

**Meopham Parish Council
Environment & Amenities Committee Meeting
held on 1st November 2016 at 7.30 p.m.
at the Windmill, Meopham Green**

Committee Members: Cllrs Gofton (Chairman), Knott (Vice Chairman), D Bramer, Buchanan, Hasler, Howard, and Wade

In attendance: Mrs N Jerram (Clerical Assistant), Cllr M Bramer and Cllr P Luxford, Mary Blackwell (Kent Wildlife Trust), Gillian Willsher (M&DFG) and 1 member of public.

Item 1 **To receive Apologies for Absence**

E.46 There were no apologies

Item 2 **To receive Declarations of Interest**

E.47 There were no declarations of interest.

Item 3 **To approve minutes of the previous meeting**

E.48 The minutes of the meeting held on 06/09/16 were approved as a correct record on a proposal by Cllr Bramer, seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

Item 4 **To consider matters arising from the above Minutes**

E.49 There were no matters arising.

7.35pm – Cllr P Luxford arrived.

Item 5 **To consider and make recommendations on Planning Applications**

E.50 The following applications were considered by this Committee:

2016/0884 LOMER FARM ESTATE, WROTHAM ROAD, MEOPHAM KENT

Conversion of existing stables to 2 no. residential dwellings with associated parking.

Cllr Wade proposed a motion of no objection, subject to Green Belt Policy, Gravesham Borough Council and National Planning Policies and Planning Officer's approval. This was seconded by Cllr Hasler and all voted in favour. The motion was agreed.

2016/0893 NORWAY HOUSE, WROTHAM ROAD, MEOPHAM DA13 0AU

Erection of first floor rear extension to form bedroom with en-suite and walk-in wardrobe, and small external balcony. Re-design of ground floor to provide open plan kitchen/diner and installation of new bay window with window seat, new bi-fold doors.

Cllr Buchanan proposed a motion of no objection. This was seconded by Cllr Howard and all voted in favour. The motion was agreed.

2016/0145 THE OLD DAIRY BOCODA HILL FARM, WROTHAM ROAD, SOUTH STREET, MEOPHAM DA13 0QG

****AMENDED PLAN**** Loft conversion to create larger roof space to existing first floor landing area, study and two bedrooms, with single storey rear extension to form garden room.

Cllr Wade proposed a motion of no objection, subject to neighbour consultations, Green Belt Policy (boundary issues) and the Planning Officer's recommendation. This was seconded by Cllr Knott and all voted in favour. The motion was agreed.

Item 6 Village Greens/Harvel Pond

6.1 To note the results of the annual survey of the village greens, Judson's Recreation Ground and Southdown Shaw and to approve any work required.

E.51 The results of the survey were noted by all members.

Cllr Gofton spoke regarding bench maintenance and it was agreed that a list of all benches to be maintained would be drawn up, work on the benches to be teak oiled would commence immediately but the benches to be varnished would have to wait until spring as varnishing wet wood only seals in the water. On a motion proposed by Cllr Gofton, seconded by Cllr Buchanan, all members voted in favour of these works costing up to £50 per bench.

6.2 To receive an update on Harvel Pond and to note the results of the Green Survey carried out by KWT

On a motion proposed by Cllr Gofton, seconded by Cllr Buchanan, all members voted in favour of suspending standing orders to allow Mary Blackwell (KWT) to speak regarding the green report carried out on Harvel Pond.

E.52 Discussions followed on dredging the pond which is a costly exercise. It was agreed to look into contacting local farmers to take

the sludge away which is very fertile and of benefit to farming; this would reduce the cost. Care must be taken when dredging the pond as it is clay lined.

A form is to be sent to KMBRC (Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre) asking for information recorded on the wildlife in this area.

Members discussed working with KWT on identifying the trees surrounding the pond and what can be safely cut back. Mary Blackwell (KWT) advised that the dredging of the pond should only be carried out between November and February and the depth of the water at the time of dredging was an important factor.

Cllr Gofton thanked Mary Blackwell (KWT) for attending the meeting.

Standing Orders were then reinstated.

6.3 To note date and venue of meeting with residents of the parish concerning Harvel Pond

- E.53** Members noted date and venue – 23rd November, Harvel Village Hall, 7-8pm. It was agreed a poster advertising this event would be circulated on all notice boards and social media.

Action: Clerk

6.4 To approve the removal of the duck house on Harvel Pond

- E.54** Members agreed to defer removing the standing duck house due to the possibility wildlife may be using it and to await the wildlife report from KMBRC.

6.5 To set up a working group for Harvel Pond

- E.55** Cllr Gofton asked members to volunteer to be part of a working group to consist of 4 people to oversee progress on the pond. Cllr D Bramer volunteered to lead with Cllr Gofton's assistance.

6.6 To authorise the clerk to spend up to £2,000 from the Village Green/Harvel Pond budget to remove the sludge from the pond

- E.56** On a motion proposed by Cllr Gofton and seconded by Cllr Buchanan, 5 voted in favour of the above motion and 2 voted against. The motion was agreed.

6.7 To authorise the Clerk to seek grant funding for work on Harvel Pond

- E.57** On a motion proposed by Cllr Gofton and seconded by Cllr Howard, all voted in favour of the above motion. The motion was agreed.

8.45pm – Mary Blackwell (KWT) left the meeting.

Item 7 **Rights of Way, including Footpaths Groups**

7.1 Update on Millsole Green

E.58 Cllrs D Bramer and M Bramer visited Millsole Green and reported as follows:

Millsole Green is a small, unfenced green which is not substantially overgrown and has a footpath which is passable. Cllr M Bramer advised all present that Millsole Green is not owned by MPC, the green has two owners who do not live in the vicinity and the Parish Council therefore has no jurisdiction over this green. This information was confirmed to M&DFG (Meopham & District Footpaths Group) along with a copy of the land registry plans.

7.2 Update from Meopham & Districts Footpaths Group

E.59 No update from M&DFG.

Members discussed the proposed diversion of Footpaths NS258 & NS260 located at Meopham Vineyard. Cllr Buchanan confirmed there would be a site meeting for members to attend on Friday 4th November. It was agreed that members would respond individually to KCC PROW with their views and any concerns.

Item 8 **Recreation Ground and Playground Equipment**

8.1 To receive an update on wetpour repairs

E.60 Cllr Gofton reported the wetpour repairs were currently in progress.

8.2 To receive an update on the cutting back of the perimeter vegetation and the tree work behind the fenced in play equipment

E.61 Members noted the perimeter cut back had been completed by Highview Tree Services. Cllr Gofton spoke on the tree work carried out behind the play equipment by O.T.S. Members agreed further cutting back was required as there is overhanging vegetation. Clerk to speak to contractor to quote for further work.

Action: Clerk

E.62 Members discussed a residents new fence erected on Judson's Recreation Ground and if any re-planting is required following the removal of vegetation to accommodate the new fencing. It was agreed Cllrs Gofton and Knott would meet the service contractor at the fence to discuss.

Action: Clerk/Cllrs Gofton/Knott

8.3 To approve and agree, if appropriate, the purchase of 1 no. Cardiff litter bin with generic key to replace broken bin on Recreation Ground

E.63 All members agreed to approve the purchase of the new bin.

On a motion proposed by Cllr Gofton, seconded by Cllr Knott, all members voted in favour of suspending standing orders to allow a member of the public to speak regarding the allotments.

Item 9 **Allotments**

To discuss points raised by an allotment holder

- a) Allotment Agreement
- b) Relevance of the 1950 Allotment Act in respect of the tenancy agreement
- c) Compostable Toilets
- d) Rainwater Catcher
- e) Seedbank
- f) Use of weed killer on the allotment site
- g) Are the M&D Allotment Association members of the National Allotment Society

E.64 Members discussed the above points as follows:

- a) The Allotment Association has a written Agreement with Meopham Parish Council until 2018
- b) The Tenancy Agreement was drawn up by NALC and is fully compliant
- c) A formal proposal in writing from the Allotment Association regarding compostable toilets should be received by the parish council
- d) Rainwater catchers; a proposal should officially be in writing from the Allotment Association
- e) A seed bank requirement; Allotment Association to look into Allotment Agreement.
- f) Use of Weed killer (Allotment Association to check in Agreement)
- g) M&D Allotment Association are members of the National Allotment Society

Standing orders were then reinstated

Item 10 **Youth Club – Update**

E.65 Cllr Gofton informed members she had spoken with The Grand and there is a KCC bus located in Northfleet which is available for use (authority from KCC in progress). She had also spoken with Meopham

Leisure Centre who had confirmed that the bus could park at the centre on Tuesday evenings and the youth club could use the facilities. A meeting is to be set up with The Grand and Meopham Leisure Centre to finalise arrangements.

Action: Cllr Gofton

Item 11 Litter Pick – Update

E.66 Cllr Gofton reported attendance at the last litter pick was disappointing but several black sacks of rubbish were collected. Four litter pick dates have been advertised for 2017.

Item 12 Christmas Events

12.1 To approve costs for the purchase and erection of a Christmas tree on Meopham Green

E.67 Cllr Wade informed members that the arrangements were in progress.

12.2 To note the arrangements for turning on the lights for the Christmas tree on Meopham Green

E.68 Members noted arrangements - 21st December at 8pm. Cllr Hasler confirmed that he had spoken with two residents involved in the local community who would be honoured to switch on the tree lights.

Action: Cllr Hasler

12.3 To note the arrangements for the carol singing event on Meopham Green

E.69 Members noted arrangements – 21st December at 8pm.

Item 13 Financial Matters

13.1 To consider and approve the small grant applications submitted

E.70 Members discussed all the applications and agreed to honour all grant applications received, except Harvel Village Hall, where a £500 grant was agreed. A recommendation for approval for the grant to Kent Windmill Trust would be put to Full Council as this was over the £500 small grant budget limit. It was agreed that a virement for any shortfall from the grants budget would be made from an underspent budget at the end of the financial year. This motion was proposed by Cllr Gofton, seconded by Cllr Howard, 6 members voted in favour with 1 abstention.

Action: Clerk

13.2 To approve the Environment and Amenities Committee Expenditure from 06/09/2016 to 26/10/16

E.71 This was noted and approved by all members.

13.3 To note the Environment and Amenities Committee Income and Expenditure for the 2016/2017 financial year

E.72 This was noted by all members.

13.4 To consider and approve the proposed Action Plan for 2017/2018

E.73 Discussions followed and members agreed to add the Youth Facilities to the Action Plan. This motion was proposed by Cllr Gofton, seconded by Cllr D Bramer and all voted in favour. The Action Plan was approved.

13.5 To consider and approve the proposed Environment and Amenities Committee budget for the 2017/2018 financial year

E.74 Cllr Gofton proposed a motion to approve the proposed budget; this was seconded by Cllr Knott and all voted in favour of approval.

Item 14 Correspondence

14.1 To note correspondence received

E.75 Members noted correspondence list.

Meeting closed at 10.05pm

