

ALKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES - MONDAY 7th NOVEMBER 2016

1. Venue Alkham Village Hall, 7:30pm
2. Present Parish Councillors: Neil Burrows, Den Barnard, Fiona MacAskill, Anthony Barrier and Geoff Hillier. Clerk: Angela Miller. Members of the public: 16
District Councillor: Nick Dixon. County Councillor: Geoff Lymer.
3. Apologies and approval of absences
Parish Councillor: Susan Lees and District Councillor: Pauline Beresford.
4. To receive declarations of interest and dispensations
Cllr Barnard declared an interest in St Anthony's PCC.
5. Regular Business
 - 5.1 The minutes from meetings held 12th & 23rd Sept 2016 and 13th Oct 2016 were received, approved and signed as correct records. Cllr Hillier wished to expand on his views contained in his letter of 7th Sept. He is concerned that somebody had contacted KCC requesting to open the byways by using the Parish Council's name as support to their argument and he plans to investigate this further. He stated it is a serious issue if someone is using the Parish Council's name in this manner, especially as (at that time) the Parish Council had not had an opportunity to discuss the matter. Cllr Hillier also requested that the Parish Council consider adopting a Standing Order, which the Parish Council did not support.
6. Matters Arising
 - 6.1 Byway Closures: Andrew Hutchinson confirms that he is meeting with the contractor on Wednesday next week to 'walk and talk' the details of the repairs to Pimlico Way. He has confirmed that these repairs will not affect Alkham's place on the list of TRO's to be considered. He has also advised that a colleague, Louise Smith, at KCC is managing a 'Natural Flood Management' project and is in discussion with relevant landowners to deliver a scheme to alleviate flooding issues in Slip Lane. Louise will be able to fund the installation of grips on ER25, which should also reduce the problem of flints washing down Slip Lane. Cllr Barnard will follow this news up and keep the Parish Council updated.
 - 6.2 Drainage Update – Since the last meeting, the soakaway in Lockering Lane has been cleared and a grip has been installed on the corner to divert the water into it. Cllr Barnard will observe it during the next period of rainfall and see if KCC need to revisit the matter. A complete walk through of the dyke has taken place and the Drainage Team have confirmed that the Meggett Lane culvert and the blocked drain at the entrance to Pimlico Way will be cleared by the end of the month and the brick wall at Short Lane will also be rebuilt. A soakaway pipe installed in Lower Everden Lane was brought to the Parish Council's attention because it is not working very well. Cllr Barnard will take up the matter with KCC and keep the Parish Council updated.
 - 6.3 Speed Watch Update – Volunteers have been registered online now and are awaiting a date for practical training.
 - 6.4 Parish Councillor vacancy: The deadline for applications is Friday 11th November 2016.
 - 6.5 Play equipment: Harmer Landscapes, together with Cook Fabrications, have managed to source new swing clamps. The clamps are more expensive than previously quoted; therefore the new total price for the work is £548 +VAT. The Parish Council agreed that the work should still go ahead at the revised price. Cllr Barnard has checked the play equipment this month and is satisfied that there are no safety concerns.

- 6.6 Traffic Mirror: The mirror will hopefully be installed opposite the track at North Hill Cottage soon. A flexible mirror has since been purchased using the Alkham Fund and Cllr Barnard plans to experiment with it to see if it could improve the visibility at the jct of Slip Lane.
- 6.7 Winter Salt – three new bags have been ordered for 2016; one bag will be delivered to the car park adjacent to the Village Hall and the other two to local farmers in Chalksole and South Alkham.

7. Correspondence

- 7.1 Alkham Village Hall Committee – Flood risk letter was read aloud and a discussion followed about the maintenance of the dyke across the Village Green. It is the riparian owners responsibility to ensure that there are no obstructions of the watercourse. Flood Warden Cllr Barnard continues to press KCC to clear the silt from the culverts and the waterbed and intends to ensure that KCC maintain this work going forward.
- 7.2 A letter received via the suggestion box requesting a tidy up for the fence around the sump and the provision of a reed pond for seasonal overflow – The Parish Council agree that a fence is certainly required around the sump. It was brought to the Parish Council's attention that there are holes in the wire fence so this will be reported to KCC. Councillors agreed to take a look at the site to see whether additional hedging would help.
- 7.3 A letter received via the suggestion box regarding overgrown hedgerows on the path alongside the Alkham Valley Road between 'Bramhall' and the telephone box. The hedges have been cut back but the bank is encroaching onto the footpath. This will be reported to KCC. A hedgerow cutback has been requested in Slip Lane, as it would be difficult for emergency vehicles to get up the lane.
- 7.4 Policing in Kent 2017-21: Autumn 2016 survey. Online at www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/take-part. The deadline date is 2nd December.
- 7.5 Neighbourhood Watch advise that deliveries of Yellow Pages will begin on 16th Nov by a company named DEYA. This will take 2-3 weeks.
- 7.6 DDC new afternoon appointment service – for matters on Council Tax, Housing and Planning. More information can be found on DDC's website.
- 7.7 BT Consultation on removal of phoneboxes: - Alkham Valley Road phone box has only had 4 calls made from it during the last 12 months. The Parish Council therefore agreed with BT's proposal to remove the kiosk.
- 7.8 Environment Agency Nationwide Flood Action Campaign – more details on website.
- 7.9 Kent Police Firearms Amnesty – ends 5pm on 11th November.
- 7.10 Kent Highways letter informing of changes to Management Team – Stephanie Wadhams will be the District Manager whilst Steve Rivers undertakes a 6mth project elsewhere.

8. Planning -

- 8.1 **DOV 16/01190 Upper Westhill Farm, Belsey Lane, Ewell Minnis** – Erection of a single storey extension with balcony over (existing extension to be demolished).
The Parish Council has no objection.
- 8.2 **DOV 16/01029 Land adjoining 1 Catherine Cottages, Alkham Valley Road, Alkham** – Erection of detached dwelling and associated car parking (existing outbuildings to be demolished).
The Parish Council has no objections subject to the following:-
 - i) That there is a satisfactory visibility splay for vehicles emerging from the property onto Alkham Valley Road.
 - ii) Highways approval for the increase in traffic to the site located near to a very dangerous bend in the village.
 - iii) The blocks of native hedging are planted, and not delayed.

Outcome of previous planning applications / queries:-

- 8.3 **DOV 16/00396 Land at Short Lane, Alkham** – Permission refused for the outline application to erect three dwellings (matters reserved).
- 8.4 **DOV 16/00453 Alkham House, Short Lane, Alkham** – Permission granted for the erection of a triple detached garage with first floor ancillary space (amended plans).
- 8.5 **DOV 16/01053 Drellingore Farm, Stombers Lane, Drellingore** – Permission refused for the erection of an agricultural storage building.
- 8.6 **DOV 16/00750 Holmlea, Alkham Valley Road** - Permission granted for the variation of condition 2 of permission DOV 15/00893 to allow changes to approved drawings (application under section 73).

9. Delegates Reports & PCSO

- 9.1 **District Councillor Nick Dixon** reported that the ice rink at Dover Terminal is now open. More information can be found on Christmas events on www.whitecliffschristmas.co.uk There will be road work disruption on Snargate Street until early next year and the 40mph average speed check on the A20 is up for review in 2017.

County Councillor Geoff Lymer reported on the costs involved with the increase in asylum-seeking children. He concurred with Cllr Dixon about the plans to review the 40mph limit on the A20 and agreed to suggest to Matthew Balfour and Kent Police that resources should then be allocated to enforcing speed limits through the Alkham Valley to try and move traffic back to using the A20.

- 10. Interval Cllr Hillier confirmed that he had submitted a response to KCC's Local Transport Plan 4 on behalf of the Parish Council. The general volume and speed of traffic through the village was discussed and it was agreed that the new Speed Watch scheme would hopefully have an impact.

- 11. Finances The Parish Council resolved to pay the following:-
 - 11.1 Clerks salary and expenses of £507.86 for Sept & Oct '16
 - 11.2 Contribution to KCC of £275 towards byway repairs – already authorised
 - 11.3 Invoices from Harmer Landscapes for Sept & Oct mowing of £321.60
 - 11.4 St Anthony's PCC – a donation of £250 towards 2016 grass cutting costs at St Anthony's Church. The Parish Council agreed that this donation does not set a precedent. This cheque will be authorised during the December meeting.

12. Any other business

- 12.1 Minutes must be kept concise and decision based.
- 12.2 The Parish Council website address should be included in the monthly newsletter.
- 12.3 After the sale of the property 'Valley View' situated behind 'Hazeldene', it was brought to the Parish Council's attention that the original planning application did not include the additional bedroom in the roof space. The Parish Council will enquire with DDC accordingly.
- 12.4 The street lamps at 'Valley Cottages' and 'Countryside' are not working properly. The Parish Council will report these to both KCC and DDC for repair.
- 12.5 A discussion concerning the sand bags at the Village Hall took place about whether there could be salt inside the sand bags. The Alkham Village Hall Committee should just re-check the bags to ensure that there is no risk of saline pollution.

13. Next meeting is the Precept meeting on Monday 5th December 2016 at 7pm

The meeting closed at 9:30pm

Signed (Chairman)

Date