

ALKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES - MONDAY 12th SEPTEMBER 2016

6:30pm Prior to the main meeting

The Parish Councillors met to discuss correspondence received from Andrew Hutchinson at Kent PROW. The long-term plan for the byways is still a big concern and the Councillors debated the options that appear to be available. The Councillors noted Cllr Hillier's view on the topic as per his email dated 12th September 2016. The Parish Council are awaiting further details on possible sources of funding and feels it would like to see the byways opened for all users in the short term but with the intention of working alongside KCC to agree a solution to mitigate damage caused by 4x4 vehicles going forward. The Parish Councillors all received correspondence from Cllr Hillier (absent from the meeting) dated 7th and 11th September 2016 and acknowledged his views, and have also considered the correspondence received from Glyn Jones dated 10th September 2016.

The Councillors were also in possession of correspondence regarding the flood risk to the Village Hall and had time to consider the content of this. Flood Warden Cllr Barnard is in regular contact with KCC Highways concerning the Nailbourne and continues to address KCC's responsibilities to clear silt from the dyke/sump with the appropriate department.

The Parish Councillor's discussed publicising 'Draft' minutes on the website in future. This proposal was approved by a majority vote. The documents must be clearly marked as draft and remain subject to approval until the subsequent meeting where they are received for approval.

1. Venue Alkham Village Hall, 7:30pm
2. Present Parish Councillors: Neil Burrows, Den Barnard, Susan Lees, Anthony Barrier and Fiona MacAskill. Clerk: Angela Miller
County Councillor: Geoff Lymer. District Councillor: Pauline Beresford
Members of the public: 12
3. Apologies Parish Councillor: Geoff Hillier and District Councillor: Nick Dixon
4. Regular Business
 - 4.1 The minutes from meetings held 4th July, 8th August and 18th August 2016 were received, approved and signed as correct records. It was noted that in future, under 'section 2: Present' the heading parishioners should be changed to members of the public. Cllr Burrows confirmed that he does not have a declaration of interest to make regarding any of the matters on the agenda.
5. Matters Arising
 - 5.1 Parish Council vacancy - The Parish Council advised those present at the meeting that there is a vacancy for position of Parish Councillor. The statutory notice has been displayed on the village notice board, and also at Dover District Council offices. Anyone wishing to apply can contact the Returning Officer at DDC, or for assistance please email Alkham Parish Council. The deadline for applications is 29th September 2016.
 - 5.2 PROW update - The Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council had a site meeting with Andrew Hutchinson from Kent PROW to walk the byways. Subsequent to that meeting Mr Hutchinson has received quotations for the cost of repairs. At this stage, the Parish Council feel they would like to see the byways opened for all users in the short term, with a view to getting into dialogue with Kent PROW regarding ways to mitigate the damage caused by 4x4's going forward.

- 5.3 Play equipment - Harmer Landscapes are having difficulty finding new swing clamps that will fit the narrow top bar on the top of the swing frame. Mr Harmer has suggested that we enquire with Cook Fabrications to manufacture a new top bar that will allow the proper size clamps to be fitted. The Parish Council will contact Cook's accordingly. Harmer's have purchased new swing seats and will await further instruction from the Parish Council.
- It has recently been brought to the Parish Council's attention that a child caught a finger on the underside of the slide. The Councillors discussed the quotation of £420 +VAT to repair the slide and all were in favour of going ahead with this work.
- Ongoing, the Parish Council will ask Mr Harmer if he would conduct an annual inspection of the play equipment and agreed that Cllr Barnard would carry out a monthly check. Came & Company Insurance has confirmed that Hiscox do not require the Parish Council to provide evidence of inspections, but agreed that it would be good practice to conduct regular checks and keep the records on file.
- 5.4 Drainage Update – Cllr Den Barnard was pleased to report that the receptor tanks at Hopton Manor are due to be cleaned this week. Unfortunately there is nothing more that KCC can do to improve the collection of surface water at Everden Lane so Den plans to talk instead with the owners of the land nearby. Den referred to the meeting that was arranged 2 years ago with all interested parties where a list of jobs was promised to the Parish Council. He reported that everything on that list has been done apart from the culvert at Meggett Lane and the clearing out of the grill in the ditch in the Garden Centre. Both of these items will remain on the list until they are resolved.
- Cllr Barnard has arranged a walk through of the length of the Nailbourne with Kevin Gore from KCC and anticipates having a better idea of a plan by the end of the week. He will obtain details from Mr Gore regarding their plans for annual maintenance on the work that has already been done, particularly keeping the culverts and sump clear of silt. He remarked on the ground clearance work that has been done on the banks adjacent to Alkham House and hopes that this will additionally help with the flow of water. He confirmed that he is aware of the broken brick wall at the culvert in Short Lane and will bring this to Mr Gore's attention also.
- 5.5 Litterbin opposite the Village Hall – This has been replaced after complaints of litter strewn across the car park and the football pitch. Subsequent to the meeting, Dover District Council has confirmed that our public bins are emptied twice a week, on a Tuesday and Thursday. Hopefully the litter problem will cease but the Parish Council will monitor the situation.
- 5.6 SpeedWatch - There have been 11 volunteers to train as Speed Watch practitioners. The Parish Council is pleased at the positive response and has already registered the interest with the Speed Watch team. Once further details are available the volunteers will be contacted accordingly. The Parish Council will approach Cllr Hillier to see if he is interested in co-ordinating the scheme.
- 5.7 Bus Stop at Meggett Lane –Stagecoach have confirmed that they have made all bus drivers aware of the request stop at Meggett Lane. They would also support our request to KCC for a proper stop, consisting of a pole and a flag. The Parish Councillors were all in favour of making a request for this.
- 5.8 Traffic Mirror, Slip Lane - After a trial period it was concluded that the mirror did not add any advantage to motorists emerging from Slip Lane. It was possible to see oncoming traffic from Folkestone before it became visible in the mirror. The Councillors all agreed to remove the mirror from this location and to trial it opposite the track to North Hill Cottage where it is hoped it will be more effective. Cllr Barnard will make the necessary arrangements.

6. Correspondence

- 6.1 Email request for a fence to enclose the swings and rocking horse – The Parish Council discussed the idea but decided that the money would be better spent on repairing and maintaining the play equipment instead.
- 6.2 Highways England: Public consultation events regarding the proposed Lorry Park at Stanford West - 12 September, 2pm-8pm - Dover Town Hall. Further details on village notice board.
- 6.3 Additional litterbin - A request was received via the suggestion box for an additional bin on the Village Green to accommodate extra litter generated from the use of the picnic benches. County Councillor Lymer said he would look into the cost of purchasing one from his Fund and the Parish Council thanked him for his offer.
- 6.4 UK Power Networks – announced the launch of free phonenumber ‘105’ for power cuts.
- 6.5 Alkham Village Hall Committee – Flood risk letter. This was considered amongst the Council prior to the meeting. However, the letter will be included again in the ‘Correspondence’ section on the next agenda, for the meeting 7th November.

ADDENDUM

7. Planning -

- 7.1 **DOV 16/00453 Alkham House, Short Lane, Alkham** : Amended Plans for the erection of a triple detached garage with first floor ancillary space.
The Parish Council object to the application. The amended plans don’t materially change our concerns over the height of the garage on the plot, therefore our original comments are still applicable.

Outcome of previous planning applications / queries: -.

- 7.2 **DOV 16/00339 Greenwood Slip, Slip Lane, Alkham** – Retrospective Permission has been granted for the erection of an outbuilding.

8. Delegates Reports

District Councillor Pauline Beresford reported that news on the new leisure centre for Dover is due soon. The train line between Dover and Folkestone has now re-opened and work on the second roundabout in Snargate Street is underway. She reminded the Parish Council that an option for raising extra funds would be to increase the precept, as currently Alkham is one of the lowest in the district.

County Councillor Geoff Lymer said that KCC would not be placing a gutter alongside Hogbrook Hill Lane, as it is too costly and likely to get easily blocked and become ineffective. He reported that pothole repairs are ongoing and encouraged people to try and attend one of the Lorry Park consultations. He will investigate the cost of funding a pole and flag for a permanent bus stop at Meggett Lane and the Parish Council thanked him for his generosity.

9. Interval It was brought to the Parish Councillors attention that the ‘Dover’ section of Kent County Council’s LTP4 (local transport plan) does not feature Alkham Valley Road at all. With the ever-increasing amount of traffic through Alkham the Parish Council was encouraged to submit comments to both KCC and DDC before 30th October 2016.

Some members of the audience questioned whether the Parish Council envisage contributing funds toward the costs of repairs for the byways and emphasised that the Parish Council is responsible for the sensible expenditure of parish money. The Chairman confirmed that The Parish Council is waiting to see what funding is forthcoming before making any decisions. Discussions continued about the concerns of spending money on immediate repairs that may not last very long and the importance of establishing a long-term plan. The Chairman made an assurance that the Parish Council is mindful of the issues, accepts the safety concerns and is fully exploring the options with KCC.

When asked, Cllr Burrows clarified that neither he, nor any of his family members have a pecuniary interest in the closure of the byways.

A member of the audience expressed concern that the damaged banks adjacent to Pimlico contribute towards problems with flooding and asked whether the banks will be repaired. KCC will not spend money on reinstating the land to the sides of the byway as this damage occurred as a result of the previous landowner allowing organised 4x4 events on his land. A member of the public said that he is of the understanding that KCC are responsible for repairing the banks adjacent to ER185 Pimlico Way.

Cllr Barnard was questioned about the long-term flood measures should a predicted increase in winter rainfall over the next 5-10 years be correct, and any plans to mitigate the effects of flash floods. Cllr Barnard confirmed that at the moment he has concentrated on resolving the immediate problems and has made excellent progress. Long-term plans are slow to materialise as a result of KCC's budget constraints but it remains a consideration going forward. He is in constant dialogue with KCC's drainage team to find workable solutions for Alkham's problems with flooding.

It was brought to the Parish Council's attention that the hedgerow either side of Slip Lane requires a cut back, so this will be raised with KCC Highways for attention. Also, it was mentioned that it is easier for motorists to emerge from Slip Lane when vehicles are not parked near to the junction.

A discussion followed about the problems of enforcing restrictions on restricted byways and the advantages and disadvantages of installing blockages such as concrete blocks at the entrances to the routes and fences to the sides.

10. Finances The Parish Council resolved to pay the following:-
- 10.1 Invoice from Larry Lambourne for £47.31 for servicing and fuel.
 - 10.2 Clerks Salary and expenses of £741.43 for July & August 2016
 - 10.3 Harmer Landscapes – Invoice for £927.60 for groundworks
 - 10.4 Harmer Landscapes – Invoices for £100.80 for mowing July '16
 - 10.5 Harmer Landscapes – Invoice for £44.40 for traffic mirror
 - 10.6 Harmer Landscapes – Invoice for £103.20 for mowing Aug '16
 - 10.7 Invoice for new strimmer of £387.59

11. Any other business

- 11.1 Flytipping has been reported at Newcastle Lane but until it obstructs the byway KCC will not clear it away.

12. The date of the next regular meeting is Monday 7th November 2016 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9:06pm

Signed (Chairman)

Date