



# Coxheath Parish Council

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 7.15 pm in the Village Hall

Present: Parish Cllrs : C Parker (Chairman), C Bird ( Vice Chairman), D Carpenter, G Crickett, R Mickleburgh, V Page, E Potts, K Woollven, E Small, R Webb, S Whitehead.

In Attendance: Irene Bowie ( Parish Clerk) 2 Members of the public

### PRIOR TO THE START OF THE MAIN MEETING:

Representations from the general public will be taken for a period up to fifteen minutes before the opening of the formal meeting. Individuals may speak for up to three minutes at the discretion of the Chairman. The minute book will be closed

To receive reports from (if present):

- *Kent County Councillor* Simon Webb;
- *Maidstone Borough Councillors*; Richard Webb, Lottie Parfitt-Reid and/or Simon Webb.
- *Community Warden* Owen Moemken.

### 1. Apologies and absences:

- 1.1 Apologies for absence received and confirmed by the Council Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 75(1) of the Local Government Act 1862, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted. Apologies were received from Cllr Chandler. It was RESOLVED to accept the apology.
- 1.2 Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests. There were none.
- 1.3 To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda. In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2010 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1862 in respect of officers. Cllr's Parker, Crickett and Carpenter declared a non-pecuniary interest in the payments to be considered to the Village Hall.
- 1.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were none.
- 1.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were none.

### 2. Consideration of items to be taken in private (Exclusion of Public and Press): In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1850, the public and press be excluded from the meeting by the reason of its confidential nature. There were no confidential items to be considered.

### 3. Reports

- 3.1 Chairman of the Parish Council Cllr Parker  
Cllr Parker reported that the switching on of the Christmas Lights had been well received by residents. The advent walk had also been successful. He reported on his attendance at the Church Coffee morning where in response to a query he reported that the parish council had no knowledge of any plans for development in Amsbury Wood and that there had been no sites there put forward in the last Call for Sites. He reported that the Dr's Surgery and the Church were looking to fund 4 warm hubs for the community to assist with the cost-of-living crisis. Both the Scouts and Preschool had raised funds though their Christmas Santa Sleigh round and a Christmas Bazaar. He reported that a Lego Club had been set up in the Library as an after school club for children.
- 3.2 Playground Inspection Report Cllr Small  
Cllr Small spoke to his report. He also concurred with the finding of the MBC Inspection report. The Inspection reports were received and noted.
- 3.3 Councillor's Reports All Cllrs
- 3.4 Litter Pick Cllr Down  
Cllr Down had previously circulated the dates of the next litter pick which were noted as the having taken place on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

### 4. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022 were taken as read and confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 5. Matters arising from the minutes: (not included in other agenda items)

- 5.1 Defibrillator in the Village Centre . The Clerk provided an update that the defibrillator would be serviced very soon and it would then be handed over to the Scouts for placement in the cabinet in the car park

at the Scouts Hut. It was AGREED that once this had happened larger defibrillator signs would be placed on the noticeboards.

5.2 New Noticeboards . It was AGREED that Cllr's would confirm the location of the last noticeboard.

5.3 Adoption of Play areas and Scout Hut Car Park. The Clerk reported that she had followed up with MBC and that she had had a response that the Parks Manager has advised that this will go to committee, probably in March/April for approval. If approval is confirmed the Corporate Land disposal process would then be permitted either via a lease or freehold disposal.

5.4 Community Governance Review (CGR)

It was AGREED to submit the CGR response tabled with three small amendments.

## 6. Finance:

6.1 To receive and authorise payments listed on the schedule (to be provided at the meeting) . It was RESOLVED to approve the payments on the schedule.

<b>MBC</b>	Bin Emptying December 2022	<b>130.00</b>
<b>Bartlett</b>	Level 2 Survey - Tree Works	<b>780.00</b>
<b>KCC</b>	Christmas Lights Licence and Checks	<b>2,220.00</b>
<b>East Farleigh PC</b>	Play Area Inspection Training Cllrs Parker and Small	<b>346.92</b>
<b>Commercial Services</b>	LS205635 Grounds Maintenance	<b>227.59</b>
<b>Vodafone</b>	Vodafone January 2023	<b>16.00</b>
<b>Emails</b>	Ionos January	<b>48.60</b>
<b>Printing</b>	HP Instant Ink January 2023	<b>22.49</b>
<b>Coxheath Village Hall</b>	Floor Repairs Allocation from Agreed Grant	<b>3,360.00</b>
<b>Coxheath Village Hall</b>	Hall Rental, Office Cleaning and Additional Keys Cut	<b>£550.75</b>
<b>HMRC</b>	PAYE Q3	<b>£2,018.07</b>

Cllr's Parker, Crickett and Carpenter, having declared a non-pecuniary interest, did not vote on payments to the Village Hall.

6.2 Late Payment Request/s to be discussed for approval and payment.

6.3 Banking Arrangements – Update. It was RESOLVED to open an account with Unity Bank.

6.4 To note receipts of Income.

6.5 To receive the Bank Reconciliation

6.5.1 To review the 2022/23 spend vs budget forecast

6.5.2 To consider the precept and parish services scheme for 2023/24

The tax base was 1,994.6 which represents an increase of 50.5 from 2022/23 . It was RESOLVED that the precept for 2023/24 would be set at £103,720. This being a Band D equivalent of £52 per annum and an increase of 0.47p per annum per Band D property.

6.6 To consider any late financial matters

It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation from HAGS for the repair, renewal and replacement of items in the play area. Total cost agreed as £6,268.02 (ex VAT). It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would apply for Section 106 monies to cover this expenditure.

## 7. Planning:

7.1 To table planning applications received since last meeting:

7.1.1 23/500113/FULL 6 Westerhill Road Coxheath Kent ME17 4DG

Demolition of converted garage and erection of enlarged veterinary surgery with staff accommodation.

**No Objection**

7.1.2 22/505983/FULL Ambury House Amsbury Road Hunton Kent ME15 0QH

Proposed new garage with room above.

**No Objection**

- 7.1.3 22/505989/SUB 146 Heath Road Coxheath Kent ME17 4PL  
Submission of details pursuant to conditions 4 (landscaping scheme) & 6 (biodiversity enhancement scheme) of application 20/502698/FULL.  
**No Objection**
- 7.1.: 22/505843/FULL 30 Huntington Road Coxheath Kent ME17 4DY  
Demolition of existing garage and erection of double garage  
**No Objection**
- 7.2 To Table Planning Applications dealt with since the last meeting
  - 7.2.1 22/505668/FULL 1 Orchard Close Coxheath Maidstone Kent ME17 4HE  
Demolition of existing garage and erection of a single storey rear extension and conservatory. Creation of a new vehicle access, driveway and erection of a brick boundary wall. (Re-submission of 22/504409/FULL) **CPC No Objection**
- 7.3 To table decisions by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) since the last meeting.
  - 7.3.1 22/505191/FULL 88 Amsbury Road Hunton Maidstone Kent ME15 0QH  
Erection of a single storey rear extension. **MBC Application Permitted**
  - 7.3.2 22/505095/FULL The Orchard Medical Centre 146 Heath Road Coxheath Kent ME17 4PL  
Section 73 - Application for minor material amendment to approved plans condition 15 (to allow amendments to footprint, internal layout and minor elevation changes to plots 06-08 to create 3rd bedroom) pursuant to 20/502698/FULL for - Erection of 8no. residential dwellings with associated parking and landscaping on site of existing doctor's surgery to be demolished. **MBC Application Permitted**
  - 7.3.3 22/505340/FULL Chapel Nursery Pleasant Valley Lane East Farleigh Maidstone Kent ME15 0BB  
Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a detached four bedroom chalet bungalow with associated access, parking, amenity and landscaping. **MBC Application Permitted**
- 7.4 To table late planning matters:
- 8. Working Groups: To receive Updates**
  - 8.1 Recreation & Youth Working Group
    - 8.1.1 MUGA Maintenance . Cllr Mickleburgh reported that he had contacted Chartway regarding the surface of the MUGA. It was AGREED that the cleaning of the surface would be put on hold until Chartway had reported back re repairs to the surface.
    - 8.1.2 Village Hall Field - Outdoor Gym behind the Play Area. The Clerk reported that this application was with MBC Section 106 Team. If approved, it was RESOLVED that the Clerk would place an order with Fresh Air Fitness for the Outdoor Gym.
    - 8.1.3 Football Pitch . It was discussed and AGREED that the Clerk would contact the Manager of the Football team regarding the contract and also the condition of the container.
    - 8.1.4 Play Area and MUGA Inspections from April 2023. It was AGREED that these would be decided at the February meeting of the Parish Council.
      - 8.1.4.1 Play Area Inspection Course 14<sup>th</sup> February – It was reported that Cllrs Parker and Small would attend the Playground Inspection course organised by East Farleigh Parish Council.
    - 8.1.5 Sports Wall Surface. It was reported by Cllr's Small and Mickleburgh the condition of the surface of the sports wall was unacceptable. It was noted that the MBC report did not list the surface as unsafe. It was AGREED that the Clerk would seek legal advice as to the parish council liabilities as the sports wall belongs to the parish council but the land it is situated on belongs to the Village Hall. It was reported that the matter of an improved playing surface being installed had been discussed and rejected by the Village Hall Committee during the last year. The Clerk to establish if it would be possible for a new surface to be installed. The Village Hall Management Committee have indicated that this would not be possible as the land, as shown on the Kent Heritage Maps, is a burial site from the former Workhouse. It was again AGREED that the Clerk would seek quotations from for the topsoiling, re-seeding/grassing of the area this spring. It was AGREED that the group would arrange a meeting in February.  
Cllr Mickleburgh requested that the all Recreation and Youth Working Group members were notified prior to any ad-hoc repairs being made to the sports wall or surface.
    - 8.1.6 Any other matters
  - 8.2 Traffic & Community Safety Working Group
    - 8.2.1 KCC Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)
      - 8.2.1.1 KCC Highways Heath Road, ATC Results.  
The report from KCC Highways stated :

*“ The ATCs were carried out for Heath Road recently and found that the existing speed limit is very well observed at this location with over 80% of drivers within the enforcement threshold of 35mph (10% +2mph over the speed limit) in a westerly direction and over 90% in an easterly direction. Results indicate eastbound speeds of 29.2mph on average and westbound 30.8mph.*

*I asked our Planning team to investigate the results and unfortunately they do not recommend any further measures for this location. They have also checked the collision data we have available and there is no pattern of collisions involving speed as a contributory factor. I did ask if we can install any roundels or repeaters, but due to the road having a series of streetlighting we are not allowed to install any.*

*I appreciate this will not be the response you were looking for, but it is good news that the ATC found a high compliance with the speed limit.” Community Engagement Officer*

Members expressed their disappointment that the results do not support the re-installation of the new Vehicle Activated Signs, as requested in the current Highway Improvement Plan (HIP).

It was AGREED that Cllr Mickleburgh would provide to the Clerk the additional information request by KCC Highways regarding the provision of Horse Signs. Clerk to follow up re new School and also Playground signs.

Clerk to circulate the current HIP to Cllrs. Members of the Group to arrange a meeting and update the HIP with new priorities which can then be submitted to Kent Highways.

8.2.2 Parish Portal Report. The report was received and noted.

8.2.3 Any other matters

8.2.3.1 Lack of a Pedestrian Crossing – Greensands Health Centre Linton

Members discussed an email from KCC Cllr S Webb requesting funding from Coxheath Parish Council following a response from KCC Highways which indicated that *“the site itself appears to meet the requirements for a puffin crossing to be installed asset wise (street lighting, footways, good visibility etc), the issue for this however will be funding. The cost of this would be a minimum of £45,000 for a new puffin crossing. A zebra crossing is a bit cheaper to install, but cannot be installed on roads where the 85th % speeds are above 35mph. KCC Highways do not have enough to be able to allocate the funding to this site at present. Cllr S Webb indicated that he may be able to contribute towards this cost via his Members’ grant and asked CPC if they would consider contributing.”*

It was AGREED that the Clerk would contact KCC Cllr Webb and enquire if multiple PC’s would contribute as the surgery is not in Coxheath and it is used by patients from several neighbouring parishes. If all the parish who have patients attending the practice contributed the cost per PC would be lowered.

Members were concerned that the lack of a pedestrian crossing was raised by the PC in response to the original Planning Application in March 2018 but KCC agreed with the developer in that a dropped crossing would be sufficient. The pedestrian crossing was rejected. MBC as the planning authority had to accept the recommendation of KCC as the statutory body at the time. Members were perplexed as to why in 2022 KCC Highways have stated that the site appears to now meet the requirements for either a puffin or pelican crossing and parishes are expected to pay for it retrospectively.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would contact Involve Kent and Greensands Surgery to obtain details of the Community Transport Scheme available for those patients who do not have access to their own transport.

- 8.3 Seasonal Events Working Group
- 8.3.1 Best Christmas Window Display Coxheath . Due to unforeseen circumstance this was not awarded this year.
- 8.3.2 To consider events and budget for the Coronation of His Majesty The King, Charles III. On Sunday, 7th May 2023, a special Coronation Concert will be staged and broadcast live at Windsor Castle. Cllr R Webb provided an update of events that were being planned in the community. These include on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May The Big Lunch and street parties and on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May a Village Fete. Information to be posted on the Parish Council noticeboards and Website when finalised. Cllr R Webb to enquire if the Jubilee Beacon can have a Coronation Sleeve.
- 8.3.2.1 To Consider applying for a grant via The National Lottery Awards for All. It was AGREED that the Clerk would apply for a grant to assist ion the costs of the Coronation Events.
- 8.3.3 Future projects: It was reported that consideration is being given to a Rogation Procession (Beating the Bounds) by the Church around the Parish each May.
- 8.4 Environmental Initiatives Group
- 8.4.1 Tree Survey – Level 2. This had been completed and the results were awaited.
- 8.4.2 Trees for the Queens Jubilee – Cllr Small reported that having inspected the Hornbeams, it appeared that the trees were healthy and in a stable position with roots remaining firmly planted. Elastic strapping and posts, and securing fixings all are intact and firm, no evidence of vandalism. Cllr Bird AGREED to provide the Clerk with Photographs of the Trees to enable a listing to be made in the Queens Green Canopy for Coxheath.
- 8.4.3 Future Works – Tree planting at the Village Green update. It was AGREED to seek additional advice as to options for this work. Clerk to source companies for initial discussion. The Parish Council need to address the issue of utilities, once determined the agreed a planting layout can be updated as appropriate and quotes be obtained. Clerk to obtain quotes for utilities searches.
- 8.4.4 Cllr Small - Environmental Report to November 2022  
Cllr Small gave his report ( Appendix 1). He reported on a successful meeting he had with the Primary School Eco Council. The school wish to become a green school and obtain the accreditation for that. Cllr Small also reported that he will follow up with the School Gardening Club re Bee Houses and other initiatives that the PC may be able to assist with. Members thanked Cllr Small for his excellent report and for building rapport with the Primary School.  
Cllr Small also spoke to his report of the 12<sup>th</sup> January: *“With the brambles in die back mode, opportunities are more easily seen with regards to further plantings, areas for further thought in the rewinding policy, agreed by council, is within the bramble encroachment areas, (Linden Road), also while checking the (Saturn Road), tree works, again its evident there are spaces here to enhance the WER with low level shrubs suitable for pollinators, in winter you can clearly see the extent of the bramble encroachment, although as environmentalists we understand the value of brambles, I think going forward the council should consider ways to manage it, balancing the basic agreed principles of the WER, of natural rewinding and giving nature a hand, through agreed interventions”*
- It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish Council committed to actioning the WER schedule below as proposed by Cllr Small.
1. Feasibility study regarding the creation of a small copse in the already defined area, (west side west field), to involve some land clearance and landscaping with sapling trees and low-level shrubs, retaining some existing species, Actioning ASAP with an aim to plant in the Autumn
  2. The planting of low-level shrub planting in west and east fields, to match existing species, and adding to, species within the WER, that would be attractive to pollinators, these would be container grown easy to plant and I would be willing to purchase plant, plant and maintain them with the help maybe of the school ECO council in line with our current partnering understanding. Actioning by April at the latest

3. Mass bulb planting maybe 1000 bulbs along the parking fence line, this would require a turf skim and a trench drawn then the bulbs being laid, maybe again the ECO council could be involved in laying the bulbs, then the trench could be refilled and the turf replaced, we would need to find a man with a digger to do this work, Actioning September

4. Regular Health and safety inspections, both in regards to, the public access, and the health of the natural species including the new Hornbeams, that exist within the WER, to continue with the ongoing tree work and to ensure the protocol of two trees for one are strictly adhered to if trees are lost, as this is essential to increase tree stock in the situation of Climate Emergency and is in accordance with the agreed aims of the WER. I would be prepared to undertake and report back to council on this. Actioning ASAP

5. To consider as the year progresses new ideas on how to enhance and make the WER more welcoming to small mammals and pollinators, again an aim of the WER statement. Actioning through 2023

It was AGREED that the EIG would meet as soon as possible. It was RESOLVED that Cllr Whitehead would join the EIG.

8.4.5 Pollution Patrol Coxheath Primary School and Parish Council. It was reported that the school had had difficulty accessing the e-learning packs. Cllr R Webb will investigate and advise. The Parish Council wishes to support the school and will follow up with MBC re anti idling signage.

8.4.6 Anti-Idling Signs/ Discussed under 8.4.5

## 9. Correspondence:

9.1 To table items of late correspondence :

9.2 Items circulated for information: For further information contact the Clerk

9.2.1 Hi Kent – fund raising quiz in Coxheath Village Hall on Saturday 11th March.

9.2.2 KALC News

9.2.3 Planning Enforcement training presentation from MBC

9.2.4 Gallagher Insurance Important Correspondence – Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III

9.2.5 NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin .

9.2.6 Email from a resident re - Survey of Woodland between Amsbury Road and Heath Road Clerk to respond to resident that the PC are not aware and have not been notified of any planned developments.

9.3 Items for discussion/action

9.3.1 New Road Name required by Coxheath Parish Council for a New development by Hillstone Homes Property Developers on former site of surgery at 146 Heath Road. It was RESOLVED to propose the name ' Mulberry Close'

9.3.2 Mayor's Charity Scenic Cruise and Tour of Allington Castle - 26 April

9.3.3 KCC bus funding (email from KALC)

9.3.4 Resident email re parking at Heathside Avenue. Clerk to contact MBC and ask for a Parking Enforcement Officer to attend.

## 10. KALC Community Awards Scheme 2023 - Deadline for submission Tuesday 28th February 2023

It was Resolved that CPC would participate in the KALC Community Awards Scheme. A resident was nominated and unanimously agreed by members. Clerk to contact KALC to confirm suitability.

## 11. Policy Review:

11.1 **Financial Regulations** . It was RESOLVED to adopt the amended Financial Regulations

11.2 **Memorial Bench Policy**. It was AGREED to defer this policy to the next meeting

11.3 **Grant Application Policy**. It was RESOLVED to adopt the amended policy.

Meeting Dates 2023 : **28<sup>th</sup> February, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 30<sup>th</sup> May, 27<sup>th</sup> June, 25<sup>th</sup> July, 29<sup>th</sup> August, 26<sup>th</sup> September, 31<sup>st</sup> October, 28<sup>th</sup> November.**

There being no further business to be transacted the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:35pm

Singed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman.....

Date.....

## Appendix 1.

Environmental Initiatives Group

8.4.4 Report from Councillor E Small

Coxheath Primary ECO Council

Councillors I had a really interesting meeting with the School ECO council, I thanked them for inviting me and for their good work planting the Hornbeams with Chocolate and Cake, I expressed a hope that further work like bulb planting and small shrub and tree planting would be approved by the Parish Council and they again could help plant and enjoy refreshments afterwards.

The ECO council offered their views regarding the protection of the environment, they had many splendid ideas, many members of the ECO council spoke, and I was impressed, by the knowledge they had and how they knew how important it was to protect the ECO system for future generations, they talked lots about growing things in the knowledge of the value of green things, points were made about managing green space and not letting it overgrow, the session was really good in that there was minimal teacher involvement, it was all their ideas beautifully expressed, we visited the vegetable gardens, and I agreed to help them and the gardening club with that, hopefully increasing yield by adjusting soils to suit, and teaching them how important it is to grow food going forward in an organic way, we also looked at the pool area which has been refurbished with a new pond liner, we talked about a bee or insect house, and maybe some plants loved by pollinators, it was so pleasing to me, to hear these wonderful ideas from students so young, and as we agreed as a parish council to look forward to working with the school on future ECO projects through 2023.

We also talked about the Pollution Patrol and how important it was for the school to be involved as they wished to get a Green Intuitive award, and these learning packs would aid them getting the accreditation, I explained to the ECO council I had emailed the MBC with no response, as yet and I might need to phone them, I think as a parish council we should support the school in this endeavour.

I think the ECO council understood the need to learn about the environment what dangers there are, and make students' parents and others aware of these dangers and what needs to be done to help protect the ECO system, we did talk about engine idling outside school, and the need to make a plan and action it, I was pleased to tell the students that they were Environmental ambassadors, learning, raising awareness, explaining, planning, and actioning good green environmental practise.

It was agreed that I would visit again in the future.

As lead Environmental councillor on the parish council I have tried to make councillors aware of the dangers of Climate Emergency, we established a WER, we undertook the management of trees, plating the hornbeams, and are looking at further proposals at this meeting so enacting our plan with the mass planting of bulbs, with shrubs and small sapling trees in the previously designated areas, we have a plan now we need to act I hope you can fully support the action plan as proposed going forward.

Councillor Ernie Small