

ORLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Orlestone Parish Council's Meeting held on Monday 11th November 2024 at 7pm in Hamstreet Sports Pavilion, Pound Lees, Hamstreet.

Present: Parish Councillors: Andy Othen (Chairman), Mike Wady (Vice-Chairman), Dave Farrell, Sid Gittens, Basil Smith, Mags Wellsted-Boorman and the Parish Clerk (Sue Stiffell).

Also Present: Borough Councillors David Ledger

Public Comments & Observations:

1. **Apologies:** Apologies were received from Steve Newton, Sadie Michell and David White who had prior engagements. Those present agreed these apologies be accepted. Apologies had also been received from Kent County Councillor David Robey and Borough Councillor Aline Hicks; both had provided reports that had been circulated via email prior the meeting.

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): None were made at this point of the meeting.

- 3 **Minutes From OPC's Meeting Held on 14th October 2024: To Be Authorised as Being A Correct Record:** Sid Gittens proposed that the minutes from the meeting held on 14th October 2024 be accepted as a correct record of the meeting and signed/authorised by the chairman. Basil Smith seconded this proposal which was agreed by those present.

4. **Matters Arising From Minutes of The Meeting Held On 14th October 2024.**

- Waste Water Works in Warehorne Road: A complaint had been made to Southern Water regarding the number of lorries that were visiting the works every day and potential dangers that this posed. It had been asked what upgrades were planned. The local MP and OFWAT were copied into the correspondence for information. Although the Parish Council's email and letter had been acknowledged no reply had been received regarding the queries. The Clerk is to chase for a reply.
- Street Light in Pound Leas Car Park: had been reported to KCC Highways who had notified the clerk that this was not their responsibility. The Clerk is to report the fault to ABC.

5. **Reports/Updates From Representatives of the Community Including Kent County Councillor David Robey & Borough Councillors**

Borough Councillor David Ledger: highlighted that he would be attending a meeting the following week at ABC to discuss the draft Local Plan 2041. He would be holding a surgery at the Cosy Kettle from 10am on Wednesday 13th November.

During a brief discussion it was noted that the parish council were taking a pragmatic approach regarding the call for sites. There were concerns that some of the sites put forward had already either put in a planning application or were thinking of doing so before seeing if they had been accepted for inclusion into the Local Plan 2041.

It was realised that more homes were needed and that Hamstreet had been earmarked as a growth area but members opposed large scale development such as had been submitted for Carters Hill preferring smaller developments.

It was noted that the cost of brown bins had increased but had not been replaced as promised.

Reports received from Kent County Councillor David Robey and Borough Councillor Aline Hicks, had been circulated via email and would be added to the end of the minutes. The Clerk was asked to contact Cllr David Robey and ask when the 30mph signs that had been promised on Ashford Road just past the primary academy on the way to Ashford were likely to be erected. No other matters arose from the reports received.

6. War Memorial Project: Update: Sid reported that the memorial was now completed with Early Birds finishing all the snagging work. During a brief discussion it was agreed that an article would be put in the Kentish Express; the Chairman and Sid are to put something together. A formal unveiling would be held in 2025; perhaps at the same time as the Annual Assembly due to be held on 7th April 2025; *date to be confirmed*.

7. Purchase of Land: Update The following was noted:

- Following receipt of the loan, payment had been made to the Parish Council's solicitor for the purchase of the field.
- Various paperwork had been completed and credit checks had been undertaken.
- Once all signatories had been received from the sellers, exchange and completion would take place.
- Andy met with Gemma (Chair of the HDSLA) and discussed next steps following completion. They suggested
 - i. A meeting be held between the HDSLA and OPC.
 - ii. An agreement set up between both groups regarding the use of the land and following discussion, legal advice will be sought to have this drawn up. The existing agreement for Pound Leas updated and possibly incorporated into a new agreement. The agreement(s) will be reviewed regularly for the benefit of future generations. The terms in the new agreement could perhaps be along the same lines as the existing agreement i.e. HDSLA will take responsibility of the land and seek grants for it, maintain it and be responsible for it with the Parish Council being a silent partner and responsible for paying the loan to purchase the land. This could be their sole responsibility and financial commitment.
 - iii. Regular meetings held between the HDSLA and OPC to keep lines of communication and information open.
 - iv. Eventually a 'Sub-Group' or 'Working Party' set up; this will be a dedicated group working on the development of the field. Members for this group will be sought via social media posts, posters and word of mouth.

During a brief discussion it was highlighted that the HDSLA had created a flyer which would be delivered to those living locally. It invited those who wished to be involved in the development of the field to attend an information/open event on 6th February 2025.

8. Section 106 Funding: Ref St Mary's Church, Orlestone A meeting had been held with representatives of St Mary's Church, OPC and ABC on 22nd October 2024. Notes taken at the meeting had been circulated prior the meeting. The Friends of St Mary's Church now have to obtain quotations for the work that is required so that they can complete an application form for funding. If the bid for S106 funding was successful, Orlestone Parish Council would be responsible for monitoring the project. Funding would be released to the Parish Council which would be passed to The Friends of St Mary's Church. It was noted that the S106 funding related to The Nightingales development in Ashford Road and The Pippins development in Warehorne Road.

9. Reports/Updates Received From Parish Councillors:

Mags Wellsted-Boorman: reported that there were Solar Panels on the back of the pavilions roof. The HDSLA had managed to obtain a free battery that would help operate them which will save on electric costs in the long term.

She reported that the HDSLA had held their AGM and Jemma had remained as Chairman and Mark was the vice-chair and that she continued to act as secretary.

Sid Gittens: highlighted that the water leaks outside Fairfield Terrace and in the layby by Quince Orchards opposite Dukes Meadow remained. These had been reported by Mike Wady and the Parish Clerk who will report them again.

Mike Wady: reported that he had undertaken a walk around and had reported 3 street lights that were not working and 2 that were permanently on.

Andy Othen: noted that he had received an email from Peter Hunt from Fenton Homes regarding their proposed application for development of the field beyond the primary academy. He had informed Peter that OPC were happy to be consulted with regarding the development but remained opposed to any large-scale developments.

8. Planning: Applications Received, Updates and ABC's Local Plan 2014

No new applications had been received.

9. Correspondence Received: not covered under other agenda items:

- Various circulars, bulletins and fraud notices had been circulated to members via email.

15. Finance:

Budget Review/Update: had been circulated to members prior the meeting. No queries were raised.

Grant: An application had been received from Hamstreet Victory Hall for help towards mowing costs. By a majority vote it was agreed that £500 be granted.

Authorisation of Cheques: The following cheques were authorised for signature with the Chairman having delegated authority to approve cheques if required before the next meeting. Signatory on account.

To	For	Amount	Cheque No
Parish Clerk	Salary for November	572.00	1846
Parish Clerk	Home as Office Expenses	120.00	1846
Parish Clerk	Reimburse: Stationery & Refreshments	54.86	1846
Hamstreet Victory Hall	Grant Towards Mowing Costs	500.00	1847
Cleverley & Spencer Ltd	War Memorial: Stone	1,168.35	1852

16. Items for Next Agenda/Any Other Business: During discussion it was agreed that due to various commitments of members the next meeting would be held on Monday 9th December at an earlier time of 6.45pm. The agenda would be shorter than normal and would be followed by drinks.

17. Date & Time of Next Meetings:

Parish Council Meeting: Monday 9th December 2024 at 6.45pm

Meeting Concluded at 8.50pm

Chairman's Signature:

Report Provided by Kent County Councillor David Robey.

- The KCC Budget, and balancing it, still looms large at KCC. The impact of the Chancellor's Budget on KCC will be negative, in terms of the increase in National Insurance and the Minimum Wage, which will increase the costs of our Commissioned Services, especially in Adult Social Care. We are currently working out the impact of this, and also bidding for the monies announced for potholes and buses.
- We have sent an Expression of Interest in some sort of Devolution Deal for Kent to the Government, in response to Angela Rayner's recent letter to Local Authorities, and we await a response.
- I have dealt with one or two drainage enquires and a couple of other things, but if you need any more help, then please let me know.
- I think that you are updating your HIP, and if you want me to help in any way, then, again, please let me know

Report From Borough Councillor Aline Hicks – Dated 10th November 2024 I attended a meeting at ABC regarding Homelessness which affects many residents throughout the borough. I was alarmed to find that there are about 260 households in temporary accommodation and just over 1700 households on the register for social housing.

I also attended the Planning Committee on 7th Nov to hear the debate about Kingsnorth Recreation Centre. There was a good representation from the public and their spokesman delivered his speech well. However, the committee agreed with the officer's recommendation to approve with conditions.

As you know I am rather involved with river matters on behalf of the borough but that also reflects very much on our parish with its low-lying land and tributaries to the 71-mile-long River Stour.

At the end of October all of the River Boards from the southeast came together for a meeting of the SE branch of ADA which was held at Ashford Market. It was interesting to hear the EA rep state say that at last authorities are waking up to the fact that there really is a climate change. He mentioned that this was shown by the intensity of summer rain fall and that the ground water level is the highest for this time of year. We also had an interesting presentation by the Water Recovery Trust on their work on eradicating mink. They have been very successful in East Anglia with trapping but there are still many minks in the SE especially the Romney Marsh. A fascinating subject as these creatures are invasive and kill many other creatures up to the size of herons - since 2000 the farming of mink has been banned. There was some discussion as to whether the Drainage Boards should become statutory consultees when Planning Applications are submitted to councils.

Also . yesterday I attended the AGM of the River Stour Internal Drainage Board and have been re-elected as Vice Chair. Apart from all the usual policy and financial items we had a presentation from Martin Thomas (Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership) they carry out the biodiversity for the RSIDB and Martin explained how they are eradicating the invasive species of Azolla and Parrotts Feather from the river banks. They are also re wetting the peat and creating ponds for great crested newts and planting many trees for carbon catchment.

I have also attended the Kent Windmill Group meetings in my quest to find ways of restoring Woodchurch Windmill which has been sadly neglected by ABC. This will be an item at the Cabinet meeting in December.

I was pleased to learn that KCC have made safe the access for inspections of the road bridge over the Speringbrook near the viaduct on the Warehorne Road. A big thank you to our County Councillor for highlighting this issue.