[**April 2020 Minutes**](https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/april-2020-minutes/)

Minutes of the meeting of Hollingbourne Parish Council held on Monday 6th April 2020, online via Microsoft Teams, due to COVID-19 Government recommendations.  The Clerk made sure that public were invited to the online meeting on the agenda notice.  To action this request, their email address was required by the Clerk and they could then be invited to the meeting, via email.  This is a necessary requirement, as although the Parish Council can have online meetings at this time, they must still be audible to the public if they wish to listen.

**Present:**          Cllr A Ward (Chairman), Cllr S Hulme (Vice-Chairman), Cllr D Ardley, Cllr A Marshall,

Cllr C O’Meara and Cllr C Gooding

**Attendance**:   Cllr Mrs S Prendergast (KCC), Cllr P Garten (Maidstone BC) and Mrs V Smith –Parish Clerk.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Dr S Bauer (computer accessibility) and PCSO Matthew Adlington – work commitments.
2. **Declarations and Requests**

Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests – none; Declaration of Interest in items on the Agenda – Cllr D Ardley will not comment / vote on 20/501217/FULL on the land rear of 44 Culpeper Close as the development is very close to the Meadows Trust land, and he is a Director of the Trust; Requests for Dispensations – none

1. **Approval of minutes of last meeting (circulated prior to meeting)**

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on 9th March 2020 are a true and accurate record of the meeting,

1. **Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda) –**

5.a.      The Parish Council recognise that lots of the crimes reported in the Hollingbourne area emanate from the Roadchef Services, M20, Junction 8.  The Clerk has written to the Manager for their comments on the matter, but so far without any response.  The Clerk will pursue the matter.  **Action:  The Clerk**

6.b.      At the March 2020 Parish Council meeting it was reported that with regards to the Village Hall, formal notices had been received by the Parish Council from the landowner’s solicitors.  The Section 25 notice advised that the Landlord is not prepared to renew the tenancy for the Parish Council after August 2020.  At the moment, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Village Hall is standing empty due to clubs and organisations having to stop operating.  With this in mind, Cllr Ward reported that the Village Hall Committee had suggested that the hall be handed back to the Landlord before the deadline of August 2020.  The Landlord can then carry out maintenance and repairs to the hall at the same time as their works to the Windmill PH.  Cllr Ardley was in agreement with this proposal also.

13.a.    The Clerk is investigating the installation of a new notice-board near the Church Approach to facilitate the residents at the upper end of the village.  The notice-board design will be similar to that situated near the school and it will need to stand on posts, with a contractor arranged to install it.  **Action:  The Clerk**

13.c.    The proposed Village Spring Clean on the 28th March was cancelled on this occasion due to the COVID-19 crisis.  The event will be rearranged for a later date in September 2020.

1. **Police Report**
2. The report for the Hollingbourne and neighbouring Hucking area taken from [www.e-watch.co](http://www.e-watch.co/) and the Police UK website [https://www.police.uk/kent/50/crime/2019-09/+OqXKoY/](https://www.police.uk/kent/50/crime/2019-09/%2BOqXKoY/) are unable to supply details of crime reports at the moment. The Clerk will provide updates to the Parish Council as soon as they are available.
3. The Parish Council would like to urge villagers to contact the **Crimestoppers** on **0800 555 111** if they have information relating to crimes, or other concerns that they would like to anonymously supply to the Police. **Crimestoppers** is a charity which the Police use frequently.  If you own a smart phone, the ‘app’ <https://countryeye.co.uk/> is also a very convenient way of reporting matters and concerns to the police and the Parish Council would urge you to use this service.
4. **Chairman’s Report –**
5. The Parish Council is extremely grateful for the crowd of volunteers, including the Women’s Institute and Martin and Julie of the village shop ‘Woods of Hollingbourne’. Their tireless hard work of providing food and medication prescriptions for the vulnerable members of the village, which could potentially result in putting themselves at risk of the COVID-19 work, is so much appreciated.  It is very humbling to see how many volunteers have offered to help out in these strange times and the Parish Council and the residents are greatly thankful to them.  Cllr Garten was glad to offer community funding towards their efforts and the KCC and Maidstone BC have offered useful contacts, help and guidance in this matter.  Please see the link <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/coronavirus-help-for-villagers/> , <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/safeguarding-in-the-coronavirus-crisis/> and <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/woods-of-hollingbourne-opening-times-update/> .
6. Following the guidelines from KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils) on the COVID-19 crisis, the Parish Council members have made the unanimous decision to **cancel the planned Parish Assembly, which was due to take place on the 28th April 2020. The Village Fete, due to take place on the 13th June 2020 has also been cancelled** (please see item 16.a.).  There is a possibility that a public meeting may be rescheduled for later on in the year to discuss the highways, however, it is more likely that there will be a public small summary published of what was going to be discussed at the event for the residents, which will be placed on the Parish website.  Cllr Ardley mentioned the request for the public’s feedback with regards to the highway improvements in the village.  Cllr Mrs Prendergast advised that it is better to wait until a feasibility report and costings have been received from the KCC Highways before any decisions are made.
7. The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the Parish Council. The May 2020 elections of its members has been delayed until May 2021, together with the Maidstone Borough Councillor election. In view of this Cllr D Ardley suggested that we should recruit the vacant position for the Parish Councillor, as the Clerk had previously been advised by the Maidstone BC that the advertisement should be delayed until after the elections.  The Parish Councillors were all in favour of the recruitment and the Clerk will forward this matter.  **Action:  The Clerk**
8. This Parish Meeting is taking place online, as will others, until the lock-down restrictions have been released (please see the opening statements of these minutes).  The Clerk has also informed the Parish Councillors that the annual audit of the Parish Council accounts has also been delayed (update:  September 2020 is now scheduled by the Government for the inspection of the accounts).  The Clerk will prepare all of the documentation for the audit in advance.  (Please see item 14.c.).  **Action:  The Clerk**

1. **Clerk’s Report –**
2. The Clerk is concerned that the Hollingbourne Pre-School are going to struggle to pay their rental for the use of the Cardwell Pavilion whilst the group is not able to operate due to the COVID-19 restrictions. The numbers of children had dropped since the beginning of March 2020 due to sickness, and the number of children present at the sessions reflect on the money received by the pre-school from KCC.  With the pre-school being completely closed at this time (from the 13th March 2020), their funds were very tight.  With this in mind, the Clerk wanted to suggest to the Parish Councillors that the pre-school rental was rebated from the dates of the 1st March 2020 until the future date when the pre-school would re-open again.  Cllr A Ward proposed that this should take place and Cllr C O’Meara seconded the proposal, with all Parish Councillors in attendance in agreement.  The Clerk is grateful for the Parish Council’s assistance in this matter and will inform the Pre-School of the arrangement.
3. With regards to the Parish Website and the need for it to be compliant with Website Accessibility Initiative WCAG2.1.  The website company started their works on the new Parish website on the 31st March 2020 and will also assist the Clerk in fine-tuning the GDPR requirements for the Parish Council.  The company are in regular liaison with the Clerk as to the ongoing works involved, and an example of the consultant’s work can be seen on the link <https://wrothampc.org/>  .  **Action:  The Clerk**
4. Please see items 6.b. with regards to the cancellation of the Parish Assembly on the 28th April 2020. This updated information will be placed on the Parish website and the Clerk will personally advise the attendees who have confirmed their booking at the event.
5. Please see items 6.c. with regards to the effect of the COVID-19 outbreak and the elections of the Parish Councillors and Borough Councillors.

1. **Defibrillators – Cllr A Marshall**
2. Cllr Marshall has checked the defibrillator machines in the village and they are good for action.  The Clerk is in the process of finding out whether a paediatric set of pads can be fixed upon the machine placed outside of the Village Hall.  Please see the link <https://www.train-aid.co.uk/blog/different-pad-placement-for-aed-on-a-child> , for more information on this matter.  Please be assured that the defibrillator machines guide the person operating the device through all of the necessary steps, both audibly and in text script.  Please always advise the Clerk on 07856 180003, via pchollingbourne@gmail.com, or talk to one of the Parish Councillors, if the defibrillator has been used.  **Action:  The Clerk / Cllr Marshall**

1. **County Councillor’s Report –**Cllr Mrs S Prendergast
2. Cllr Mrs S Prendergast has been copied into an email to Cllr D Ardley from the Highways KCC about the village’s Highways Plan, and will leave this matter in his capable hands.
3. Cllr Mrs Prendergast is concerned about the future for the local pre-schools when we exit the COVID-19 lockdown and she has already spoken to the Cabinet members and Corporate Director for Education asking them to lobby Central Government at the highest level for support for Early Years and Childcare providers.
4. The KCC have developed the 24hr help-line, Kent Together initiative, link <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/kent-together-helpline-launched-by-kent-county-council/> , which provides a single, convenient point of contact for anyone in the county who is in urgent need of help during the Coronavirus outbreak. This service is not intended to replace the fantastic Community Groups which are in place already, but it will work alongside the existing groups.  It is a collaboration between KCC, central Government, District, Borough and local councils, the voluntary and community sector, the NHS, emergency services and other partners to ensure help is at hand for vulnerable people.
5. Cllr Mrs Prendergast reported that some Parish Councils had looked into KCC funding for running the Community Groups, and that her Member’s fund is available to the Hollingbourne too. Cllr Ardley was very glad to say that with regards to looking after the vulnerable people within the village, an excess of twelve volunteers were working well in delivering medication and food to residents.  Cllr Mrs Prendergast is also very proud of the volunteer’s efforts and reminded them that all they need to do is ask, and help can be provided.  (Please also see item 6.a.).
6. The KCC has been affected by the COVID-19 in enormous ways, including various members of staff having to work from home. Many services are still available, but some have stopped at the moment.  Cllr Mrs Prendergast is in the process of compiling a list of available services and at present KCC information is available on this link <https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/coronavirus/coronavirus-service-updates> .

1. **Borough Councillor’s Report**– Cllr Patrik Garten
2. Cllr Garten advised the Parish Council that his role as the Borough Councillor for the North Downs will come up for election in 2021, rather than in 2020. The Parish Council is very glad that he remains in his position as Borough Councillor for the North Downs area.  (Please see item 6.c.).
3. Cllr Garten had also personally contacted the Parish Council and the Community Volunteer Group with regards to the Member’s funding that he could use to assist in their works. The £750 had to be used on a first come first served basis and if possible, should be shared between Hollingbourne and Stockbury Community Groups.  Cllr Garten contacted the WI and Wood’s of Hollingbourne to see if he could help out financially, but following conversations it was evident that the Stockbury Community Group, who has a group of 40 volunteers would benefit greatly from the funding available.  In our local area, Cllr Garten and Cllr Ardley can both report on the excellent service and continuity of service provided by Wood’s of Hollingbourne and the hard-working volunteers.  (Please see item 6.a.).
4. The Maidstone BC has automatically sent out letters to relevant businesses who are seeking rebates in these times of COVID-19. However, if businesses have not received a letter, they need to contact the Business Team as soon as possible.  Please see link <https://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/other-services/covid-19/tier-2-primary-areas/advice-and-help-for-businesses> .
5. Cllr Garten encourages all to read his report on the Parish website, link <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/patrik-garten-mbc-councillor-for-north-downs-ward-recent-newsletter-march-2020/> and <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/update-from-patrik-garten-mbc-cllr-for-north-downs-ward/>   .  Cllr Garten’s newsletter is always timely, relevant to the local residents and worth reading.

1. **Planning Committee Report (Including Call for Sites & Local Plan Updates) –**Cllr O’Meara
2. **20/501268/SUB– Eyhorne Green – Hollingbourne Property Services Ltd, Hollingbourne**

**Proposal:**  Submission of Details to Part Discharge Condition 2 (Materials) Condition 4 (Hard and Soft Landscaping) and Condition 7 (On Site Parking and Turning for Construction Traffic) Subject to 19/504324/FULL.  **Decision: DO WISH TO OBJECT (DNWTO)**

1. **20/501050/FULL– All Saint’s Cottage, Upper Street, Hollingbourne**

**Proposal:**Erection of a replacement garage.  **Decision: (DNWTO)**

1. **20/501217/FULL – Land Rear Of 44 Culpeper Close, Hollingbourne**

**Proposal**:  Demolition of dilapidated garage and construction of detached single storey pitched roof office unit with ground floor parking.**Decision:  OBJECT:**All Parish Councillors in attendance, except for Cllr Ardley who abstained (please see item 2) voted in agreement to this decision.

**Reason for decision:**This is a commercial building within a residential area and the Parish Council is concerned about its impact on the people living nearby.  The movement of vehicles within the pedestrian access to the Meadows Trust land is also potentially a problem.  The Parish Council has called this application in for the Planning Committee.

1. **20/501428/FULL– The Site of Previous Maple Leaf Garage, Ashford Road,** **Hollingbourne**

**Proposal:**Erection of 2 x two storey office buildings with associated car park, landscaping and fencing.

**Decision:  OBJECT**(All Parish Councillors in attendance voted in agreement to this decision).

**Reason for decision:**The Parish Council consider this proposed development too large for the area of land and the entering and exiting of the site is very dangerous on this part of the Ashford Road, especially due to the lack of a right turn lane.  The Parish Council has called this application in for the Planning Committee.

1. **UPDATE: 19/500310/FULL & 19/501539/FULL- Land East Of Eyhorne Green House, Musket Lane, Hollingbourne (land near Eyhorne Street, close to Eyhorne Manor)**

**Proposal:**  Erection of single dwelling (Resubmission to 19/500310/FULL & 19/501539/FULL).  An appeal has been lodged by Mr Paul Teague in relation to the above for the following reason: The Council has refused permission for this application.

**Planning Inspectorate Reference:  APP/U2235/W/19/3236776**

**Planning Inspectorate decision:  REFUSED – 18.03.20**

1. **Environmental / Parks Committee Report –**
2. Cllr Marshall is currently getting prices for a ‘duck house’ for the Millennium Green following the award of £1,300 money from the Go Green Go Wild grant scheme. Cllr Ward and Cllr Marshall are also very glad to report that the Millennium Green park is getting visited regularly by the villagers now that the paths have been cleared and the area tidied up.  The works which have been carried out to remove the rhizome plants from the clay base of the pond has been successful; the few plants which have re-emerged will be treated over the next few months.
3. The hedges along the A20 have been trimmed back by the Maidstone BC contractors. Cllr Ardley has expressed the concerns of the Parish Council and the villagers over the disruption of bird’s nests and their young when these works have previously taken place, and trust that all necessary checks were made by the contractors on this occasion.
4. Cllr Marshall advised that the Village Spring Clean is planned to take place in September 2020, as the original date in March had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

1. **Finance Report –**
2. There is £27,461.82 in the Parish Council’s combined bank accounts as of the 2nd April 2020, and the cheques raised by the Clerk were agreed upon. Cllr Ardley signed the cheques for the Clerk at a separate time to the meeting (COVID-19 safety measures abided to).
3. The 20/2021 precept payment of £26,844.05 from the Maidstone BC will be forwarded to the Parish Council in mid-April 2020.
4. The External Auditor has issued new dates for annual audit completion for 2019/20 all Parish Councils due to the restraints of the COVID-19 crisis. The annual accounts will be ready for inspection by the public before September 2020.  (Please see item 6.d.).
5. The Parish Council’s cleaning contractor will still be attending the Cardwell Pavilion during the absence of the pre-school, as deep cleaning of the kitchen, window cleaning, etc, will need to take place.
6. The Clerk is still in the process of opening up an additional bank account for the Parish Council.

1. **Highways and Infrastructure Committee Report**–
2. Cllr Ardley has had further email correspondence from KCC Highways regarding the Parish Council’s Highways Improvement Plan. The KCC Highways have visited Hollingbourne to carry out their assessment of the area, and prioritise what matters need addressing first.  The first matters arising have been the improvement of speed limit signs and the installation of keep clear markings outside of The Dirty Habit PH.  The question was raised of what the Parish Council considers to be the highest priority to tackle first.  This is a difficult question as all of the highway improvements are important to the welfare of the villagers.  However, the Parish Council has taken the KCC’s advise on this matter, which also considers the financial costs of implementing changes within the village, and therefore these two items will be tackled first.  The Parish Council is prepared to match Cllr Mrs Shellina Prendergast’s available funding of £5,000 towards these works.  Improvements to the Ashford Road in the area of the Great Dane’s roundabout, particularly to make crossing the road safer and accessing the roundabout, are recognised as very serious issues.  However, we are advised that the funding required to carry out the works in this area is way beyond the budgets of both of the KCC and the Parish Council at present.  (Please see item 9.a.).
3. The Parish Council has received a letter from a local farmer, which was discussed at the March Parish Meeting. The letter was regarding a wall that has been built outside a house along the Pilgrim’s Way, which is allegedly obstructing the transportation of large agricultural vehicles travelling along the road.  As a response, Cllr Ardley investigated the matter with the KCC Highways department, who advised him that the wall in question is just on the property’s boundary.  Cllr Ardley highlighted to the KCC Highways that normally street furniture should be 45cm away from the edge of the highway to reduce contact, but at the time of the meeting he had not received a response to his email.

1. **Fête Sub-Committee Report –**Cllr D Ardley
2. **The Village Fete, due to take place on the 13th June 2020 has also been cancelled** due to the COVID-19 outbreak (please see item 6.b.). This decision was made because even if self-isolation restrictions are lifted before this date, social distancing measures of attendees (remaining 2 metres apart) is going to be impossible.  In addition, the fete performers will no longer be able to put on their shows due to lack of practice.  The new date proposed for next year is Saturday, 12th June 2021 and all of the stallholders will be advised of this information.  Please see the link <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/summer-fete-cancellation-and-new-dates-for-2020/> .
3. The Parish Council has paid for the toilets for the 2020 Fete already, which is the greatest expense of the event; and the posters have been printed for a small cost. It was suggested that the Clerk contact the toilet suppliers to see if they can change the requirement date to the new time in June 2021.  UPDATE:  The suppliers have very generously agreed to assist the Parish Council in this matter, as they are regular customers.  The Parish Council is very grateful for their assistance in this matter.

**Date of next meeting: Monday 11th May 2020, 7.30 pm, Cardwell Pavilion, Hollingbourne**