

**MINUTES OF THE OTHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY, 13 JANUARY 2020 AT 7.45 PM  
IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs K Hipkins (Chairman); R. Gray; V. Moon; Mrs T. Irving – Clerk; 2 residents.

**1 APOLOGIES:** Cllr R. Gardner - Holiday; Cllr H. Drake – family commitment; Cllr S. Trench – unwell; Cllr Newton – recovering from operation; PCSO Budde

The apologies and reasons for absence were noted and accepted.

**2 NOTIFICATION OF WHETHER ANYONE WISHES TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEM** – None received.

**3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None received.

**4 COUNCILLOR VACANCY/CO-OPTION:** Unfortunately, Mrs Chambers has decided that being a parish councillor is not for her and has resigned. MBC has been informed and a casual vacancy notice displayed.

**5 CRIME REPORT & POLICING UPDATE:**

Following PCSO Turner's new assignment within the force, PCSOs Zachary Budde and Daisy Roberts will be sharing duties in the parish.

The following report was obtained from e-watch:

- Honey Lane between 4 pm on Thursday 12 December and 9.30 am on Friday 13 December. A shed was broken into at the football club and two leaf blowers were stolen.
- Church Road between 7 am and 6 pm on Friday 22 November. A trailer was stolen from a residential address.

**6 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**

The meeting was reconvened

**7 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2019:** The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings & were duly signed by Cllr Hipkins.

**8 RECEIVE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT:** Not available.

**9 RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** Not available.

## 10 FINANCE.

### 10.1 Approve Statement of Account:

#### Cheques issued

Royal British Legion	Wreath	50.00
KCC Re Kent Pension	Employer/Employee (Nov)	126.34
Geoxsphere	Mapping (NHP)	90.00
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary (Nov)	433.68
KCS	Flyer for Carols	24.52
R. Gardner	Expenses	100.00
S. Trench	Expenses	127.35
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary (Dec)	405.78
KCC Re Kent Pension	Employer/Employee (Dec)	126.34
HMRC	PAYE	157.40

#### Receipts

NatWest	Interest (Sept to Dec)	2.44
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**Balance of Current Account: £18,437.21 credit, after all cheques sent/rec'd**

**Balance of Business Reserve Account: £4,917.32**

**Total Funds: £23,354.53**

Cllr Gray proposed acceptance of the above, seconded by Cllr Hipkins & unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**

**10.2 2020/21 Budget Proposal/Set Precept:** Following a briefing from the Finance Committee, it was proposed by Cllr Gray, seconded by Cllr Moon and unanimously agreed that no change will be made in the parish element of the council tax for residents, with the Precept for 2020/21 set at £13,208.12. This will result in an uplift of £940.12 in total funding. **RESOLVED**

### 10.3 Other Matters to Report:

- The Clerk has been advised by HSBC that all signatories may need to visit the bank to set up the initial account. Clerk to make arrangements.  
It was **RESOLVED** that £100 will be left in the existing NatWest current account to the safe keeping of documents to continue at the branch.
- LGA S137 for 2020/21 has been set at £8.32.

## 11 PLANNING APPLICATIONS: RECEIVED/GRANTED

### New Applications

**19/506158/TPOA | TPO application to carry out works according to received 2019 H&S tree survey and location plan. | Gore Court Church Road Otham ME15 8RF**

The Landscape Officer has been asked for guidance to identify the trees in the application. Clerk to chase up a response.

**ACTION: Clerk**

Awaiting Decision by MBC

**19/501600/OUT – Land West of Church Road**

**Outline application for up to 440 residential dwellings with associated access, infrastructure, drainage, landscaping and open space (Access being sought with all other matters reserved for future consideration).**

Cllr Gray represented OPC at the meeting held on 11 December to discuss the matters raised at the planning committee meeting of 24 October/the reasons for deferment.

The parish council does not agree with the findings in the report and wishes to maintain their original objections.

**19/503912 Land at Bicknor Farm, Sutton Road.**

**Development of the site with 302 dwellings, parking, access, amenity space, landscaping and associated works.**

**19/503342 – Bramley, Otham Street.**

**Retention of dwelling footprint as built with alterations to the roof**

Applications Granted

**19/504880 – Land at Bicknor Farm**

**Advertisement consent for 2 no. non-illuminated signage boards**

**19/504960 - The Monards, Avery Lane**

**Proposal: Demolition of existing outbuilding and summer house. Erection of an annexe ancillary to main dwelling, together with garage and car lift (resubmission: 19/502389/FULL).**

Approved, subject to conditions.

**19/505471 – The Old Barn, Holly Farm Road.**

**Erection of a single storey rear extension**

**19/504706 – Ivy Cottage, Green Hill**

**Retrospective application for double wooden gates**

**Call for Sites:** Cllr Gray attended a meeting on 16 December to discuss the new sites which have been offered in Otham – see Item 20

**12 HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENTS: Highways Improvement Plan**

Following a meeting held on 22 November, the HIP was updated and circulated to all.

A 20 MPH zone for the areas that were suggested is unlikely to succeed. However, it was suggested that enhancing the gateways into the village, including the village nameplates and installing roundels on the carriageway next to the repeaters, may be an option? This would act as a reminder to drivers that the speed limit is 30 mph.

Highways agreed to carry out further investigations/site visits for the items on the HIP and will be in touch again when they have been carried out

### **13 VILLAGE GREEN**

Concerns were raised by a resident that; “The green is in danger of falling foul to the modern practise of having solar lighting and there is a danger of it becoming a shrine. A lot of flowers are being displayed on what is essentially a village green”.

Clerk to monitor and make contact as appropriate.

**ACTION: Clerk**

#### **Play Equipment:**

The amended proposal from Discovery Timber was agreed. It was **RESOLVED** that whilst funding will be sought for the equipment, if this is not successful, the project will go ahead regardless, subject to consultation.

The quotation from Paul Waring for maintenance of the green during 2020 was considered – proposed RG, seconded KH - **RESOLVED**.

**14 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE:** The plan is very nearly complete.

Slight adjustments are required to ensure that it complies and the basic conditions need to be compiled.

Work continues by the group.

**15 REVIEW OF CHRISTMAS CAROLS:** Due to the work involved and the cost of the event, the poor attendance led to questioning whether this should continue? Following discussion, it was agreed to dispense with the Carols for 2020 and review again next year.

A proposal put forward by Cllr Trench to replace the carols was considered: ‘A group walk using one of the heritage walks followed by tea and cakes in the village hall’. Following discussion, it was agreed to make this an agenda item for March’s meeting.

**16 HERITAGE WALKS:** Now completed and on the website.

Clerk to ask MBC about publicity of the walks and whether they would consider printing 150 to 200 copies of each walk?

**ACTION: Clerk**

**17 VILLAGE HALL SIGN & LIGHT:** Cllr Gardner is still waiting for a response from his contact.

**ACTION: Cllr Gardner**

**18 HEDGES:** Awaiting update from KHS.

**19 SPRING CLEAN:** From the dates put forward by Cllr Trench, Saturday 22 February was agreed. Volunteers to meet at 10 am on the village green. Clerk to request the usual equipment & collection of rubbish by MBC.

**ACTION: Clerk**

#### **20 RECEIVE REPORT OF MEETINGS AND SEMINARS ATTENDED:**

- Cllr Gray - Meeting with MBC/Bellway Homes on 11 December to discuss the reasons for Church Road deferment.

- Cllr Gray – Attended an informal meeting with MBC on 16 December to discuss the latest Review of Call for Sites. A possible further 40% housing (1,236 homes) may be required.

Formal written feedback can be provided for each site.

- Cllr Hipkins & Clerk KHS Seminar on 28 November which was well attended. It was stated that the Leeds/Langley bypass is still being evaluated but as Highways does not have the money to finance the scheme, this would have to be put to the Government. A very large amount of housing would be required to justify this, making land around the route very vulnerable for development.

Traffic congestion will need to be deemed 'severe' to stop development.

**21 URGENT MATTERS:** Cllr Weeks (DPC Chairman) requested via the Clerk that a meeting is arranged with OPC Chairman to discuss the future DPC/OPC split of expenses. Members feel that it is rather premature to make a decision until approx. 1,000 homes are occupied in the parish. Clerk to advise Cllr Weeks of the decision and request that he makes contact with Cllr Hipkins if he has any queries.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**22 AGREE DATES FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:**

The APM will be held at 7.30 pm on Monday 27 April and the AGM will be at 7.30 pm on Monday 11 May.

**23 RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE:** Various correspondence circulated by email.

- The subsidised tree packs from the Kent Downs AONB was discussed, but a suitable location could not be found for the amount of trees on offer. Whilst it was initially suggested that the information was made available on the parish website, this would not be appropriate as the offer is for parish councils.

**24 ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING ON 9 MARCH 2020:**

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

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.