimously. The Clerk was formally instructed to send the agreed precept information to TWBC.

There had been requests from the Samaritans and TW CAB for funding. A grant of £150 for the Samaritans was unanimously agreed. JF thought that discussion of a grant to CAB should be deferred until the council had a copy of their accounts. This was agreed.

JF circulated a breakdown of playground related expenditure. There was over £9,000 still unspent and thus available for playground equipment. DHB suggested a more permanent surface on the much used and very muddy track by the ditch near the zip wire. The subject of adult outdoor exercise equipment was also discussed. JU felt that the money should be retained for major repairs when they were needed and this was agreed by the council.

JF reported that audit arrangements were changing. If we did nothing, an auditor would be appointed for us. JF recommended this route and all agreed.

5. COMMON LAND AND ALLOTMENTS

DHB reported that a meeting had taken place and he was now in contact with a land management company who were proposing a way forward. A woodland management plan was needed. A grant was available via the Countryside Stewardship Scheme towards the preparation of this plan and the company could make the necessary application on the council's behalf. The total fees for the plan, the grant application and the land registration would be £1300 + VAT, payable once the plan was approved by the Forestry Commission. In addition he could apply for another grant of 100 per hectare to help with common land maintenance, although this grant was competitive and not guaranteed. DHB advised going through the first stage, at a cost of around £300 then deciding how to proceed. DC had spoken to a parishioner who worked in land management who had a long term interest in working with LPC's common land group. DC agreed to ask him first about preparing a plan and investigate whether this might be a way forward before proceeding with DHB's contact. He would pass on the map of Lamberhurst's common land and perhaps ask him to the next meeting. A meeting would be set up with JU, BU, DHB in the next couple of weeks.

JU reported that the allotments on the abattoir field were largely overgrown and there was ongoing maintenance there with hedge cutting. Other allotments were almost all under cultivation. Parishioners should register their interest with the clerk if they wished to be considered for an allotment for the next season.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Chairmanship Conference: 26th February 9.30 am

DC was unable to attend and opened this to other councillors who might like to go in his place.

2. TW District Citizens Advice Bureau: Jeremy Cross, New Chief Officer, The clerk would write that no suitable date could be found at the moment.

3. New Year's Honours List 2017 – Deadline for nominations 4th February 2016

This was noted.

4. High Weald AONB

It was noted that the High Weald Website offered free event advertising on its event pages.

7. PLANNING

Decisions on applications from Court Lodge were still awaited.

A consultation document on National Planning Policy was circulated to councillors. The Planning group should read the documents, research online if necessary and report back at the next meeting as to what the implications might be for Lamberhurst. DC encouraged councillors to respond on the council's behalf where necessary, by 22nd February.

8. REPRESENTATIVES/ SUB- GROUPS REPORTS

War Memorial Hall

JU raised the need for signage showing opening times outside the public toilets. It was agreed that the whole issue of opening times needed to be resolved before a sign could be erected. There was a further issue of basins becoming blocked by ramblers when washing their boots there. More signage

was needed. CH reported that the Hall managers would be looking for grants to replace rotten fire doors in the hall.

Bewl Water

Nothing to report

Playing fields

Nothing to report

Youth / Playground Working Group

Nothing to report

Buses/Transport

Nothing to report

Police

Nothing to report

Highways

RS had been talking to Kent Highways about speeds on School Hill and had been promised a feasibility study. The issue around the bollards by Church Road had been raised. The 30mph sign cannot be moved without a consultation process, which is deemed too expensive, but the request for additional signage would be investigated. The recent petition had been rejected. A meeting was to be held at the primary school next Tuesday at 10am to discuss parking issues there. DHB and BU would attend.

Footpaths

Nothing further to report

Flooding

Nothing further to report

Housing

Nothing to report.

Common Land

Nothing further to report

Events

Nothing further to report

KALC

“Country Eye” had been recommended as an app which gives information about rural crime.

Parish Chairman

Nothing to report

Business

Nothing to report

Website

Nothing to report.

School

Nothing further to report

Public Conveniences

Nothing further to report

9. QUEEN ELIZABETH II 90TH BIRTHDAY

There was discussion as to what, if anything, the parish council might want to do to mark this event and whether the beacon should be lit. The event was a Thursday evening and it was thought not a good time for a family event. A vote was taken re lighting of the beacon with a majority against. On March 5th and 6th there was to be a national litter picking event. Caroline Price is organising this round Hook Green and there was discussion about doing the

same in other parts of the parish. It was thought that the Brownies and Girl Guides might like to be involved.

10. MATTERS OF URGENCY AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

Parish Reserve

DC reported that it was now possible for a council to apply for this in cases of extraordinary expenditure.

Aviation Action group

DHB would liaise with High Weald Aviation Action Group and could ask them to come and speak to us if desired. Flight Radar 24 was a useful free app showing you what was flying overhead at any given moment.

11. EXEMPT ITEMS

See separate sheet.

The meeting closed at 9.54 pm

