

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

PRESENT: Cllrs K Hipkins (Chairman); V. Moon; S. Trench; G. Newton; H. Drake Mrs T. Irving – Clerk; Mr Clint Hickmott.

1 APOLOGIES: Cllr H. Gray – Holiday; R. Gardner; PCSO Kirsty Greaves.

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 VACANCIES/CO-OPTION: Ms Vicky Parker and Mr Clint Hickmott have both been in contact to register their interest in the vacancies. A further candidate is also believed to be interested but has not made contact.

Ms Parker's application was left pending as she had stated that she would be present at the meeting.

Following a discussion with Mr Hickmott, it was unanimously agreed to proceed with his co-option. An Acceptance of Office was signed and, as requested, DPI and Co-Option paperwork to be emailed & returned within 28 days. **ACTION: CH/TI**

Cllr Hickmott to represent the JPG and KCC committees.

5 CRIME REPORT & POLICING UPDATE: PCSO Kirsty Greaves.

April.

1 Crime. Theft in Otham Street – roof tiles and lead.

A few off road bike reports – have had an off road bike operation running which we have been paying attention to the area during that. Will continue to monitor if the calls continue to come in.

May.

1 Crime. Criminal damage to communal door in Cobnut Avenue.

The village is continuing to abide by the government rules very well, patrolling the Green but appears to be a lot better recently. Will continue to monitor.

June.

2 Crimes

Criminal damage to window – Green Hill.

Criminal damage to vehicle – White Horse Lane.

Bicknor Woods are suffering with some ASB, extra patrols are being carried out in the area as a result of this.

6 ADJOURNMENT FOR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

No members of the public were present.

The meeting was reconvened.

7 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 MARCH 2020: The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings & were duly signed by Cllr Hipkins.

8 REVIEW OF COVID19 CIRCUMSTANCES: Whilst the Council was unable to convene in May, contact was maintained and regular updates were provided by email.

Cllr Hipkins and the Clerk met with DPC Chairman, the Community Centre Chairman and a Downswood volunteer resident to discuss how best to assist the community. Otham has a good community spirit with neighbours supporting each other. As far as the Council is aware, everyone that needed help received it.

Cllr Hipkins continues to read the government updates.

Having spoken with MBC it was decided to reopen the play area today in accordance with government guidelines.

9 RECEIVE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT: (Written Report Received & Circulated to Cllrs). Attached as an appendix.

10 RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: (Written Report Received & Circulated to Cllrs). Attached as an appendix.

11 FINANCE.

11.1 Approve Statement of Account:

Cheques issued

SLCC	Clerk's Annual Membership (1/3)	60.00
Otham with Langley PCC	Donation - Churchyard	200.00
Friends of Five Acre Wood	Donation	100.00
SECAMB	Donation	100.00
HMRC	PAYE	157.20
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses (March)	455.90
KCC Re Kent Pension	Employer/Employee (March)	126.34
Commercial Services	Ragstone	104.19
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary (April)	403.39
KCC Re Kent Pension	Employer/Employee (April)	146.52
KCC Re Kent Pension	Employer/Employee (May)	146.52
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses (May)	431.02
MBC	Play Area Refurbishm't (Part Payment)	500.00

MBC	"	"	"	"	"	500.00
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses (June)					413.17
KCC Re Kent Pension	Employer/Employee					146.52

Receipts

MBC	Precept	13,208.12
MBC	PSS Grant	728.00
Reserve Acct	Interest	4.90

Balance of Current Account: £27,359.74 credit, after all cheques sent/rec'd

Balance of Business Reserve Account: £4,922.22

Total Funds: £32,281.96

Cllr Trench proposed acceptance of the above, seconded by Cllr Newton & unanimously agreed. **RESOLVED**

11.2 Consider Annual Subscriptions/Renewals: Following discussion it was agreed: **KALC** – renewal **RESOLVED** @ £347.28. **CPRE** – renewal **RESOLVED** @ £36. **ACRK** – it was agreed not to renew this year.

11.3 Annual Audit: Exemption Criteria Review: Exemption proposed by Cllr Moon, seconded by Cllr Hipkins. **RESOLVED** **ACTION: TI**

11.4 Consider the Annual Governance Statement: The Statement was duly considered.

11.5 Approve the Annual Governance Statement: Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve affirmative responses to questions 1 to 8 inclusive (question 9 being not applicable)

11.6 Consider the Accounting Statement: The Statement was duly considered.

11.7 Approve the Accounting Statement: Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statement as prepared and circulated by the RFO/Clerk.

11.8 Consider Annual Insurance Policy 2020/21: Renewal with Came & Co on a 3 year basis @ £313.84 per year **RESOLVED**.

11.9 Standing Orders: Clerk has started a draft and hopes to have the document available for consideration prior to September's meeting. **ACTION: TI**

11.10 Other Matters to Report: None.

12 PLANNING APPLICATIONS: RECEIVED/GRANTED

- **Update Land West of Church Road.** The applications have now been Refused twice by the Planning Committee. They will go before this evening's Policy and Resources Committee to discuss the financial implications and the way forward.
- **Bramley.** Despite objections from OPC and residents, permission was Granted. Cllr Newton has advised MBC that the fence is unsafe and needs to be taken down.

New Applications

20/500713/FULL Bicknor Farm, Sutton Road.

Re-modelling of an existing dwelling and the erection of 7 no self-build dwellings with associated landscaping and parking, following the demolition of existing commercial units.

20/502969 – Green Hill.

Telecommunications notification for replacement of the existing 20m lattice tower with a new 25m tower supporting 6 antennas, 2 x 300mm transmission dishes, replacement of 1 x equipment cabinet and ancillary development.

20/501868/FULL – The Oast Rose Cottage, Otham Street

Demolition of modern single storey additions, restoration of the oast roundel, reconstruction of the stowage and conversion of oast into 1 x dwelling with associate landscaping.

Applications Granted

19/503342 – Bramley, Otham Steet.

20/500917 - Bishops, Avery Lane

Applications Refused

19/501600/OUT & 19/506182/FULL – Land West of Church Road

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

Awaiting Decision by MBC

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

13 ASSESS THE NEED FOR AN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: In accordance with Regulation 4, it is not required to hold an AGM this year. Councillors/committees confirmed they are happy to remain as appointed in 2019 and, therefore, an AGM will not be held until May 2021.

14 RECEIVE REPORT OF MEETINGS AND SEMINARS ATTENDED: Cllr Hipkins & Clerk attended a meeting on 24 March to discuss COVID 19 – see Item 8.

15 URGENT MATTERS: No new items.

The sensor at the Football Club has been reset and the lights are no longer on all night.

16 HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENTS: The proposal from KCC's Schemes Project Manager to install a Gateway in Green Hill was circulated and agreed.

17 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE: The Plan is almost ready to submit for the Regulation 16 stage, but is waiting for MBC to review the new draft Built Environment policies in advance of the formal submission. **ACTION: MBC/RG**

Cllr Trench suggested that following recent developments, a section should be included for Bicknor Wood. Cllr Trench to contact Cllr Gray to discuss. **ACTION: ST**

18 VILLAGE GREEN/PLAY AREA: Review Play Equipment Consultation/Assess Concerns. All correspondence arising from the consultation was forwarded to councillors in advance of the meeting. From the 20 responses received, a total of 13 residents are in favour, 6 are against and 1 was undecided. The concerns of the 6 residents all living in close proximity to the Village Green were discussed.

Some of the issues did not relate directly to the play equipment and were concerns about parking on the private road and the Village Green in general. However, with regard to the War Memorial and views from the green, it was explained that the new equipment will be sited sufficiently away from the War Memorial so as not to detract from such an important monument. Likewise, the position was also selected to ensure it does not change the view over the valley and the fields.

The Clerk has been in contact with MBC for advice (communications from the consultation were shared anonymously). The feedback supported the new play area.

- The current provision does not serve the community
- The size and scale of the proposal is not out of proportion with what's already there. It's low level, low key equipment.
- The play agility of equipment being offered for the well-being of children – targeted at 5 to 11 year olds.
- Ticks the box for inclusive play and lends itself to dynamic play; movement rather than static in one spot
- Disabled and those with learning difficulties can be lifted onto the basket swing (nothing currently available for them)
- It is more attractive than the current equipment.

It was **RESOLVED** that the play equipment will proceed.

Parking has always been an issue for visitors to the Village Green but whilst there is not a lot that can be done to resolve the problem, the following was agreed:

- The existing sign warning that Stoneacre Lane is a private road is considered to be too small. Clerk to request NT to install a larger sign.*
- The removable bollard on the VG to be reinstalled and the bollards that have been knocked askew/damaged to be rectified. A maximum budget of £350 was agreed for the work.*
- Signage warning of CCTV to be investigated.*

***ACTION: TI**

Cllr Drake advised that the no parking cones she has purchased are currently proving to be effective.

Reports of possible drug related issues have been reported to the police.

Further to MBC's Inspection Report, replacement cradle seat to be purchased and installed in the sum of £158.

ACTION: TI

19 RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE: Various correspondence circulated by email.

20 HERITAGE WALKS/PARISH WALK: No updates available for the heritage walks. Due to the current circumstances, it was agreed to defer the parish walk.

21 ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2020: Notice Boards.

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 9.20pm.