

Minute Ref HPC 12/23
Hothfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council
held on Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 7.00pm at The Bluebells Children's Centre.

1. Note of Persons Present

Cllr Lloyd, (Chairman), Cllr Sutcliffe, Cllr Fletcher, Cllr Brock, Cllr Bowker
Borough Cllr Clair Bell, Mrs Marie Norris (Clerk)

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Pollock.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

Cllr Lloyd declared an interest in the Ram Lane pre planning discussion as he is a near neighbour.

Declaration of Significant Interest

There were no Declaration of Significant Interest recorded this period.

i) To note the granting of any Requests for Dispensation and the decision

No requests received.

ii) Updating of Declarations of Interest for the Code of Conduct

There were no declarations of interest. Councillors were reminded that they should update their Declaration of Interest with the Monitoring Officer if necessary.

4. Public Interval

No members of the public were in attendance, and no items for discussion were brought to the council.

5. Acceptance of Minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes of the November meeting were amended *remove* line there was no meeting of the village hall, *insert* no one from the PC was able to attend the last meeting of the village hall.

The chairman reminded all members that changes to the draft minutes should be brought to the attention of the clerk as soon as practical.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted, and it was unanimously agreed that the chairman should sign them.

6. Matters Arising from the previous minutes

There were no matters for report not covered on the agenda.

7. Items for Planning

PA/2023/2180 Shed End Alder Farm, Bethersden Road: This item for planning was received after the agenda had been issued. Following discussions, Cllrs supported the application with a caveat that the nearby pond should be protected during the build process.

Resolution: Support

PA/2023/2040 Hurst Hill Farm Cottage: The PC support the application though have questioned further as to how the sewage is removed as the current application does not detail this.

Resolution: Support

Urban Cure Architecture had contacted the PC with a pre planning application. Councillors considered the document and were grateful to have the opportunity to look at the plans at this early stage. The PC requested that the clerk invite the agents to attend a future meeting to discuss the plans further and answer further questions.

Action: Clerk

8. Borough Councillors Report

Cllr Bell reported that the council have approved plans to move from the Civic Centre Maidstone to International House. Questions still remain as to what will happen to the purpose-built Civic Centre.

The Christmas Waste Collections have been circulated to residents and will include a Saturday collection.

The PC raised the question about the proposed closure of the Hothfield Childrens centre and, in particular, how the current covenant on the building would affect this decision. This is a matter for KCC and not Ashford Borough Council although Cllr Bell agreed to try to find out.

The report from a local resident of a drain that was causing flooding outside his property was raised with Cllr Bell and she advised the clerk how to progress this matter further.

Residents' concerns about cars parking on the grass area in Sackville Close were raised.

Cllr Fletcher raised concerns that the footpath on the opposite side of the A20 heading towards Charing is overgrown and not in a suitable state for a mobility scooter and/ or prams or cycles to access. Cllr Cox suggested that this was part of a wider issue and that the PC consider this at a future meeting as an agenda item where the wider issues could be addressed.

9. Financial Reports

Bank Reconciliation

As of the November 2023 statement, there was a total of £69,625.07 This was split between 68,478.10 in the Business Reserve Account, £100.00 in the Current Account and £1046.97 in the Reserve Account

Accounts for Payments December payments totalled £1513.81 this is made up off the following payments:

Salary 564.48

Salary £334.06

HMRC £83.60

Flossy Bakes £92.00

KALC Training £95.00

PublicStar £227.02

M Norris Christmas Lights £95.65

Earmarked Funds

The clerk reported on the earmarked funds and provided a breakdown.

Precept

The PC formally agreed and adopted the budget for financial year 24/25 and agreed a precept of £15,500 which remains the same as the previous year.

11. General Council Business

Correspondence – Nothing to report.

Action Clerk

Village Hall – Cllr Sutcliffe had attended the last meeting where it was reported that the water meter issue had been resolved.

Bookings for the months of November and December were good and continue to look so into the new year with both private and corporate clients using the hall facilities.

Further to the inspection of the village hall by the surveyor on behalf of ABC, a report was yet to be received by the village hall committee. The bookings clerk had agreed to chase up the report on behalf of the committee. There were some concerns expressed about works that will need to be completed in the hall including electricals and the kitchen hall flooring. It is hoped that the surveyors report will provide a guide as to how to proceed with these.

Feedback from the race night was, although well attended and successful overall, it had not received much local support from village residents which was disappointing.

The hall committee are not due to meet in January but will resume in February.

KALC A meeting had not taken place during this period. Cllr Cox agreed to attend the next scheduled meeting.

MUGA Cllr Fletcher highlighted the number of leaves on the MUGA it was felt by the pc that these would disappear naturally but, should they look to be causing a problem and a hazard, the PC would ask Mr Marden to remove them. Cllr Fletcher reported that she had also contacted Ian Rickards at Kent Wildlife Trust to advise him about the number of large brambles behind the MUGA and to enquire as to whom owns the land directly behind the Muga.

Police Matters – Nothing to report.

Carbon Literacy Training Cllr Fletcher provided a verbal report on the training course she had recently attended. Copies of the print outs will be made available to the chairman and the clerk and can be distributed to members of the PC on request. A link to the vide will also be made available by Cllr Fletcher who will also write an article for the newsletter which will layout more details on her suggested priorities for Hothfield which include .

- Cycle Routes
- Saving the Bluebells Childrens Centre
- Newsletter including a dedicated page for children.

The chairman thanked Cllr Fletcher for attending the training and her subsequent debrief on the event.

Cllr Cox informed that KALC had also looked at some of the areas that the training had addressed.

Cllr Fletcher proposed that the Hothfield News has a page for children which could cover many topics. The PC were in agreement and Cllr Fletcher agreed to draft.

Hothfield Newsletter- Options to change from a monthly newsletter to every 2 months were discussed. This could help reduce costs of production and distribution. The chairman, in his role as editor, will consider this further. Action: Chair

12. Solar Funding Projects Update

Nothing further to report at this stage.

CCTV

Cllr Cox requested that this item was incorporated into the solar plan core projects. The clerk agreed to do so. Cllr Cox had spoken with the clerk at Charing and reported that they are waiting on some brackets and then their system will be complete. The Charing system is fully linked, and Cllr Cox confirmed that the clerk from Charing is happy to come to our next meeting and brief us further. The Hothfield clerk will contact Charing Clerk to arrange. Actin Clerk

13. Christmas Plans

The Christmas carol service around the tree is scheduled to take place on 15th December 6.00pm. Plans were in place for the evening.

15. Forum for Exchange of Information between Councillors

(Items are for discussion only. No decisions can be made under this heading)

Cllr Fletcher requested reimbursement for ink cartridges. The PC agreed Cllr Fletcher to submit receipts.

Cllr Cox raised the subject of cycle paths The current consultation with Kent Active Travel ends 10th Jan. Although cycle route from Ashford to Charing was in the consultation, Cllr Cox had suggested an alternative route. The chairman agreed that the PC would support Cllr Cox's proposals which would be submitted as part of the Hothfield views on the consultation.

The clerk asked the chairman to raise with Mrs Cook the presence of a plaque to commemorate the late Cllr Malcolm Cook.

16. Items for the Next Agenda

- Co option of Mr Jepheart

- Invitation for Charing Clerk to discuss CCTV
- Invitation for Urban Architecture

The chairman reminded members that agenda items should be raised with the clerk before the next meeting. The Chairman thanked all members for attending and called the meeting to close at 9:09pm.

17. Date of the Next Meeting

The next parish meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 14th February 2023.

Chairmans Signature: **DRAFT** **Date:**