

## PLAXTOL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held in Plaxtol Memorial Hall on Monday 4 April 2016 at 8.00pm

**Present:** Cllrs P Thomas (Chairman), M Brewin, J Cannon, M Carboni, J Denham, K Johnson, R Simpson; L Thomas (Clerk); 2 members of the public

**Apologies:** Cllr D Fermor; Boro Cllrs S Perry, T Shaw, M Taylor

### 1. Matters raised by the public / Borough Councillors

Mr Stuart Cheesman and Ms Alex McMaster were present to comment on planning application TM/16/00355/FL, Kingsdown, a neighbouring property. Letters had been submitted by both parishioners covering objections to the size and prominence of the proposed garage, its elevation and dominance of the street scene, the impact on neighbours' sight lines, its impact on the linear development of The Street and its detrimental effect on the aesthetics and village feel. They pointed out that the applicants had recently demolished a garage at the rear of the property to make way for a side extension, and that other garages situated at the front of properties were at street level and therefore not as intrusive as the proposed building.

The Chairman thanked them for their input.

### 2. Declarations of interest

None.

### 3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 7 March 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### 4. Planning

This item was moved up the agenda for the benefit of the members of the public present.

Call for Sites. The Chairman reported that the 'Call for Sites' list was due to be published this month, along with the technical evaluation of each site. There was currently an opportunity for parish councils to make representations to TMBC, but as this period would extend until the autumn, Councillors agreed they would await the publication of the list before making any response, if necessary. The Chairman advised that there was an ongoing problem with the capacity of the pumping station at Basted, which would be exacerbated should development in the area look likely. Southern Water had so far failed to address the issue and Boro Cllrs Shaw and Taylor had now intervened. River conservationists had also agreed to conduct pollution tests, should a response from Southern Water prove unsatisfactory.

#### **TMBC decisions**

Dux Barn, Dux Lane TM/15/04073/FL

Change of use of small area of derelict ground between residential barn conversion and agricultural building from redundant agricultural use to residential garden amenity space. **Granted permission.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Golding Orchard, The Street TM/16/00279/TNCA

T1 - Weeping Willow - Raise lower branches and remove damaged limbs in the crown. T2 Leylandii hedge - reduce by 3m. **No objection.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

**Parish council decisions**

7 Church Row, Plaxtol Lane TM/16/00565/TNCA

Reduce Pine by 10% . The Tree Warden reported that the action was needed for the health of the tree and to improve light. **No objection.**

4 Grange Cottages, Grange Hill TM/16/00658/FL

Detached double garage. **No objection.**

Kingsdown, The Street TM/16/00355/FL

Construct detached garage within front garden adjacent to frontage.

**Objection.** Proposal does not conform to Plaxtol Parish Design Statement: Section 2 (a) (page 32) in particular to the building line, scale and massing and also consideration of the lie and level of the ground and positioning within the plot. In addition the proposal does not bear in mind the impact on neighbours, especially in regard to sight lines (Plaxtol Planning Review page 6)c, the linear aspect of The Street and the general proximity to neighbours (Plaxtol Planning Review, section f on page 9). Proposal includes a high pitched roof and is in general raised from street level by virtue of the slope leading up to the main dwelling; it is worth noting that the garage built opposite is on street level and therefore the visual impact significantly less.

Salmons Farm, Long Mill Lane TM/16/00216/FL

Demolition of existing garage and stable/store. Erection of a replacement garage/store with residential annexe at first floor level and relocation of shed and oil storage tank. It was noted that although this application had appeared on TMBC's list of validated applications, the paperwork had not yet been received. Using paperwork available online, Councillors agreed a view of **no objection.**

[Note: This decision will be forwarded to TMBC by the response date of 25 April, subject to there being no adverse comments from neighbouring residents.]

Wealden House, Long Mill Lane TM/16/00555/FL

Part single, part two storey rear extension, loft conversion including dormer window to front roof slope and 3.no rooflights to rear roof slope. **No objection.**

**5. Matters arising from the minutes of 7 March 2016**

Item 6: DCLG consultation of planning changes. Cllr Simpson reported that he and Cllrs Brewin and Carboni had responded jointly to this consultation. He advised that the proposals were for far reaching changes to the planning system, with key elements summarised as follows:

- creating 'permission in principle' whereby approval of land use, location and amount of development would be separated from approval of technical details (what the buildings actually looked like), changes intended for large sites. A developer would submit details regarding use of land, location of development and proposed number of dwellings. No technical details would be submitted at this stage. Once given, a 'permission in principle' could not be rescinded and the LA was not empowered to impose conditions on in principle decisions. As with minor sites, only an applicant would be able to appeal against a LA decision. Planning applications under this process must be housing led, though could include provision for retail/commercial space. Sensitive sites, those subject to flood risk, contamination or heritage sites, would have additional protection. Councillors had flagged the lack of

- reference to Green Belt, AONB and SSSIs and their protection;
- LAs to hold a brownfield site register;
- LAs to hold a published small sites register, sites of between 1-4 plots suitable for custom house building. Councillors drew attention to the need to protect AONB, SSSIs and the impact of development on the neighbouring area;
- improving the timeliness of LAs reaching decision on applications. Councillors were broadly in agreement with this proposal though noted that the less time available to the LA, the less time available to consult with parishes;
- introduction of competition in the handling of planning applications whereby applicants could chose to have an application processed (from validation to recommendation) by a body other than the LA, although the final decision would still rest with the LA. Councillors were not in favour of private providers and the consequent reduction in the role of the LA planning officers;
- improved transparency of the financial benefits of individual planning applications.

Item 6: KALC membership survey. Cllr Carboni reported that he had responded to positively to this survey.

Item 14: Cllr Denham advised that there had been no response to date for a volunteer to take forward the project at the Spoute recreation ground. She and Cllr Carboni would be meeting to discuss the issue further.

## 6. Council Matters

The Clerk reported that the statutory time period for the calling of an election following the resignation of Cllr Stokes was reaching its conclusion. Councillors agreed that on receipt of confirmation from TMBC that no election had been called, a notice would be placed in the Herald inviting applications for co-option onto the Council, especially from residents in the Basted area of the Parish.

**Action:**  
**Clerk**

## 7. Correspondence

### KCC

Community Liaison Officer: Tesco Green Space grant programme - details at [www.groundwork.org.uk/sites/tescocommunityscheme](http://www.groundwork.org.uk/sites/tescocommunityscheme).

Flood and water management: Flood Risk to Communities consultation. Cllr Brewin will consider a response.

**Action:**  
**Cllr**  
**Brewin**

### TMBC

Crime Prevention Panel: minutes, 14.3.16.

Joint Transportation Board: decision sheet, 14.3.16.

Scrutiny & Partnerships Manager: Equality Objectives consultation.

### Other

Action with Communities in Rural Kent: Inside Track, Issue 235, funding opportunities; Oast to Coast, Spring 2016; Community Hall Convention, 2.4.16; planning workshop, 16.4.16; Kent & Medway Funding Fair, 1.6.16 – details at [www.fundingforall.org.uk](http://www.fundingforall.org.uk).

**Action:**  
**Cllr**  
**Brewin**

Applause Rural Touring: newsletter, March 2016.

Gatwick Airport: response to Arrivals Review. Cllr Brewin will examine the report and advise of any issues affecting the local area.

KALC: NALC newsletters, 16.3.16, 24.3.16; NALC national developments bulletin, 24.3.26; emergency planning workshop, 19.5.16; Local Council Review, Spring 2016; review of KCC funded bus services consultation. Cllr Thomas advised that KCC needed to achieve substantial savings but that the bus routes identified for cuts did not affect Plaxtol.

Kent Men of the Trees: Arbor, Spring 2016.

Kent Wildlife Trust: newsletter, Spring 2016; notification of group meetings, 21.3.16, 5.4.16.

Tonbridge & Malling Seniors' Forum: open meeting 29.4.16.

E-watch: nos 1327-1334.

## 8. Payments/Finance

The Chairman advised that Boro Cllr Perry had confirmed that he had secured regeneration funding for Plaxtol and that these funds were being held over pending a proposed project. Suggested projects currently were to widen the car park entrance for ease of access, and to pursue the possibility of improving mobile phone coverage. Any project must impact on businesses in the area. The issue would be further discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting on 18 April.

Cllr Cannon advised that the Plaxtol Players were seeking help with funding new stage blocks for the Memorial Hall. The current stage blocks were heavy, unwieldy and difficult to store thus restricting opportunities for use. The new lightweight blocks were easy to assemble and would benefit other Parish groups and the school. Councillors agreed a contribution of £500.

A financial statement and bank reconciliation was distributed to members.

The following payments were approved:	£
H&E Tree services – maintenance work at Spoute Rec	288.00
KALC – annual membership 2016/17	468.82
R Williams – fence repairs, gate installation	1,721.95
NALC – Local Council Review subscription 2016/17	54.00
PFL electrical – street light repairs	369.60
TMBC car park rates	186.34
CPRE annual membership 2016/17	36.00
ACRK – annual membership 2016/17	50.00
Communicorp subscription 2016/17	96.00
Young Kent – Youth Club affiliation fee 2016/17	99.00
KCPFA – anniversary appeal donation	50.00
TMBC – Y2 Crew summer scheme donation	100.00
Clerk's pay and reimbursements March 2016	591.89
BMPOS – annual contribution 2016/17	337.50
Eon Energy – street lighting March 2016	71.25

## 9. Emergency Plan

Cllr Brewin reported that UK Power Networks were encouraging vulnerable residents to register with their Priority Services Register for priority treatment in the event of a prolonged power cut. A notice will be placed in the Herald advertising this service to parishioners. It was agreed that Cllr Brewin would also explore the possibility of the Parish Council creating its own list of vulnerable residents by inviting those who need priority support during an emergency to register with the Council.

**Action:**  
**Cllr**  
**Brewin**

#### 10. Environment

Cllr Johnson proposed that entry into the Trees in the Village competition be deferred until 2017 as there was still some maintenance work to be done, especially after the recent storm. He advised that entry into the competition was a useful exercise for gaining an outside report on the condition of local trees and that Plaxtol village had last been entered in 2014. Councillors agreed that a three year cycle was appropriate.

#### 11. Basted Mill Public Open Space

Cllrs Simpson and Johnson had attended the meeting on 10 March 2016 and reported on the following issues:

- that the BMPOS Chair had noted the financial pressures on TMBC and that their continued financial support at historic levels could not be assumed. [Subsequently it was confirmed that funding for 2016/2017 would remain the same];
- that BGPC's auditor had agreed to review BMPOS accounts also;
- that the Chair was working on the new management plan, which would drive the budget along with the updated workplan for 2016/2017;
- that a website was currently being worked on;
- that the financial year end cash position looks likely to be broadly the same as the prior year;
- that there had been vehicle damage to the grass verges which needed repair.

#### 12. Memorial Hall

Cllr Thomas reported that the meeting of 30 March 2016 raised the following issues:

- that the remaining asbestos was to be removed during the summer holidays at a cost of around £5k;
- that some external decoration would take place at the same time;
- that the Hall's finances were robust;
- that a new carpet had been laid in the foyer.

Cllr Cannon also advised that she was investigating the possibility of replacing the stage carpet.

#### 13. Any Other Business

Cllr Cannon reported that the footpath sign on Allens Lane had gone missing. This will be reported to KCC.

It was noted that four crimes had been reported during the period since the last meeting: theft of a chainsaw in Long Mill Lane; three instances of damage to windows in Long Mill Lane.

The Chairman reminded Councillors of the Annual Parish Meeting on 18 April 2016 in the Memorial Hall.

#### 14. Date of Next Meeting:

Annual Meeting: Monday 9 May at 8 pm

Parish Council meeting: Monday 9 May at 8.30pm

The meeting closed at 10.15pm

Subject to approval