

Harrietsham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 27th November 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Booth Hall

Cllr Powell welcomed all present to the meeting.

Public discussion

Several positive comments were received regarding the work being completed at the village hall.

A resident queried how planning applications will be dealt with before the next Parish Council meeting in January and the Clerk confirmed that meetings are held, if any applications are received, on the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month. Cllr Powell requested that the resident contact the Clerk if they do wish to attend a future meeting.

1 Present

Cllr E Powell, Cllr T Sams, Cllr J Sams, Cllr C Roots, Cllr Dean, Cllr S Brown, Cllr F Stanley, Cllr Donley, Cllr T Griffiths, RFO/Amenity Manager Mr M Cuerden and the Clerk Mrs A Broadhurst
3 Members of Public

2 Apologies for absence

Cllr R Dayes, Cllr S Luck

3 Minutes of the last meeting

Parish Council Meeting 30th October 2024: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Dean, seconded by Cllr T Sams; with all in favour.

4 Disclosures and confidential items

Changes to the Register of Interests

There were no changes to the register.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

Cllr S Brown

Agenda Item 7.3 (Finance - Grant Applications) as he is the Treasurer of the Fish Scheme.

Cllr C Roots

Agenda Item 7.3 (Finance - Grant Applications) as he is the Treasurer of Harrietsham in Bloom.

Cllr T Griffiths

Agenda Item 6.2 (Environmental Cttee Recommendations) as his wife is an allotment tenant.

Requests for Dispensation

No requests were submitted.

5 Planning

5.1 The outstanding planning applications were noted.

5.2 The approved applications were noted.

5.3 The refused applications were noted.

5.4 The withdrawn application was noted.

5.5 Other Planning Matters

Cllr J Sams reported that she had attended a stakeholder meeting with Cllr T Sams to discuss the Heathlands, Lidsing and Invicta Barracks sites, this was to start the process of creating supplementary Local Plan documents; it was highlighted that the process needs to be transparent. Cllr T Sams stated that Cllr Hammond, from Lenham Parish Council, had raised the point that the Heathlands Development is not viable and representatives from MBC had refused to comment. Cllr Powell queried whether the proposed railway station was discussed and Cllr J Sams confirmed that this is still included and Homes England implied that there is an outline business plan, which Cllr J Sams has requested a copy of. It was suggested that the cost of the station would be approximately £30m, however a similar station had cost in the region of £40m. Future meetings will be arranged separately for each site, with the next one being in January 2025.

6 Environmental

6.1 Minutes of the Environmental Meeting held on 11th November 2024: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Brown, seconded by Cllr Dean; with 3 in favour (those present at the meeting).

6.2 Recommendations from the Environmental Committee:

- Allotment Rent from October 2025 to be increased to £30: Cllr Brown stated that, although the recommendation was to increase the annual rent to £30, he had proposed in the meeting to increase by a small amount to £27, as he felt £30 was too high compared to other sites. Cllr Dean responded that, considering the amount of administrative work involved, the higher proposed sum is still cheap. After discussion Cllr Powell seconded Cllr Dean's proposal, however no other Councillors supported the £5 increase. Cllr Brown then proposed an increase of £2 to £27 and this was seconded by Cllr T Sams, with 5 in favour, 2 against and 2 abstentions. **ACTION: Clerk**

6.3 Other Environmental Matters

- MBC Bin on West Street Green: Cllr Roots reported that the bin needs to be repainted or replaced as it is damaged and rusty. Cllr T Sams offered to report this to MBC. **ACTION: Cllr T Sams**
- Village Sign on West Street Green: Cllr Roots had noted that the village sign is in need of refurbishment. Cllr T Sams informed all present that Paul Passey had arranged the sign in the 1980s. After a brief discussion Cllr T Sams offered to take some photos so that Councillors can see the work required. **ACTION: Cllr T Sams**

7 Finances

7.1 Income and Expenditure Spreadsheets: The finance sheets were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr J Sams; with all in favour.

7.2 Minutes of the F&GP Meeting held on 19th November 2024: The minutes were proposed as accurate by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Stanley; with 4 in favour (those present at the meeting).

7.3 Recommendations from the F&GP Committee:

- Grant Applications Financial Yr 2024-25:
 - Harrietsham Fish Scheme (£750) - Proposed by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr T Sams; with 8 in favour and 1 abstention.
 - Harrietsham Gardening Society (£150) - Proposed by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Griffiths; with all in favour.
 - K,S&S Air Ambulance (£100) - Proposed by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Griffiths; with all in favour.
 - Harrietsham PCC (Church £984) - Proposed by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Griffiths; with all in favour.
 - Harrietsham Primary School (£1,000) - Proposed by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Griffiths; with all in favour.
 - "We Are Beams" ASD Support (£150) - Proposed by Cllr Roots, seconded by Cllr Griffiths; with all in favour.
- Grant Applications Financial Yr 2025-26:
 - Harrietsham in Bloom (£100) - Proposed by Cllr Griffiths, seconded by Cllr J Sams; with 8 in favour and 1 abstention.
 - Harrietsham Tennis Club (£500) - Proposed by Cllr Griffiths, seconded by Cllr T Sams with all in favour.
 - Friday Coffee Morning - hall hire fees from Harrietsham Village Hall (est. £1,400) - Proposed by Cllr Griffiths, seconded by Cllr T Sams with all in favour.
- To Readopt Reviewed Risk Assessments & Investment Policy: It was proposed by Cllr Powell to adopt the reviewed Risk Assessments and Investment Policy. This was seconded by Cllr Dean, with all in favour.
- To Adopt Revised Financial Regulations: It was proposed by Cllr Dean to adopt the revised Financial Regulations. This was seconded by Cllr T Sams, with all in favour.

7.4 Other Financial Matters

- Unpaid Allotment Invoice: The Clerk reminded all present of the discussion at the October meeting. Since then, contact has been made with the tenant, who has been out of the country. They had explained that they were financially unable to pay £200 at once so there had been a local agreement that they would repay the charge in 4 installments of £50. The

first one was received by the date set. The resident has been informed that, if they default on any of the payments, the outstanding amount must be paid immediately.

8 Highways

It was noted that a highways report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Roots commented that a Speedwatch session had taken place and no one had been caught exceeding the speed limit.

Cllr T Sams informed all present that a resident had complained about the illuminated signs along the A20 being dirty, these have now all been reported to KCC Highways.

The Clerk reported that the Village Gateway, which had previously been discussed, has been approved and will be installed within the next 90 days.

9 Santa's Grotto

Cllr Griffiths reminded all present that Santa's grotto will be held on Sunday 22nd December, 10am - 4pm. So far 30 children are booked in and 7 stalls have been arranged. It was agreed that setting up the grotto will start at 5.30pm on Saturday 21st December, Cllr Donley will assist and Cllr Roots will confirm closer to the day. The grotto will need to be taken down as soon as the event finishes at 4pm on the 22nd and Cllrs T & J Sams and Donley will assist.

The Clerk reported that 1 box of chocolates need to be wrapped and Cllr Dean offered to arrange this. It was noted that cable ties and a 3x6m white sheet are required. The Clerk offered to purchase these.

ACTION: Clerk

10 Code of Conduct Consultation

The Clerk reported that, following the last meeting, she had contacted KALC for clarification as to whether a blanket dispensation would be required for setting the precept. The secretary had commented that she didn't think it was necessary and had not discussed the matter with the KALC members as requested. The Clerk had subsequently contacted the Monitoring Officer directly who had stated that he would not expect Clerks to have to give a blanket dispensation each year.

11 Kent Police ANPR Cameras

The Clerk had circulated an email from PC Ben Cox regarding the opportunity for Parish Councils to purchase ANPR cameras and also clarified a couple of queries that Councillors had raised. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr T Sams and seconded by Cllr Roots that no action be taken; all Councillors were in favour.

12 To Readopt the Reviewed Standing Orders

It was noted that the only amendment was that the Community Warden was now referred to as the Parish Warden. It was proposed by Cllr J Sams to adopt the amended Standing Orders. This was seconded by Cllr Roots, with all in favour.

The Clerk added the other Council policies would need to be reviewed in the New Year. **ACTION: Clerk**

13 Groundworks in the Village Green

Cllr Roots asked that Councillors consider setting aside £6,000 in the next financial year to install an electrical supply on the village green. This would primarily be to allow for a Christmas tree to be installed but would be useful for other small events to take place. Cllr Dean felt that the green was too small for events, dangerous due to its location on the A20 and the risk of children falling in the stream, as well as causing a nuisance to the surrounding properties. Cllr Griffiths felt that it was a good idea and that lighting could be installed to make the stream safer, Cllr Brown felt it was too expensive. The RFO queried whether a meter would be installed as the cost of the 3 streetlights in Church Road are costing in the region of £500 a quarter; with most of this cost being the standing charge. Mr Cuerden was concerned that another meter would result in a further standing charge which would be a large ongoing expense. Cllr Stanley queried if any H&S signs would be required and Cllr Donley confirmed that they would not, as the supply would look similar to a BT box. Cllr T Sams concluded that a lot of work had gone into arranging the quotation, but that further discussion is needed to understand the long-term use of the supply. It was noted that a permanent SID could be installed. It was agreed by all present that the matter should be deferred to the next F&GP meeting for Councillors to make a recommendation to the January Full Council meeting, when the budget and precept will be approved for 2025-2026.

ACTION: F&GP Cttee

14 Future Events

14th December - Ploughman's in the Church (12 - 2pm)

14th December - Church Carol Service (5.30pm)

22nd December - Santa's Grotto (Village Hall - 10-4pm)

15 Items for Future Consideration

No items for consideration.

16 Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 29th January 2025 at 7.30pm in the Booth Hall

(No meeting in December)

The Clerk commented that 4 Councillors (Cllrs Powell, Dean, Luck & Donley) would be booked onto the virtual Councillors training session arranged for 17th March 2025 6-8pm. **ACTION: Clerk**

With no further matters to discuss the Chairman wished all present a Merry Christmas and the meeting was closed at 8.27pm.

Items covered in the public discussion:

- A resident thanked the Parish Council for their work during the year.
- A resident commented that the village sign had been erected in 1982/3
- A resident commented that the traffic is awful along the A20, making it difficult to pull out from side roads. The general view was that this would not improve with the amount of development around the area.