

## **Birling Parish Council**

### **Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 13 October 2015 in Birling Village Hall at 8pm**

**Present:** Councillors      Mrs Jacquie Westwood (Chair)      Mr Ron Nudd (Vice Chair)  
   Ms Deborah Harrington                      Mr Guy Nevill  
   Mrs Helen Walker

Borough Cllr Mr Matthew Balfour

#### **1      Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies were received from County Cllrs Mrs Hohler , Borough Councillor Mrs Kemp, Cllr Grimmett, Cllr Spooner, Mrs Grimmett and PCSO Boyd.

Cllr Walker declared an interest in **5(f)** due to the proximity of her property and Cllrs Harrington and Walker declared non-pecuniary interests and Cllr Nevill a pecuniary interest in **7 Local Development Plan**.

#### **2      Reports**

##### **KCC & T&MBC**

Borough Cllr Mr Matthew Balfour was aware of concerns raised by the Parish Councils about potential changes to area planning committees. An independent peer review had suggested this change due to the potential cost savings. In his view this change was unlikely to be supported by T&M Borough Councillors.

He raised the pressing issue about available resources. Both KCC & TMBC were undertaking reviews on non-statutory services due to a widening gap of affordability. KCC were currently consulting on plans to reduce costs as a result of deficit issues. This was due a number of factors including likely cuts resulting from the impending comprehensive spending review and lack of reimbursement from government for £6-£8M costs of care of minors from abroad and ring fenced concessionary bus fares that had overspent by £6M. He advised that the cost of community care continues to rise steadily and urged local solutions by encouraging more care to be provided at home thus reducing the need for residential and nursing care. It was noted that the financial pressures are likely to impact on Parish budgets.

##### **Crime**

A garage in Bull Road was broken into 8/9 September – taken from EWatch. The police report received had not showed any reported crimes in Birling.

Cllr Nevill advised that two poachers were caught in the Manor on 12 October and a vehicle had rammed the gate whilst trying to escape.

#### **3      Open Forum**

No members of the public were present.

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

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8 September 2015 be **APPROVED** and they were **SIGNED** by the Chair.

#### **5      Matters arising and last month's circulation**

##### **(a)      Transparency Code**

The Government has set up a fund to assist councils in paying for the extra work and equipment needed to comply with the Code. KALC are running Transparency Fund for Smaller Councils workshops in October at a cost of £30+VAT which can be reclaimed from the Fund. The Clerk will attend the workshop at Staplehurst on 20 October. An

additional 4 hours had been spent on the website. It's possible that BPC could claim for laptop/setting up costs/website training etc which currently total £800+.

**(b) Defibrillator Training**

The clerk is waiting for Community Heartbeat to suggest suitable dates and had requested that the contact get back to the Chair in her absence. This has not yet occurred.

**(c) Footpath by Birling Ashes**

Cllr Harrington had confirmed that it is clear.

**(d) EDF Contract renewal**

Laser Energy had negotiated a cost of £503.52 (approx. £5 more than 2014-15) for the period 1/10/2015 – 30/9/2016 which the Chair had authorised.

**(e) NatWest Bank & Secure Trust Bank - Change of Signatories**

Cllr Harrington's name has been added to the list of NatWest signatories and Cllr Hopper's name has been taken off. Letter for Secure Trust Bank insufficient and forms need to be completed which Clerk is still waiting for.

**(f) Development of Donald Marchant's Property in Masters Lane**

The primary concern raised by Cllrs was the single track lane with limited vision when accessing Ryarsh Road. The current property is situated in a quiet lane, currently with access to 2 houses. Walkers, many with dogs, who access the footpath, use the lane extensively. Any development would have an increase of traffic that is not desirable. It was also noted that neighbours could be overlooked, depending on the siting of any development, as the current property is a bungalow. It was agreed that this informal view of Cllrs should be feedback to Mr J Marchant, thanking him for asking our views, and advising that any decisions would be made by the TMBC Area Planning Committee following consultation with local residents and BPC.

**(g) Voluntary Litter Code**

Suzie's Snack Bar in the layby along the A228 is to be awarded a certificate for keeping the area around the snack bar clean for the past 12 months. The Area Co-ordinator of Larkfield Neighbourhood Watch has produced a certificate with the Birling Village sign and is looking to present the award sometime towards the end of October and would appreciate a member of BPC attending. Details to follow.

**(h) Any other matters arising**

Nothing was raised under this heading.

**6 Parish Business for Decision**

**(a) Charitable Donations**

Cllrs considered the section 137 donations to charities that are listed below.

**ACTION: these were approved with the deferment of the donation to Birling Flower Festival as BPC were awaiting confirmation of the type of event that may take place in 2016.**

**Section 137 Payments**

**2015-2016**

Royal British Legion, Poppy Wreath	67.00
Air Ambulance	50.00
Citizens Advice Bureau	50.00
All Saints' Church PCC, Flower Festival (subject to confirmation)	250.00
Victim Support	50.00
Maidstone Ass of Youth - Try Angle Awards	50.00
Age Concern	50.00
Volunteer Centre Malling	50.00

**(b) Representative for Remembrance Day Service on 8 November**

The Chair or Cllr Grimmett will present the wreath.

**(c) Dog Poo Bin**

A resident had asked Cllr Grimmett / Cllr Walker if a dog poo bin could be sited at the bottom of Masters Lane. This is a very popular area for dog walkers a lot of whom do not clear up after their pets. An officer from the TMBC Environmental Enforcement team has looked at the site and agreed that a bin can be supplied and installed at a cost of approx £200+VAT.

**ACTION : This was approved**

**(c) Any other matters to be Decided**

Nothing was raised under this heading.

**7 Correspondence (all had been circulated and are attached)**

Parish Partnership Panel – Minutes and Local Development Plan

Cllr Walker was willing get copies of the hard copy plan for all members that showed the potential development sites across the Borough. It was noted that the consultation will commence next year.

**ACTION: A copy of the plan should be made public and placed on the notice board and the hard copy information to be circulated to members.**

[www.tmbc.gov.uk/callforsites](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/callforsites)

NALC – Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth Day 14/3/2016

**ACTION: As the flag pole is located on the Church Tower the Clerk to ask the PCC if they were willing to support this initiative**

KALC – KCC Consultation on Street lighting

**ACTION: It was agreed that the Chair and Clerk complete this survey and request low level LED lighting and reduce hours they are alight. It was noted that BPC may need to consult should the hours of street lighting be reduced.**

East Malling & Larkfield PC – Proposed Abolition of Area Planning Committees

A significant number of letters had been sent to T&MBC about this issue due to concerns about transparency and local engagement. Comments from Borough Cllr Balfour are reported earlier in these minutes.

KCC Highways & Transportation Plan [Consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/streetlighting](http://Consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/streetlighting)

**ACTION: It was agreed that the Chair and Clerk complete this consultation**

Home Office Consultation – Reforming the Powers Of Police Staff and Volunteers

[www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-the-powers-of-police-staff-and-volunteers](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-the-powers-of-police-staff-and-volunteers)

Details noted

**8 Financial Matters**

**(a) Monthly accounts, statements & PAYE records to be signed**

The bank statement, quarterly reconciliation sheet and PAYE forms were signed.

NatWest balances as at 30 September 2015: Current £15742.24 Reserve £100.38

Secure Trust Bank: £16815.12.

**(b) Cheques**

The following cheques were signed:

			<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Gross</b>
1401	Mrs Grimmett	October salary & reimbursements	£353.92	£7.50	£398.92
			(this includes £37.50+VAT laptop set up cost)		
1402	Royal British Legion Wreath				£67.50

**(c) NatWest – Clerk’s Letter of Authority**

A new letter authorising NatWest to provide the Clerk with information was signed.

**(d) Any other financial business**

Nothing further was raised under this heading.

**9** **Roads**

**(a) JPCTCG Meeting**

Neither Cllr Nudd nor Cllr Grimmett had been able to attend the meeting. Concerns were raised by Cllr Nevill on behalf of a local resident about the speed of traffic through the village along Ryarsh Road. Cllrs noted that parking on the road is the way that some local residents attempt to slow the traffic. Cllrs asked if it would be possible to instigate a 20mph restriction.

**ACTION: Cllrs to raise issue at JPCTCG meeting to obtain support and advice and then Clerk to raise the issue with Highways and Police to ask about process to invoke speed restrictions and meanwhile to request speed monitoring and visible police presence at busy traffic periods.**

**(b) Vegetation Blocking Road Signs**

Cllr Grimmett had cut back vegetation blocking the road signs in Bull Road. He was thanked for taking this matter in hand.

**(c) Any other roads business**

The pavement to Ryarsh School from below the Cantors residence is overgrown and needs to be trimmed.

**ACTION: The Clerk to request Ryarsh Parish Council to deal with this matter.**

**10** **Planning**

**New Applications:**

TM/15/02445/FL TQ567539 159747

Applicant: Mr P Amlani

Location: Ryarsh Livery Stables, Birling Road, Ryarsh, West Malling

Proposal: Demolition and removal of existing commercial livery barns and portakabins and replace with Class B8 storage unit with ancillary B1 office

**Decisions: TMBC - Refused**

**11** **Any Other Business**

**(a) Birling Farms**

Cllr Harrington had noticed several men shooting in the field at the bottom of Masters Lane and Cllr Nevill had advised that they were estate workers shooting pigeons. It was noted that the shooting season took place from October to January but that pigeon shooting was undertaken all year.

**(b) Footpath from Masters Lane to Bull Road**

Cllr Harrington had asked the Clerk to enquire whether it was possible for a mirror to be erected opposite the exit of this footpath onto Bull Road as it was dangerous trying to cross the road. The Public Rights of Way Office had not received any other comments and were not prepared to take any action. Birling Farms had erected a kissing gate that has resolved the issue. It was noted that currently the Bridle Way at this point was not connected across the two paths.

**(c) What does Birling Mean?**

A game played by lumberjacks primarily in Northern US where each tries to balance longest on a floating log whilst rotating the log with their feet. Cllr Nevill noted that is was also a Scottish word meaning ‘to drink ‘and a also a nordic boat.

<http://dictionary.reference.com/wordoftheday/2015/09/30>

(d) Nothing further was raised under this heading.

**12 Date of next meeting**

As previously agreed **Tuesday 10 November 2015 at 8.00pm**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.48 pm.