

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RIVER PARISH COUNCIL**

Held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at River Methodist Church

**PRESENT:** Cllr. Taylor (in the Chair), Cllr. Brand, Cllr. Buhlman, Cllr. Dixon, Cllr. Horobin, Cllr. Mrs. Horobin, Cllr. Leach, Cllr. Reeves, Cllr. Shirley and Cllr. Webb

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. A. Denyer (Parish Clerk) and Dist. Cllr. Beresford

Before the start of the meeting, Chairman announced the sad passing, at the age of seventy eight, of Peter Bowers, Vicar at St.Peter and St.Paul's Church at River from 1986 to 2002 and Rural Dean for the Dover Area from 1993 to 2000. Chairman invited all present to stand for a few moments as a mark of respect.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Dist. Cllr. Nicholas

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were none.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014 had previously been circulated. One amendment was noted, that Cllr. Webb should have been listed as present at the meeting. Following this amendment, it was proposed by Cllr. Leach and seconded by Cllr. Shirley that the minutes be accepted as a true record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

### **4. MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**

The minutes of the Budget Committee Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014 had previously been circulated and their contents were noted.

### **5. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2015 were circulated at the meeting and their contents were noted.

Chairman reported receiving notification of a site meeting arranged by Dover District Council to discuss 27 Crabble Lane, the subject of several recent planning applications. Chairman and Clerk will attend along with any other members of the Parish Council Planning Committee, if available.

### **6. PCSO REPORT**

PCSO was unable to attend and sent a written report which was read to the meeting:

There have been four burglaries during November and beginning of December. Suspects have been identified and arrests made in three of these. There have also been several thefts from motor vehicles and arrests have been made for one of these crimes. There were a couple of assaults between rival fans after the big football match. One incident of anti-social behaviour where a doorbell had been rung and whoever had done it had run away.

Chairman reported that PCSO has also been in contact with Kent Highways about improvements to the signage relating to the temporary road closure on Lower Road.

### **7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (NOT OTHERWISE LISTED ON THE AGENDA)**

There were none.

### **8. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

Following disputes over traffic using Chisnall Road as an alternative route because of temporary road closure at Lower Road, Cllr. Beresford confirmed that Chisnall Road is an unadopted road but not a private road. During the roadworks, children are being transferred between buses to get around the road closure. In answer to a query about the deep puddle in the road outside the school, this is partly a result of the camber in the road. Cllr. Beresford will also be attending the planning site meeting at 27 Crabble Lane.

### **9. REPORT FROM THE EVENTS COMMITTEE**

Cllr. Brand reported that preparations for the 2015 Country Fayre are progressing. It is hoped to be able to fill the arena with events throughout the Fayre. Several grant application forms have been sent out but none yet returned.

## **10. FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Financial reports for November and December 2014 had previously been circulated and were presented by Clerk. Cllr. Dixon queried the cost of the water bill compared with that of wastewater. He reminded the meeting that the previous Clerk had negotiated a reduction in wastewater charges due to the fact that irrigation water does not go back into the drainage system. The small difference in the bills does not seem to reflect that. Clerk was asked to check that the Parish Council was still receiving the reduction and to check whether any areas other than the bowling green are being irrigated. This was agreed. It was proposed by Cllr. Dixon and seconded by Cllr. Brand that the reports be accepted and all agreed.

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BUDGET COMMITTEE**

### **a) Recreation Ground Hire Fees 2015/16**

A copy of the proposed fees had previously been circulated. Options for increasing by three percent as had been the usual practice along with a two percent increase, more in line with current inflation rates, were available. It was proposed by Cllr. Leach that the hire fees increase by two percent. This was seconded by Cllr. Brand and all agreed.

Cllr. Dixon explained that, following the Budget Committee Meeting, the licence with the Bowling Club was being reviewed.

### **b) 2015 Precept**

A copy of the proposed budget and recommendations for the precept, as discussed at the Budget Committee meeting, had previously been circulated. The proposals reflected a budget to maintain the current level of precept as that requested for 2014/15. Individual figures had been decreased to account for the thirty two percent reduction in the Council Tax grant to be received. Clerk presented the recommendations to members. It was proposed by Cllr. Leach that the budget be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Dixon and all agreed. A copy of the budget is appended to these minutes.

## **12. 'RIVER IN BLOOM 2015' PROJECT**

A proposal for the River in Bloom initiative was circulated at the meeting. Cllr. Shirley gave a presentation on the project. Locations included key sites at the two village signs and at the Valley Road/Lower Road junction. Fertiliser and soil were important as the existing soil at the proposed sites was very poor. Donations of planters, old tyres etc. had been asked for and requests for volunteers had also gone out. It was hoped that small groups of people could adopt a location for ongoing maintenance. Local competitions could start once the project was established. Chairman suggested liaising with Dist. Cllr. Beresford over permissions for certain locations. Cllr. Shirley said that the planting and maintenance for Village in Bloom would cost £960 in the first year and £220 in the second year. Cllr. Webb proposed that the budget for planting and maintenance be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Leach and all agreed.

In addition, Cllr. Horobin suggested planting flowering trees or shrubs along the Recreation Ground boundary on Lewisham Road to fill in the gaps between existing trees. Chairman asked Cllr. Horobin to look into costs.

## **13. STREET LIGHTING WITHIN RIVER PARISH**

Cllr. Mrs. Horobin reported that representations had been made to her by residents of the area around The Ridgeway about the lack of night-time streetlighting. She said that many residents, especially the elderly, felt insecure in their homes at night. Chairman reminded the meeting that this was due to the current KCC policy of switching out streetlights between 12am and 5.30am for all lights except those on major thoroughfares. Dist. Cllr. Beresford said that all the lights belonging to DDC were still kept on. Cllr. Dixon proposed that a letter be sent to KCC about the problem which could then be followed up by a petition. This was seconded by Cllr. Webb and all agreed. Cllr. Webb and Cllr. Buhlman were asked to draft the letter. This item will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

## **14. NOMINATIONS FOR THE KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME**

Clerk explained that only one nomination per parish was accepted for someone who had made a substantial contribution to the community. Chairman proposed that, in view of his long service to the Parish Council and the local community, Cllr. Leach be nominated. This was seconded by Cllr. Reeves and all agreed. Cllr. Leach abstained from voting.

## **15. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **a) Re-opening of River Post Office**

A letter had been received from the Post Office giving details of the re-opening of River Post Office on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015. Chairman asked that the minutes show the Parish Council's appreciation of the hard work by Dist. Cllr. Nicholas in securing the continuation of Post Office services in the village.

### **b) Lord Lieutenant of Kent Annual Service**

An invitation had been received to attend the annual service hosted by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent at Rochester Cathedral. Chairman asked that if any members wished to attend with their partners as representatives of the Parish Council to please contact the Clerk by the end of the week.

## **16. TOPIC FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Chairman suggested that the Council might invite Kevin Charles to do an updated presentation on the progress with the Kearsney Abbey project. Cllr. Leach suggested that a display on the 'River in Bloom' might also be valuable. Members are requested to contact the Clerk with any other suggestions.

## **17. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- Chairman said that following a discussion at the last Events Committee meeting, a Facebook page was to be established for the Parish Council to publicise notifications about events and other information.
- Also that local rumours about dogs being barred from Kearsney Abbey under the new DDC Dog Control Orders are false and followed on from a misleading report in the local press. The only places where dogs will be barred from are areas where a ban is currently in force. A map is provided on the DDC website.
- Opportunities for half-price bus travel for children have been passed on by Dist. Cllr. Nicholas.
- The latest newsletter from the Thanet Rights of Way Society had been received and was available for circulation.
- Clerk reported that a local collective energy switching scheme was currently being run with Dover District Council as one of the partners. A poster would be displayed on the notice board and details are available on the DDC website.
- Also that an electoral review of Kent County Council was currently underway by the Local Government Boundary Commission.
- Cllr. Brand said that incidents of dog mess seemed to be increasing in the village. Dist. Cllr. Beresford said that enforcement officers did visit the village and that incidents should be reported to them.
- Cllr. Webb suggested that a review of Parish notice boards be an agenda item for the next meeting.

## **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Caroline Fox-Betts said that all drains leading up to Kearsney Abbey were now blocked. She also asked if it were possible for the village heritage interpretation panel to be moved further forward to be more visible. Also, that the panel is now very shabby. Clerk said that renewal of the panel is in hand. It was considered unlikely that re-siting the panel was possible.

The meeting closed at 9.31pm