

Birling Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 12th January 2021 via Video Conference Call at 8pm

Present: Councillors Mrs J Westwood (Chair)
Mr N Hewett
Mr S Hirst
Mr G Nevill
Mrs S Spooner
Mr D Yates
Mrs H Walker

Clerk Ms J Miller

Also in attendance: County Councillor Hohler; Borough Councillor Kemp; 1 member of the public

322. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Montague (TMBC).

323. Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest

There were none.

324. Reports - County, Borough and Police

Cllr Hohler reported that COVID19 cases in the county are still high and this has had a knock-on effect to staffing levels at the county council. The Direct Debit payments for school bus passes have been suspended until March and KCC has removed the restriction for using bus passes before 9am. It was noted that test stations are being well used. Cllr Hohler reported that foreign HGVs are being turned away in France if they do not present the correct documents to ensure that the Kent roads are not blocked whilst drivers wait for papers. There are now teams on patrol handing out warnings and clamping HGV drivers that do not comply with the new regulations in Kent. Cllr Hohler reported that the traffic from the continent is less than expected although Dover DC and Highways England have a large amount of litter to clear from the area.

The benefits of reporting HGVs in the parish on the Country Eye app under 'HGV watch' was discussed.

For those in need of assistance during lockdown, the Kent Together helpline is still available 03000 419292. Cllr Hohler confirmed that symptom free testing is now being carried out across Kent and Larkfield Library is the nearest hub to Birling, tests can be booked online.

Cllr Hohler reported that the draft budget for KCC has now been released and a rise has had to be applied to cover the loss of income during the pandemic.

Cllr Kemp reported that TMBC are working hard to distribute grants to small businesses and encouraged local business owners to apply.

Cllr Kemp discussed the delays with the Local Plan whilst the council's lawyers respond to the planning inspectorate.

The borough council budgets were discussed and Cllr Kemp confirmed that, as with KCC, the council's income streams have been badly hit by COVID although with help from government the position has eased slightly. It is expected that major savings will need to be made in the region of £1m per year.

Cllrs reported that the brown bins had not been collected from Ley Farm and Budd Oast and that this has been reported to the waste services department.

The police report was noted and the rural police were congratulated on catching the poachers in Ryarsh.

325. Open Forum – Public Participation Session

There were none.

326. Approval and signing of minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of 8th December 2020.

327. Matters arising and last month's circulation

i. Parking issues

To receive update from Cllr Hirst regarding photographs of issues.

Cllr Hirst will take some pictures when bin collections are moved back to Tuesdays.

ii Meeting with Ryarsh School

To receive update from Cllr Walker

Cllr Walker reported that the draft minutes had been circulated and the head teacher hasn't had a chance to review them as yet.

iii. Culverts

Deferred due to Corona Virus

iv. The bank verge infringement

To note KALC recommended solicitor approached.

A response is awaited.

v. Village Sign

To note new sign installed.

It was noted that the box hedge had grown and the clerk shall approach TMBC for permission to cut back.

328. Matters for Information circulated to councillors

06/12/2020 E Watch 1823

06/12/2020 Highways England moveable barrier works

06/12/2020 KALC news November

06/12/2020 Local Government Bulletin 2 December

06/12/2020 Recycling site removal

06/12/2020 M20 updates

06/12/2020 COVID updates

06/12/2020 Affordable Housing

06/12/2020 K Cas Ransomware

08/12/2020 KALC T&M Agenda

08/12/2020 KCC Webinar EU

08/12/2020 KCC Revised safeguarding

08/12/2020 The Rural Bulletin

08/12/2020 E watch 1824

08/12/2020 NALC breaking news

08/12/2020 KCC Media Release – Cold Weather Warning

08/12/2020 Covid Grant Scheme

08/12/2020 NALC Chief Executives Bulletin

11/12/2020 Climate Adaption Survey for Kent and Medway

11/12/2020 E Watch 1825

11/12/2020 Brexit Webinar

11/12/2020 NALC chief executive bulletin

19/12/2020 Christmas card from Mayor TMBC

19/12/2020 Covid 19 financial support package for councils

19/12/2020 E watch 1826

19/12/2020 NALC Coronavirus update

19/12/2020 Seasons Greetings 2020

19/12/2020 Kent Prepared Newsletter

19/12/2020 NALC Chief Executive's bulletin

19/12/2020 KCC Media Release Asymptomatic Testing in Kent
19/12/2020 The Rural Bulletin
19/12/2020 E Watch 1827
22/12/2020 Highways England information letter – M20
22/12/2020 Seasons Greetings CPRE
22/12/2020 KALC Ceo Bulletin December 2020
22/12/2020 Kent Police Rural Task Force Report
22/12/2020 Act now and help stop wildlife paying the price
04/01/2021 Press Release – Statistics following cross channel disruption
04/01/2021 Local Government Bulletin 30 December
04/01/2021 E Watch 1829
04/01/2021 Highways England letter – M20
04/01/2021 E Watch 1830
04/01/2021 Op Fennel Stakeholder Briefing
04/01/2021 The Rural Bulletin

329. Meetings

(a) Meetings attended on behalf of the parish council

- i. 10/12/2020 KALC T&M Area Committee - Cllr Westwood
Cllr Westwood reported that the police inspector attended the meeting and noted that the police are mainly dealing with neighbour disputes, speeding and obstructive parking during the pandemic. It was noted that child and domestic abuse incidents had increased. The area with the most anti-social behaviour reports was Snodland.
David Lettington reported on the local plan, and it was clear that neighbouring parishes have strong views about the process too.
Cllr Betts reported updates on the flytipping issues and that TMBC are working on a strategy. It was noted that Cllr Yates' research was forwarded to inform the strategy.

(b) Future meetings

04/02/2021 – Parish Partnership Panel

330. Parish Business for Decisions

1. Highways Improvement Plan

- i. To note signs to be installed on Stangate Road – January 11th 2021
ii. To note Cllr Hohler awaiting press release details

The clerk shall follow up.

It was noted that KCC have approached the parish council to begin work on the Highways Improvement Plan.

The clerk shall update the document and circulate to councillors before sending to KCC.

(b) Local Plan

- i. To note update

The letter from the inspector was discussed. The letter shall be circulated to members by the clerk.

(c) Coronavirus updates

- i. To note national lockdown restrictions

It was noted that the country had entered a third national lockdown.

- ii. To note community support efforts update from BART

It was noted that the community has been supporting each other well.

Cllr Walker will investigate with the vicar if there is a further need to assist Birling residents.

- iii. To note Village Hall update

There were no further updates.

(d) Fly Tipping / Litter

i. To consider how to address recent litter issues

It was noted that due to the lockdown restrictions it is not possible to organise a litter pick. It was **RESOLVED** to ask TMBC councillors what the borough council could do to assist.

The Spring Clean shall be arranged in March should the restrictions be lifted.

ii. To note fly tipping information shared with Cllr Betts and KALC- noted.

(f) Investment

i. To consider investing an amount of contingency reserves to either a one year bond at 0.85% (Shawbrook) or 5 year bond at 1.15% (Cambridge Bank) Minimum investment £10,000.

It was **RESOLVED** to keep the funds in the bank account now that the Highways Improvement Plan is under way as access to the funds may be required.

(h) Streetlighting

i. To consider turning off lamp outside residents house – see email

It was noted that the lamp on the buildout outside Clackett Farm was out.

The timings on the lamps and the cover shall be investigated and the resident kept informed.

(i) Strategic Plan

i. To consider the development of a 3 year plan

The following points were agreed to be added to the plan:-

- That BPC works with external organisations such as CPRE
- Include the maintenance of the church clock and other powers
- Investigate the Public Health projected population estimates that are in the local plan - Cllr Hewett will investigate as need context for figures. Possibly to illustrate rural nature of the parish.
- Key priorities - Reflect consultations carried out in HIP
- Flooding/Climate change
- Heading Community - how the council sponsor events such as the village party to enable social interaction

It was **RESOLVED** for councillors to email all ideas by Sunday 17th Jan and Cllr Yates and the clerk shall update the documents and present to the next meeting

(j) Model Code of Conduct

i. To consider adopting updated Code of Conduct

It was noted that this will be deferred until TMBC are in a position to make a recommendation.

331. Parish Business for Noting

(a) Website update

i. To note the following added to the website:-

- Road Closures and M20 Updates
- Corona Updates
- Fraud updates
- Precept report
- Kent Police updates
- Flytipping information from Cllr Betts

332. Correspondence

- (a) Email from resident regarding streetlighting and Ryarsh school posters
- (b) Freedom of Information Act request from resident regarding verge

333. Finance & Accounts

(a) To approve Bank Reconciliation December 2020.

Net Bank Balances as at 31/12/20 £24,378.95

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliation for December 2020.

(b) To note budget position year to date December 2020.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the budget position to date December 2020.

(c) To approve PAYE record January 2021.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the PAYE record for January 2021.

(d) BACS to be approved and signed (in person at next face to face meeting):

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the BACS payments for January.

January		Gross	Net	VAT	
J Miller	Staff Costs	£330.33	N/A	N/A	Salary January
HMRC Cumbernauld	Staff Costs	£206.80	N/A	N/A	PAYE January
J Miller	Expenses	£49.29	N/A	N/A	Printer Ink
Kent Site Services	Contingency	£409.44	£341.20	£68.24	Village Sign
LexisNexis	Contingency	149.99	N/A	N/A	Reference Book
CPRE	Subscriptions	£36.00	N/A	N/A	Annual subscription

334. Roads

(a) To report any road issues

Cllr Walker reported that the trees should have been planted for the smart motorway works in November, the clerk shall contact Highways England for an update.

(b) To report any updates on M20 Smart Motorway Works – noted.

(c) Road Closures

There were none.

335. Planning

(a) Applications to be considered

There were none.

(b) Decisions by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

The Cottage 30 Masters Lane Birling West Malling Kent ME19 5JP Demolition of existing dwelling and replacement with green oak framed dwelling, with new boundary wall and gates (re-submission with revised design to that approved under reference TM/20/00503/FL - provision of basement) **Approved on 18 December 2020**

336. Matters for future meetings

The standing items shall be added to the agenda.

**337. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 9th February 2021.
Meeting closed at 22:25pm**

Signed..... Date.....