

PLAXTOL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held via Zoom on 3 August 2020 at 8.00pm

Present: Cllrs P Thomas (Chairman), M Brewin, J Budworth, J Denham, G French, M Hiddleston, M Julio, S Knights; L Thomas (Clerk); Boro Cllr W Palmer; Kent County Cllr H Rayner

Apologies: Cllr M Carboni; Boro Cllrs T Shaw, M Taylor

1. Matters raised by the public / Borough Councillors

County Cllr Rayner reported that the costs to KCC of Covid-19 were still rising with a projected in-year deficit of c£20 million. Funding in excess of £30 million had been targeted towards adult services, care homes and the provision of PPE. Schools were preparing to re-open in September and bus services were re-organising to run with reduced loadings.

Cllr Rayner advised that in a national reorganisation of local government, the Minister for Local Government, Simon Clarke, was seeking extensive devolution and reformation of the current 3-tier system. The early abolition of District and Borough Councils and County Councils was being sought to be replaced by Unitary Councils with combined powers and elected mayors, with enhanced powers for parishes.

Cllr Rayner also advised that he was currently pursuing the enforcement of mineral extraction planning regulations.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Rayner for his report.

Boro Cllr Palmer reported that issues had been raised at PTAB in respect of the 21-day rule regarding changes to online provision to allow notification of validation dates to parishes within their respective parish areas. It had been confirmed that the IT department were currently working on the necessary changes.

Boro Cllr Palmer advised that TMBC had so far used c£8 million of reserves as a result of the pandemic. She also reported that re-organisation was taking place at a local level with TMBC reviewing the number of Councillors in each area, which should be calculated according to number of parishioners. The review would address some anomalies, with adjustments being made where necessary. She advised that revised figures were being produced in respect of the Local Plan, to be published 2 weeks before inspection hearing dates in October and November. These were Phase 1 hearing dates covering legal compliance, housing supply and Green Belt. Phase 2 hearings would take place next spring. Neighbouring Council were at various stages of review.

Boro Cllr Palmer reminded parishioners that voter registrations were now being sent online and in the post and must be completed.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Palmer for her contribution.

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 6 July 2020 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising

- i) Item 5, Annual Parish Meeting (APM) summary. The Chairman reminded Councillors that, as the APM for 2020 had been cancelled due to Covid-19 lockdown, it had been agreed that the Chairman should place a report of Council activities for the year on the website. The report had been circulated to all colleagues for comments, which had been incorporated. The final version was approved by Councillors for publication.
- ii) Cllr French confirmed that the necessary repairs to MR322 had been effected.

5. Council Matters

The Chairman confirmed that Cllr Mark Hiddleston was now formally co-opted to the Council. Councillors welcomed him to his first meeting.

6. Correspondence

A list of correspondence is at Appendix 1.

7. Payments/Finance

- i) Councillors were advised that internal audit procedures were due for review, having been last reviewed in 2017. It was noted that the latest Governance & Accountability guide (2019) was now recommending annual as opposed to three yearly review. It was agreed that review documents would be circulated to the Councillors with current responsibility for financial matters, viz Cllrs Brewin, Carboni, Knights, Thomas to agree a review process.

Action:
Cllrs
Brewin,
Carboni,
Knights,
Thomas

- ii) Receipts & Payments. Councillors noted that the Cllrs Brewin, Carboni, Knights & Thomas had authorised the transfer of funds held in a deposit at Barclays Bank (£6,219) to the new account at Unity. Until interest rates improve, it had been agreed not to seek a deposit account elsewhere. Application for a corporate payment card was also being made to avoid Clerk & Councillors having to pay for small items or subscriptions and then seek reimbursement.

Councillors noted that an interim payment of £9,307 had been made to UKPN; this payment had been approved at the July meeting.

A financial statement and bank reconciliation was distributed to members.

The following receipts were noted:

	£
Bank interest	1.67

The following payments were approved:

	£
H&E Tree Services: allotment hedges	168.00
Clerk salary & reimbursements July 2020	791.02
Eon Energy: street lighting July 2020	127.00

8. Planning

- i) The Chairman advised that the Local Plan Phase 1 hearing dates had been confirmed as 6-8 October, 3-5 and 10-11 November. Phase 2 hearings would be held in early 2021.
- ii) Cllr Brewin outlined possible adjustments to Council procedures to accommodate the new 21-day rule. It was noted that there are, and would continue to be, planning applications coming before the Council which would need a response to TMBC between scheduled Parish Council meetings. It was proposed that Council could either arrange a second public meeting each month to consider such applications, or that a decision could be taken by

Councillors between meetings for all non-contentious applications, with a public meeting being called only for those applications considered to be contentious. Councillors noted that this would of necessity be a judgement call and it was agreed that a definition of 'contentious' would need to be formalised. Non-contentious applications would be considered by a sub-committee of Council, although all Councillors reserved the right to be involved in the decision making process if they so wished. A revised planning procedure paper would be drawn up to reflect the new processes for approval by Council and the terms of reference and constitution of the planning sub-committee. The process for the public's involvement in the new procedure would be made available on the website.

Action:
Cllrs
Brewin,
Carboni,
Denham,
French;
Clerk

ii) Planning applications

TMBC decisions

Chance Cottage, Long Mill Lane TM/20/01002/FL

Development of a detached, 1.5 storey, 2 bedroom dwelling on an infill site. **Granted permission.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Chance Cottage, Long Mill Lane TM/20/01283/RD

Details of condition 2 (materials) pursuant to planning permission TM/20/00096/FL (Construction of detached dwelling). Application **withdrawn.**

Crowhurst Farm, Crowhurst Lane TM/20/00994/FL

Demolition of existing cottage and erection of new dwelling (amendment to extant planning permission reference TM/03/00743/FL). Resubmission of TM/20/00016/FL. **Granted permission.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Dux House, Dux Hill TM/20/01070/FL

Demolition of existing single storey, lean to roof extension. Construction of replacement single storey, lean to roof extension to form revised interior layout. **Granted permission.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Elm Tree Cottage, Yopps Green TM/20/01320/TNCA

Mixed native hedge (H1) to be reduced in height to 2.3m approx, and Hawthorn (T1) to reduce in height to 1.8m approx. **No objection.** Following receipt of the Tree Warden's report the Parish Council had not objected to this application.

The Former Rectory, The Street TM/20/01260/TNCA

T1 Cob Tree - fell because tree is dying. The Tree Warden confirms the tree is dying and needs to be felled. **No objection.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

High Hope, The Street TM/20/01163/TNCA

Lawson Cypress Tree - section fell to ground level, Purple Leaf Plum Tree - reduce by 1 to 1.5 metres, Maple Tree - reduce by 1 to 1.5 metres and Silver Birch Tree - reduce by 3 to 4 metres. All these trees have grown too large for their surroundings and are being reduced to improve the health and longevity of the trees. **No objection.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Parish council decisions

Councillors noted that the responses in respect of the following had been made to TMBC since the June report:

Cobwood, The Street TM/20/01354/FL

Conversion of existing garage and utility area to form new dining/family room. New window and door to front elevation, infill of existing windows and formation of new door opening to rear. Existing drive to be widened. **No objection.**

Forge Cottage, The Street TM/20/01355/FL TM/20/01356/LB

Demolition of ground floor WC and existing roof dormer. Construction of single storey rear extension with rooflight and porch roof. Construction of new dormer to rear roof slope to afford improved access on the staircase. Convert existing kitchen to boot room and WC including new external door and window. Opening up of internal

staircase walls (retaining timber structure). Form new door opening between study and new kitchen extension. Line basement walls with waterproofing and insulated studwork. Remove concrete basement floor to allow waterproofing and insulation. New retaining walls to rear patio and steps up to garden level. **No objection.**

Councillors considered the following applications:

Allens Lodge, Allens Lane TM/20/01513/FL

Proposed single storey extension and general alterations to Allens Lodge to accommodate an internal swimming pool with ancillary facilities. **No objection.**

Weavers Cottage, Sheet Hill TM/20/01487/FL, TM/20/01488/LB

Refurbishment of existing concrete framed detached garage using new oak weatherboarding and the addition of a new pitched tiled roof. **No objection.**

9. Meeting Feedback

KALC 23.7.20. Cllr Thomas attended this meeting, which was held via Zoom. He advised that the meeting was mainly concerned with the re-election of officers and the 21-day rule, but that other issues included:

- Shipbourne Parish Council's concern about lack of parking enforcement in the parish. Feedback was being sought from neighbouring parishes with a view to developing alternative forms of enforcement;
- the inclusion of parish schemes in S106 negotiations. TMBC were considering a way forward via PTAB so that parish schemes could be included in pre-planning negotiations;
- the status of the Parish Charter in parish relationships with TMBC, which will be considered further at Parish Partnership Panel.

10. Outstanding Issues

Councillors provided brief updates on issues held over during Covid-19 restrictions. A timetable for reporting more fully on each issue was agreed and would be raised on the appropriate agenda.

Action:
All Cllrs;
Clerk

11. Environment

It was noted that the Trees in the Village competition would not take place this year. The Parish Council enters the competition on a three-year basis so would defer this year's entry to 2021.

12. Recreation Grounds

It was confirmed that it had been decided between meetings and following national guidance to re-open the recreation grounds fully, rather than restrict access to various pieces of equipment. Cllr Denham confirmed that the grounds were now fully open with appropriate signage to guide users on Covid-19 safety issues. There had been no major issues to date, although litter was sometimes problematic. The Chairman advised that parishioners had been appreciative both of the re-opening and the safety measures and advice put in place by the Council.

13. Highways & Transport

Cllr French advised that she had been approached by a parishioner with regard to speeding cyclists in School Lane. It was noted that previous speedwatch exercises had failed to provide evidence of persistent speeding by motor vehicles but that cyclists did not fall within the speedwatch remit. Cllr Budworth advised that speeding cyclists were also an issue on the blind corner

Action:
Cllrs
Hiddleston,

of Spoute Island into Long Mill Lane. It was agreed that Cllrs Hiddleston and Thomas would consider a possible way forward.

14. Memorial Hall

Cllr French advised that the dominant issue for the Hall currently was the effect of Covid-19. The Hall had been closed since mid-March opening only in early June for the resumption of the nursery school for 6 weeks on reduced numbers. There would be no other lettings until further review, possibly until January 2021. Sanitising and cleaning was the major issue for lettings and ensuring that the Hall would be fit for nursery school following a letting. Cllr French reported that a £10k small business grant had been secured, plus tax refunds and the committee would be looking at energy efficiency initiatives also. The cottage continued to be let providing valuable income. Cllr French advised that the glasses which were available to borrow for various parish functions were now being stored at the Hall.

15. Any Other Business

- i) Cllr Hiddleston raised the issue of exploring encouraging tourism to the Parish. The Chairman advised that this could be taken forward at a subsequent meeting.
- ii) The Chairman advised that the lease on the former butcher's shop had now expired. Further developments were awaited.

16. Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 7 September 2020 at 8 pm

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

Appendix 1

Correspondence List 6 July 2020

KCC

Highways & Transport Bus services report, June 2020

TMBC

Leisure Services Y2Crew virtual summer scheme

Leisure Services Re-opening of leisure facilities & swimming pools

Street Scene, Leisure &
Technical Services

Update on refuse & recycling services

Other

CPRE Campaign update, 11.7.20

KALC NHS Kent & Medway CCG, Community Bulletin, Issue 6, July 2020

Came & Company resource centre

Community payback scheme

CEO bulletin, July 2020

Health & Well-being training webinars, September 2020

Kent Downs AONB Newsletter, July 2020

Kent Wildlife Trust Newsletters: 8.7.20 - 27.7.20

NALC NALC bulletins on national developments: 10.7. 20 - 31.7.20

Online events

SE Water

The Source newsletter, Summer 2020

E-watch

Nos 1780-1787

Consultations

FCC Environment Ltd Allington waste management facility expansion consultation

KALC KCC Budget consultation 2020-2021 review

KCC Kent Downs AONB draft management plan 2020-2025

Public satisfaction survey on highways & transport

NALC Government devolution White Paper

COVID-19

KALC Public Health England: COVID-19 updates

NALC Coronavirus updates for Parish & Town Councils