

ORLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Orlestone Parish Council's Meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 at 7pm in Hamstreet Sports Pavilion, Pound Lees, Hamstreet.

Present: Parish Councillors: Andy Othen (Chairman), Mike Wady (Vice-Chairman) David Farrell, Sadie Michell, Steve Newton, Basil Smith, Mags Wellsted-Boorman, David White and the Parish Clerk (Sue Stiffell).

Prior the start of the meeting those present completed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form and Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests Form as required following the elections held on 4th May 2023.

- 1. Election of Chairman For The Ensuing Year:** Nominations for Chairman for the ensuing year were requested. Mike Wady nominated Andy Othen, Mags Wellsted-Boorman seconded this nomination; no other nominations were received. Andy Othen agreed to act as Chairman for the next 12 months and thanked those present for his nomination.
- 2. Election of Vice-Chairman For The Ensuing Year:** The Chairman requested nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman. Mags Wellsted-Boorman proposed Mike Wady; Basil Smith seconded this nomination; no other nominations were received. Mike Wady agreed to act as Vice-Chairman for the next 12 months.
- 3. To Receive and Approve the:**
 - i) Inventory/Asset Register of Council Property
 - ii) Risk Management Analysis
 - iii) Standing Orders
 - iv) Internal Financial Controls and Procedures
 - v) Freedom of Information Act – Policy
 - vi) Retention & Disposal of Documents Policy
 - vii) Data Protection Policy
 - viii) Safe Guarding Policy
 - ix) Complaints Procedure Policy
 - x) Social Media Policy

The Chairman highlighted that the policies had been circulated prior the meeting via email and in summary they asked for members to act with decorum when representing the Parish Council. [No questions or queries arose and it was unanimously agreed that the policies and asset register be approved.

- 4. To Appoint Members (including Chairman and Vice-Chairman) to Orlestone Parish Council's Planning Committee.** During discussion the following was agreed:
Chairman: Mike Wady
Vice-Chairman: Sid Gittens
Members: All members
Terms of Reference: To meet on the third Monday of every month, if necessary, to discuss planning applications received and have delegated power to comment. At the discretion of the Chairman of the Planning Committee, a site meeting could replace a sit-down meeting as could a digital meeting.
- 5. Appointment of Representatives onto Outside Bodies:** The following was agreed:

HDSLAs:	Andy Othen & Mags Wellsted-Boorman
Victory Hall Committee:	Basil Smith
Friends of St Mary's Church	Basil Smith
War Memorial Committee	Sid Gittens
Bowls Club	David White & David Farrell
Hamstreet Shed Men	Sid Gittens, David Farrell, Basil Smith
Royal British Legion: Hamstreet Branch	Andy Othen

6. Allocation of Councillors' Responsibilities: The following was agreed:

Website/Facebook	Andy Othen
Highway Issues	Mike Wady/Sid Gittens/Steve Newton
Johnsons Corner	Andy Othen/Mike Wady
Designated Finance Officer	Mike Wady
Allotments	David White
Flood Wardens	Mike Wady and Dave Farrell
Forge Gardens	Sid Gittens (& Linda Gittens)
Defibrillator	Mags Wellsted-Boorman
Local Community Liaison Officer	Sadie Michell
Noticeboards	Mags
Flags	Mags/Andy Othen with all members taking responsibility in their absence.

7. To Fix Date & Times of Parish Council Meetings for the Ensuing Year: It was agreed that Parish Council meetings would continue to be held on the first Monday of each month except January and August, at 7pm in the Hamstreet Sports Pavilion. Confirmation of the date of the next meeting would be agreed at the meeting prior to it; it was noted that due to various work/leisure commitments and bank holidays it would not always be possible to hold meetings on the first Monday of the month. Planning meetings would be held on the third Monday of each month when necessary.

8. Finance:

Insurance: The Parish Council's annual insurance policy had been circulated to members. Cover included building cover for the pavilion for £617,012, Street Furniture cover for £24,569 and playground equipment £94,985. The latter covers the MUGA. The annual premium being £2,426.88. Those present agreed that the premium be paid but quotations from other companies would be sought next year.

Agree & Set Annual Budget: A draft budget for the year had been circulated via email, copies were made available to those present.

Mags had raised concerns that no funding was being set aside in the budget for any future repairs that may be required to the pavilion building. During discussion the Chairman noted that this was something that had never been considered before. It was agreed that representatives from the Parish Council needed to meet and discuss how much should be set aside and what it would cover. A meeting with representatives from both groups would be organised.

Parish Councillor Allowances: It was noted that members could apply for an allowance to cover their expenses and time being a Parish Council. During a brief discussion no-one present wished to apply for such an allowance but all expenses would be reimbursed to members.

Parish Clerk's Salary: In December 2019 it had been agreed that the Clerk be paid £420 a month (£96.92 a week) for 8 hours work a week (£12.11 per hour) and £120 for the use of her home as an office. During discussion it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk's hourly rate be increased to £15 per hour from 1st May 2023 and that this be reviewed each year at the AGM.

Review End of Year Accounts and Annual Governance Statement: These had been circulated to members prior the meeting and further copies were made available. An end of year bank reconciliation and an explanation of variations in income and expenditure from the previous financial year had also been circulated prior the meeting and further copies were made available.

Mike Wady proposed that the items listed from 1 to 9 in section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 could be agreed and signed by the Chairman; that the Accounting Statements in the Annual Governance Statement were correct and could be signed by the Chairman as being so. Basil Smith seconded this proposal and all present agreed.

The Internal Auditor's report was contained in the AGAR and in a covering letter the internal auditor stated: *'I provided an Internal Audit service to Orlestone Parish Council for the financial year ending 31st March 2023 and acting independently, I examined the system of internal control by*

undertaking a variety of tests guided by the questions raised in the Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23 of the Local Councils Annual Return Form. On the basis of my examination, in my view the Council's system of internal controls is adequate for the purpose intended and effective.

Thank you for taking on board my verbal recommendation for reviewing and adopting a new grant application process. This has helped make the procedure fairer and more transparent.'

Authorisation of Cheques: Those present agreed that the following cheques be authorized. It was noted that the Chairman had authorized various cheques since the last full meeting held in March 2022

To	Details	Amount	Cheque No
Gallagher	Annual Insurance Premium	2,476.88	1791
Andy Othen	Reimburse Cost of Website Provision: Domain Etc	131.66	1790
Mrs Morley	Internal Audit	60.00	1789
Parish Clerk	Reimburse cost of 'No Smoking Signs'	3.99	1789
Parish Clerk	Stationary: Paper	8.00	1789
Parish Clerk	Salary for May	520.00	1789/1788
Parish Clerk	Home as an Office Expenses: May	120.00	1788
Parish Clerk	Reimburse costs of Grant For Netball Posts, Bibs etc		
	RBL Lamp Post Signs	685.75	1787
HDSL A	Annual Grant For 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023	1,250.00	1786
Victory Hall	Grant for Kings Coronation Celebration	250.00	1785
HDSL A	Refreshments at Annual Assembly	160.50	1784
Mike Wady	Reimburse for Property Maintenance Costs	86.50	1783
Parish Clerk	Reimburse Costs: Stationary & Flowers (Gifts)	44.15	1782
Parish Clerk	Salary for April	420.00	1782
Parish Clerk	Home as an Office Expenses: April	120.00	1782
Cosy Kettle	Refreshments for Annual Assembly	100.00	1782
Heartbeat	Defibrillator Pads	55.20	1781
ABC	License Fee for Pound Leas Recreation Ground	31.00	1780
Parish Clerk	Reimburse Costs of Fuel, Parking, Ink, No Smoking		
	Signs, Trophy Engraving	67.85	1779
	Reimburse Cost of New Noticeboard on Pound Leas	628.80	1778
Tidyman (S Weeks)	Payment for Work From Sept 2022 to Feb 2023	360.00	1777

9. **Apologies:** Apologies were received from Parish Councillor Sid Gittens who was away; those present agreed that these apologies be accepted.

Apologies were also received from:

Kent County Councillor David Robey who had provided a report which had been circulated to members; paper copies made available to those present.

Borough Councillor David Ledger who noted 'In giving my apologies, can I please thank everyone that voted for me, it is great to be able to carry on serving Orlestone's lovely community for another term. We won't know until later in the month who will be leading the Borough Council nor who is on which committee. Please let me know if I can help with matters related to ABC in the meanwhile.'

Borough Councillor Aline Hicks who noted 'I will do my best to come along after the ABC meeting. Hopefully I will be able to say well done to all of the councillors and assure everybody of my desire to help the parish council whenever possible'

Community Warden Kathy Carter who noted: 'I still cover Hamstreet, usually on a Tuesday and Friday. I sometimes pop into the Friday Coffee Morning which is attended and is run really well. The ladies that run it are marvellous – they make sure that anyone who has a birthday is given a card and sung to. They also have a weekly draw of £5, not to mention their regular pub lunches, river trips and train trips etc. It is lovely to see. It also gives me the opportunity to help with any issues that there may be – usually potholes or flytipping which I report for all my surrounding villages on a regular basis. I was asked to do a talk on what my job involves at Cottonhill House a few weeks ago – and I also covered a few of the scams that are going around and handed out leaflets which had a brief description of each scam. My

job also involves welfare visits, sometimes referred by social services and sometimes the other way round. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need my help in anything.'

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): The following declarations of interest were received: Dave Farrell and Basil Smith, members of Hamstreet Men in Sheds, Chairman: Involvement with the Hamstreet Junior FC, Mike Wady conflict of interest with the HDLSA, Sadie Michell: proprietor of the Cosy Kettle, Mags Wellsted-Boorman: HDLSA Member, David White: Allotment Holder.

10. Approval of Minutes From OPC's Meeting Held on 6th March 2023 and the Annual Assembly held on 3rd April 2023: Mags Wellsted-Boorman proposed that the minutes from the meetings held on 6th March and 3rd April 2023 be accepted as correct records and signed/authorised by the Chairman. David White seconded this proposal which was agreed by those present.

11. Matters Arising From Minutes of The Meetings Held on 6th March and 3rd April 2023

- Section 106 Funding Relating to Lancaster Close Phase 2: Details of funding left had been passed to the HDLSA who were believed to have made a bid for funding towards the purchase of a tractor and trailer. There was still funding left which had no time limit on it for Hamstreet Allotments.

12. Reports/Updates Received From Representatives of the Community Including Kent County Councillor David Robey, Borough Councillors and PSCO Katherine Richards: Reports provided had been noted under apologies:

Parish Councillor Reports:

Mike Wady: Began by expressing his frustration with Highways and Ashford Borough Council. Potholes and various other issues were reported regularly but with little or no response. He would continue and hope that things would get better. He highlighted that Lance continued to oversee Johnsons Corner although he had now moved away from Hamstreet and that the Tidyman (Stuart Weeks) cut the grass opposite opposite Johnsons Corner and was intending to make 3 wild flower circular flower beds if OPC agreed.

During a brief discussion the idea of the wild flower beds was agreed. It was noted that the pond area was having work done to it by Landscape Service.

Sid Gittens: War Memorial: in his absence he had passed to the Clerk a quotation from Paul Hirst Design Services who has provided a quotation to do a survey of the area proposed for the war memorial, provide draft drawings etc for £1,325. This had been circulated via email to members. Those present agreed that this be discussed further when Sid was present.

Basil Smith: Highlighted that the footpath that run alongside Victory Hall and the bungalows had a 'No Cycling' Sign which was rusty and dangerous and needed removing. The Clerk is to contact Highways and put in a request that this be removed. Basil noted that the problem drain in Warehorne Road had been replaced with a new drain.

Sadie Michell: raised the issue about the primary academy taking on the responsibility of the new football field that was in the process of being built on the Nightingale Development. Questions were being raised about affordability. During a brief discussion it was noted that the Parish Council had been approached during the planning stages and asked if they wished to take this area on but had refused as they felt it was not in the right area for the village and they were involved in Pound Leas Recreation Space and the Pavilion. It was noted that this proposed school football field, the wildlife area and school car-park had been promoted by the primary academy who had been confident at the planning stage that they could cover its running costs and this had been a major consideration when the planning application was approved.

David Farrell: highlighted that the Highways Development Manager (Chris Smith) lived locally and it was hoped this would help with various local issues.

Mags Wellsted-Boorman: noted that the red dog waste bins had now been replaced with black multipurpose bins in the village. The Lancaster Close play area had been tidied up. She asked if a complaint could be issued regarding the Village Gate that lay in the ditch in Warehorne Road. This required re-installing.

Chairman: Asked members to consider putting on an organised litter pick. He highlighted that the Hamstreet Under 9's team had recently won their football tournament and there were plans to set up a Hamstreet Girls Football Team.

13. Correspondence Received & Planning Update & Review Applications Received:

Correspondence: not covered under other agenda items.

- The Clerk had circulated via email to members various notices from Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council. This included details of a Parish Council Community Cost of Living Support Grant. This funding is available for initiatives that support residents experiencing financial hardship due to the cost-of-living crisis – food poverty, fuel poverty, health, wellbeing and isolation. The deadline for applications is 31st May 2023.
- Emails had been received from a concerned resident regarding the parking of vehicles in the lay by in front of the bus shelter in Ruckinge Road. Following enquiries relating to signage that would request people not to park here which drew a blank; the clerk asked the resident to provide photographic proof of those parking here with dates so that these can be passed on to Highways and ABC to emphasise the need for some type of signage here.
- An email had been received from Alan Brind, ABC Corporate Property Technical Officer who had provided a revised list of street lights in the parish, asking if any were deemed not necessary or required. During a brief discussion it was agreed that all existing street lights were needed and were necessary.

Planning:

Application: NOT/2023/0745

Location: The Pippins, Warehorne Road, Hamstreet

Proposal: Reserved Matters Application for approval of (appearance, landscaping, layout and Scale) for provision of 3 dwellings self build plots and associated works.

OPC Comment: No Objection

Application: PS/2023/0753

Location: 16 Village Way,

Proposal: Single-storey rear extension with room in the roof, conversion of roof space with dormer to south elevation and roof-lights following demolition of existing conservatory.

OPC Comment: No Objection to application

UPDATE:

Application: 22/01045/AS

Location: Amberley, Ashford Road, Hamstreet, TN26 2EW

Proposal: Proposed single-storey front and rear extension; and a first and second floor extension. Amended plan, amended description.

Decision: Granted by ABC on 15th May 2023

Application: PA/2023/0465

Location: Capel Oast, Capel Road, Hamstreet TN26 2EH

Proposal: Conversion of existing double garage into residential annexe for occasional use by Family and friends.

Decision: Granted by ABC on 3rd May 2023

Those present agreed that Agenda Item No 14 be discussed in a closed meeting and would be minuted separately due to its sensitive content. The minutes from agenda item 14 would be put in the public domain after 24 months.

15. Items for Next Agenda/Any Other Business: It was agreed that the Village War Memorial and Village Fun Day being held on 15th July be given their own agenda items.

16. Date & Time of Next Meetings: Due to various Parish Councillor commitments which meant that the meeting could not be held earlier, it was agreed that the next meeting would be held on: Monday 19th June 2023 at 7pm

Meeting Concluded 9.05pm

Chairman's Signature:

Report From Kent County Councillor David Robey – 17th May 2023

- The KCC Budget is under tremendous pressure, due to the spiralling cost of Adult Social Care, and to a lesser extent, Children's Services & Education. There is no easy answer to this in the short term.
- The Highway's Budget is particularly badly affected, as the condition of the roads demonstrates, and this area has been underinvested for years. This is not just a problem in Kent, and reflects the approach that we take to infrastructure investment in the UK as a whole, which is flawed. KCC has, however, secured £6m for Government for potholes repairs, which is something.
- The proposed parking restrictions at the bus stop in Ruckinge Road, fall under the control of Ashford Borough Council, rather than KCC, and need to be chased through with them, although the emails on this suggest that it won't be a problem.
- The Loading Bay that we have discussed near the shop should be in the Highway Improvement Plan and I will chase this up with Kent Highways.
- The results of the recent Local Elections will have an effect on how Kent is run, which will unfold over the coming months.
- We continue with our plans to re - introduce Nuclear Power to Dungeness in the form of Small or Advanced Nuclear Reactors. We have agreement in principle for a site visit by Andrew Bowie, who is the Energy Minister, and this is likely to take place over the next two months.
- Plans to deal with the Stodmarsh issue, which is about mitigating the effects of Phosphorus and Nitrogen getting into the environment, are moving fast and are likely to involve a mixture of Wetlands, and more Tertiary Water Treatment from Southern Water, as well as some onsite treatment for some sites. This is very important, as the issue has held up the development of Allocated Sites in the Local Plans of most District Councils in Kent, and opened the door to speculative Planning Applications in unsuitable locations, which nobody wants.
- KCC has just secured agreement with HM Treasury, to take control of ringfenced funds to operate the Kent & Medway Business Fund Loan Scheme in perpetuity. This is a very successful scheme, which has helped hundreds of small businesses and created thousands of jobs right across Kent, and represents a major achievement by KCC.
- The Exit & Entry System (EES), which is planned to deal with moving between the UK and the EU, has been delayed again, and looks unlikely to be in place this year. The French have asked that if the timing slips from November 2023, then the introduction of the system should be delayed until September 2024. This is obviously likely to lead to the delays in crossing the Channel continuing.