

Nettlestead Parish Council
Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting
Held on 2 September 2021 7.45pm
At Nettlestead Village Hall

Members Present

Cllrs David Meredith - Chairman, Anita Van-Hensbergen – Vice Chairman, Emily Salter, David Thomas, Alison Green.

Also, in attendance; Rebecca Pullen, KCC Cllr Simon Webb.

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Jackie Bennett, The Clerk – Michelle Rumble.

2. Declaration of pecuniary or personal interest in any item on the agenda

None

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were signed as a true and correct record.

4. Parish Councillor Vacancy

One of the candidates who had previously expressed an interest in joining the PC have now withdrawn their applications. Rebecca Pullen was co-opted as a Member of Nettlestead Parish Council by unanimous vote.

5. Matters arising from previous minutes and action points

The Clerk was asked to contact the PCSO for updates concerning the village and to request attendance at forthcoming meetings.

The Clerk was asked to investigate ownership of the triangle of land at the southern end of footpath KM178 where it joins Maidstone Road adjacent to the lay-by.

6. County and Borough Councillors' Report

Cllr Webb's written report was noted.

7. Cllr Webb joined the meeting at 8.25pm and in his capacity as a Maidstone Borough Councillor, he provided an update on Borough Council activities including the proposal for a new Overview and Scrutiny Group which would oversee all 4 Borough Committee, providing a higher level of oversight across all areas of BC responsibilities. This proposal will be open to public consultation shortly.

Cllr Webb also provided an update on proposals to clean up and improve the public realm at Brenchley Gardens in Maidstone. Rebecca Pullen stated that she had recently visited these gardens and suggested the need for signage, particularly to indicate Exits. Cllr Webb agreed to take this feedback to the BC.

Cllr Webb was thanked for his update, and whilst it was noted that he is not Nettlestead's Borough Councillor, his input on both Borough Council and County Council matters were greatly appreciated.

8. Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr Salter stated that there was nothing further to report than previously noted.

9. Police Matters

No report had been received.

10. Chatterbox

Cllr Van-Hensbergen provided an update noting that there had not yet been a formal meeting of the group since the start of the Covid pandemic. However, she reported that some of the group had attended the Mayor's Tea Party in Maidstone along with Borough Cllr Russell. It is hoped that regular meetings can restart soon.

11. Parish Magazine

Cllr Van-Hensbergen stated that she had not been chasing advertising payments due to the commercial impact of the pandemic. It was agreed that as businesses are now beginning to return to normal it would be appropriate to ask for 6 months payment for 2021 and to return to the usual annual terms in January 2022.

Cllr Van-Hensbergen updated the meeting that the monthly update from Nettlestead Neighbours has now been removed from the Parish Magazine as the group was set up only as a response to the pandemic and was not intended as an ongoing service. Cllr Meredith agreed this was appropriate with the ongoing return to business and life returning to some normality.

12. Village Hall

Cllr Meredith stated that The Clerk has complained that she is receiving calls and messages regarding the Village Hall. It was agreed that it is not The Clerk's role to deal with Village Hall matters. Cllr Meredith advised that he is investigating whether the telephone and email contacts for Village Hall Bookings are correct and are working and is waiting for confirmation from the Village Hall booking clerk. It was also noted that it is difficult to find the Village Hall website on-line. The PC agreed that it is disappointing that the Village Hall is not being used at present.

13. KGV Field

1. *ROSPA Report:* The annual ROSPA Report was noted. It was also noted that the urgent actions identified in the report have been addressed with appropriate repairs & maintenance completed.

The Clerk was asked to obtain quotes for the re-surfacing issues identified.

2. *Goal Posts:* Further complaints from residents with properties adjoining the KGV field were noted. It was also noted that the ROSPA Report identified maintenance issues with the goal posts. It was agreed to remove and dispose of the goal posts but leave the high protective netting in-situ. It was agreed to take no immediate action on any replacement equipment for the Goal Posts but to consider the post Covid needs of the younger residents of the village and investigate options to encourage greater participation in outdoor activity.

Cllr Salter was asked to contact A&F Services regarding the removal and disposal of the goal posts, and making good the holes left after their removal.

The Clerk was asked to contact the impacted residents and inform them of the decisions.

3. *Maintenance quote:* The quotation from Capel Groundcare for ongoing inspection and maintenance of the play and exercise equipment was approved, and in particular it was agreed that quarterly inspections would be prudent.

14. Churchyard

The message from a member of the public concerning damage to headstones, grave flowers and urns was noted. The Clerk will be asked to respond and put them in touch with the Contractors directly to arrange appropriate recompense.

The Chairman would check with the Clerk about the action taken to date, and then contact the Church to see if details of a list of damaged items can be obtained.

15. Highways and Footpath matters

1. *Speedwatch:* It was noted that Teston PC have offered to lend Nettlestead its Speedwatch equipment. It was agreed to accept this offer subject to confirmation that NPC has the necessary insurance cover for both the equipment and volunteer users, the cost of a new battery for the equipment and that there is somewhere secure to store the equipment when not in use. It was further agreed that Teston PC should be given the new battery when the equipment was returned to them. It was also noted that the calibration of the equipment would need to be confirmed, or guidance obtained on how this is done.

The Clerk was asked to confirm all these issues.

2. *Bishops Close parking:* It was noted that KCC has stated that the proposal for Yellow Lines at the junction of Bishops Close and Maidstone Road will proceed to the next stage of the process. The objection had not been withdrawn, but KCC were aware of the support of all other respondents.

3. *Footpaths:* Rebecca Pullen informed the PC that the section of Footpath KM177 which runs from Bishops Close down to Maidstone Road is very overgrown and is unpassable, especially by those with pushchairs or wheelchair users. Cllr Salter also reported that the Footpath which runs down from the Churchyard to the riverbank is very overgrown and unpassable at the section close to the Churchyard.

The Clerk was asked to inform MBC, although it was noted that the PC has been told there is no budget for additional cuttings such as these.

16. Correspondence

It was noted that there had been no further correspondence not covered elsewhere in the meeting.

17. Planning Applications

New Planning Applications: None

Decisions made by MBC:

*21/503137/Full Rock Farm Barn, Gibbs Hill, Nettlestead, Maidstone: Conversion of an existing storage and distribution building into a 5 no bedroom dwelling with associated parking. **APPLICATION PERMITTED** – Noted*

*21/502981 Cherry Hill, Maidstone Road, Nettlestead: Demolition of existing garage and porch. Erection of two storey side and rear extension, alterations to existing windows and roofs. Erection of detached garage to the rear. **APPLICATION PERMITTED** – Noted*

Cllr Meredith mentioned the email he had sent concerning YEP and the inadequacy of the sequential test that had been applied. He stated that he was not aware of what had happened at the meeting. Borough Cllr Webb stated that he could not comment as he was not at the meeting. Cllr Meredith stated that he had not received a response from Borough Cllr Burton regarding his email concerning YEP.

18. Finance

To note Budget monitoring report for August and September 2021: Noted

Resolution to authorise payments for August and September: It was RESOLVED by all members present to make the payments.

To sign the Bank Reconciliation: It was RESOLVED to approve the Bank Reconciliation

To approve the Risk Assessment 2021: It was RESOLVED to approve the Risk Assessment for 2021.

19. Future agenda items

Goal Nets – follow up

Churchyard damage – follow up

Speedwatch – follow up

20. Date of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be on 7 October 2021 at Nettlestead Village Hall at 7.45pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.25pm