

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Weaving Village Hall,
Weaving Street on Monday 3 March 2014 commencing at 7.31 pm.**

Councillors present: Mr Ivor Davies (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr T Harwood (arrived during item 6), Mr Bob Hinder, Mrs W Hinder, Mr D Hollands, Mrs K Macklin, Mr G Smith, Mr A Springate, Mr P Sullivan, and Mrs M Waller, together with the Clerk and 4 members of the public/press.

1. Apologies and absences.

Cllr Vic Davies (holiday), Cllr P Dengate (unwell) and Mrs A Spain (convalescing).
Borough Councillor Derek Butler.

2. Declaration of Interests or Lobbying.

The Chairman declared that he was an allotment tenant and a member of the Allotment Working Group but had been awarded dispensation to vote on allotment matters.

Cllr Bob Hinder declared that he was an allotment tenant and a member of the Allotment Working Group but had been awarded dispensation to vote on allotment matters.

Cllr Sullivan declared that he was an allotment tenant but had been awarded dispensation to vote on allotment matters.

All members declared that they had been lobbied on item 6.

Item 6 was taken at this point.

3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 27 January 2014.

The minutes of the meeting were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising From the Minutes.

4.1 Minute 2618 Parish Emergency Plan: Clerk is investigating whether an additional plan is needed. **Noted. Action: Clerk.**

5. Report from the PCSO and Police Issues.

Members **received** crime statistics for the period 28.01.14 – 24.02.14.

6. Complaint Hearing.

After the Chairman had introduced members and outlined the procedure to be followed, the complainant was invited to remind members of the grounds for the complaint, referring where necessary to the folder of documents that they held. Following this, members asked the complainant a number of questions about the previous state of Sandy Lane; its use by farmers, adjoining property occupants and members of the public; its ownership and other related matters. It was noted that large and small vehicles used Sandy Lane and that 2013/14 had been the wettest winter on record.

The Chairman then invited the Clerk to respond to the complaint on behalf of the council. Dealing first with the alleged failure of the parish council to repair the potholes, she explained that a parish council has no legal power to repair or maintain a public highway and questions of consequential legal liability could arise were they to attempt to do so. The matter had therefore been passed over to the highway authorities and the complainant had been so informed.

Turning next to the allegation that the council was mainly responsible for the muddy condition of the road, the Clerk said that this was not the case. The road was regularly used by a variety of vehicles visiting the roadside premises and fields. Unsurprisingly, these did on occasion bring mud onto the road. Any such material disturbed by construction vehicles when the allotments access road was built last summer had been swept clear by the parish council on completion of the

work. The parish council could not therefore accept responsibility for the mud found along the public road, both above and below the allotments gate. That said, she added, the parish council did not deny that after heavy rain there was some water and silt run-off from the road accessing the allotments and the adjoining property. This water and silt joining other run-off from further up the road. As some of this silt was tracked on to the road, the parish council was seeking urgent professional advice on how this problem could be mitigated. The complainant would continue to be kept informed of developments. As regards the broader problem, MBC had recently swept the road and KCCH&T had cleared some surface mud and was investigating the potholes. The road should henceforth be swept by MBC every six weeks and the Clerk would monitor this.

Having heard the Clerk's response, the complainant stated that she now felt that one of her complaints, namely not being kept updated, had now been resolved. The complainant declined the Chairman's invitation to stay for members' decision on the remainder of her complaint. The Chairman then thanked her and her companion for attending and she in turn thanked members for the time they had given to the matter. The complainant then left.

After discussion, in which it was noted that the original complex formal complaint had now been reduced to the collection of silt and water at the access road entrance and its tracking on to Sandy Lane, Cllr Bob Hinder proposed seconded by Cllr Hollands that "**having heard the grounds for complaint and the rebuttal by the Clerk, members agree that the complaint is not upheld**". This was **agreed** with two abstentions (the Chairman and Cllr Springate) and none against.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.26 pm to allow a resident to praise the facilities at Cobtree Manor Park and to report how busy it had been the previous Sunday. She was encouraged to so tell MBC who would welcome the feedback. Reconvened 8.28pm.

7. **Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings.**

Received and noted.

- 7.1 Environment Committee meeting 27 January 2014.
- 7.2 Environment Committee meeting 10 February 2014.
- 7.3 Estates Committee meeting 11 February 2014.

8. **Finance.**

- 8.1 Payments made out of meeting 28.01.14 - 21.02.14. **Noted.**
- 8.2 Receipts for the period 21.01.14 - 24.02.14. The Clerk explained that the adjustments at vouchers 432 - 434 were part of an audit trail. **Noted.**
- 8.3 Account balances as at 24.02.14. **Noted.**
- 8.4 Payments of accounts. **Authorised.**

9. **Casual Vacancy.**

In accordance with section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Clerk declared a casual vacancy on the council owing to non-attendance by Cllr Holmes. **Noted.** Arrangements will be made to advertise the vacancy. **Action: Clerk.**

10. **Dove Hill Allotments.**

Cllr Bob Hinder gave a brief update to members. The Clerk confirmed that as there were still vacant plots, arrangements were in hand to offer these to people outside the parish boundary. As non-residents they could apply for only one or two quarter-plots; residents could apply for up to four. **Action: Clerk.**

11. **Policies and Procedures Review.**

The Equal Opportunities statement was **unanimously agreed.**

Equal Opportunities Statement

The parish council values diversity and believes that it strengthens our community. The Council is committed to treating everyone fairly and with courtesy and respect. The aim in producing this statement is to ensure that the parish council eliminates discrimination in its own areas of responsibility and promotes anti-discriminatory practices in the wider community. The parish council wishes to create an environment where all forms of discriminatory or oppressive behaviour are unacceptable and every member of the council's workforce and the community is able to develop their full potential. It is recognised that the way in which we treat one another is a crucial element in ensuring that we create the right environment in which people can grow, develop and maximise their contribution.

The council therefore undertakes that:

No service user, employee or job applicant will be discriminated against or receive less favourable treatment on grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation*.

* Terms used are based on the Equalities Act 2010 definitions.

Note. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (specific duties) Regulations 2011 the Parish Council undertakes an annual review of its obligations to ensure that the services it supplies meets, at a minimum, the legislation.

12 **Matters for Decision.**

- 12.1 World War 1 commemoration. After discussion it was **agreed** to continue considering the three ideas already put forward, namely a plaque/memorial, trees and/or a leaflet. Members **noted** that a resident had come forward about the leaflet and Cllr Harwood suggested the verge at Grovewood Drive North (near its junction with New Cut Road) for the trees. The Clerk was asked to continue liaising with the resident. **Action: Clerk.**
- 12.2 Unipar Safety Road Safety Speed Watch – Event Planning Seminar 14 April 2014. **Noted** that the Environment Committee meets on the same night but members wishing to attend should contact the Clerk. **Action: Councillors.**
- 12.3 Sevenoaks Town Council's proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act "for a return of a system to provide a percentage of the Business (Non-Domestic) Rates to Town and Parish Councils to be used for the benefit of economic growth in the locality" was **supported** by the council. The Clerk to notify the relevant authority of this support. **Action: Clerk.**
- 12.4 KALC Planning Conference on Saturday 22 March 2014. Members wishing to attend are to contact the Clerk. **Action: Councillors.**
- 12.5 Annual Meeting of the Parish. It was **agreed** this should be held on 12 May 2014 immediately before the parish council's annual general meeting.

13 **Reports from Borough and County Councillors.**

Cllr Wendy Hinder gave a brief report on issues relating to the parish.

14 **Reports from councillors/office.**

Received and noted.

- 14.1 Celebrating Boxley Warren. Members were notified that the shortfall in match funding had now been filled due to the work of Cllr Harwood, Mr Phillips and the Clerk. The Chairman thanked Cllr Harwood. It was **noted** that Aylesford Parish Council had contributed £400. Cllr Bob Hinder informed members that a wet habitat was to be constructed.

- 14.2 Mid Kent Downs Steering Meeting. Cllr Smith's request that an e-mail be sent to the Chairman of the group concerning tourism and the need for a café was **agreed. Action: Clerk.**
- 14.3 Police Parish Forum. The Chairman attended but there was nothing of interest to this parish to report.

15 **Matters for Information.**

Noted.

Rural News issues 133 and 134.

16 **Next Meeting.**

Monday 7 April 2014 at Tyland Barn, Tyland Lane, Sandling.

Meeting closed at 8.58 p.m.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman.....Date.....

