

Aylesford Parish Council

Policy & Resources Committee

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held via Zoom link on 6 April 2021

Present: Councillor Balcombe (Chairman) and Councillors Ms Dorrington, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Ludlow, Ms Oyewusi, Ms Papagno, Rillie, Shelley, Smith, Sullivan, Walker, Winnett and Wright.

In Attendance: Melanie Randall (Assistant Clerk and Finance Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Hammond

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Hammond (Unwell) were received, and the reason for absence **agreed**.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Ms Papagno declared an interest in Item 10 and took no part in the discussion or decision.

Councillor Mrs Gadd declared an interest in Item 20 and took no part in the discussion or decision.

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 2 March 2021

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Accounts for Payment

There were no Accounts for Payment

5. Law and Order – CCTV in the High Street

The Assistant Clerk reported that she had followed this up twice since the last meeting but has not received a response from the company.

6. KALC

The Report from Councillor Shelley for the meeting on 25 March was received by Members.

7. TMBC/Parish Partnership Panel Meeting

There had been no meeting of the TMBC/Parish Partnership Panel since the last meeting of this Committee.

8. Council Vacancies

It was Noted that the current Vacancies are

1 – Aylesford South

9. Public Convenience Review

The Chairman confirmed that the public toilets in the High Street had now been closed by TMBC. A late request from the Head Teacher at the St Peters Church of England School had been received seeking possible use of the building for themselves as an outside teaching room/area for the children. A site meeting promptly took place between the Parish Council and TMBC to discuss the initial idea. Discussions are taking place between the School, TMBC and the Parish Council to see if this is an alternative option to demolishing the building. Members Agreed that although the current situation is that the building be demolished in line with the terms of the Lease, this option could be considered by the Parish Council. TMBC are in the process of costing the works for both demolition and alteration on the building and will report back to the Council in due course. TMBC have indicated that the alterations would be funded by themselves up to the cost of what the demolition would be and if there was a gap the School would fund it.

10. Micro Grant Request from Aylesford Pre-School

The Assistant Clerk reported that the Council had received a request for a donation towards the cost of the purchase of items for the children's allotment on Forstal Road. The Chairman asked if it was legal to give a donation of Section 137 monies to a business, as although it is a pre-school it is still in effect a business.

Action: The Assistant Clerk will confirm what the Legal situation is on this and subject to the donation being legal Members **Agreed** £100.

11. Micro Grant Request – Items for Planters in Blue Bell Hill Village

The Assistant Clerk reminded members that last year the villagers took over the planting of the Parish Councils Planters in Blue Bell Hill. She reported that a request had been received for a small donation of £55.90 to go towards the cost of wood stain, weed control fabric liners, compost and chicken manure pellets. It was **Agreed** that Councillors Smith and Sullivan fund this request through their Micro Grants.

12. Grant Request – The Big Lunch, Old Bridge Gardens

The Assistant Clerk reported that a request had been received for a financial contribution for the above event that Members had agreed to at the recent Environmental Services Committee Meeting on 23 March. The last donation the Parish Council made was for £400. It was **Agreed** to increase this to £500 for this year. Payment of the donation will be made after the event and is subject to the Parish Council receiving appropriate invoices.

13. TMBC – Y2Crew Summer Activity Programme

The Assistant Clerk reported that a request had been received for a contribution towards the Y2Crew Activity Programme, which is for vulnerable children and young people aged 7 – 18 in Tonbridge & Malling. The decision was **Deferred** as members would like to know how many children within Aylesford Parish attend these activities. **Action:** The Assistant Clerk will ask TMBC for the numbers and will report back to this Committee once she has the information from TMBC.

14. Aylesford Village Community Centre – Annual Grant

The Assistant Clerk reported that a late request had been received from the Community Centre requesting to carry over their unused grant allocation from 2020/21 to 2021/22 for the installation of new front doors to the centre and the remaining balance towards the cost of all Covid related items they needed to purchase. They currently have a balance of £4,000 as they did not claim any throughout 2020/21, therefore they would like to carry over £2,000. This means their available balance will be £6,000 once the annual £2,000 is allocated.

It was **Agreed** that £2,000 be carried over, £4,628.55 is to be used for the new front doors and the remaining £1,371.45 is to be paid towards the cost of the Covid related items they had to purchase on receipt of invoices and/or receipts.

15. Tunbury Recreation Ground – Vandalism to Skier

The Assistant Clerk reported that ten different options for a replacement item had been received and had been circulated to members with the Committee Agenda for this meeting. It was agreed that a machine that has fewer moving parts or none would be the best solution as this should be less prone to vandalism. It was **Agreed** that the Exercise Bars from Caloo be purchased at £1,350.50 including installation.

16. Forstal Road Recreation Ground Play Area – Resurfacing

The Chairman reported that 4 of 7 quotes had been received all based on the same specification that was provided by Wicksteed. M&M Developers LLP were one of the preferred Contractors but as the Parish Council has not had any work carried out by this company, members would like to see some references from those who have used them.

Action: The Assistant Clerk will make contact with the company and ask for details of those they have worked for and obtain some references then report back to members.

17. Noticeboard – Old Bridge Gardens

The Assistant Clerk reported that a complaint had been received from a resident regarding the location of the new noticeboard in Old Bridge Gardens. The resident states that the sun is reflecting from the noticeboard into the property. The Assistant Clerk informed members that the resident had been told that the Council will monitor the situation for 3-6 months then review it. She also told members of a positive email received regarding the location of the noticeboard and that it blends in really well with the surrounding Ivy. It was **Agreed** to continue to monitor the situation for a period of 3 – 6 months.

18. Gladman’s Section 106 Sporting Facilities Wish List

The Parish Council was asked by TMBC to produce a ‘wish list’ of things they would like out of the Section 106 monies. A Report was circulated with the Committee Agenda. It was **Agreed** to submit the document to TMBC.

19. Tree Lights – Blue Bell Hill

The Assistant Clerk reported that TMBC are replacing the bus shelter on Maidstone Road near the junction with Keefe Close and the Council has been asked to remove the tree lights to enable the branches to be cut back so there is clear access. A quote for £328.00 was obtained from the Council’s Contractor; Gala Lights to remove the lights from the tree directly behind the bus shelter. It has previously been recommended by Gala Lights that some of the lights in the other trees should be replaced with Low Voltage LED lights, therefore the Assistant Clerk felt that it may be appropriate and more cost effective to remove them all at the same time while the Contractor is on site with the cherry picker. The cost to remove them all is £984.00. It was **Agreed** to remove them all and review the situation later in the year during the Parish Christmas Lights Review.

20. Repairs to Height Barrier and Ferryfield Sign in Ferryfield

The Chairman reported that the Height Barrier appears to have been hit recently which has bent the legs. A quote has been obtained for the repairs from S & G Process Engineering Ltd for £450.00. The works will be carried out in situ. It was **Agreed** to proceed with this work.

Ferryfield Sign

The overhead Ferryfield sign was recently identified as needing some TLC therefore a quote was obtained from S & G Process Engineering Ltd for £580.00 to remove the sign, take to their workshop, rub down the paint work, repair all damaged areas, renew post tops, re-paint and return to site fixing back in place.

It was **Agreed** to proceed with this work.

21. Meeting Calendar – May 2021 to May 2022

The proposed calendar was circulated to members with the Agenda. The Assistant Clerk requested to move the Annual Meetings from 11 May 2021 to 18 May 2021, as TMBC have their Annual Meeting on the 11 May. The Assistant Clerk also reminded members that the legislation to allow Councils to hold meetings remotely will end on 6 May 2021 and the advice from KALC is that although they and other bodies are lobbying Government to extend the legislation, they advise Council's to prepare for face-to-face meetings to restart. It was **Agreed** to move the Annual Meetings to 18 May 2021.

Action: The Assistant Clerk will look for a hall that is big enough to accommodate the Parish's meetings as its own meeting room is not of a sufficient size to enable social distancing.

22. Staffing Matters

The following Staffing Committee Minutes were **Agreed**
11 December 2020, 17 February 2021 and 9 March 2021

23. Any Other Business/Correspondence

Thank You Letters

The Assistant Clerk reported that the Council had received a Thank You letter from the Head Teacher at St Peter's Church of England School with three additional letters from the children thanking the Council for the donation of £200 towards the cost of items for their allotment.

KALC Annual Membership

The Assistant Clerk reported that she had received the annual renewal for the subscription to KALC Services. The cost for 2021/22 is £1,620.00.

The Annual Renewal was **Agreed**.

KALC – Audit of Office

The Chairman reported that KALC offer a service whereby someone comes in and 'audits' the Parish Office with regards to practices, processes and compliance and will give advice on any areas that may need improvement. There is a fee for this service, therefore it was **Agreed** that further enquiries will be made.

Action: The Chairman will enquire and report back to this Committee in due course.

KALC – Planning Presentation

The Chairman reported that KALC have a Planning Event that is designed to help Parish Councils have more understanding of the Planning process. It was **Agreed** that this might be beneficial to the Parish Council and that it be looked into further.

Action: The Chairman will make some enquiries

MERlin – Medway Ecological Riverline Link

Councillor Walker spoke about MERlin, which is a cross party group trying to save as much open space as possible. They; along with the Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum are writing a letter to KCC this week regarding the KCC Strategic Plan and Kent's Infrastructure and Councillor Walker asked if the Parish Council would consider putting their name to it.

It was **Agreed** that the Parish Council would put their name to the letter.

24. Duration of meeting

7.30pm to 8.57pm