

## DRAFT AND UNAPPROVED MINUTES FOR HOLLINGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 14<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2020

Please find below the minutes of the meeting of Hollingbourne Parish Council monthly meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020, 7.30 pm, 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 D Ardley, Cllr A Marshall, Cllr C O'Meara, Cllr C Gooding and Cllr Maria Domican (Cllr Dr S Bauer was trying to join the meeting whilst it was taking place, but due to technical issues this proved very tricky).

**Attendance:** Cllr Patrik Garten (Maidstone BC), Mr Stuart Jeffrey (Green Party) and Mrs V Smith –Parish Clerk

**1. Apologies for absence:** Cllr S Hulme (Vice-Chairman) & PCSO Matthew Adlington (work commitments) & Cllr Mrs Shellina Prendergast (KCC) – meeting clash.

### 2. Declarations and Requests

Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests – none; Declaration of Interest in items on the Agenda – none; Requests for Dispensations – none

### 3. Approval of minutes of last meeting (circulated prior to meeting)

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

### 4. Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda) – none

5.a. PCSO Matthew Adlington has helped the Clerk to make contact with the Roadchef Services, and it is hoped that the representative can attend the Parish Council meeting next month. **Action: The Clerk**

11.a. Please see item 14.c. Borough Councillor's Report.

### 5. Police Report – (via email)

a. The report for the Hollingbourne and neighbouring Hucking area taken from [www.e-watch.co](http://www.e-watch.co) is now available and reported the following for November 2020:

- Between 12:01am on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> of November and 12:00pm on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of November in Hasteds somebody broke into a vehicle parked in the road. They do not appear to have taken anything.
- Between 11:00pm on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> of November and 10:48am on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of November in Pilgrims Way somebody broke into a vehicle parked in the road. Nothing appears to have been taken.
- On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of November between 12:00am and 6:00am in Tilefields. Somebody broke into a Lexus Rx300 parked on a driveway and stole various items.
- Between 8:30pm on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> of November and 5:30am on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> of November in M20 Junction 8. Somebody broke into a vehicle parked in a car park. The Police are waiting for a list of stolen items, if any.

These crimes started in the village of Bredgar and then progressed through to Hollingbourne, including Pilgrim's Way and beyond. The Parish Council would like to remind all vehicle owners to make sure that they always lock their vehicles and keep valuables within the vehicle hidden from would be thieves. Suspected hare coursing and poaching has also been reported. *Please see item 19.b.*

b. The Police UK website supplied the following information: In total, within the confines of the village, there were two crime and one anti-social behaviour report for October 2020. These consisted of:

- On or near Greenway Court Road – 2 x vehicle crime offences (under investigation)
- On or near Troys Mead – 1 x anti-social behaviour (under investigation)

- c. In total, within the Maidstone Services, M20, Junction 8, there were eight crime reports in October 2020. These consisted of four crime reports of drugs crime offences; two crime reports criminal damage and arson crime offences and two crime reports all other crimes. *Please see item 4. Matters Arising, item 5.a.*
- d. There has been one crime report and one anti-social behaviour report in October 2020 for local villages:
- On or near Broad Street Hill – one crime report of criminal damage & arson.
  - On or near Scragged Oak Road, Huckling – one anti-social behaviour report.
- e. Regular police reports are also placed upon the Parish website for resident's information, together with details of 'scams' which people need to be vigilant not to become tricked by. Information can also be obtained from the Kent Police website <https://www.kent.police.uk/> or [Your area | Police.uk \(www.police.uk\)](https://www.police.uk). Unfortunately, crime is on the rise and it is time to check that property is safe and secure. Please see the link <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/as-the-nights-draw-in-is-your-home-secure/>
- f. 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 frequently liaise with for information. 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. Criminal activity can also be reported either by telephone via '101' or online <https://www.kent.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>.
- 6. Chairman's Report – (Cllr A Ward) – Village Hall**
- a. Cllr Ward has been involved with the outgoing Village Hall Committee as some members have now left. Cllr Ward has joined the committee as a trustee. The management of the Village Hall is controlled by Lush Heath Ltd who run The Windmill PH, and Cllr Ward's main purpose is to look to the future of the Village Hall. On the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 there was a 'brainstorming' session which Cllr Ward attended to share thoughts regarding what is perceived the local people want from the Village Hall and whether there is enough interest. It isn't the ideal time to gauge a fair interest in the hall due to the COVID-19 restrictions, but the situation will be different in the future. The meeting was also joined by a member of Hush Heath – the COVID-19 pandemic has inevitably slowed business down, but they have plans to push ahead once restrictions are able to be relaxed. Cllr Ward assured the Parish Council and Cllr Garten that Hush Heath had been advised of the Village Hall Committees wish to gauge interest in a potential new Village Hub, and they were okay with these plans. Please contact the Parish Clerk on [pchollingbourne@gmail.com](mailto:pchollingbourne@gmail.com) if you would like to become involved with the committee.
- b. Cllr Ward wanted to confirm with the Parish Councillors whether it was acceptable to mention in any leaflets to the villagers that the Cardwell Pavilion site is a potential site for a future community building. This proposal was acceptable to the Parish Councillors at the meeting. Cllr O'Meara said that the Cardwell Pavilion could be combined with a new building and there is ample parking there. Cllr Gooding also pointed out that the vacant building near the Hollingbourne Station could also be a possibility.
- c. The grant money which Cllr Gooding had accessed for the Village Hall is in the Committee's bank account and will be used for items such as producing the aforementioned leaflet, etc. Cllr Gooding expressed his concern over the use of the money. A new community building would cost such a lot of money and the hospitality trade is not at all great at the moment. If the interest is not there with the villagers for a new building it is not worth the money being spent. However, all the time that we the Village Hall Committee or Parish Council does not have any ownership rights / lease – we do not have any control over the future of the building. It is best to keep options open for now.
- 7. Hollingbourne Village Hall – Please see the Chairman's Report**
- 8. Seasonal Events within the Village – Cllr Domican / Cllr Ardley**
- a. Cllr Domican was very glad to report that the Parish Council has had a lot of positive feedback with regards to the seasonal events organised for the village. The Hollingbourne in Lights competition and The Snowman Trail are individual activities, but collectively they unite the residents of the village. Over two thirds of the village houses have festive lights. People love the snowmen and have even asked if they are for sale! The Parish Councillors thanked Cllr Domican for arranging the village Christmas cards. Plans to run similar events in 2021 will be a great success, as they are already this year.

- b. Cllr Ardley advised that the wreaths at the Ashford Road entrance to the village will be a little bigger next year to accommodate the size of the speed signs. They bring a lovely festive cheer to our village.
  - c. A panel of judges for the Hollingbourne in Lights competition will be selected from different clubs, businesses and organisations within the village, so that winners can be picked fairly.
- 9. Parish Website (update) – Cllr Domican**
- a. Cllr Domican has been very busy updating the new and the old Parish website for a few months now, but is very glad to report that the new website has now had its final adjustments to become ‘live’ for all internet viewers. The Parish Council is very appreciative of Cllr Domican’s efforts and expertise in this matter and it is reassuring to know that the new website is fully accessibility compliant.
  - b. Cllr Domican has also started an Instagram account for the Parish Council, which will give people speedy access to information such as the M20 road works.
- 10. Forming a Hollingbourne Information Leaflet (Similar to Harrietsham Discovery Trail) – Cllr Ardley**
- a. The Hollingbourne residents have been fortunate to receive in the post the brilliant Harrietsham Discovery Trail leaflet. The publication welcomes people to explore the local walks in Harrietsham and discover local landmarks. The Parish Clerk has been in touch with the Harrietsham Parish Council with regards to how the publication was formed. There is always the chance that local businesses could sponsor the leaflet if they were advertised within it. The Dirty Habit PH has leaflets available about the local walks in Hollingbourne and it is believed that a local resident and former Chairman of the Parish Council has in the past produced detailed information about the village walks.
  - b. It will take a lot of local knowledge and research to form a village leaflet. A pathway / circuit in the village to highlight the historical areas of Hollingbourne would be very good, but Cllr Gooding emphasised that the pathways have to be maintained rights of way and not be crossing private land without rights of way. The Parish Council would need to talk to the KCC with regards to keeping the pathway / circuit clear and tidy. It would also be interesting to find out how some of the properties in the village have received their specific names. (*Please see the Highways and Infrastructure Committee Report, item 1.a.*)
  - c. The Parish Council is minded to produce a leaflet similar to the Harrietsham Discovery Trail and it could include Kent highlights such as The Leeds Castle. The only disadvantage that the village has a lack of car parks for the visitors. The Parish Council also needs to decide where the leaflet is to be targeted – is it just for local people or further afield? Cllr Domican also pointed out the local landmarks and places within the village can be advertised in various magazines. The walks could also be highlighted on the National Trail website, and please see the website [North Downs Way - National Trail](#) , Kent Life, Inside Kent or Staycation and similar magazines. Decisions need to be made about how far the leaflet and Hollingbourne are to be advertised and what heritage funding is available for such a project.
- 11. Clerk’s Report –**
- a. The Clerk has had to close off access to the clatter bridge play equipment in the children’s playground as the slats upon it are rotten and need replacing. The Clerk has advised the school and pre-school about this information so that parents/carers and children are aware that the equipment is defunct at present. Prices have been obtained for its repair together with the replacement of the rope ladders, but it is very expensive. The Parish Council is not in a position where it can agree to paying for the works at the given price and further quotations will be obtained.
  - b. The Clerk is at present in liaison with the Parish Council’s insurance provider for extending the policy to cover the Millennium Green. The insurance has and is paid for by a past member of the Parish Council.
  - c. South Eastern Trains have been in touch with the Clerk with regards to being interviewed about the service which is received by train passengers. The Clerk isn’t a regular user of the trains and so wanted to extent the invitation to the Parish Councillors, as approved by South Eastern Trains. There are several items raised by the Parish Council which the Clerk will forward onto the South Eastern Trains.
  - d. Details and Public Notices with regards to the end of year accounts for 2019/20 are now on the village notice-boards and on the Parish website.
- 12. Defibrillators – Cllr A Marshall**
- a. Cllr Marshall has checked the defibrillator machines in the village and they are good for action.

**13. County Councillor's Report - Cllr Mrs S Prendergast**

- a. Please find Cllr Mrs S Prendergast's regular reports from the KCC on the Parish Website.

**14. Borough Councillor's Report - Cllr Patrik Garten**

- a. Cllr Garten is in liaison with the Community Rail Partnership on the line from Otford to Ashford (the Kent Downs Line). The Hollingbourne Station holds a lot of potential to run a community shop / hall and there could be funding available to help carry out improvements in this area. To assist the Community Rail Partnership in helping to decide whether the empty building can be utilised they will need a key to the building. The Clerk will investigate how the key can be located. The neighbouring Bearsted Station has put in a bid for wood yard next to their land with the view to make similar improvements to their station. Questions were also asked by the Community Rail Partnership whether the proposed use of buildings/land is for non-commercial or commercial. If the area is going to be used to run a shop or taxi service it is commercial, however, most projects have areas of commercial and non-commercial.
- b. The Economy and Recovery and Leisure Committee (ERL) gave authority to officers to cancel MBC's contract with Parkwood Leisure with regards to the running of the Hazlitt Theatre. Parkwood Leisure is the contractor who runs the theatre. The annual subsidy to Parkwood is around £200k. The theatre already made a loss prior to the COVID-19 pandemic but is in a far worse situation now. The Conservative Group called-in the ERL Committee's decision and had it overruled against the votes of the ruling Lib/Lab alliance. The Borough Councillor covering the Detling area, who recently defected from the Conservative Group to the Liberals, did not vote with his new group. There will now be a further report on this matter to ERL in January with added options to consider. The danger is whether the theatre will ever open again and Cllr Garten does not feel that the options to cancel are sufficient enough. There should be a possibility to see if the running of the theatre can be linked with the museum.
- c. The Section 18 Local Plan Review consultation will take place until 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020. Cllr Domican kindly attended the previous Maidstone BC meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> November with regards to the matter. The Section 18 consultation does affect the village as the proposed site near to Godfrey House (ref. 204) is on the local plan. Cllr Ardley said that when the original development was approved by the Parish Council and at the time the Planning Department had refused any building beyond the building line, which is now on the proposed local plan site. A councillor asked whether this means that the original restrictions have now been dismissed by the Planning Department? Cllr Garten replied that individual planning applications will have to be tested against the Local Plan, which is a strategic document. If wider issues, such as the increased demand for housing, requires the Local Plan to be amended, this new plan supersedes any previous policies and individual planning restrictions. The land concerned contains precipitation tanks and is designated as a nature reserve area. Cllr Ward feels that if a change of decision has taken place within the Planning Department that people will start to lose their trust in the system. The Parish Council had approved of the Fernham Homes development because it wasn't too big for the setting, but this could all change now. The Central Government wants Maidstone BC to build more and more properties in the area, and this is why Cllr Ward is negative about Neighbourhood Plans, because they change every five years. Cllr Garten agrees with Cllr Ward but the Maidstone BC needs a local plan before the new increased number of properties are demanded by Central Government! Cllr Garten feels that if the Maidstone BC doesn't get the Local Plan home and dry quickly there could be trouble. The Leeds / Langley corridor would be next in the area, with a relief road, and this would impact greatly upon Hollingbourne. All concerns should be raised at the Section 18 consultation. Cllr Garten advised that there are some factual errors within the Local Plan review which can be commented and highlighted upon with regards to the site within Hollingbourne. However, Hollingbourne does only have eleven homes due to be built on this site, and one property along the Ashford Road, and so compared to some of the local villages they are very lucky. With this in mind the Parish Council will tread carefully when putting their case forward and Cllr O'Meara will submit her response to Maidstone BC once it has been perused by the other Parish Councillors and Cllr Garten.
- d. Cllr Garten advised that the planning application for Courtyard Studios is being called into the planning committee. The Parish Council didn't object to either of the applications.
- e. Mrs Helen Whately MP is sending information with regards to coping with loneliness in the community, which he will forward onto the Clerk for the Parish website.

- f. There is a continuing scheme for business rates rebate, up to £1000. The Cardwell Pavilion does not pay business rates and so cannot claim this rebate, but many other local businesses will be able to. Please see the link [Advice and support for businesses - Maidstone Borough Council](#)
- g. Please see Cllr Garten's latest newsletter on the Parish website [Important information from your MBC Councillor | Hollingbourne Parish Council \(hollingbournepc.co.uk\)](#) and <https://www.hollingbournepc.kentparishes.gov.uk/patrik-garten-mbc-councillor-for-north-downs-ward-recent-newsletter-sep-2020/> where issues and information for the residents is candidly reported upon.
15. **Planning Committee Report** – Cllr C O'Meara & Cllr C Gooding
- a. **20/505584/TCA – The Vicarage, Upper Street, Hollingbourne**  
**Proposal:** Conservation area notification to remove overhanging large suspended, broken branch of one Mulberry in neighbouring garden; Fell two Black Elders to a height of 1.5 metres; Dismantle fell one Tulip Tree to ground level; Dismantle fell one Sycamore to ground level; Dismantle fell one Beech to ground level. **Decision: DO NOT WISH TO OBJECT (DNWTO)**
- b. **20/505699/SUB – Alpine Garage, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne**  
**Proposal:** Submission of details pursuant to condition 3 (full details, including acceptable digital samples, of the external surfacing materials to be used on the respective buildings), condition 4 (details of proposals for the retention and protection of the existing trees and hedgerows to the eastern and western boundaries of the site during), condition 15 (external lighting) and condition 16 (proposed drainage strategy) in relation to planning permission 20/501428/FULL. **Decision: DNWTO**
- c. **20/505140/LBC – Eyhorne Manor, Musket Lane, Hollingbourne**  
**Proposal:** Listed building consent for a secondary glazing. **Decision: DNWTO**
- d. **20/505240/FULL – 8 Athelstan Green, Hollingbourne**  
**Proposal:** Conversion of garage to bedroom. **Decision: DNWTO**
- e. **UPDATE: APP/U2235/W/20/3248091 – 1 & 2 New Cottages, Upper Street, Hollingbourne**  
**Proposal:** Erection of two storey extensions to 1 & 2 New Cottages, to form 4 x terraced properties in place of a pair of semi-detached properties. (Ref: 19/502435/FULL).  
**Planning Inspectorate Decision: Dismissed** (decision date: 18.11.20)
16. **Environmental / Parks Committee Report** – (including the Millennium Green)
- a. Cllr Marshall reported that Golding Homes had kindly agreed for the Parish Council to purchase, plant and maintain a small tree 'flowering cherry' for on the verge next to the car park of Bournside Terrace. Three additional trees have also been ordered to plant on the Millennium Green together with some new bird boxes. A couple of trees had fallen on the Millennium Green following the recent wind storms. The wood will be chopped up and used to make a bug house, which will be very good for the environment.
- b. Cllr Marshall has been in contact with the Go Green Go Wild organisation as there is a tree planting initiative to mark the length of the Queen's reign. It would be good for the Parish Council to get involved with this initiative. A tree on the verge opposite the school would be a fitting place to commemorate this important and unique event. The KCC would need to be approached for permission to plant the tree. The verge would also be an attractive site to plant a wild flower area.
- c. Cllr Ward reported that the play area equipment S106 funding is available and prices have been obtained for two options within the price restraints. It is hoped that the works can be carried out within the winter / spring months. Details of the options are on the Parish Website for the resident's opinions on the options.
- d. The Parish Council is very glad to see that the shrubs have been pruned along the Ashford Road at a time of the year when the birds will not be disturbed. The new fencing around the Snagbrook land is much neater behind the hedge. Fences less than 1.8 metres high do not need planning permission if they are set back from the road.
17. **Finance Committee Report**– Cllr D Ardley / Cllr S Hulme
- a. There is a total of £29,384.63 is in the Parish Council's combined bank accounts as of the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020. There hasn't been any income for the Parish Council this month. In total £2,395.05 was spent by the Parish Council and Cllr Ardley signed the cheques for the Clerk at a separate time to the meeting (COVID-19 safety measures abided to). The largest costs for this month were for grass cutting in the village, including the Lance Memorial Field and maintenance contract costs for the streetlights.

- b. The Parish Council's money is spent widely over the village and a short report will be produced for the residents to see how the money is used and what plans are in place for 2021. The Parish Council is not reticent in asking the Maidstone BC for a raise in the precept to carry out essential works – they look to do the best for the village.
18. **Exercise Equipment for the Millennium Green** (Cllr D Ardley)
- a. A local resident has been given various pieces of outdoor exercise equipment for a school and Cllr Ardley asked whether the Parish Council could have it installed at the Millennium Green or at the playground. Cllr Ward thinks that it would be good placed at the Millennium Green, which is at the other end of the village. Cllr Marshall pointed out that the land at the Millennium Green can get very boggy and the equipment would need a base. It is a green area but the exercise equipment is only modest in size. Some equipment could be placed at the left-hand side as you come over the bridge to the green (slightly raised, or over the far side), or placed at the top left-hand corner. The Parish Council needs to look at the equipment, get measurements and obtain quotations for the installation of it.
19. **Highways and Infrastructure Committee Report** – Cllr D Ardley / Cllr C O'Meara
- a. The byway near Hospital Way, as well as other byways in the area, is probably 18" deep in rotting vegetation, it is impassable. Car tyres are dumped on the byway near the Pilgrim's Way – if the tyres are on the right of way, it would be responsibility of the KCC to clear them. Cllr Ward will report the matter as he has photographs of the evidence. Cllr Gooding wonders if the Parish Council can do anything to rectify the situation. Cllr Ardley has already made contact with KCC Rights of Way staff and the byways in question are on their lists for improvements. Unfortunately, the byways in Hollingbourne are not near the top of the list in priority and due to lack of funding and staff, a date for works to be carried out is impossible to predict. However, the KCC are very much concerned with the states of the local byways. It would be good to speak to the KCC again about the byway to see if it can be reclassified as a bridleway, but consideration had to be given to agricultural vehicles access as well as pedestrians.
- b. Suspicious vehicles, particularly 4X4's have been noticed around the Pilgrim's Way / Upper Street crossroads late at night, which may have been involved in illegal activities such as hare coursing. Local residents report these incidents to the Police. Cllr Ardley has also had a conversation with a representative of the Horse Association who report incidents to the KCC when problems are experienced with the 4X4's along the byways. Cllr O'Meara advised that a lot of the bridleways in Bromley are protected, for example, with small 16" deep steps at the entrance of the bridleway which the horses and ponies can step over, but are a nuisance to off-road bikes.
- c. Cllr Ardley reported that the works being carried out by the KCC on and near Upper Street are proposed to start in about March 2021. Drawings of the proposed waiting restriction areas are being prepared, which proceeds a consultation with the local residents as to their wishes on the matter.
- d. The micro-surfacing works which were applied in Eyhorne Street is deteriorating near the shop and the Windmill PH, but at present they are not falling within the intervention level for the KCC. Regular complaints are made from residents in Upper Street and Cllr Ardley has forwarded the concerns onto the Highways KCC, copying in Cllr Mrs S Prendergast, but without any response from the KCC, to date. Most of the complaints concern off-road motorbikes and speeding vehicles.
20. **Fête Sub-Committee Report** – Cllr D Ardley & Cllr A Ward–
- a. It is proposed that a meeting for the 2021 fete will be held after the COVID-19 lockdown. Cllr Ardley will check that the acting performances due to take part at the 2021 fete are still available.

**Date of next meeting: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021, 7.30 pm, Cardwell Pavilion, Hollingbourne**

Signed as a true record:

Chairman:

Date: