

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF RIVER PARISH COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday 14th April 2015 at River Methodist Church

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr. A. Denyer (Parish Clerk), Dist. Cllr. Beresford, Dist. Cllr. Nicholas, PCSO White

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr. Shirley and Cllr. Webb

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were none

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10th March 2015 had previously been circulated. It was proposed by Cllr. Brand and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Horobin that the minutes be accepted as a true record. All agreed and the minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

4. REPORT FROM THE PCSO

PCSO presented her report on the last month. There have been a couple of incidents of shoplifting and road signs being moved. There have also been problems with exceptional and inconsiderate parking around Kearsney Abbey during the school holidays. PCSO will be in the area during the next two days and will leaflet any vehicles parking inconsiderately.

5. MATTERS ARISING:

a) Update on parish notice boards

Clerk is still pursuing specifications and prices and will bring them to a future meeting.

b) Update on Lower Road telephone kiosk

Clerk reported that an 'adopt-a-phone-box' scheme is operated by British Telecom. Information as to whether the Lower Road telephone box is eligible and all the potential options are still being enquired into.

c) Item 8a (i) DOV/15/00147 | Erection of a verandah/balcony (retrospective application) | 22 Lyndhurst Road, River, CT17 0LY.

Since the last meeting, Chairman has received correspondence from a resident including a photograph showing that the patio door previously thought to have been a pre-existing part of the property had actually been installed by the applicant and was formerly a window only. Cllr. Beresford reported that she had called the application in for consideration by the District Council planning committee. Chairman hoped that any additional information subsequently received after the consultation period had ended would be taken into consideration.

d) Public Question Time

An update on issues raised by Mrs. Flood in public question time regarding trees growing out of the riverbank across Lower Road and also parking around the Kingston Close junction on some match days at Crabble Athletic. Chairman reported that we have received assurances from the Environment Agency that the problem with trees is to be dealt with. Also that Mrs. Flood has agreed to seek support from neighbours about the parking problem and will then speak to Dover Athletic F.C. about the possibility of having parking cones around the junction of Kingston Close and Lower Road on match days.

6. PLANNING MATTERS

a) Planning applications:

i) DOV/15/00232 | Erection of two storey side and single storey rear extensions | 1 Minnis Lane, River, CT17 0RF – no objections

ii) DOV/15/00235 | Erection of two single storey side extensions | 1 Briar Close, River, CT17 0LZ – no objections

b) Planning applications received by the date of the meeting:

DOV/15/00317 | Erection of a single storey rear extension and conversion of garage into a habitable room (existing conservatory to be demolished) | 57 Deanwood Road, River, CT17 0NU – no objection subject to any reservation from neighbouring properties with regard to loss of privacy.

c) To note any decisions taken by Dover District Council:

i) DOV/15/00170 | Certificate of lawfulness (proposed) for the erection of a single storey rear extension | 15 Mannering Close, River, CT17 0UD – granted permission.

Clerk reported that this application had not been put forward to the parish council for consultation as it merely confirmed that the work to be undertaken fell within permitted development rights and that a new planning application had not been required.

ii) DOV/15/00110 | Erection of a two storey rear extension | 28 Coxhill Gardens, River. CT17 0PX – granted permission

iii) DOV/15/00081 | Erection of single storey extensions to garage to form additional garage and workshop and creation of a parking bay | 95 London Road, River, CT16 3AA – granted permission

d) Correspondence regarding development at Belle Vue, Minnis Lane

Following a report to the Parish Council, correspondence has been sent to Dover District Council Planning Department about the development taking place at Belle Vue, Minnis Lane. No planning application is on record for this development. An Enforcement Officer from DDC has visited the site and investigations are ongoing. Cllr. Beresford said that she would also be looking into the matter.

7. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

County Cllr. Lymer reported on current matters within the Dover West Ward.

Flooding earlier in the year, affecting Alkham and Temple Ewell, led to water coming up from under the road surface and causing road damage. This was in the process of being repaired and would require night time road closures.

With regard to issues relating to Heavy Goods Vehicles. Cllr. Lymer explained that the problems are threefold: access to the Coombe Valley Road Industrial Estate required via Crabble Avenue; the use of car SATNAV systems by HGVs; and the low railway bridge on the Alkham Road leading to HGVs diverting along Lower Road and through River.

With regard to the problem with litter along highways, Cllr. Lymer has arranged for two litter picks with a third one currently ongoing. However, the problem has become so bad that work may be need to be done at night which will involve carriageway closure. Cllr. Lymer is looking into the possibility of prosecutions but the problem is one of enforcement.

With regard to Operation Stack, Cllr. Lymer reported that the latest idea being considered was for a lorry park at Westernhanger but he felt there were better options that ought to be considered. He outlined other options and a discussion took place. Cllr. Leach said that Operation Stack had only been implemented four times since 2010 and that the main problem for Dover is that Townwall Street becomes clogged with lorries on several evenings every week.

Cllr. Lymer will push for the implementation of the scheme for double yellow lines on the junction of Valley Road and Common Lane. However, the new signage for HGVs in the vicinity of the Crabble Avenue junction will have to wait its turn. A lot of county members' funding is used up at the end of the financial year. A substantial proportion of which is aimed at highway schemes. This leads to a backlog of work for Kent Highways.

Finally, Cllr. Lymer paid tribute to Cllr. Nicholas, who is stepping down at the forthcoming elections, for her character and the amount of time she has given to the community over many years.

Cllr. Nicholas said that she was extremely concerned about parking around the Kearsney Abbey area during school holiday periods, especially with regard to the movement of buses. During the last week, a bus had been unable to pass along Lower Road, Temple Ewell due to parked vehicles. The police had been contacted citing obstruction but declined to attend. If problems with the bus service lead to loss of passengers, this could put the service itself in jeopardy. Chairman and Cllr. Nicholas agreed that both would email the PCSO about the problems and ask her to contact the police directly and asking for acknowledgement of the issue.

Cllr. Beresford said that the issue of parking around Kearsney Abbey could be raised with the Kearsney Parks Project Manager at the activity day on Thursday. She reported that refuse left on Crabble Lane had been reported for collection. Also, the Alkham Valley road will be shut from 10pm to 4am on Monday to Thursday next week to allow re-surfacing to take place. Reports received of HGVs parking overnight in River turned out to be English drivers who had run out of time for driving. During recent problems on the A20, police without local knowledge had been directing HGVs along Alkham Valley.

8. REPORTS FROM THE EVENTS COMMITTEE

Cllr. Brand reported that grant cheques had been paid out. Arrangements for the Country Fayre are continuing.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

No significant general correspondence to report

10. FINANCE:

a) Financial reports for March 2015

Financial reports for March 2015 had previously been circulated. It was proposed by Cllr. Brand that the report be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Dixon and all agreed.

b) Annual Governance Statement

Clerk circulated copies of the annual governance statement from the annual return. This would be approved along with the annual accounts at the annual general meeting.

c) Quotations for parish insurance

A review of parish insurance is in progress. At least five insurance companies are now providing insurance cover to parish councils. Chairman and Clerk met with Came & Company, Local Council insurance brokers, who have provided a quote. One other quotation has also been received. Clerk is awaiting renewal terms from our present insurers. It was agreed that Chairman, Cllr. Dixon and Cllr. Buhlman form a sub-committee to consider all three quotes when available and have the power to act.

d) To approve subscription to Kent Association of Local Councils

The annual subscription to KALC is now due. The benefits of membership were discussed. Chairman proposed that the council renew membership at a cost of £960. This was seconded by Cllr. Reeves and all agreed.

e) Appointment of internal auditor

Chairman proposed that Tony Kilbee be asked to continue acting as internal auditor for the annual accounts towards completion of the annual return. This was seconded by Cllr. Buhlman and all agreed.

11. RENOVATION / REPLACEMENT OF VILLAGE BENCHES

Chairman reported that a quote of £370 has been received for the repair and renovation of public benches in the village. After discussion, it was agreed that this represented good value and that further quotes, in this instance, were not required. Cllr. Dixon proposed that the quote be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Horobin and all agreed.

Cllr. Reeves has offered to make a donation towards replacing the bench in River Street, near River Church, with a new one in memory of Cllr. Brian Cuff. This was accepted and a vote of thanks is recorded for the offer. It was agreed that the existing bench will be renovated and relocated inside the Recreation Ground.

12. TREES WITHIN THE PARISH

a) Tree planting in the Recreation Ground

Twelve new trees have now been planted along the Lewisham road boundary of the Recreation Ground. Cllr. Mrs. Horobin suggested that twelve more be planted to complete the row. Cllr. Mrs. Horobin is to obtain a price for the work, assuming that this will now be carried out in the autumn. Cllr. Dixon is to follow up a request for a price for protective cages for the initial planting.

b) Correspondence from Kent County Council re. Lewisham Road trees

An email has been received from Kent Highways with prices and available locations for four possible replacement trees in Lewisham Road. It was agreed to fund this scheme at a cost of £1,603.

c) Correspondence regarding trees in Chisnall Road

A resident of Chisnall Road has emailed the Clerk with concerns over potential threat to mature trees growing opposite number one. Local residents maintain the area but the ownership of the land is unknown. Chairman will look into the land ownership.

13. ARRANGEMENTS FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING/PARISH MEETING

The annual general meeting and annual parish meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th May at 7.30pm.

14. NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2015/2016

It was noted that Cllr. Leach and Cllr. Reeves were standing down from the parish council after the forthcoming elections. Chairman asked that the minutes show the council's appreciation of the many years of service to the community by both Councillors.

Seven nominations have been received for the parish council, which means the election is uncontested. Cllr. Shirley has not put her name forward for nomination due to other commitments but has indicated that she may be open to joining the council at a later date if a position is available. Chairman said that he is willing to continue in the role if it is the wish of the members of the council. Cllr. Webb has agreed to join the planning committee. All Committee members and officers will be formally agreed at the AGM.

15. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- Cllr. Dixon reported that the problem with dog walkers / dog fouling in the Recreation Ground is increasing. New signage is due to be installed by DDC as a result of the new dog control orders. Cllr. Beresford said that she will look into the new signage and also speak to PCSO.
- Cllr. Leach said that the railings along the River at Lower Road were in need of repainting. Cllr. Beresford said she would look into.
- Also that many street signs are in need of cleaning.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A resident of Woodland Close questioned the loss of trees in Lewisham Road and Crabble Lane over the years. He had contacted Kent County Council about the matter and they had not been helpful.

Chairman said that the parish council has been active engaging with Kent Highway Services about tree work and also with replanting. The difficulty in replacing trees is down to the growing amount of underground utility services and also overhead cables. With regard to the cost of replacement as reported in Item 12b, Chairman said that the cost is not something the parish council has any control over and that KCC contractors must be used.

Chairman said that the parish council would meet with KHS Landscape Services with a view to investigating the replacement of trees in Crabble Lane.

Meeting closed at 10pm