

Meopham Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 17th October 2023 at 7:00pm at Judsons Pavilion

Members Present:

Cllr M Adam
Cllr D Bramer
Cllr S Buchanan – Vice-Chairman (*from Item 4*)
Cllr A Evans (*arrived at 7:31pm*)
Cllr P Haslam
Cllr C Price – Chairman
Cllr D Sims
Cllr B Wade
Cllr P Watson

In Attendance:

S Fishenden – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
G Duffort – Locum Assistant Clerk
M Cason – KCC Community Warden
Two members of the public

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

F.C. 131 Apologies were received and accepted Cllr Burlington (work)

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

F.C. 132 Cllr Price declared an interest in Item 7.5 as it was relating to her expenses claim, and Item 11 as she was a member of Harvel Village Hall Committee and is friends with a trustee of We Are Beams. Cllr Price also declared an interest in Item 9.2 as her husband is President Elect of Meopham Rotary Club.

Cllr Bramer declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 7.5 as through her involvement in Golden Thread Alliance, they have a working relationship with We Are Beams

Item 3: **To approve minutes of the previous Full Council meetings: 14.08.23 and 02.10.23**

F.C. 133 It was agreed to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14.08.23
PROPOSED: Cllr Price. SECONDED: Cllr Buchanan. All in favour.

F.C. 134 It was agreed to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 02.10.23
PROPOSED: Cllr Price. SECONDED: Cllr Haslam. All in favour.

Item 4: **Public Session & External Reports**

4.1 Public Session

F.C. 135 No members of the public wished to speak.

4.2 Borough Councillors and County Councillor

F.C. 136 There were no members of the public present.

4.3 Police and Community Warden

- F.C. 137** The Community Warden gave the following update –
- The Warden consultation had now closed and the response from KCC would not be published until January 2024
 - The warden had responded to a pothole on the A227 near Fairseat Lane
 - Has continued to make social services referrals and supported some families with food aid from the Community Cupboard
 - Still trying to establish who the access road at the rear of Camer Parade belonged to

Item 5: Election of Vice-Chairman: To elect a Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the 2023-2024 municipal year and to receive their Declaration of Acceptance of Office

- F.C. 138** It was agreed to elect Cllr Buchanan as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the 2023-2024 municipal year. Her Declaration of Acceptance of Office was received and witnessed by the Proper Officer.

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

Item 6: Officer's Report: To receive a report of items for information from the Clerk and Assistant Clerk

- F.C. 139** The Clerk gave the following verbal report:
- The Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Chairman and former Chairman had met with Swale Community Leisure in August 2023 to discuss the success of their family fun day.
 - The Clerk and Assistant Clerk had met with PC Jo Hammond in August 2023 to forward concerns received about anti-social behaviour at Judsons. She had asked the Neighbourhood Policing taskforce to prioritise the Recreation Ground and she would carry out patrols when on duty.
 - Officers are releasing weekly updates on social media which have been well-received. If any councillors were participating in community engagement, they should send in details to the office for inclusion in the weekly update.
 - The Big Conversation event on 5th November planning is going well and publicity would be launched tomorrow.
 - G Duffort had commenced his mentoring with A de Jager from Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council and a progress report would be published at the end of a six week period
 - The Clerk clarified the legalities to the deed of gift and being able to utilise Judsons Pavilion for council meetings

Item 7: Financial Matters

7.1 Approval of Payments: To approve the payments made since the last meeting up to 10.10.23

- F.C. 140** It was agreed to approve the payments totalling £40,669.26 as listed in the schedule.

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

7.2 Receipts & Payments Report: To note the receipts and payments report up to 10.10.23

F.C. 141 The Receipts and Payments report up to 10.10.23 was noted.

It was noted the Clerk would provide Scribe read-only logins to the new councillors, a refresher training session on accessing Scribe would be provided to all councillors

7.3 Bank Statements: To note the bank statements as of 10.10.23

F.C. 142 The Unity and Lloyds bank statements as of 10.10.23 were noted.

7.4 Council Reserves: To note the reserves balance as of 10.10.23

F.C. 143 The council reserves report as of 10.10.23 was noted.

7.5 Expenses Claim Forms: To consider authorising the expenses claimed by the Clerk and Cllr Price

F.C. 144 It was agreed to approve the expenses claims from the Clerk totalling £24.82 and Cllr Price totalling £35.00.

PROPOSED: Cllr Watson. SECONDED: Cllr Wade. Eight votes in favour, one abstention due to declared interest. The motion was carried.

7.6 Bank Signatories: To review the council's bank signatories

F.C. 145 Unity Trust Bank account - It was agreed to remove former Cllr Ogden as signatory and C Collings as administrator on the Unity account, it was also agreed to add Cllr Wade, Cllr Haslam and Cllr Evans as signatories

Lloyds Bank account - It was agreed to remove former Cllr Ogden as signatory of the Lloyds Bank account and add Cllr Wade, Cllr Haslam and Cllr Evans as signatories

Cambridge Building Society account – It was agreed to set-up the account with Cllr Buchanan, Cllr Price, Cllr Wade and Cllr Haslam as signatories

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

7.7 External Audit: To note the External Auditors report and Certificate for the year ended 2022-2023, Section 3 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the Parish Council has been received. The notice of conclusion of audit will remain on display for 14 days in compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

F.C. 146 This was noted.

Item 8: Committees & External Representation

8.1 Personnel Committee – Terms of Reference: To consider adopting the revised terms of reference

F.C. 147 It was agreed to amend section two of the TOR so that:

Bullet point 1 reads 'the Vice-Chairman of Council and four members elected by Full Council'

Bullet point 2 it is amended so it is the Clerk in consultation with the Vice-Chairman of Council who selects a substitute member to attend

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

8.2 Personnel Committee – Membership: To review the membership of the Personnel Committee in line with the amended terms of reference

F.C. 148 The Chairman of Council reminded all members of the Nolan Principles and the importance of declaring any conflicts of interest.

It was agreed that Cllr Adam, Cllr Bramer and Cllr Sims would be appointed full members of the Personnel Committee, along with existing member Cllr Wade and Vice-Chairman; Cllr Buchanan.

Cllr Watson and Cllr Haslam would be appointed the substitute members for the committee.

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

8.3 KALC Gravesham Area Committee – Council Representatives: To appoint two voting members to attend the KALC Gravesham Area Committee for the remainder of the 2023/2024 municipal year

F.C. 149 It was agreed to appoint Cllr Buchanan and Cllr Watson as the Area Committee representatives. Cllr Wade was appointed to serve as substitute member.

PROPOSED: Cllr Haslam. SECONDED: Cllr Adam. All in favour.

8.4 Culverstone Community Association – Council Representative: To appoint one voting representative to attend the CCA meetings for the remainder of the 2023/2024 municipal year

F.C. 150 It was agreed to defer consideration of this item until the next meeting to enable Cllr Bramer, Cllr Evans and Cllr Price to hold a informal meeting with the Culverstone Community Association to confirm the right to nominate a representative and establish a good working relationship with the Association.

Item 9: Council Events

9.1 Gravesham with Meopham Rotary Club – Proposed Music Event: To consider the request from the Rotary Club to work in partnership to arrange a music-based event in Summer 2024

F.C. 151 It was agreed that in principle the Council supported the concept of a joint partnership to arrange a music-based event in Summer 2024 with Meopham Rotary Club.

A meeting will be convened with the Rotary Club, the council will be represented by Cllr Buchanan and Cllr Evans.

9.2 D-Day 80th Anniversary Commemorations: To consider how the Parish Council wishes to commemorate the D-Day Celebrations in June 2024

F.C. 152 It was agreed to defer consideration of this item, to enable officers to liaise with Hopehill Scout Campsite, and Luddesdown Society regarding their beacons to establish whether there are planned lightings of theirs.

Item 10: Environment & Amenities

10.1 Hook Green – Tree Works: To consider quotes received for tree works, following approval from the Tree Officer at GBC

F.C. 153 It was agreed to instruct NPC Tree Surgery to complete the work as per the specification at a cost of £400 + VAT.

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

10.2 Edmund Green – Trees: To consider agreeing to release the aerial survey report to residents as requested

F.C. 154 It was agreed to release the aerial survey report to residents of Edmund Close.

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

10.3 Judsons Play Area – Seat Replacement: To consider the quote received for replacing the swing seat at Judsons play area

F.C. 155 It was agreed to approve the quote received for the new play area seat from Playdale at a cost of £175.17 + VAT.

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

10.4 Motion from Cllr Sims – Meopham Windmill Site: To discuss concerns about the condition of the Windmill gardens and to decide whether to write to Meopham Windmill Trust

F.C. 156 Cllr Sims was invited to attend the Zoom meeting being held between KCC and MWT at which the Parish Council had been invited to attend, concerns about the Windmill site will be raised at this meeting.

11. Community Grants: To consider applications received to the Community Grant Scheme for the 2023-2024 financial year

F.C. 157 It was agreed to make the issue the following community grants

Organisation	Amount	Legal Power
Swale Community Leisure	£500	S145 of Local Government Act 1972
Elliott Holmes Memorial Fund	£500	S137 of Local Government Act 1972
Harvel Village Hall Management Committee	£500	S133 of Local Government Act 1972
Meopham Carers Support Group	£500	S19 of Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) 1976
We Are Beams	£500	S137 of Local Government Act 1972
Meopham Village Hall Committee	£250	S133 of Local Government Act 1972

Culverstone Community Association	£250	S133 of Local Government Act 1972
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PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr Haslam. All in favour.

Item 12: Council Archives

12.1 Scanning of Files: To consider quotes received for bulk scanning of all council files

F.C. 158 It was agreed to defer consideration of this item until the end of the current financial year

12.2 Chamber Table and Chairs: To consider donating the chamber table and twenty chairs currently in our storage container to Meopham Windmill Trust

F.C. 159 It was agreed to offer the chamber table and chairs to the Windmill Trust if they wish to accept them.

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

Item 13: GOV.UK Domain Name: To consider the quote received from CloudNext for renewing the www.meopham-pc.gov.uk domain name at a cost of £110 + VAT for a two-year period

F.C. 160 It was agreed to renew the GOV.UK domain name for a further two-year period with CloudNext for a cost of £110 + VAT.

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

Item 14: Items for Information: To receive verbal reports from all councillors for information only

F.C. 161 Cllr Buchanan reported that the Remembrance Event planning was proceeding well. She invited councillors to volunteer to assist on the day with the event. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk offered to do the road marshalling if councillors were unable to.

Cllr Watson reported he was aware from social media of a dog incident occurring on Judsons Recreation Ground

Item 15: Progress Tracker: To note the progress tracker of council decisions

F.C. 162 The progress tracker was noted.

F.C. 163 Cllr Price PROPOSED the council entering closed session. SECONDED: Cllr Buchanan. All in favour.

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 were asked to leave the meeting

Item 16: Personnel Update: To receive an update from the Chairman of Council on the suitability of the proposed consultant for the investigation

F.C. 164

The Chairman of Council reported on the feedback received from KALC on the suitability of the proposed consultant, Council HR & Governance Support

It was noted an additional meeting of the Personnel Committee would be convened to discuss the proposed consultant further and an extra-ordinary Full Council to review any recommendation from the Committee.

The meeting closed at 9:35pm