

**INUTES OF THE OTHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2022 AT 7.45 PM  
IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllrs Kevin Hipkins; Rachel Gray; Val Moon; Clint Hickmott; Gordon Newton; Mick Read; Mark Ramsey; Teresa Irving – Clerk; 2 Members of the Village Hall Committee; 3 Members of Bicknor Wood Community Group; 4 Members of the Public.

- 1 APOLOGIES:** Cllrs Christine Lambourne (prior commitment).  
The apology and reason for absence was noted and accepted.
- 2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS** – The Clerk for the purpose of minuting.
- 3 RESIGNATION OF CLLR KINGA STALLWOOD/CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR:** Sadly, Cllr Stallwood has resigned due to a change in her working situation.  
Cllr Hickmott to check if his neighbour might still be interested in the role?
- 4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None declared.
- 5 CRIME REPORT & POLICING UPDATE:** Crimes reported on e-watch.co.
  - 18.07.22 around 03.12 in Spot Lane. Someone tried to break into a business property.
  - 30.07.22 between 02.00 and 07.11 in Otham Street. Somebody stole a vehicle, Y2\*\*\*\*, from the road.
  - 02.08.22 between 10.45 and 13.00 in Holly Farm Road. Somebody broke into a residential property and stole some jewellery. It was noted that, in fact, the jewellery had been misplaced and had not been stolen.
  - 05.09.22 in Lambert Drive. Somebody stole a red Range Rover FJ66\*\*\*, from a driveway.
- The meeting adjourned for**
- 6 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**  
  
The meeting reconvened
- 7 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4 JULY 2022:** The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings & were duly signed by Councillor Hipkins.
- 8 RECEIVE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT:**
  - A water leak on Church Road was reported to SE Water. A water main was subsequently struck by contractors.
  - Cllrs Newton, Hipkins and the Clerk attended a meeting with Bellway Homes on 16 September. The notes have been circulated and are available on the website.
- 9 RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT:** Not available.

## 10 FINANCE:

### 10.1 Approve Statement of Account:

#### Cheques issued:

Staffing Costs (July)	Payroll/Expenses	676.70
SE Landbase	Training (C. Hickmott)	184.80
Staffing Costs (August)	Payroll/Expenses	625.95
PKF Littlejohn	Annual Audit	480.00
Staffing Costs (Sept)	Payroll/Expenses	975.92

#### Cheques received:

NatWest Business Acct	Interest (to 30 Sept)	2.12
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**Balance of Current Account: £147,696.60 credit, after all cheques sent/rec'd**

**Balance of Business Reserve Account: £4,925.99**

**Total Funds: £147,698.72**

Approval of the above was proposed by Cllr Hipkins, seconded by Cllr Gray and unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**

- 10.2 Consider Investment Account re CIL monies:** All to consider what short term investment accounts might be suitable? **ACTION: ALL**

### 10.3 Grant Requests.

#### Otham Village Hall (The Institute Otham):

Following consideration of the comments made by two members of the VH Committee in respect of work that is required to make the hall viable, a grant towards replacement heating and decorating of **£20,000** was **RESOLVED** from CIL funding.

**Bicknor Wood Residents Community Group (BWRCG):** A wish list of equipment was supplied by the group. Following due consideration, a grant from CIL funding of **£16,000** was **RESOLVED** towards the most relevant items.

- 10.4 Conclusion of Audit 2021/22:** The External Audit was signed off by PKF Littlejohn with no issues raised.

**SAAA – Consider Op Out Option:** Following due consideration, it was **RESOLVED** to continue as part of the SAAA sector-led auditor appointment regime.

- 10.5 Other Matters to Report:** There were no other matters.

## 11 CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS: RECEIVED/GRANTED:

### Applications Received: Nil

**Application 22/501614/FULL:** Section 73 - Application for Variation of condition 30.  
Appeal withdrawn by Bellway Homes

**Notice Boards.** Locations for the boards that are to be provided by Bellway Homes were agreed as: The Plaza area/centre of Parsonage Place, the Play Area between Imperial Park/The Coppice, Bicknor Green Play Area and, if a fourth board is available, the Village Green.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**12 VILLAGE GREEN:**

- **Parking Update/Review of Requested Information:** Unfortunately, the NT are unable to help with sharing their car park during the summer months: *'We are planning to open Stoneacre twice as much next year, so the car park will be in more regular use. We are also discussing the possibility of extending our offer and may require the car park at short notice. If used more frequently than this it would likely cause damage'*  
However, the tenant farmer understands how difficult the parking situation is and he's keen to help by possibly allowing parking behind the barn. He will be checking with the Managing Agent/Trust and report back accordingly.
- **Replacement Verge Posts:** Quotation from Steven Waring was discussed, with the following items **RESOLVED:**
  - 2 x 100 x 100 wooden posts on a metal spike in the sum of £70.40 each (ex VAT)
  - 1 X Wooden post c/w socket, padlock and reflectors in the sum of £130.50 (ex VAT)
- **Consider quotations re Trees:** Quotations to carry out a report were invited from: The Living Forest, Qualitree Services & BG Valley. Following due consideration, the quotation from The Living Forest in the sum of £425 was **RESOLVED**
- **Play Equipment Maintenance:** It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from MBC to jet wash the Play Area and Equipment in the sum of £350. 00. Work to be requested in mid-November (after the leaves have fallen).  
It was noted that alternative arrangements will have to be made re inspection of play equipment, as MBC will cease this arrangement from 1 April 2023.
- **Request for hire re Langley Lions, U7 Football:** Unfortunately, due to no parking being available, the PC is unable to assist with the request.

**13 OTHAM COMMUNITY FACILITY STUDY:** Discuss the way forward.

A bid for additional CIL funding would have to be considered for the larger projects, or residents may wish to consider a contribution?

CIL strategic funds for borough wide infrastructure will only be available by way of bids and the Council has recently closed the bidding. The Borough Council has not yet decided the date/year for the next round of bidding.

**14 LGBCE: Electoral Review of Maidstone Borough Council – Draft Recommendations:**

No comments to be submitted from the PC (the postponement of September's meeting did not permit time). However, it was noted that some Members sent their own comments.

**15 PARISH VEGETATION/HEDGE CUTTING UPDATE:** The property management company for Bicknor Wood are currently ignoring requests to trim additional sections of the hedge. Cllr Moon confirmed that the hedge on the opposite side of White Horse Lane has been cut.

**16 VILLAGE HALL REQUEST TO CONSIDER MANANGEMENT:** The VH Committee has requested help from the community and invited residents to attend the next AGM. Therefore, they would like to 'shelve' the previous request for help from the PC for the time being.

**17 CIL PROJECTS:**

- **PROW KM94 (White Horse Lane to Bicknor Farm)** is due to reopen soon. When the footpath reopens, consideration to be given to possible improvements for a small section.
- **Rumwood Cricket Club.** Clerk to make contact with the club to establish the current situation regarding fencing etc (discuss possible match funding). **ACTION: CLERK**

- 18 **OPC BANNER:** BWRCG to provide Clerk with contact details for supplier.
- 19 **CONSIDER CHRISTMAS EVENT:** It was agreed to hold a joint event with BWRCG.
- 20 **REVIEW OF COUNCILLOR COMMITTEES/RESPONSIBILITIES:** Deferred to November's meeting.
- 21 **RECEIVE REPORT OF MEETINGS AND SEMINARS ATTENDED:**
- **Parish Council Environment Network Group** attended by Cllr Hipkins who will also attend future meetings, which are likely to be held every 4/5 weeks.
  - **Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)** attended by the Clerk/KCC's Highways/Transport/Waste Road Safety Eng Proj Manager. Updated HIP to be provided.
  - **Village Hall Committee Meeting** attended by Cllrs Read & Hickmott
  - **Cllr Hickmott attended:**
    - 13.09.22 LANTRA Basic Tree Survey and Inspection
    - BWRCG x 3
    - **MBC Planning .**
      - 05.09.22 Induction Training - Development Plan, Planning Policies & Guidance, Legislation, Planning Conditions, Grounds of Refusal, S106 Agreements/CIL and Legal Training including Pre-determination and Judicial Reviews
      - 12.09.22 Second session of above.
      - 26.09.22 Enforcement
      - 10.10.22Section 38(6) and the Development Plan and the Weight to be Given to Emerging Local Plan Policies.
- 22 **REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY:** Cllr Hipkins to represent OPC at the Church and VG Service.  
**Action: Cllr Hipkins**
- WREATH DONATION** – A donation of £50 was proposed, seconded & unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**
- 23 **REVIEW OF BUS SHELTER:** It was agreed that the condition is very poor. Residents to be asked via The Ragstone for their views re possible replacement/removal.  
**ACTION: Clerk**
- 24 **URGENT MATTERS:** The resident that volunteered to make contact with the trustee(s) of Kirkwood Trust is requested to come forward with an update (re the items reported in 04.07.22 minutes).
- 25 **RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE:**
- A request for an additional dog waste bin on Green Hill at KM86 was considered but agreed not necessary, due to the amount of bins in close proximity.
  - Traffic concerns. Concerns to be raised with KHS to determine what can be done to ease the situation?
  - Snapwire re an app that could directly notify residents of latest news and events. An interest to be expressed/request further info.  
**ACTION: Clerk**

**26        ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED: None.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

**The next meeting will be held at 7.45 pm on 14 November 2022 in the Village Hall.**

Please contact the Clerk if you have items that you wish to be considered for the agenda.