

PLAXTOL PARISH COUNCIL

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

Present: Cllrs P Thomas (Chairman), M Brewin, J Cannon, M Carboni, J Denham, D Fermor, K Johnson, R Simpson; L Thomas (Clerk)

Apologies: Cllr I Stokes; Boro Cllrs S Perry, T Shaw, M Taylor

1. Matters raised by the public / Borough Councillors

None.

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 7 December 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising

Item 6: Local Council Tax Support Scheme review. Cllr Simpson advised that the focus of the review was those councils which had failed to pass on support funding, which did not apply to TMBC, although examples of good practice were also being sought. Cllr Simpson agreed to consult with Boro Cllr Taylor before considering a response further.

Action:
Cllr
Simpson

5. Correspondence

TMBC

Mayor's Office: Mayor's Charity Quiz Night, 27.2.16

Other

Action with Communities in Rural Kent: Inside Track, Issue 233, December 2015 – funding sources.

Gatwick Airport Ltd: response to Government announcement on airport expansion.

KALC: NALC newsletter, 8.12.15; River Medway flood storage areas, Environment Agency newsletter, December 2015; Highways England stakeholder consultation on proposals for a permanent M20 lorry area at Stanford. Further details from www.gov.uk/government/consultations/management-of-freight-vehicles-through-kent; NALC bulletin on recent national developments; Parish News, December 2015; Area Committee meeting papers, 14.1.16; DCLG National Planning Policy Framework consultation on proposed changes. Cllr Carboni outlined the areas for change, affordable housing provision, density of development, sustainability, etc, and requested comments from Councillors prior to making a response before the 25.1.16 deadline.

Action:
All Cllrs

Kent Downs AONB: Newsletter, December 2015.

Kent Men of the Trees: Arbor, Autumn 2015.

Kent Wildlife Trust: Wild Kent, Winter 2015/16; E-newsletter, 22.12.15.

KSS Air Ambulance: letter of thanks for donation.

E-watch: Nos 1298-1304.

6. Payments/Finance

Councillors received an amended draft budget for 2016/17. Cllr Simpson advised that since the last meeting notification had been received of the tax base calculation, plus details of the Council Tax Support grant, which was to continue for the forthcoming year. It was noted that the tax base had risen slightly resulting in a decrease of 0.5% to the tax payer on a static precept. Councillors also noted that DCLG had confirmed that referendum principles on local tax increases of 2% and above were not being extended to Parish Councils for 2016/17.

A budget of £36,623 was considered against a projected income of £29,313, leaving a shortfall of £7,310. Councillors noted that provision had been made within the budget for improvements to the Spoute Recreation Ground. It was also noted that TMBC had advised that the funding methodology in respect of the financial arrangement and support grant was likely to change from 2017 onwards as a result of funding cuts at County and Borough level. In view of these issues, the Chairman proposed a 5% increase in the precept for 2016/17 to maintain healthy reserves. It was noted that a 5% increase in precept would mean a 4.5% increase to the tax payer with annual increases of £1.24 for a Band A property, £1.44 for a Band B property and £1.85 for a Band D property.

Cllr Simpson proposed adoption of a budget of £36,623, with a 5% increase to the precept increasing projected income to £30,488 and reducing the deficit of expenditure over income to £6,136. This was seconded by Cllr Cannon and unanimously agreed.

A financial statement and bank reconciliation was distributed to members.

The following payments were approved:	£
Plaxtol Herald – annual donation	1,000.00
Age Concern, Malling – donation	150.00
Plaxtol Playtime – donation	500.00
T&M Citizens' Advice Bureau	250.00
Clerk salary & reimbursements December 2015	525.71
Eon Energy – street lighting December 2015	71.25

7. Planning

Councillors noted that application TM/15/02628/FL, land rear of Shrubshall Meadow, had been withdrawn.

Parish Council decisions

Cob Orchard, Tree Lane TM/15/03975/TNCA

T1 - Row of leylandii x 6 - Reduce by 30% to allow more light into the garden. The Tree Warden agrees that the leylandii need a serious reduction in height to allow more light into the garden and avoid interfering with overhead power cables. **No objection.**

Malling Well House, The Street TM/15/04003/TNCA

T1 - Oak tree in the rear garden- Section fell and remove stump with the use of a stump grinder. Situated directly underneath high voltage power cables. This tree is regularly cut back by the power network and as a result, has had its main leader removed. T2 - 2x Conifers- Section fell, leaving stumps as low as possible. These trees are very close to the property and drainage and offer no real value to the property. The Tree Warden supports removal of the oak tree

which has become disfigured and of the conifers which have outgrown their position. **No objection.**

8. **Young People**

It was reported that the Youth Group organisers had submitted an updated budget along with minutes of their November meeting and agreed Terms of Reference. The Group is due to recommence on 29 January and members will be required to pay subscriptions for the first 6 months up front which will compensate for fluctuating attendance. The Parish Council had been asked to fund some basic equipment to the value of £600 on behalf of the Group and Councillors agreed to the funding. The Parish Council will make the order and the equipment will be added to the Council's insurance. It was noted that the organisers had expressed an interest in becoming an organisation of the Parish Council and it was agreed that the Clerk should investigate the implications of such a move.

**Action:
Clerk**

9. **Recreation Grounds**

It was reported that the organiser of the exercise group at the Spoute Recreation Ground had confirmed that the group was always mindful of the needs of other users. They had agreed to cease using the benches as step equipment. It was noted that the organiser had also reported a high incidence of dog fouling in the recreation ground. It was agreed that the sign advising that no dogs were allowed on the ground would be turned to face the road, which would make it more obvious to visitors. Further signage would be considered if necessary. A reminder to residents regarding the 'no dogs' rule would be placed in the Herald and on the website.

**Action:
Clerk**

Cllr Denham reported that a notice was to be placed in this month's Herald and on the website asking residents to select a preferred equipment installation from a choice of two proposals. Posters would also be displayed around the Parish. Comments were to be received by the end of February and a fund raising committee would be put in place in March. The equipment provider had also been asked to replace both sets of swings, which they were offering at a discounted price.

**Action:
Cllr
Denham**

Cllr Denham reported that the playground inspection had highlighted some low risk repairs required in both recreation grounds. It was agreed that repairs to the Winnie Bowes recreation ground should proceed but that those at the Spoute should await the overall upgrade. It was noted that the approach to the Winnie Bowes recreation ground had once again been highlighted as in need of repair and Cllr Denham will pursue this issue further. She will also take over the regular monitoring of the play areas.

**Action:
Cllr
Denham**

Cllr Denham reported that the plans for the new access to the GML would be finalised by February. It was thought that extra signage might be needed on the highway and that this was being confirmed.

10. **Highways & Transport**

The following road closures were reported:

Long Mill Lane, Plaxtol from 30.1.16 for up to 19 days for the installation of fibre optic cable;

Long Mill Lane, Platt, from 22.2.16 for a new connection to be carried out by SE Water;

Grange Hill, Plaxtol, from 7.3.16 for maintenance work by UK Power Networks.

It was noted that the drain in Church Hill was again blocked. Cllr Thomas agreed to pursue this issue with Kent Highways.

Action:
Cllr
Thomas

11. Any Other Business

It was noted that the car park fence was in need of repair and that this was being investigated.

Cllr Fermor reported that the phone box on Church Hill was in need of extensive repair and that she would pursue this issue with BT.

The Chairman advised that he would be placing a notice in the Herald regarding the national 'Clean for the Queen' environmental campaign.

It was noted that three crimes had been reported since the last meeting: damage to a vehicle in the road in The Street; theft of power tools from a shed in Long Mill Lane; theft of electrical equipment from a workshop in Basted Lane.

Action:
Cllrs
Fermor,
Thomas

12. Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 1 February 2016 at 8 pm.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm