

Birling Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 8 November 2016 in Birling Village Hall at 8pm

Present: Councillors Mrs Westwood (Chair) Mr Grimmett (Vice Chair)
 Mr Hewett Mr Guy Nevill
 Mrs Spooner Mrs Walker

Mrs Grimmett (Clerk), Cllr Matthew Balfour and 1 member of the public

1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

County Cllr Sarah Hohler and Cllr Harrington had given their apologies. Cllrs Walker & Nevill declared an interest in item **10** Timberley planning application.

2 Reports

Borough: Cllr Balfour had nothing to report.

County: Cllr Balfour reported that so far feedback on the Parish Seminar had been positive. Cllr Hewett asked why there were traffic counters in Bull Road and elsewhere. Cllr Balfour did not know but suggested that it could be to do with the Lower Thames crossing project. Work at Jct 4 was unlikely to be completed until mid January. A decision had not yet been made about the Castle Way junction but it is likely to be no right turn. Consultancy on Boundary Commission has finished. In response to Cllr Walker's question as to if a decision had been made about planning permission for Ryarsh School Cllr Balfour said no decision had yet been made.

Crime: Nothing identified from EWatch

3 Open Forum

Nothing was raised under this heading.

4 Approval and Signing of Minutes of Previous Month's Meeting

The Clerk pointed out that in the draft minutes previously circulated the date of the bank balances was incorrect and had been corrected. It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11 October 2016 be **APPROVED** and they were **SIGNED** by the Chair.

5 Matters arising and last month's circulation

(a) Actions from September's meeting:

Unsuitable for HGVs sign – sign has been turned round but not the light
Mr Tugendhat's contribution to Parish Magazine – Rev Shuker has agreed that contributions can be made but not every month and she will liaise directly with Mr Tugendhat.

Local Plan Presentation – Cllrs Westwood & Hewett had attended the recent meeting where details of the sites identified in the Tonbridge & Malling area were given. They considered that the site north of Kings Hill (likely to be 1500 houses but no businesses) would have the most impact on Birling with increased traffic affecting the A20, A228, & M20 Jct 4. A further potentially large development in the Aylesford area would put more pressure on the A20 and Cllr Balfour said that changes to the Hermitage Lane/A20 junction were being considered. Councillors were concerned that unless the necessary infrastructure was in place in the new developments existing residents would be adversely affected and Cllr Balfour agreed that new primary schools, expanded secondary schools and other services

would be essential. A discussion took place about which points in the Consultation should be responded to.

Action: Cllr Hewett to draw up response and circulate for comment prior to submission by 25 November.

Cllr Balfour left at 8.40pm

KALC & BPC - response to Local Government Finance Settlement had been sent to Mr Tugendhat MP who had forwarded it on to the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State of Communities and Local Government for consideration.

Appointment of Internal Auditor – Lionel Robbins had confirmed his acceptance of the post of internal auditor.

Footpath opposite All Saints' Church – the steps at the top have been repaired

(b) Website Training

No further training sessions are planned but a 1 hour Webinar session can be done.

Action: Clerk to discuss with Cllr Harrington.

(c) Parish Seminar

The Clerk had attended and reported that, as with all KCC departments, Highways budget had been cut and they were also asked to see what further cuts might be made so that they could contribute to Social Services budgets and attendees were asked if they thought this was right. General consensus was that insufficient financial detail had been given to make a considered opinion. Whilst it was acknowledged that cuts were inevitable it was felt that cutting back on investment in roads and maintenance in the short term would lead to higher future costs. Verge cutting, which took place 6 to 8 times a year a few years ago, was now reduced to one cut with other services similarly affected. Some parishes thought that they could provide a better service at a reduced cost and wanted to know how much Kent Highways would pay them. The current contract is based on a cost per square metre and each parish needs to ask Highways for the details so that they can get their own quotes. As Highways get a good rate due to economy of scale there may not be any/much cost saving but parishes may feel it better to add their own contribution to have the benefit of cutting being carried out when they feel it is needed. Parishes could join together to get better rates to carry out tasks that may be devolved to them in the future. The mild and wet weather over the past 2 years has led to a greater need for weed control and funds have been made available for a second spraying. If conditions this winter are the same, savings on gritting and salt will go towards an additional spray next year. Highways are prepared for all eventualities this winter and have renewed contracts with farmers across the county if their help is needed. The changeover to LED lighting across the county has commenced and is on time and work is currently being undertaken in TMB. This will give energy savings of £5M and less maintenance will be required. Information on the seminar will be on the KALC website in the next few weeks.

Action: Clerk to ask Kent Highways what budget for cutting back would be and print details from KALC website cc Cllrs Hohler & Balfour

(d) Any other matters arising

Nothing was raised under this heading.

6 Parish Business and Decisions

(a) Review of Standing Orders / Financial Regulations / Asset Register

Drafts produced by Cllr Westwood and the Clerk had been circulated but councillors needed more time to review the changes.

Action: Defer decision until December meeting.

(b) Charitable Donations - Kent Association of Youth/Try Angle Awards

The Clerk had obtained details of where to send a cheque and it was **AGREED** to make a donation of £50.00.

(c) Local Plan Consultation

As previously discussed

(d) Secure Trust Bank

Secure Trust had notified a reduction in the interest rate from 2%AER to 1.25%AER wef 13 February 2017. It was **DECIDED** to leave the deposit with Secure Trust.

(e) Remembrance Day Service

Remembrance Day is on 13 November and Cllr Westwood offered to attend on behalf of the Parish Council. The Clerk had purchased a wreath at a cost of £17.50 plus a £50 donation as usual.

(f) TMBC – Funding Arrangements with Parish Councils 2017 – 2018

TMBC had advised that from 1 April 2017 the Scheme of Financial Arrangements with Parish Councils and the Council Tax reduction grants will cease. TMBC is reviewing the issue of funding for open churchyards but, whatever may be agreed for the future as a result of the review, no provision has been made for funding in 2017/18 and any grants made by parishes during this period must be met by the Parish Council. After a lengthy discussion it was **AGREED** that no contribution would be made to All Saints' PCC for the churchyard for 2017/2018.

(g) Any other Parish business

Nothing was raised under this heading.

7 Correspondence

Email Voluntary Litter Code – Presentation of Certificate to Sue's Snack Bar A228
Cllr Westwood had attended the presentation.

Kent's Police & Crime Commissioner - Policing in Kent 2017 -2021 Autumn Survey

Action: Cllr Nevill to respond

8 Financial Matters

(a) The quarterly reconciliation sheet, bank statements & PAYE records were signed.

NatWest balances as at 31 October: **Current** £20284.63 **Reserve** £100.45

Secure Trust Bank £17239.22

(b) Cheques to be signed

The following cheques were signed:

			Net	VAT	Gross
1508	Mrs Grimmett	Nov salary & reimbursements	£414.96	£1.84	£416.80
	(RBL wreath	S137 donation included in the above			
					£67.50)
1509	All Saints' PCC	S136 payment			£1727.00
1510	CAB	S137 donation			£50.00
1511	Age Concern	S137 donation			£50.00
1512	Beat Project	S137 donation			£50.00
1513	Heart of Kent Hospice	S137 donation			£50.00
1514	Air Ambulance Trust	S137 donation			£50.00
1515	Victim Support	S137 donation			£50.00
1516	Try Angle Awards	S137 payment			£50.00

(c) 6 Month Budget Review

Payments at present are under budget with the likelihood that there will be a difference of approx £1250 at the year end, with a difference of approx £5000 between receipts and payments. It was noted that with the withdrawal of the FAPC by TMBC in 2016/17 BPC's expenditure would be greater than the income and Councillors were asked to consider the implications for an increase to the precept to be discussed at December's meeting.

(d) Any other financial business

Nothing was raised under this heading.

9 **Roads**

(a) JPCTCG

Minutes of the meeting on 21 September had been circulated. It was noted that the response from Birling concerning the consultation about a permanent left hand only turn at the Castle Way/A228 junction, accessing the M20 via Birling roundabout, had been noted in the minutes. Cllr Grimmett was thanked for responding on behalf of BPC.

(b) Any Other Roads Business

Cllr Walker advised that Simon Houldsworth is organising a litter pick on 10 December and he will be liaising with TMBC re health and safety aspects..

Cllr Westwood has been asked by a resident if a sign could be put up showing Snodland Road to avoid drivers' confusion at the Bull Road junction.

Action: Clerk to speak to Kent Highways

10 **Planning**

Ham Hill Quarry

Cllr Westwood and Mr Chittenden had attended the meeting and reported that concerns about noise and odour were raised. Local residents could hear what was said over the tannoy when vehicles were being directed to loading/unloading bays. Further investigation into how to alleviate the odour will be conducted.

New:

TM/16/03129/TNCA Mrs West 13 Bull Road, Birling ME19 5JE

Fell old laburnum tree as it has dead branches and trunk is in decline

BPC: No objections

Decisions:

TM/16/02658/FL Timberley, Masters Lane (Cllrs Walker & Nevill took no part in this)

Demolition of existing detached house and replacement with 2 detached dwellings with garaging & parking & widening & improvement of the vehicular access

BPC: Comments made

It was noted that modifications to the plans had been submitted by the applicant following comments from neighbours and TMBC and that these are still being considered. It was also noted that Kent Highways have issued a Temporary Road Closure Notice for Masters Lane for up to 18 months from 2 January 2017. Access to 30 Masters Lane will be provided at all times and the lane will remain open to pedestrians.

11 **Any Other Business**

Cllr Nevill advised that electricity cables are currently being put underground on the escarpment. He thought that perhaps the pipeline, while exposed, could also be used to improve broadband in the village.

Action: Clerk to ask KALC/CPRE/Cllr Hohler/Cllr Balfour if they have any contacts who could advise

The Clerk advised that she had decided to retire wef the end of the financial year unless a replacement could be appointed before then.

Action: Vacancy notice to be drawn up for KALC website, BART magazine and noticeboard.

Nothing further was raised under this heading

12 **Date of next meeting**

As previously agreed the next meeting will be held at **8pm on Tuesday 13 December 2016** and there being no further business the meeting closed at 9.55pm.