

# ORLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Orlestone Parish Council's Meeting held at 4pm in the Cosy Kettle, Hamstreet, Ashford Kent and via Zoom application

**Present:** Parish Councillors: Andy Othen (Chairman), Mike Wady (Vice-Chairman), Sid Gittens, Julian Griffiths, David Weeks and the Parish Clerk (Sue Stiffell).

**Also Present via Zoom:** Borough Councillor David Ledger and one member of the public (David White)

**Public Comments & Observations:** *This being an opportunity for parishioners to speak or ask questions. The Agenda noted that those wishing to speak should contact the Parish Clerk via telephone or email at least one day in advance of the meeting.* It was noted that there had been no questions received.

Prior the start of the meeting it was observed that the meeting was being recorded via Zoom.

1. **Apologies:** were received from Stephen Shorter (unable to attend due to work commitments), Basil Smith (away), those present agreed that these apologies be accepted.  
Apologies were also received from Kent County Councillor Mike Angell who was attending a KCC meeting and Borough Councillor George Sparks.
2. **Declarations of Interest:**  
Declarations of Pecuniary Interest (relating to items on this agenda made in order to comply with the Kent Code of Conduct): None were made at this point from Councillors present.  
Declarations of Significant Interest (relating to items on this agenda made in order to comply with the Kent Code of Conduct): Mike Wady conflict of interest with the HDSLAs.
3. **Minutes of Meeting Held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 to be Authorised as Being Correct Record.** Julian Griffiths proposed that the minutes from the Parish Council's meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 be accepted as correct record of the meeting and that they be signed/authorised by the Chairman of that meeting; Sid Gittens seconded this proposal, which was agreed by all present.
4. **Matters Arising From The Minutes of the Meeting Held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020:** *Items for discussion only; no decisions can be made under this heading.*
  - **Allotments:** No reply had been received from Southern Water regarding the Parish Clerk's enquiries as to what they were spraying onto their fencing that bordered the allotments.  
One of the allotments had now been vacated and the tenant in the last plot (6b) will be taking it over. During the last meeting members had agreed that plot 6b was not suitable for purpose. Once it is vacated it will be used by the existing allotment holders for a joint project/purpose.  
A request had been made during the last meeting for funding towards plants that could be planted along the border between Southern Water's fence line and the allotment plots to help prevent the growth of weeds. This funding may no longer be required as Parish Councillor Basil Smith had kindly provided plants to be put in this area.  
During discussion the Clerk was asked to notify those on the allotment waiting list that one of the allotments had been decommissioned as it was not suitable for purpose. Discussion was held on the need to put forward a request for more allotments when the proposed developments in the area were put forward in planning applications.
5. **Reports From Representatives of the Community:**  
Borough Councillor David Ledger: reported that August had been a quiet month. The Planning & Overview Committee had continued to meet regularly. The numbers on ABC's planning committee had been cut resulting in the Independents only having three representatives sitting on it. David highlighted work that the KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils) were involved in, this included discussions on parish boundaries. He recommended that members reconsider their decision not to join.

Following David's report, a short discussion was held during which the Chairman explained that OPC had carried out a review regarding the benefits in becoming a member of the KAPC and had decided not to join for now but were happy to appraise this decision in the future.

PCSO Katherine Richards had provided a report which had been forwarded to members via email and a paper copy was made available to those present. It noted:

- i) A stolen water bourse had been found by a local farmer and returned to its owner.
- ii) Community Speedwatch Groups have been out in various locations and speeders have been issued with tickets.

NHW Updates:

- i) On Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July officers attended a property in Hamstreet Road after the homeowner confronted two suspected burglars who were on his land reportedly looking through his windows and trying door handles. The victim called police at around 9.30pm after confronting the men, which caused them to run from his property. Patrols carried out a search of the area with the assistance of police dogs and located a 52-year-old man from Ashford in woodland near to the property. He matched the description of one of the suspects and was arrested on suspicion of burglary.
- ii) Reports of doorstep criminal targeting residents in the Ashford Area for roofing type work: tiling/downpipes/gutters. An elderly resident in the Wye area fell for the scam after being quoted £10,000 and paid a deposit of £2,500. This cheque had been stopped before it was cashed.

A copy of Rural Matters (Magazine of Rural Policing in Kent) and a National Trading Standards newsletter which highlighted the dangers of 'Romance Fraud' and Pension Safety.

**6. Planning: Update, Applications Received:** The following details had been received:

Application No 20/01057: Home Farm, Ashford Road, TN26 2DS

Demolition of existing single skin link building and replacement with infill kitchen extension  
Details regarding the application were made available to those present. During a brief discussion it was noted that there were no objections to the application.

Application No 20/01033 Hamstreet Sports Pavilion, The Street, Hamstreet, TN26 2JH

Extension to existing balcony.

The plans were examined by those present; it was noted as the 'owners' of the pavilion, the submission had been made in OPC's name.

**UPDATES**

*20/00566: The Old School House, The Street, TN26 2HG*

Proposed rear and side first floor roof extension

Permitted by ABC

During a short discussion the Clerk was asked to contact ABC's planning enforcement officer and request that an inspection be made of the property as there were concerns regarding the welfare and safety of those living in the premises and the possibility that various legislation not being adhered to.

*20/00665: Land adjacent to Orlestone Rise, Ruckinge Road, Hamstreet, Kent*

Erection of 3 detached dwellings with associated car barns and landscaping...

Refused by ABC

During a brief discussion the reason for refusal was noted, this being *'The proposed development as a result of the density and scale of development, would unacceptably erode a green gap of high amenity value on the edge of the village. The significant loss of trees, the rising land, and, the urbanisation of the road frontage, would result in a visually prominent suburban layout, which would be detrimental to local character, and would dilute the existing distinct edge to the village confines, due to the important role of this prominent site in marking the transition between the limit of built development and the countryside beyond. The erection of three large dwellings and infrastructure on the site would unacceptably urbanise and over-intensify the existing low density of the Orlestone Rise*

site, to the detriment of the visual amenity of the area, by introducing a form of development which would be inconsistent with the local character of the edge of village location.'

It was noted that arguments along the same lines had been put forward regarding the applications for development in Warehorne Road and opposite the primary academy but these had not been valid for these sites.

20/00883/AS: 88 Lancaster Close, Hamstreet, Ashford, Kent, TN26 2JG Partial garage conversion with extension to form ancillary annexe.

Permitted by ABC.

20/0868: Ashstone House, Hamstreet Road, Hamstreet, Ashford, Kent, TN26 2EB Change of use of former care home to two residential dwellings.

Decision pending

20/00872: The Cosy Kettle, The Lantern Building, The Street, Hamstreet, Ashford, TN26 2HE Removal of condition 2 on planning permission 13/01458/AS (Change of use from A1 retail to A3 cafe shop/tea room) to allow for onsite food preparation/cooking.

Permitted by ABC

20/00521/AS Fairview Industrial Park, Hamstreet Road, Ruckinge, Ashford, Kent, TN26 2PL Erection of industrial/storage building for 8 units.

Decision Pending

7. **Victory Hall Play Area: Annual Inspection Fees:** A letter had been received from the hall committee which noted that the new play area by Victory Hall was looked after and maintained by them. They carried out weekly visual checks and all findings were recorded and action taken if necessary. To help with this programme, an annual inspection plan to help with continuing maintenance had been provided by KOMPAN, costing £627.91 a year. The hall committee had written to OPC asking if they would consider providing a contribution to this annual cost.

During discussion concern was raised around the question 'would this be setting a precedent?' and that this would be an operational cost and not one for capital projects. It was noted that members wished to be fair and treat all spaces the same and if funding was provided for Victory Hall Play Area then it would have to be for other areas if OPC were approached. Following discussion those present agreed that this request would be declined. The Clerk was asked to notify the hall committee and highlight that OPC were fully supportive and appreciative of the work they did and that members hoped that when the time was right a meeting could be held with them and the new committee members so that the existing partnership could be made stronger and more secure and that both groups could work together in developing village amenities.

8. **Hamstreet in Bloom:** An email had been received from Ann Prebble (Chair for Hamstreet in Bloom) which explained that prior COVID19 there had been a vision to surround Hamstreet with colour by providing 20 planters filled with flowers which would be displayed in the village with local clubs and organisations sponsoring the cost of the flowers. The planters were ready and had been painted by the Hamstreet Men in Sheds. The intention was now to plant them with bulbs which had been donated by Pashley Manor Gardens in October for a spring display in 2021. Following this they will be filled with bedding plants.

Ann highlighted that unfortunately they were no funds to purchase the compost needed for the planter and asked if OPC could provide funding which would cost approximately £36 to £40.

During a brief discussion those present agreed that funding be provided. Sid offered to investigate the possibility of obtaining a discount from the local garden centre for the project. He will liaise with the Clerk regarding cost and reimbursement.

9. **Highways: Discuss Highways Improvement Plan (HIP):** Following the last meeting concerns regarding the speed of traffic along Bourne Lane were highlighted to Highways with a request that a speed sign be put up. Various other concerns had also been raised in particular parking in the centre of the village.

A reply was received from Rebecca Bailey (Highways Scheme Project Manager) which highlighted that HIPs are used if Parish Councils have highway related concerns and projects that require further investigation and assistance from KCC.

On behalf of OPC the parish clerk responded and highlighted the following:

#### Speeding Concerns:

- Bourne Lane: the speed of vehicles here was highlighted and a possible remedy was suggested of the provision of speed bumps either side of the emergency exits from Lancaster Close.
- Ashford Road up to Church Lane: possible remedy to move 30mph sign further up road.
- Warehorne Road: Move 30mph limit sign to before the brow of the hill at Burr Farm.
- Ruckinge Road: Move the 30mph limit to before the brow of the hill.

#### Highways: Parking, Sight Lines & Safety Concern

- The overgrown planting at the entrance to Lancaster Close was highlighted, it was noted that at times entering Ashford Road via Lancaster Close was difficult due to this planting and either more frequent cuts were needed or different plants put in.
- Parking in the main high street: it was suggested that traffic lights could be placed here to prevent cars parking here.

Rebecca Bailey responded by highlighting that the KCCs Schemes Planning and Delivery Team were currently experiencing exceptional service demand and had to focus on the delivery of the Emergency Active Travel Fund, consequently they now needed to pause any new schemes from Parish Councils.

During discussion it was agreed that members would continue to point out to the Highways team work that was required in the area with the Clerk keeping note of all correspondence. The Clerk is to report again the overgrown hedge that required cutting back in front of 2 Quince Orchard fronting Ruckinge Road with a suggestion that the Parish Council cut it back if Highways could not. The following was also noted:

- i) A large vehicle was regularly parking near the junction of Cock Lane and Ashford Road which was obstructing the line of sight for drivers and creating a blind spot. This will be reported to the local enforcement team.
- ii) The Old Bakery: the hedge line was overgrown and causing an obstruction on the footpath. The owner to be contacted with a request that the hedge be cut back.

#### **10. Parish Councillors' Updates/Reports: Inc. Highways; Johnsons Corner; HDSLAs; Gardening**

Forge Gardens: In August a large lorry turning into Warehorne Road had knocked the boundary wall down between Forge Gardens and Eastside and damaged a street post. The damage was reported to Highways and a land registry search was undertaken and to find out who was responsible for the boundary wall. Unfortunately, the land registry search did not provide this information. The owners of Eastside are pursuing an insurance claim to have the wall repaired.

HDSLAs: The car park barrier had been broken and temporary fixed. This has been reported to Highways with a request that it be repaired. There had been a recent issue with a burst water pipe in the pavilion; this had now been mended.

Johnsons Corner: David reported that he was attending the area regularly mowing and streaming.

#### Highway Issues:

The Chairman had been contacted regarding the lack of lighting in Carters Wood. It was noted that the street light outside no 18 Carters Wood was removed some time ago resulting in this area being in complete darkness. The Parish Clerk had contacted Highways (Darren Hickman) and asked if a new street light could be put in this area. *Following the meeting a reply was received which noted that there had never been a street light in this area and any lighting had most probably been put in by residents. Due to ABC's dark skies policy no street light would be provided.*

War Memorial: An article had been placed in the parish magazine and on OPC's website regarding the group and what it was trying to achieve. During a brief discussion it was agreed that another 'push' would be made. *During this agenda item David Weeks left the meeting due to another engagement.*

#### **11. Correspondence Received:** not already covered

- Various briefing notes/updates had been received from ABC and KCC (these had been forwarded to members via email.
- Notice of resignation had been received from Mags Wellsted-Boorman on 16<sup>th</sup> July. Following a delay to allow Mags time to reconsider, this had now been passed to ABC. During a brief discussion it was agreed that David White would be asked to join the Parish Council. It was further noted that Gaye Latter had also voiced an interest and would be asked if she wished to join.

**12. Finance:**

**Internal Auditor's Report:** The internal auditor had recommended that the Parish Clerk review the possibility of Internet Banking. On investigation the Clerk had been informed that this was not possible as she was not a signatory to the account and so would not be able to access the accounts.

**Update on Financial Budgets:** A budget review had been circulated to members via email.

It was noted that various expenditure had been made with the same cheque number. It was explained that the Clerk had covered these costs and had then been reimbursed, this being a simpler method of payment in the current climate.

It was noted that funding had been allocated to Twinning and it was agreed that this needed further discussion.

**Authorisation of Cheques:** The following cheques were authorised; those present agreed that the Chairman had delegated authority to authorise cheques if payment was required before the next meeting.

For	To	Amount	Cheque No
[Redacted Table Content]			

**13. Items for Next Agenda:** It was agreed that the future of Twinning be discussed at the next meeting.

**14. Date & Time of Next Meetings:**

Planning Meeting: 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 (place and time to be agreed if necessary)

Parish Council: Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm

*(following the meeting Government regulations/guidelines regarding public meetings and the number of people being able to meet at any one time was altered)*

Meeting Concluded 5.40pm

Chairman's Signature: