

**MINUTES OF THE OTHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 11 September 2017 AT 7.45 PM
IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Cllrs R. Gray (Chairman); R. Gardner; S. Trench; V. Moon; K Hipkins; Cllr G. Cooke (KCC); 2 members of the public (Hugh & Susan Vaux).

Prior to the meeting commencing, the winners of the photography competition were awarded with their prize of £50 each. Mr Ken Brinsley won the Over 16's category and Miss Lauren Smith the Under 16's.

1 APOLOGIES: Cllrs Drake (personal reasons), Cllr Newton (conflicting appointment); Gandotra (family commitment).

Apologies and the reasons for absence were noted and accepted.

2 COUNCILLOR VACANCY/CO-OPTION: Ongoing.

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

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations.

5 RECEIVE POLICE REPORT: The council has been advised that a reshuffle of wards has taken place to ensure a fair coverage and presence of local police support officers.

It has been communicated that PCSO's cannot routinely attend parish council meetings anymore. Although they will be expected to attend when there has been a particular issue in the parish that has caused concern or if there is any other need for public reassurance.

In addition, monthly figures will no longer be given out in the way they were before. This applies to all parish councils.

PCSO Alan Hunter is the PCSO responsible for the partnership cameras and he will be a liaison if any queries, concerns or questions arise and local PCSO's aren't readily available.

PCSO John Boyd has been appointed as the PCSO for Downswood & Otham.

Cllr Hipkins reported '2 major incidents in Holly Farm Road over the past 2 weeks, involving armed police and a police helicopter or drone'. Clerk to enquire if any information is available in this respect.

The meeting was adjourned for

6 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

The meeting was reconvened.

7 APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY 2017: The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings & were duly signed by Cllr Gray.

8 RECEIVE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT: Not available.

9 RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

There is a need for additional savings of a further £40 million to be made.

The 2018/19 budget is currently being looked at (it is likely that there will be no bus subsidies).

Helen Whately MP has written to the Secretary of State to request that the Local Plan is called in, due to the lack of proper infrastructure.

MBC & the Planning Inspector have failed to respond to complaints that have been made by local residents.

A report that was carried by Amey and sent to KCC, states the severity of traffic congestion is worst case that they have seen anywhere in the country.

Fundamental road closures at Gore Court Road/White Horse Lane have not been discussed with KCC, but they will be consulting with residents to see how they feel about the proposed changes.

Kent has done really well with A Level and GCSE results.

More candidates from Kent have applied for university places than ever before.

10 COMMUNICATIONS: As triggered by the NHP, Cllr Gray has delivered the village questionnaire to residents of The Coppice. This resulted with 14 completed questionnaires being collected and 10 emails addresses added to the residents list.

RAGSTONE: No updates.

NOTICEBOARDS: Cllrs Gardner & Hipkins to seek quotes for repair/replacement of existing boards.

Cllr Cooke offered to match fund with up to £1,000 from his budget.

11 VILLAGE HALL: The future of the village hall was discussed at the NHP meeting, where it was agreed that the existing one is not fit for purpose.

It was agreed that the VH Committee and the PC should write to the Kirkwood Trust asking if it's possible for a section of land to be set aside for parking, as this is a major factor that limits interest with hire of the hall.

With the existing funding likely to be depleted in 2 years' time, there will not be enough income to offset against repairs.

The council's thanks to Steve Day for painting the windows were noted.

12. FINANCE.

12.1 Statement of Account: Cllr Gray proposed acceptance, seconded by Cllr Trench.

RESOLVED: The council approved the following payments.

Commercial Services	Printing - Ragstone	50.00
The Institute, Otham	Hire of Hall	250.00
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses (July)	372.09
KCC Re. Kent	Employer/Employee Pension	
Pension	(July)	121.08
MBC	Empty Litter Bin ((Apr-June)	72.00
Lauren Smith	Photo Comp (Under 16's)	50.00
Ken Brinsley	Photp Comp (Adult)	50.00
T. Irving	Clerk's Salary/Expenses (Aug)	405.40
KCC Re. Kent	Employer/Employee Pension	
Pension	(Aug)	121.08
	Questionnaire (NHP - The	
Commercial Services	Coppice)	76.00
S. Trench	Photo Comp Expenses	32.80

Receipts

Nat West	Interest - Business Reserve Acct	0.24
MBC	PSS 1st Instalment	915.00

Balance of Current Account: £18,353.90 credit, after all cheques sent/rec'd

Balance of Business Reserve Account: £4,903.65

Total Funds: £23,257.55

12.2 Completion of 2016/17 Annual Return: No comments have been raised by the External Auditor and they have discharged their responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act for the y/e 31 March 2017.

A copy of the completed return to be circulated to councillors for information.

12.3 Other Matters to Report: A PSS questionnaire has been sent to the Clerk for completion (MBC is currently reviewing the scheme).

13 PLANNING APPLICATIONS: RECEIVED/GRANTED/LOCAL PLAN:

The chair and Cllr Newton were thanked for their attendance and comments at the Planning Committee meeting in respect of Land North of Bicknor Wood.

New Applications

17/502560/FULL Ivy Cottage, Green Hill.

Construction of two-storey extension to permit disabled living
Resubmission (amended application)

17/504554/FULL Stoneacre Farm Cottages, Stoneacre Lane.

Single storey rear extension.

Applications Granted:
17/502411/FULL - 3 Senacre Cottages.

Awaiting Determination by MBC

17/503043 – Land South Of Avery Lane and Land South Of Sutton Road

17/501449/FULL - Land North of Bicknor Wood, Sutton Road.

16/506349/FULL - Bearsted Football Club

15/509015 - Land South of Sutton Road, Langley Park.

Planning Breaches – Awaiting Action by MBC:

16/500326 - Madam Taylors

16/506074 - Bramley

The Clerk has contacted MBC about S106 & CIL payments.

The situation with S106 funding is that the planning officer responsible for an application needs to be approached. He will then take the matter forward to the developer.

CIL funding still has a long way to go before it's available (likely to be sometime during the 2018/19 financial year). A report has just been received from the Inspector and MBC will be acting on this.

All parishes with a NHP will benefit from the pot of money that will be made available. Whether this will automatically be given or if/how the parishes will have to bid, has yet to be decided.

It was suggested that we keep an eye on MBC's website for news.

14 RECEIVE REPORT OF MEETINGS AND SEMINARS ATTENDED:

- KALC – Apologies given by Cllr Gardner for the meeting of 11 Sept.
- Meeting with PCSO Boyd attended by Cllr Gray and the Clerk.

15 URGENT MATTERS: Clerk to obtain estimate for cleaning/repairs to the Annual Competition and Wardes Challenge cups.

16 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING. There were no matters arising.

17 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE:

- Following consultation during which no representations were received, Otham parish has been designated a Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.
- Community Centre information is being explored by the Chairman, Craig Hale.
- The next meeting will be held on 21 September at 7.30 pm.

18 CHRISTMAS CAROLS/MEAL: Cllr Trench to contact Mr & Mrs Fisher to determine if they are willing to host the carols again this year at Wardes? 10 December at 4.30 pm is the favoured date/time.

Stoneacre is understood to have new tenants in place.

Clerk to contact the choir.

Clerk to establish a date that's convenient with all and circulate a menu for a meal between 13 November and 6 December.

19 PROW QUESTIONNAIRE: A response to KCC's questionnaire was agreed by councillors. Clerk to input the information online.

20 REMEMBRANCE DAY: A £40 donation was unanimously agreed in accordance with LGA S137. Cllrs Gray or Trench to present the wreath. Mrs Vaux has kindly agreed to do the tea/coffees in the hall.

21 RECEIVE CORRESPONDENCE: Various correspondence circulated by email as received.

22 ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT NEXT MEETING (14 November 2017): 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 10.00 pm.