

Meopham Parish Council

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Minutes of a meeting of the Full Council held on Tuesday 17th January 2023 at 7:30pm at Meopham Village Hall

Members Present:

Cllr D Bramer
Cllr M Bramer
Cllr S Buchanan – Chairman
Cllr S Gofton
Cllr G Green – Vice-Chairman
Cllr J McTavish
Cllr M Moss
Cllr J Ogden DL
Cllr C Price
Cllr D Sims
Cllr B Wade

In Attendance:

S Fishenden – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
G Duffort – Co-op Member Pioneer
PCSO K Lowe – Police Community Support Officer
PCSO S Balman – Police Community Support Officer

Item 1: Apologies for Absence: To receive and accept apologies

F.C. 314 Apologies were received from Community Warden; M Cason

Item 2: Declarations of Members' Interests: To receive declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests

F.C. 315 Cllr M Bramer and Cllr Green declared a non-pecuniary interest in any item which related to the affairs of the Meopham Windmill Trust due to their role as trustees

Item 3: To approve the minutes of previous meetings: 20.12.22

F.C. 316 Cllr M Bramer PROPOSED an amendment to minute F.C. 311 for it to read *"Cllr. Bramer had circulated his comments to all councillors in writing before the meeting. Cllr. Green presented his comments orally from a prepared text. The two accounts differed considerably and this led to lengthy discussion in the meeting. No action was agreed"*.

SECONDED: Cllr D Bramer. There were two votes in favour, five against and four abstentions. The amendment fell.

F.C. 317 In light of discussion surrounding Cllr M Bramer's term of office and when it expired, Cllr Green PROPOSED as a matter arising for the Council to instruct counsel and to contact the Charity Commission to seek advice on:

- Whether it is appropriate for the Parish Council to exercise its right to appoint two trustees to the Windmill Trust given the licensee/licensor arrangement that exists between the organisations
- To clarify the date at which Cllr M Bramer's term of office began

Pending receipt of the advice, the Council would ask both council-appointed trustees to take no active part in the Trust.
SECONDED: Cllr Price. There were eight votes in favour and three abstentions. The motion was carried.

F.C. 318 The minutes of the meeting held on 20.12.22 were then approved.

PROPOSED: Cllr Ogden DL. SECONDED: Cllr Gofton.
There were eight votes in favour, two against and one abstention. The motion was carried.

Item 4: Public Session & External Reports

4.1 Public Session

F.C. 319 There were no members of the public present

4.2 Borough Councillors and County Councillor

F.C. 320 There were no Borough Councillors or the County Councillor present

4.3 PCSO and Community Warden

F.C. 321 PCSO K Lowe and PCSO S Balman publicised the new 'My Community Voice' system which is a two-way engagement tool with the Police.

The Parish Council was asked to assist with publicising the My Community Voice and other methods for contacting the Police

The PCSO's confirmed following the Neighbourhood Policing Review, the new beat officers would be encouraged to engage with Parish Councils and attend meetings.

4.4 Co-op Member Pioneer

F.C. 322 G Duffort introduced himself to the Council and explained the role that he carries out as a Member Pioneer.

He explained that he is able to offer small grants and there is also the larger Co-op Local Community Fund. G Duffort is happy to support the Parish Council with any event they wish to hold for the Kings Coronation.

Item 5: Clerk's Report: To note the report of items for information from the Clerk

F.C. 323 The Clerk's Report was noted.

Item 6: Finance & Governance

6.1 Expenses Claims: To consider approving expenses claimed by the Clerk and Assistant Clerk

F.C. 324 The expenses claim from the Assistant Clerk of £53.73 was approved.
PROPOSED: Cllr Price. SECONDED: Cllr Wade. All in favour.

6.2 Schedule of Payments: To approve the schedule of payments awaiting authorisation up to 10.01.23

F.C. 325 The schedule of payments were approved.

PROPOSED: Cllr Price. SECONDED: Cllr Sims. All in favour.

6.3 Receipts and Payments Report: To note the report up to 10.01.23

F.C. 326 The receipts and payments report were noted.

6.4 Bank Statements: To receive the bank statements as of 10.01.23

F.C. 327 The bank statements up to 10.03.23 were noted.

6.5 2023-2024 Meeting Schedule: To approve the meeting schedule for the 2023-24 council year

F.C. 328 The meeting schedule for the 2023-2024 council year were approved.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr Price. Ten votes in favour and one abstention. The motion was carried.

Item 7: Policy Review

7.1 Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy: To adopt the revised anti-fraud and corruption policy

F.C. 329 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy was adopted, subject to a Whistleblowing Policy being drawn up for February 2023's Full Council to consider.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr Price. All in favour.

7.2 Equality Policy: To re-adopt the Equality Policy with no amendments

F.C. 330 The Equality Policy was adopted subject to the following provisions;

- To delegate authority to the Clerk to add a paragraph about equality in terms of councillor recruitment and to action this before the May 2023 elections. Members were invited to submit suggestions to the Clerk as to what steps should be taken in order to action this.
- The Clerk to arrange equality training, for both staff and councillors, following the May 2023 elections.
- To delegate authority to the Clerk to add a paragraph to the policy about Reasonable Adjustments.

All of the above would be done in consultation with the Liaison Cllrs for Community Engagement.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden DL. All in favour.

7.3 Media Policy: To re-adopt the Media Policy with no amendments

F.C. 331 The Media Policy was adopted with two amendments:

- In Paragraph 15 to amend 'Clerical Assistant' to 'Assistant Clerk'
- At the end of Paragraph 15 to add 'in consultation with at least two councillors'

PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr Wade. All in favour.

Item 8: Youth & Community

- 8.1 Call for Sites: Following the closing date for submissions, to consider pausing plans to progress any affordable housing development for a period of six months following a change in Central Government policy as a result of the Levelling-up Bill. Clerk to write to all interested parties to advise them of this**

F.C. 332 It was agreed to note the report, but to continue with the Call for Sites. The Clerk would circulate the nominated sites received to Councillors before the next Full Council at which they can be reviewed as to whether any are viable to be progressed.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr McTavish. All in favour.

- 8.2 Coronation: To consider proposed arrangements for celebrating the Coronation of the King and Queen Consort**

F.C. 333 The Clerk presented the three recommendations of:

- Organising an Afternoon Tea Party for the Over 80s to be held at the Village Hall on Friday 5 May 2023. Catering to be provided by the Women's Institute
- To plant an oak tree on Harvel Green near to the location of the Coronation Bench
- Given, Meopham Green's unavailability in May 2023, to hold a separate Picnic on the Green event in July/August 2023

F.C. 334 After discussion, it was agreed to launch a consultation for residents to establish what events they wish for us to hold.

It was further agreed that the Council would also compile a 'Coronation Events Guide' listing all the events occurring within the parish. The Clerk was asked to liaise with the Primary School PTA about the possibility of a joint collaboration with an event based on their annual procession.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr McTavish. All in favour.

- 8.3 Meopham Green – Year 6 Leavers Party: To authorise the use of Meopham Green for the annual Year 6 Leavers Party on Tuesday 25 July 2023 from 2:30pm onwards.**

F.C. 335 The use of Meopham Green for the Year 6 Leavers Party was approved, subject to them ensuring all litter/waste is removed at the end of the event.

PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr Price. All in favour.

Item 9: Highways Improvement Plan: To consider the comments received from KCC on our Highways Improvement Plan submission

F.C. 336 The comments provided by KCC on the Highways Improvement Plan were noted. It was agreed that the Council did not wish to fund any concept designs as it was felt they would not be actioned.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr McTavish. All in favour.

Item 10: Judsons Play Area: To agree the removal of the rocker from the play area and to arrange for the repair of the wetpour surfacing

F.C. 337 It was agreed to delegate to the Clerk to spend up to £1500 on either removing or repairing the rocker, in consultation with the Liaison Cllrs for Environment & Amenities.

PROPOSED: Cllr D Bramer. SECONDED: Cllr Price. All in favour.

Item 11: Motions from Councillors:

11.1 Motion from Cllr Sims - Meeting Start Time: To consider moving council meetings to start at 7pm instead of 7:30pm effective from February 2023

F.C. 338 It was agreed to move all council meetings to start at 7pm, effective until May 2023 when it can be reviewed by the new Council administration.

PROPOSED: Cllr Sims. SECONDED: Cllr Green. Nine votes in favour and two against. The motion was carried.

11.2 Motion from Cllr Gofton - Village Gateways: To consider installing village gateway signs

F.C. 339 It was suggested that the Council agreed in principle to installing village gateway signs but undertake further research with other parishes, other suppliers and further discussion with KCC Highways to achieve the most cost-effective outcome.

PROPOSED: Cllr Gofton. SECONDED: Cllr McTavish.
Three votes in favour, five against and three abstentions. The motion therefore fell.

Item 12: Liaison Councillor Reports: To receive reports from Liaison Councillors

F.C. 340 The Chairman invited all Liaison Councillors to provide verbal reports and remind Councillors to submit written reports to the Clerk in future. A summary of the reports are below:

- Cllr Ogden DL – Reported a successful conversation with the President of Meopham Colts who had apologised for the lack of invites to meetings including the AGM. He had promised to ensure Councillors would be invited to attend as observers to Meopham Colts trustee meetings.
- Cllr Gofton and Cllr Moss – Reported on a meeting held with the Assistant Clerk to discuss community engagement. A range of ideas were being worked on.
- Cllr D Bramer and Cllr Wade – Reported on a meeting held with the Clerk & Assistant Clerk regarding Judsons play area and to make arrangements for the Coronation Garden design competition
- Cllr McTavish – Reported on research on the Men's Shed was ongoing and that the proposed defibrillator would be on the Feb 2023 agenda
- Cllr Price – Reported on progress in obtaining the Unity Multi-pay Card. She had escalated her complaint and was visiting the Bank next week
- Cllr Sims and Cllr M Bramer had nothing to report from their liaison roles

Item 13: Parish Representatives on External Bodies: To note the reports received

F.C. 341 There was no written parish representatives report.

The Chairman reported that she was attending the GBC Parish Chairman's meeting on Wednesday 18th January and the KALC Area Committee meeting was being held after the February 2023 Full Council. Minutes from both would be circulated as soon as they were received.

Item 14: Progress Tracker: To note the progress tracker of council decisions

F.C. 342 The Progress Tracker was noted.

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that due to the confidential nature of the next item, the public and press will be asked to leave the meeting

Item 15: KALC Community Award 2023: To consider whom the Parish Council wishes to nominate for the KALC Community Award for 2023

F.C. 343 It was agreed to nominate Clear our Patch Gravesham for the KALC Community Award.

PROPOSED: Cllr Moss. SECONDED: Cllr Green. All in favour.

The meeting closed at 9:33pm