

Meopham Parish Council

St Johns Centre, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0AA - Tel: 01474 813779

Email: enquiries@meopham-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.meopham-pc.gov.uk



Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at 7:00pm at Meopham Village Hall

Members Present:

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

In Attendance:

S Fishenden – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
C Collings – Assistant Clerk

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

F.C. 400 Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr D Sims (illness) and Cllr S Gofton (prior commitment). Apologies were also noted from Borough Cllrs. Aslam, Tiran, Wardle and Harding.

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

F.C. 401 Cllr M Bramer and Cllr Green declared a non-pecuniary interest in any item relating to Meopham Windmill Trust as trustees of the Windmill Trust.

Cllr D Bramer declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6.2 as a Director of the Golden Thread Alliance who operate the school

Item 3: To approve minutes of the previous meeting: 21.02.23

F.C. 402 The minutes of the meeting held on 21.02.23 were approved.

PROPOSED: Cllr Ogden. SECONDED: Cllr Price. Five votes in favour and three abstentions. The motion was carried.

Item 4: Public Session & External Reports

4.1 Public Session

F.C. 403 There were no members of the public present.

4.2 Borough Councillors and County Councillor

F.C. 404 There were no Borough Cllrs or County Councillor present.

4.3 PCSO and Community Warden

F.C. 405 There was no PCSO or Community Warden present

4.4 Co-op Member Pioneer

- F.C. 406** The Member Pioneer was not present.
- Item 5: Clerk's Report: To note the report of items for information from the Clerk**
- F.C. 407** 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. 408** The expenses claims for the Clerk (£213.71) and Assistant Clerk (£118.38) were approved.
- PROPOSED: Cllr Price. SECONDED: Cllr Green. All in favour.
- 6.2 Schedule of Payments: To approve the schedule of payments awaiting authorisation up to 14.03.23**
- F.C. 409** The schedule of payments up to 14.03.23 were approved. The schedule is attached as an appendix to these minutes.
- PROPOSED: Cllr Price. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden. All in favour.
- 6.3 Receipts and Payments Report: To note the report up to 14.03.23**
- F.C. 410** The R&P Report up to 14.03.23 was noted.
- The Clerk confirmed he would circulate the Reserves report on a monthly basis going forward. The Clerk would also investigate if KCC bus shelter grant scheme is still running and query the £400 payment made by Zurich that is not recorded on Scribe.
- 6.4 Bank Statements: To receive the bank statements as of 14.03.23**
- F.C. 411** The bank statements from Unity and Lloyds up to 14.03.23 were noted.
- 6.5 Scribe: To consider the report from the Clerk on options to utilise Scribe's full functionality**
- F.C. 412** A verbal report was provided by Cllr Price. It was then agreed the following actions be taken:
1. That we bring bookkeeping 'in-house' and rely on Scribe alone for bookkeeping and audit trail purposes
 2. To dispense with the services of MI Bookkeeping & Payroll, effective from the 1st April 2023 for both bookkeeping and payroll
 3. To delegate to the Clerk to instruct a new payroll company to undertake all elements of the payroll task, including pensions on the basis that there will be no additional cost to the Council in making these arrangements
 4. That the Liaison Cllr for Finance & Audit is asked to check the financial record-keeping on Scribe and that the Clerk & RFO with the internal auditors on the new bookkeeping processes.
- PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden. All in favour.

6.6 New Parish Office – Telephone System: To retrospectively approve the adoption of a Zen VOIP telephone system, at a cost of £31.98 per month (cost for current office with BT is £45.71 per month)

F.C. 413 It was agreed to retrospectively approve the adoption of a Zen VOIP telephone system at a cost of £31.98 per month.

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

Item 7: Policy Review Timetable: To agree the proposed timetable for policy reviews

F.C. 414 The Policy Review timetable was approved.

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

Item 8: Environment & Amenities

8.1 Tree Works – Meopham Green: To approve the revised quotes for the removal of the tree at Meopham Green

F.C. 415 It was agreed to approve the quote for Elite Arborists at a cost of £995 + VAT. The power used to complete this work will be S.15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906

8.2 Tree Works – Edmund Green: To consider the quotes received for works to Edmund Green

F.C. 416 It was agreed to seek a further opinion from our arboriculture consultant on the potential damage that doing any works would cause to the trees and the potential danger any such harm would create. The opinion will then be shared with the residents of Edmund Close. The decision will be referred back to Full Council upon receiving the advice.

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

8.3 King's Coronation Trees: To consider the quotes received for the purchase of two trees for Meopham Green to commemorate the Coronation

F.C. 417 It was agreed to purchase two 18-20cm girth London Plane trees from Provender Nurseries at a total cost of £800 plus a £50 delivery charge.

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

8.4 Judsons – Perimeter Cut: To consider the quotes received for this work, this work was previously quoted for and approved by E&A in Jan 2021 but the contractor has not done the work requested

F.C. 418 It was agreed to approve the quote for the work received from Highview Tree Services at a total cost of £1150.

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

8.5 Streetlights: To consider writing to GBC to inform them the Parish Council no longer wishes to take responsibility for the

streetlights given the lack of structural/electrical testing documentation

- F.C. 419** It was agreed that given that it has been confirmed that the Parish Council is responsible for the Streetlights in Meopham, the new Council will be asked to consider which lights it wishes to maintain and keep illuminated once the structural and electrical testing documentation and updated inventory has been received.

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

Item 9: Youth & Community

9.1 Men's Shed: In light of similar groups operating within the parish and the lack of interest from the mobile shed team, to consider terminating all work on the Men's Shed project

- F.C. 420** It was agreed that the Clerk be asked to prepare a suitable method of consulting residents about the demand within the parish for a Men's Shed, this will then be agreed by Full Council in April 2023.

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

9.2 May Day Parade: To consider approving Meopham Community Academy's PTA; May Day Parade becoming a joint event with the Parish Council, and to consider how we can assist in the event

- F.C. 421** It was agreed the Parish Council would assist with marshalling the event on the basis of positive publicity being given to the council.

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

9.3 Picnic on the Green: To consider authorising the Clerk to arrange a Picnic on the Green event, and if so, to agree a date, venue and delegated budget

- F.C. 422** It was agreed to authorise the Clerk to arrange a Picnic on the Green event on 6th August 2023 at Meopham Green.

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

9.4 Request – Judsons Recreation Ground: To consider approving the request from KCC to hold a Foster Carers Picnic at the Recreation Ground on Monday 31 July and Sunday 13th August 2023. All risk assessments and insurance documents have been provided.

- F.C. 423** It was agreed to approve the request from KCC to hold Foster Carers Picnics on Monday 31 July and Sunday 13th August at Judsons Recreation Ground.

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

9.5 Family Fun Day – Admission Charge: To consider the request from Cllr D Bramer to implement an admission charge for the Easter Family Fun Day

- F.C. 424** It was agreed that the family fun day would be a free event but that donations would be invited.
PROPOSED: Cllr D Bramer. SECONDED: Cllr Green. All in favour.
- Item 10: Affordable Housing - Call for Sites: To consider the four sites received from the call for sites for affordable housing and to consider the response on these sites provided by English Rural Housing Association**
- F.C. 425** Cllr Wade declared a non-pecuniary interest in Site 1 - Culverstone, knowing the landowner. She confirmed she would abstain from voting.
- F.C. 426** It was agreed to recommend that English Rural Housing Association only investigate further Site 1 - Culverstone for a potential affordable housing development and that no further work is pursued for Sites 2-4 submitted

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr McTavish. Eight votes in favour and one abstention due to declared interest. The motion was carried.
- Item 11: Highways & Transport**
- 11.1 Highways Improvement Plan: To consider updating the HIP document to incorporate the concerns raised about pavement parking and the suggestion to extend double yellow lines to Norwood Lane/Nursery Road**
- F.C. 427** It was agreed to incorporate both concerns around pavement parking on the stretch of A227 between Meopham Windmill and Ifield Road, and the suggestion to extend double yellow line restrictions on Nursery Road/Norwood Lane, onto the Highways Improvement Plan at the lowest priority.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden DL. All in favour.
- 11.2 Hogarth Tyres: To consider making further representations to GBC about the issue of bus stop parking**
- F.C. 428** It was agreed that the Clerk would write again to Gravesham Borough Council to raise our concerns.

PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden DL. All in favour.
- 11.3 KCC Highways – Motion from Cllr Green: To instruct the Clerk to send a letter to KCC’s Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport**
- F.C. 429** It was agreed to write a letter to the Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport to address the following points:

“This Council is concerned at the apparent failure of KCC Highways and/or the relevant statutory undertaker to respond adequately and quickly enough to the sinkhole which appeared in the A227 at Neville Parade, Wrotham Road, Meopham.

It is particularly critical of the fact that no work took place at the site for a significant period of time; about the poor arrangements to control traffic at the site and of the lack of information for the public about the situation.

It considers that there should be a review of procedures in place to ensure no repetition of the problem in the future. The Council also requests that there is better circulation of information about planned roadworks”

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

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

F.C. 430 The written reports provided were noted. The Chairman invited Cllrs to provide any verbal liaison reports:

- Cllr McTavish reported that she would be arranging to meet with the Clerk to discuss grant funding for the Southfield Shaw defibrillator

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

F.C. 431 The following verbal reports were provided:

- Cllr Ogden DL had not received any response from Meopham Colts following the letter sent by the Clerk
- The Clerk would investigate with Darent Valley Hospital as to whether their stakeholder forum still exists
- Cllr D Bramer would be attending the annual meeting of the Culverstone Community Association
- The Harvel Village Hall AGM is being held on 20th April 2023.

A written report was noted from Meopham Windmill Trust

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

F.C. 432 This 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: Code of Conduct Complaint: To note the outcome of the complaint made, as determined by the Standards Committee at Gravesham Borough Council

F.C. 433 This was noted.

The meeting closed at 8:59pm