

PLAXTOL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held in Plaxtol Parish Church on Monday 2 August at 8.00pm

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

Apologies: Cllr D Beynon; Boro Cllrs T Shaw, M Taylor

1. Matters raised by the public / Borough Councillors

Boro Cllr Palmer advised that TMBC had decided not to request judicial review in respect of the Local Plan Inspector's judgement that the Council had failed in its duty to co-operate. The Local Plan process would be beginning again with a return to a call for sites but with a focus on brownfield sites and sites that had been identified since the Local Plan had been submitted. With regard to the proposed Borough Green Gardens, Cllr Palmer advised that Boro Cllr Lettington had met with Natural England and the sandpit owners and Government funding had been granted to progress discussion regarding the site. Borough Councillors representing Borough Green had not been party to these discussions despite being major stakeholders. Discussions on the proposal would proceed parallel to the new plan. There would be a housing uplift of 23% because of the failure of the Local Plan.

County Cllr Rayner advised that slippage on the bin collection timetables was increasing and that there were significant issues and problems with the waste and recycling contract. He confirmed that a new leader of TMBC had been elected, Matt Boughton. Other local issues included the Ightham Mote planning resubmission, which was due to be considered by Area 2 Planning Committee. The plan had reduced the proposal for hard standing, which had been replaced by a grass overflow area. Current vehicular levels were affected by the booking system which was still in place and might have to remain so. Cllr Rayner advised that the A25 closure was nearing completion; that the Nepicar Moto proposal for a 200 HGV lorry park and overnight accommodation would generate 500-1,000 movement per day within the Green Belt and AONB setting; that KCC's budget was out for public consultation and would involve further cuts. There would be fewer personnel returning to County Hall and more remote working. The Chairman thanked Cllrs Palmer and Rayner for their contributions.

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 4 May 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman along with the updates on Council activity during the meetings suspension in June and July.

4. **Matters arising**

None.

5. **Council Matters**

(i) Areas of Responsibility. It was noted that it had been agreed during June and July that Cllr Beynon would be the lead Councillor for the Finance group; Cllr Knights would be the lead Councillor for the Parish Enhancement group; Cllr Thomas would join the Parish Enhancement group. It had been further agreed that Assets of Community Value and environmental issues would be added to the Parish Enhancement group responsibilities; fly tipping would be added to Highways responsibilities.

It was further agreed that Cllr Hiddleston would move from the Planning group to the Parish Enhancement group and that Cllr Beynon would move to Planning group from Parish Enhancement group.

Areas of responsibility will be updated accordingly.

(ii) The Chairman itemised issues that had been held over during the meetings suspension and which would now be followed up. These were: IT provision policy; local needs housing; fly tipping surveillance; gritter. Cllr Budworth advised that she had been pursuing the community hub initiative, which had been put on hold since the beginning of the pandemic, and that it had become apparent that the parish was too small to take advantage of support on offer. Finding a location had also been problematic. Councillors agreed not to pursue the matter further at this stage.

(iii) Casual vacancy. Councillors considered an application from Tony Rolls and agreed unanimously that he should be co-opted on to the Council wef from the September meeting, 6.9.21.

(iv) Standing Orders annual review. Councillors received a draft update to its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, which was due for review by the Chair and Vice-chair. Councillors agreed to send any comments on the draft to the Clerk for the review to be carried out and the document approved at the September meeting.

(v) Risk Assessment annual review. Councillors received an updated Risk Assessment document, which was unanimously approved.

6. **Correspondence**

A list of correspondence is at Appendix 1.

7. **Payments/Finance**

(i) The Chairman advised that minor work around the Parish had been identified for action. Councillors agreed that Cllrs Knights and Thomas could give approval for work to go ahead subject to an overall budgetary limit of £2k, charged to the amenity maintenance budget. A quote for repairs to the litter bins at the Spoute Recreation Ground (£70) and GML (£75) was approved.

(ii) Councillors noted that a quote for £240 (ex VAT) for vegetation removal at the St Hildas bus stop had been approved between meetings by Cllrs Knights and Thomas.

(iii) Councillors considered a request for funding from West Kent Neighbourhood Watch, but agreed not to approve funding on this occasion.

(iv) Receipts & Payments. A financial statement and bank reconciliation was distributed to members.

The following payments were approved:	£
Commercial Services: grounds maintenance Apr-Jun	667.44
H&E Tree Services: vegetation removal St Hildas bus stop	288.00
Callum Knights: emergency tree clearance Spoute rec	80.00
Gardenton Flowers: Community Award Event, July 2021	95.00
Cllr P Thomas: reimbursements Council events	115.80
PPCC: hire of church, August meeting	24.00
Clerk salary & reimbursements July 2021	826.98
Eon Energy: street lighting July 2021	58.79

8. Planning

(i) Local Plan. There were no further comments to add to the Boro Cllr and County Cllr reports above.

(ii) Cllr Brewin advised members of the details of TMBC's adopted protocol for dealing with S106 agreements as outlined in their correspondence dated 8.6.21, which was duly noted.

(iii) Cllr Brewin advised that notice of an appeal against TMBC's decision to refuse permission for planning application TM/21/02242/FL, Chance Cottage had been lodged. An appeal Inspector had yet to be appointed. Councillors would consider a response to the appeal when details are received from the Planning Inspectorate.

(iv) Planning applications.

Parish Council decisions

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

14 The Street TM/21/01785/FL

Convert the integral garage into a kitchen/utility area to increase the ground floor living area. The property benefits from a driveway immediately in front of the garage which is used for parking, replace the existing up and over steel garage doors with side hinged steel insulated garage doors with enhanced security features. Replace the existing french doors and kitchen window with bi-fold doors and replace the existing rear door to the garage with a sash window in line with existing windows in the property. **No objection.**

Golding Orchard, The Street TM/21/01838/TNCA

Dying Willow tree - section fell as the tree is dying and needs to be removed before it becomes dangerous. **No objection.**

Newlands, The Street TM/21/01643/FL

Two new first floor windows to the side elevation. **No objection.**

Woodruff, Mill Lane TM/21/01651/FL

Erection of single storey side extension with glazing and bi fold doors to be used as dining/entertaining space (as alternative to larger outbuilding granted a Certificate of Lawfulness under reference TM/21/00467/LDP that would be used for the same purpose) **No objection.**

TMBC decisions

Bewley Lane House, Bewley Lane TM/21/00865/FL

Replacing a dilapidated wooden glasshouse with a powder coated aluminium glasshouse sited on a dwarf brick and Ragstone wall in keeping with brickwork within the property. **Granted permission.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Bourne Cottage, Dux Lane TM/21/00261/LB

Listed Building Application: removal of internal partition walls, and replacement of flooring. **Granted consent.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Bourne Farmhouse, Bourne Lane TM/21/01339/FL

Gates to both existing vehicle entrances set back from the road to improve security and privacy. **Granted permission.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Brook Oast, Brook Lane TM/21/01077/FL

Demolition of existing garage and shed; remove pond at rear to realize a new parking area with a carport with solar panels and electric vehicle charging point; proposed ground floor side extension with rooflight; new open porch at side; proposed two storey rear extension with dormer and rooflight; and proposed new rooflight at front.

Refused. Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Crowhurst Farm, Crowhurst Lane TM/21/01493/FL

Construction of a replacement dwelling (alternative to planning permission reference TM/20/00994/FL). **Granted permission.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Forge Cottage, The Street TM/21/00985/LRD

Details of condition 2 (Materials) and 3 (Archaeological Work) submitted pursuant to Listed Building Consent TM/20/01356/LB (Listed Building Application: Demolition of ground floor WC & 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 & WC including new external door and window. 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.) **Approved.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Nutwood House, The Street TM/21/01506/FL

Proposed loft conversion with dormer window to rear, removal of existing chimney stack, two conservation rooflights to the front elevation and window to rear gable. **Granted permission.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Plaxtol Vineyard, The Street TM/21/01001/FL

Construction of small porch to west elevation and minor alterations and changes to landscaping in garden to rear / east elevation. **Granted permission.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

Walnut Tree Cottage, Long Mill Lane TM/21/01386/LRD

Details of Conditions 2a (removing external cement render (pebble dash) on the external wall and replacing with a suitable lime render) pursuant to planning permission TM/19/00360/LB (Listed Building Application: Proposed replacement garage and replacement rear single storey extension. Works to roof, windows and walls to restore the property to a stabilised structural and breathable condition, lowering of floor to kitchen. Other minor works internally. French drain to perimeter of cottage walls). **Approved.** Parish Council had not objected to this application.

9. Meeting Feedback

KALC, 22.7.21. Cllrs Thomas and Beynon had attended this meeting. Cllr Thomas reported on the following issues:

- staff shortages at TMBC;

- the election of a new Leader of the Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (Matt Boughton) and Deputy Leader (David Lettington). Included in Cllr Boughton’s main priorities are the resolution of the underperformance on the waste & recycling contract by Urbaser and the restructuring of Parish Partnership Panel to promote effective working with the parishes;
- Police successful operation against Class A drug network; Police report that increase in domestic violence now their biggest issue;
- failure of TMBC to take up KCC’s offer to all Boroughs for the provision of cameras to monitor fly-tipping. It was also noted that TMBC is the only Borough not to have prosecuted for fly-tipping.

10. Communications

Cllr Budworth raised the issue of effective communications with parishioners, especially relating to the passing on of information received from outside bodies (eg environmental groups). It was noted that not all material is suited to inclusion on the website. It was agreed that the group looking into IT policy would also consider wider electronic communication and skills training.

11. Community Affairs

(i) Spoute phone box. Cllr Thomas confirmed that the defibrillator had now been installed and was active. The phone box had been repainted. There was some additional repair work to be undertaken inside the box. A parishioner had also come forward with a proposal to organise and manage a book exchange, which was being investigated.

(ii) Assets of Community Value. Cllr Carboni advised that he was completing the three applications required for re-listing of the Parish Assets of Community Value: the Papermakers Arms; Village Stores; retail outlet on Church Hill (currently Potterati). The current listing expires in September 2021.

Action: Cllr Carboni

(iii) LGBCE Boundary Commission review. The Chairman reported that TMBC’s response to the Local Government Boundary Commission review of the Borough’s wards had proposed moving Plaxtol and Shipbourne from Borough Green and Long Mill Ward and creating a new ward with Hadlow and East Peckham. He advised that the Borough Council’s proposals had been formulated over a period of months in secret, with a final previously unpublished amendment tabled and approved at a special meeting of General Purposes Committee on 13 July. No consultation on the proposals had taken place with the parishes. Councillors agreed that the Borough Council had failed in its duty to consult and that a response to the Boundary Commission would be made to that effect. It was noted that a second consultation would be launched in October when there would be a chance to respond to the Borough Council’s proposals. The Chairman advised that the issue was to be pursued via KALC.

Action: Cllr Thomas

(iv) Councillors noted that a four-day bank holiday weekend had been approved for the 2022 Jubilee. Councillors agreed to explore the possibility of a beacon. Cllr French agreed to approach other parish organisations regarding other plans for celebrations.

Action: Cllr French

12. Recreation Grounds

(i) Cllr Knights reported that it had now been ascertained that there were at least four gates giving unauthorised access into the Spoute Recreation Ground. She will pursue further how best to deal with this issue.

**Action: Cllr
Knights**

(ii) Councillors received a proposal from a parishioner regarding the provision of a fenced dog walking area at the Winnie Bowes Recreation Ground. After some discussion Councillors were of the unanimous view that, for either of the children's play areas in the Parish, access to such a dog area, which would of necessity be through the main play areas, would be problematic. Councillors also considered that the area could not be adequately controlled for the picking up and disposal of dog faeces, and that it would be inappropriate to introduce dogs to a children's recreational space. The proposal was not approved.

(iii) Cllr Knights advised that all Covid-19 restrictions had been removed from playgrounds, which were now operating normally.

13. Highways & Transport

(i) Parking update. Cllr Carboni advised that, following consultation with the neighbouring residents, it had been decided not to proceed with the road narrowing project for the time being. The current bus route signs were to be moved to a more visible location and the co-operation of the Papermakers Arms in discouraging inconsiderate parking was to be sought.

**Action:
Cllrs
Carboni,
Thomas**

(ii) Water leak. Cllr Thomas reported that he and a fellow parishioner had met with a representative of South-East Water, who was investigating the leak at Spoute Island. Samples of water had been taken and leak investigation devices were to be installed. The outcome of these investigations was awaited.

14. Memorial Hall

AGM and meeting 1.6.21. Cllr French advised that the Memorial Hall had remained closed to bookings other than the Nursery School during Covid-19 restrictions. A £10k Government support grant had been received; the cottage had been re-let for a further year. Trustees were currently considering ACRE advice on re-opening. Crockery etc for use at Parish events was now being stored at the Hall.

15. Any Other Business

Cllr Knights confirmed that she had received one quote for replacing the fence at the Spoute Recreation Ground. She was awaiting further quotes.

16. Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 6 September 2021 at 8 pm.

The meeting closed at 10.30 pm

Appendix 1

Correspondence List 2 August 2021

KCC

Highways Bus service improvement plan consultation

TMBC

Communities Manager KCC Covid-19 Grant Fund
 Community Safety Partnership Community Engagement Meeting, 20.7.21
 Council Leader Parish Partnership Panel reform
 Environment Services Recycling updates
 Finance Safe re-opening of venues grant scheme

Other

ACRK Rural Housing Week, July 2021
 Citizens Advice N&W Kent Letter of thanks for donation
 Communicorp Clerks & Councils Direct
 CPRE Campaigns updates/Newsletters: 10.7.21 - 23.7.21
 KALC Local Government Bulletins: 30.6.21 - 29.7.21
 Training & online events
 APPG Local Democracy round table event, 12.7.21
 National CSSC alerts & bulletins: 2.7.21 - 23.7.21
 Kent Police Rural Task Force report June 2021
 Kent Police: Rural Matters, Spring 2021
 CEO bulletin, July 2021
 KCC Reconnect Programme
 KCC Plan Bee newsletter, June 2021
 Covid-19 support grants
 KCC road safety strategy launch 15.9.21
 Kent Downs AONB Newsletter, 23.7.21
 Kent Resilience Forum Kent Prepared newsletter, Issue 4, July 2021
 Kent Wildlife Trust Newsletter: 2.7.21 - 29.7.21
 NALC CEO bulletins on national developments: 9.7.21 - 23.7.21
 Newsletters: 2.7.21 - 30.7.21
 Online events
 Star Council Awards 2021, voting
 National Allotment Society Allotments Week
 E-watch Nos 1883 - 1890