

# **NETTLESTEAD PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 IN NETTLESTEAD VILLAGE HALL at 19:45**

**PRESENT:**        **Cllr Alison Green - Chair**  
Cllr Anita van Hensbergen – Vice Chair  
Cllr David Meredith  
Cllr Emily Corfe  
Cllr Jackie Bennett  
Parish Clerk Suzanne Seal  
One member of the public

**1.        APOLOGIES AND ABSENCE**

Cllr Martyn Evans  
County Cllr Simon Webb  
Borough Cllr Claudine Russell

**2.        COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS**

No interests declared.

**3.        MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2023**

The minutes of the previous meeting were duly signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

The meeting was adjourned to hear from a member of the public, Mike Summersgill. Mike introduced himself to the Councillors and stated that he is the local Green candidate, a Parish Councillor in Hunton and more recently, in Marden. Mike stated that he wanted to attend the meeting as a spectator to understand how the meetings run in neighbouring villages, with a view to trying to link up the parishes to work together in some format.

**4.        EXTERNAL REPORTS**

**4.1       COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

Cllr Webb was not in attendance.

**4.2       BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT**

Cllr Russell was not in attendance but had circulated her report in advance of the meeting:

**MBC Members Report from Cllr Claudine Russell**

**Dated: November 2023**

**Rural England Prosperity Fund**

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) has awarded the first phase of Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) to communities across the borough. In September 2022, the Government announced that the REPF (as part of Levelling Up), was to be made available to support countryside communities across England. MBC was allocated £539,728 to spend between 2023 and 2025 to be awarded to projects for rural communities across the borough.

We will be introducing a second phase of funding at the end of 2023 when grants of £50,000+ will be available for groups to apply for and I would encourage as many rural communities as possible to come forward and apply for an REPF grant which could make a difference to their communities to upgrade a facility and improve their local environment and sustainability, supporting the rural economy into the future. For help to apply contact [climateandbiodiversity@Maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:climateandbiodiversity@Maidstone.gov.uk)

### **Local Plan**

The public consultation on the main modifications document closes shortly.

### **Current Consultations**

There is a public consultation about Climate Change and what Maidstone should prioritise and this can be accessed by the following link:

[Climate Change Survey 2023 | Lets Talk Maidstone \(engagementhq.com\)](#)

### **Parish Charter**

The consultation has now closed and we are analysing the results. The next step will be to work with KALC and parishes to draft the new charter.

As always, if you need my help, please do not hesitate to email me at [claudinerussell@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:claudinerussell@maidstone.gov.uk)

## **5. COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

### **5.1 NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH REPORT**

Cllr Corfe reported the Crime Report No. 46/187818/23 on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October around 9:20pm on Maidstone Road, when a block was thrown at a Volkswagen Polo driving in the road and damaged the rear bumper of the car.

### **5.2 PARISH MAGAZINE**

Cllr Van Hensbergen reported that she had met with Hadlums to discuss adding the KGV Field Public Consultation Survey as a loose insert into the Parish Magazine and Hadlums very kindly printed the surveys free of charge for the Parish Council.

### **5.3 CHATTERBOX AND WARMSPACE**

Chatterbox: Cllr Bennett reported that all was going well and advised there is a fundraising event on 18<sup>th</sup> November starting from 2pm at The Hop Pole with a Tombola during the day and SKA and Reggae music in the evening. Cllr Bennett welcomed any contributions for the Tombola. Cllr Bennett to liaise with Becky Pullen to advertise the event on the Parish Facebook page and to request donations for the Tombola.

Warmspace: Cllr Bennett reported that a Halloween fundraiser took place at The Hop Pole over 2 days during half term to raise money for the Evelina Children's Hospital and for a local child who is being cared for at the Evelina. Cllr Bennett advised that the event raised £522 and 70 pumpkins were donated for carving by a local farmer. Cllr Bennett passed an invoice for the event to the Clerk. Clerk to arrange settlement of the invoice to Cllr Bennett. Cllr Bennett to check permission has been given for photos to be printed in the Parish Magazine.

Cllr Bennett advised that although the hours had changed to run 2 hours later 2 evenings a week, this will likely revert back to finishing at 4pm due to the darker evenings.

**6. KGV FIELD**

**6.1 TREE GRANT SCHEME**

Parish Clerk to contact Cllr Webb to request an update on whether the report about the trees along the back of the KGV Field is available, following his meeting with KCC.

**6.2 KGV FIELD – DRAFT PUBLIC CONSULTATION SURVEY**

Cllr Green advised that she had not received many responses to the survey and urged residents to respond on what they would like to see and utilise on the KGV Field.

**6.3 KGV FIELD – UPDATE ON WORKS**

The Parish Clerk circulated the most recent Works Schedule from Capel Groundcare and noted that the final cut on 30<sup>th</sup> October had not been completed due to the weather conditions.

Clerk to contact Capel Groundcare and A&F Services to enquire if they have a planned date for the proposed works in their recent quotes to kill the weeds on the BMX track and repair fencing.

**7. CHURCHYARD**

Cllr Green reported that everything was looking good at the Churchyard.

Cllr Meredith to give Cllr Green’s details to Reverend Anthony regarding the reading of the names at the Lychgate for the Remembrance Day Service on 12<sup>th</sup> November.

**8. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS**

**8.1 SPEEDING**

Cllr Green stated that the speed strips were now down and awaited the results. Clerk to contact Cllr Webb for an update.

**8.2 TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY ISSUES AT HAMPSTEAD LANE AND STATION ROAD AND BOW HILL JUNCTION WITH THE B2015**

The Clerk hadn’t received an update on this and will contact Cllr Webb.

**8.3 STREETLIGHTS – ENERGY SUPPLY**

The Clerk reported that progress had been made now that Utility Aid, who are a broker for non-profit organisations, are on board, as they can assist by obtaining reduced quotes from the specific limited market available for unmetered supplies for parishes. The Clerk to obtain the UMS Certificate from UK Power Networks, arrange for the Letter of Authority from Utility Aid to be signed and submit the last two invoices, together with MPAN numbers and estimated annual consumption to Utility Aid.

**9. OLD SCHOOL HOUSE CLOCK**

Cllr Corfe advised that the service is due in December 2023. Clerk to obtain quotes for the annual service.

**10. PLANNING MATTERS**

**10.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

<b>23/504486/SUB</b>	<b>Former Syngenta Works Hampstead Lane Yalding Kent ME18 6HJ</b>
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	<p>Submission of details to discharge conditions 2 - External and Hard Surface Materials, 3 - Pointing and Mortar and 6 - Earth Batters Cross Sections, Subject to 23/502118/REM Application Validated: Thu 5 Oct 2023</p> <p><b>IT WAS RESOLVED BY ALL MEMBERS PRESENT TO MAKE NO COMMENT.</b></p>
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## 10.2 DECISIONS MADE BY MBC

<i>23/503617/FULL</i>	<p><b>Rock Farm Barn Gibbs Hill Nettlestead Kent ME18 5HT</b> Demolition of distribution and storage building. Erection of 1no. dwelling with garage and storage building.</p> <p><b>APPLICATION REFUSED</b></p>
<i>23/503638/LBC</i>	<p><b>Rock Farm House Gibbs Hill Nettlestead Kent ME18 5HT</b> Listed Building Consent for internal and external renovations, including erection of single storey side and rear extensions, raising of roof height of rear stair tower, and conversion of existing outbuilding to create an annex, including raising of roof height to existing side projection and installation of an air source heat pump.</p> <p><b>APPLICATION PERMITTED</b></p>

The decisions were noted. The Clerk to contact the Planning Office to request the Parish Council's comments for Planning Application 23/503617/FULL be made available to view online.

## 10.3 PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

None

## 11. FINANCE

### 11.1 RESOLUTION TO RECEIVE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2023

Cllr Meredith signed the invoices and advised that the direct debits had been paid.

**RESOLVED by all members** to approve the Budget Monitoring report for NOVEMBER 2023.

### 11.2 RESOLUTION TO APPROVE PAYMENTS FOR NOVEMBER 2023

Cllr Meredith and Cllr Corfe signed the cheques. **RESOLVED by all members** to approve payments for NOVEMBER 2023.

It was **RESOLVED by all members** to approve the Bank Reconciliation and this was signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

NPC CHEQUE LIST - NOVEMBER 2023					
Cheque No	Gross	VAT	Nett	Details	
622350	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00	UNITY BANK	DEPOSIT CHEQUE FOR ACCOUNT OPENING
622351	£198.00	£0.00	£198.00	HADLUM DESIGN	PARISH MAGAZINE PRINTING - OCT
622352	£483.42	£80.57	£402.85	CAPEL GROUNDCARE	GM CONTRACT - OCT VILLAGE HALL STRIMMING - OCT
622353	£770.89	£0.00	£770.89	SUZANNE SEAL	CLERK'S SALARY - OCT
622354	£55.44	£0.00	£55.44	SUZANNE SEAL	CLERK'S EXPENSES - OCT
622355	£252.00	£42.00	£210.00	MAZARS LLP	AUDIT REVIEW FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MAR 23
DD 171023	£9.60	£1.60	£8.00	SAGE PAYROLL	PAYROLL FEE - OCT
DD 231023	£1,199.50	£0.00	£1,199.50	GROBER LIMITED	NETTLESTEAD WARMSPACE
DD 251023	£158.19	£7.53	£150.66	NPOWER BUSINESS	STREET LIGHTING ENERGY - OCT
	<b>£3,627.04</b>	<b>£131.70</b>	<b>£3,495.34</b>		

### 11.3 RESOLUTION TO AUTHORISE SETTING UP A NEW STANDING ORDER TO PAY THE NEW CLERK

Cllr Meredith to arrange once online banking with Unity Bank has been completed.

### 11.4 INTERNET BANKING

Cllr Meredith reported that a Unity Bank account has now been opened with a deposit of £500 and that in order to carry out the switch from Santander to Unity Bank, the Savings Account funds need to be transferred to the Current Account and the Savings Account closed. Cllr Meredith produced a letter instructing Santander to make the transfer and close the account which was then signed by Cllr Corfe and Cllr Meredith. Cllr Meredith to continue to check when the Santander account address has been updated to his address.

### 11.5 BUDGET FOR 2024/INITIAL DRAFT

Cllr Meredith circulated an initial draft of the budget for discussion and the following points were agreed by all Councillors:

- To add 10% to the budget for insurance
- To re-budget for the Audit costs in the next financial year, as this went over budget this year.
- CIL grant is being transferred shortly and can be added to the budget.
- To increase the budget for Ground Maintenance
- To utilise the Household Support Grant following the outcome of the KGV Field survey
- To increase the budget for streetlight supply and maintenance
- The increase in the Precept will be discussed and agreed at the next meetings.

Cllr Bennett advised that the next funds due for Warmspace are in March, although it would be more useful to receive them at an earlier date to utilise over the Winter period. Cllr Meredith stated that an initial £1,500 was budgeted for and a grant of £3,000 was given and Cllr Bennett advised that it is expected they will utilise all funds currently available with an invoice of approx. £600 being processed in December for costs and a further invoice of approx. £600 to be submitted by The Hop Pole. It was agreed by all Councillors that in order

to continue to provide food and other amenities during the Winter months, it would need to be trimmed down to just bacon sandwiches, for example, to keep costs to a minimum. Cllr Meredith advised there will be approximately £1,000 left in the budget for the remainder of the tax year after the November payments are made.

The Clerk to send April budget information to Cllr Meredith. The Clerk to find out the amount and use of the CIL grant. The Clerk to find out when the second half of the PSS funds are due.

#### **11.6 SCRIBE SOFTWARE PACKAGE**

The Clerk to look into this matter for the Dec/Jan meetings.

#### **12. SOCIAL MEDIA**

Cllr Green reported that the QR code for the KGV Field survey had been added to Facebook and the page was being kept up to date by Becky Pullen.

#### **13. CORRESPONDENCE**

##### **13.1 BUS SHELTER ADJACENT TO TRADE IN TACKLE SHOP**

Cllr Green advised that she had reported the bus shelter which is falling over, to MBC and an email was circulated to the Councillors ahead of the meeting for information.

##### **13.2 ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Discussions were had as to support that was needed for the Village Hall, the Clerk to contact KALC for advice.

Cllr Van Hensbergen enquired as to whether the weeds on the footpath from Gibbs Hill to Nettlestead Green and the broken bus stop sign by the Church had been reported. The Clerk stated that both issues had been reported online and would be followed up this month. Cllr Van Hensbergen also reported a hole in the pavement outside the Church. The Clerk to report this.

Cllr Green advised that further emails had been received from a resident with regard to the parking and anti-social behaviour at Bishops Close. The Clerk to pass the details to MBC and the local Police for them to follow up.

#### **14. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Speeding

Traffic and Highways Issues – Hampstead Lane and Station Road and Bow Hill Junction with the B2015

Streetlights – Energy supply tariff

Scribe Software Package

Internet Banking

Update on the Budget for 2024

Update on repairs reported for the overgrown weeds, broken bus stop sign, bus shelter and the hole in the pavement

#### **15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7:45pm at Nettlestead Village Hall.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.20pm**