

DRAFT AND UNAPPROVED MINUTES FOR HOLLINGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 8th February 2021

Please find below the minutes of the meeting of Hollingbourne Parish Council monthly meeting held on Monday 8th February 2021, 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

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

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr S Hulme (Vice-Chairman) – meeting clash, Cllr Dr S Bauer - IT problems 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 Ardley will not be voting on the planning application at 3 Tilefields Close, as he is the neighbour of the applicants; 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 11th January 2021 are a true and accurate record of the meeting, with the following exceptions to item 15.e., which should read *a volunteer within Tilefields, who has a landscape business*, rather than a volunteer within Tilefields Close.

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

- 6.b. Cllr Ward doesn't have any update about the Village Hall this month. Cllr Gooding asked whether the Village Hall Committee are still receiving the business rates grants available. Cllr Ward that this is no longer possible as since August 2020 the Village Hall is the business of the Windmill PH.
- 10.b. The village Post Office is now being run from the Sugar Loaves PH on Wednesdays. Cllr Domican had previously contacted the Post Office offering for the service to be run from her home, which many years ago was the Post Office. This offer is still available if it required.

5. Police Report – Please see item 6.a. Chairman's Report

- a. Cllr Marshall spoke to PCSO Matthew Adlington a few days ago when he was busy stopping illegal off-road bikes from riding along Pilgrim's Way. Matthew is hoping to be able to attend one of the 'virtual' Parish Council meetings soon, work permitting. Cllr Marshall mentioned the various crime reports that seem to emanate from the village, the descriptions of which can be very concerning. Matthew advised her that if there is a considerable crime problem that the Parish Council and residents need to worry about, he will contact the Clerk directly with this information for it to be cascaded to all concerned.
- b. The report for the Hollingbourne and neighbouring Hucking area taken from www.e-watch.co is now available and reported the following for January 2021:
- Between 12:01am on 1st January and 11:59pm on Monday 4th January in Rumstead Lane, somebody took down/damaged a new fence.
- c. The **Police UK** website supplied the following information: In total, within the confines of the village, there were three crime and two anti-social behaviour reports for December 2020. These consisted of:
- On or near Greenway Court Road – 1 x anti-social behaviour (under investigation)
 - On or near Athelstan Green – 1 x anti-social behaviour (under investigation)
 - On or near Hasteds – 1 x Public Order Offences (includes offences which causes fear, alarm or distress (under investigation)
 - On or near Troys Mead – 1 x drugs crime and 1 x violence and sexual offences report.

- d. In total, within the Maidstone Services, M20, Junction 8, there were six crime and one anti-social behaviour reports reported on the **Police UK** website for in December 2020. The crime reports consisted of three public order crime reports, one ‘other theft’ crime report, two ‘all other’ crimes report and one anti-social behaviour report.
 - e. There has been four crime and six anti-social behaviour reports in December 2020 for local villages:
 - On or near Broad Street Hill – Anti-social behaviour (3 reports).
 - On or near Ringlestone Road – Anti-social behaviour (1 report).
 - On or near Dray’s Field, near the Church, Wormshill – 1 x ‘other crime’ report. A group of around twelve people damaged crops at a farm by driving off-road vehicles in the field (extra information from the e-watch website).
 - On or near Bicknor Village – 1 x violence and sexual crimes report and anti-social behaviour (2 x reports).
 - f. The Police UK website didn’t advise of any stop and search investigations carried out in the Hollingbourne area in December 2020.
 - g. 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/>
 - h. 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) –**
- a. Cllr Ward was very glad to advise that Daisy the dog has now been returned to her owners in Upper Street, following being stolen from outside of her property on the 18th January 2021. The news of the opportunistic crime was publicised very well on social media, the Kent Police website, television news channels, local newspapers amongst other means, and this has aided Daisy’s safe return. Unfortunately, crimes such as these are disturbingly common at the moment. Pet owners should be particularly aware of this concern and take special measures for their own safety and that of their animals, especially when exercising them.
 - b. Cllr Gooding wonders if it is now time to resurrect the Neighbourhood Watch scheme within the Hollingbourne village, which would be a more formal method of crime prevention and the reporting of incidents. This was in agreement with the other Parish Councillors at the meeting. A village CCTV system would also be desirable, with possibly a camera near the entrance to the village from the A20, a camera in the area of the Cardwell Pavilion and a camera near the area of the Dirty Habit PH. As long as the data recorded is correctly accessed and managed, in accordance to the data protection regulations, this should be feasible. The Clerk will speak to PCSO Matthew Adlington with regards to the specifications for legally enforceable cameras, ones of which can be used in a court of law. Contact details of the Police services also need to be more visible on the Parish Council website, although the Crimestoppers contact number and link to 101 crime reporting website are always mentioned on the Parish Council minutes, the last item within the Police report. Cllr Domican will look into adding this information upon the website.
 - c. The new playground equipment, Option 2, funded by the S106 money from the building of the Fernham Homes, Brickfield Close development, will be installed within the next few months. The money for these works will be transferred to the Parish council from the Maidstone BC within the next fortnight.
 - d. As previously mentioned in the January 2021 minutes, Cllr Ward received an email from one of the residents from Hadley Gardens with regards to flooding in their back garden, together with their neighbours, emanating from the Lance Memorial Field. The residents would like the flooding to be inspected by the Parish Council, as it was done so in the past, and answers as to what can be done to

resolve the issue. Update: The resident spoke to the Clerk and as a result Cllr Ward has visited the occupiers of the homes affected in Hadley Gardens. It seems that many years back the Parish Council had been involved in ‘spiking’ the field around to the back of the resident’s gardens. However, the idea of re-directing rain water into the neighbouring farmer’s field, to alleviate the problem, isn’t legal.

7. **Seasonal Events within the Village** – Cllr Domican / Cllr Ardley – nothing to report.

8. **Parish Website / Social Media** – Cllr Domican

- a. Cllr Domican reported that the new website works well for the Parish Council and that she would like headshot photographs of the Parish Councillors for the website, for it to be really professional. This would be similar to the neighbouring parishes. *Please see item 6.b. Chairman’s Report.*

9. **Forming a Hollingbourne Information Leaflet** (Similar to Harrietsham Discovery Trail) – Cllr Ardley

- a. To date, no further progress has taken place with regards to forming the leaflet. However, it was noted by Cllr Domican that in Charing some of the buildings have plaques upon them, giving interesting information about the buildings history and who may have lived there. This is a great idea which could be considered for Hollingbourne.

10. **Clerk’s Report** –

- a. A Parish Council Finance meeting was held via Microsoft Teams on the 18th January 2021, to discuss the budget, the Council Tax and Precept for 2021/22. The Maidstone BC had proposed to supply a precept of £27,024.70 to the Parish Council, however, it was agreed at the meeting that a 2% increase to this amount would be required. This would mean that a precept of £27,565.19 has now been requested. The reason for this is that the Parish Council has lost such a lot of income this year due to the COVID-19 crisis. They couldn’t rent out the Cardwell Pavilion for hire, and the pre-school had to halve their rental costs to keep their group afloat. The Parish Council only receive a tiny amount of the Council Tax payments by the residents, which is evident when the annual bill is examined by residents. The extra money that the Parish Council does request is used to fund local projects and necessities for the village.
- b. Please see item 4, Matters Arising, item 10.b., with regards to with regards to the village post office.
- c. Another quotation has been obtained for repairing the clatter-bridge playground equipment within the village, which is less expensive than the original one. In line with best practice, a third quotation will need to be obtained before works can take place, and the Clerk will organise this as soon as possible.

Action: The Clerk

- d. It is good news for the environment that the Parish Council has been advised by the Kent Local Wildlife Trust that the All Saint’s Churchyard, Hollingbourne is now a recognised site for designation (site reference number MA68). The reason for the designation is that the churchyard supports at least eighty species of lichen, the main interest being the saxicolous lichen flora and twenty species of bryophyte.

11. **Defibrillators** – Cllr A Marshall

- a. Cllr Marshall has checked the defibrillator machines in the village and they are good for action. New defibrillator pads have now been placed with the machine outside of the Village Hall, as the existing ones were due to expire within the next few months.

12. **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. For essential information with regards to the COVID-19 testing stations and resident safety, please see the link https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmailchi.mp%2Fkent.gov.uk%2Fupdates-from-kent-county-council-070121&data=04%7C01%7CShellina.Prendergast%40kent.gov.uk%7Cdc8f1fd572b248ee1d0808d8bb980e1b%7C3253a20dc7354bfea8b73e6ab37f5f90%7C0%7C637465609034376206%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6I6I1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sd_ata=FibP57Ly%2Bqy%2FV9WYQD0gLbPM1vGkK3YGvizILQDqhju%3D&reserved=0

The County Hall has now been added as another asymptomatic (without any symptoms) COVID-19 testing site, with brings the total number of sites to twenty-four within Kent. Following recent news events surge testing took place in the ME15 postcode area, as one identified case of the South African variant had been found. The KCC played a huge part in putting the surge testing together.

Approximately 10,000 tests were carried out in two and a half days, and 85% of the test results having been returned. The numbers of positive COVID-19 cases are diminishing in the Maidstone area. The mass testing was proof of really good partnership working and great effort on the part of the community.

- b. The KCC have rolled out a further £10 million of emergency funding to continue helping Kent's most vulnerable households and businesses hardest hit by the pandemic. The Helping Hand scheme will also tackle problems such as digital poverty. Digital poverty is a growing problem in the United Kingdom that the coronavirus pandemic has exposed. This is partly because a far larger proportion of people are working from home and children are being educated online. In 2019, a prominent politician stated, "The internet has become such a central part of our lives. What was once a luxury is now an essential utility." The provision of electronic devices for education and internet speeds fit for purpose are a necessity which may require extra funding via the Helping Hand Scheme. Please see the link [New multi-million fund unveiled to help most in need | Hollingbourne Parish Council \(hollingbournepc.co.uk\)](#)
 - c. Cllr Mrs Prendergast is pleased to advise that the road improvements to Upper Street / Hollingbourne Hill, paid for out of her Member's Grant, took place on the 31st January 2021, as per the attached link [Highway improvements in Hollingbourne | Hollingbourne Parish Council \(hollingbournepc.co.uk\)](#). It is not confirmed that the works have been completed yet, as the weather may have delayed some of the road markings.
 - d. The issue of illegal motorbikes, quad bikes and 4x4's in areas of the village, particularly Pilgrim's Way, is not really an issue for KCC Highways. It is a police matter if the vehicles are illegally using the roads, but due to the limited resources of the police, it is difficult for them to always attend the site of the crimes. There are genuine issues with regards to illegal vehicles, for example those without registration plates, but most vehicles are legal and have every right to use the roads.
 - e. The KCC budget has been agreed upon with a 4.99% increase of Council Tax. The KCC will claim 1.99% of this increase, whereas the other 3% will be towards the Adult Social Care Levy, for the elderly and the most vulnerable.
 - f. Cllr Mrs Shellina Prendergast has been re-selected for election by the Conservative Party to stand for her post in May 2021, and hopes to be successful again.
13. **Borough Councillor's Report**– Cllr Patrik Garten
- a. Cllr Garten attended the constitution meeting of the Kent Community Rail Partnership meeting last week and suggested that the Parish Council also enrolls an official member of the group. Cllr Garten will forward the minutes of the meeting onto the Clerk for distribution to the Parish Councillors. It is important to get as many people as possible together to support the plans to re-open the building at the station. Time is of the essence to seek out community usage opportunities for the building as there are suggestions that Network Rail wants the building to be used by a profit-making organisation/business. It is understood that Harrietsham railway have plans to house local childcare in its vacant building and Bearsted are planning to use their old woodyard in rejuvenating the railway station.
 - b. Cllr Garten is very supportive of the KCC's work in opening up the asymptomatic COVID-19 testing sites, and attended the Detling facility earlier in the month of February 2021. The experience was well organised and 'stress-free' for visitors. Cllr Garten would encourage any residents to take advantage of this service as the asymptomatic testing will have a huge impact on conquering the COVID-19 virus.
 - c. There have been some problems with regards to the domestic waste collection, particularly in the most rural areas. Missed bins need to be reported within 48 hours, preferably before the end of the working day (5.00 pm) in which they should have been collected. If they are still not collected, Cllr Garten, can help out by communicating with contacts within the relevant department.
 - d. The RSPCA charity have been lobbying for a quieter fireworks campaign. The Communities, Housing & Environment Committee considered this matter on the 1st December 2020. At the meeting it was agreed that in line with the RSPCA campaign the Committee would encourage providers of public firework displays, notified through the Council's SAG process, to be advertised in advance of the event; allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people; promote a public awareness campaign at relevant points in the year about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks; and write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays. Please see the link <https://maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/council-and-democracy/primary-areas/meetings,-minutes-And-agendas/tier-3-primary->

areas/whats-

new?sq_content_src=+dXJsPWh0dHBzJTNBJTJGJTJGbWVldGluZ3MubWFpZHN0b25lLmdvdi51ayUyRmRvY3VtZW50cyUyRnM3MzY2NiUyRIJTUENBJTIwQ2FtcGFpZ24lMjBDb25jZXJuaW5nJTIwRmlyZXdcvmtzLnBkZiZhbGw9MQ==

- e. The Maidstone BC budget review and the local plan works are in progress. With regards to the budget, a 1.99% increase to the Council Tax has been suggested by the Maidstone BC. The Borough Council have suffered a lot of financial shortfalls this year, mainly related to the COVID-19 crisis.
 - f. On the 26th January 2021, the ERL Committee unanimously agreed to keep the current contract at Hazlitt Theatre in place. There will be a meeting with Parkwood in early February to talk about how they can work with Maidstone Council to help Hazlitt Arts Centre and to enhance further our town and boroughs cultural and artistic life. Please see the link <https://www.hollingbournepc.co.uk/news-events/hazlitt-arts-centre-update> .
 - g. Please see Cllr Garten's latest newsletter on the Parish website [Patrik Garten, MBC Councillor for North Downs Ward Recent Newsletter Feb 2021 | Hollingbourne Parish Council \(hollingbournepc.co.uk\)](https://www.hollingbournepc.co.uk/news-events/hazlitt-arts-centre-update) where issues and information for the residents is candidly reported upon.
14. **Planning Committee Report – Cllr C O’Meara & Cllr C Gooding**
- a. **21/500440/LBC – Brooms Hall, Broad Street Hill, Hucking**
Proposal: Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single storey rear extension together with internal and external alteration. **Decision: Do not wish to object (DNWTO)**
 - b. **21/500439/FULL – Brooms Hall, Broad Street Hill, Hucking**
Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension and replacement of a window with patio doors. Conversion of the existing shed to a holiday let and relocation of the oil tank. **Decision: DNWTO**
 - c. **21/500418/TPOA – Greenway Court Cottages, Greenway Court Road, Hollingbourne**
Proposal: TPO Application - Cut back overhanging branches of Field Maple trees to the boundary, to give a clearance of 4m above ground level. **Decision: DNWTO**
 - d. **21/500221/FULL – 3 Tilefields Close, Hollingbourne - Proposal:** Insertion of front dormer to existing garage. **Decision: DNWTO** (Cllr Ardley abstained from the vote).
 - e. **21/500201/SUB – Maple Leaf Garage, Ashford Road, Hollingbourne**
Proposal: Submission of details pursuant to condition 3 (materials) and condition 7 (contamination) of planning permission 20/500071/FULL. **Decision: DNWTO**
Update: Mud on the road outside of this development, in the vicinity of the car wash area, may have contributed to the road accident which took place there earlier in the month, requiring an ambulance in attendance. For possible reasons such as these, the Parish Council voted against the development taking place in its initial proposals.
 - f. **21/500279/FULL – 1 Pond Cottages, Greenway Court Road, Hollingbourne**
Proposal: Erection of a two storey front/side extension. **Decision: DNWTO**
 - g. **20/506045/LBC – ‘Appledown’, Manor Lane, Hollingbourne**
Proposal: Listed building consent for the repair and rebuilding of the garden wall. **Decision: DNWTO**
15. **Environmental / Parks Committee Report – (including the Millennium Green)**
- a. Please see items 6.c., Chairman’s Report regarding to playground equipment. In addition, the repairs need to also take place of the clatterbridge as soon as possible and the Clerk will action this.
 - b. Cllr Domican reported that the footpath on the land opposite to the Cardwell Pavilion is in desperate need of some maintenance. The ruts along it are so deep that they come up to your knees, making the footpath impassable! The footpath may be the responsibility of the KCC and this will be investigated. UPDATE: The Clerk has been registered this matter with the KCC for works to be carried out.
 - c. The Clerk will advise Mr Rob Bracken, Site Director, of the Roadchef, Maidstone Services, about removing the litter and fixing the broken fence on the pathway behind the Costa Coffee drive-in services. It would be good if this area could be attended to as soon as possible for the security of both the Maidstone Services and the village residents.
 - d. Cllr Marshall reported that the flowering cherry tree has now been planted on the verge near the entrance to the Millennium Green, following obtaining permission from Golding Homes.
 - e. Cllr Marshall reported that local residents had pruned back the foliage of the hedgerows on Eyhorne Green. The Parish Council were unaware that these works were going to be carried out by the residents,

but as a result have received a quotation for the removal of the green waste from a local company with a waste removal licence, costing £90 + VAT, which will be funded by the Parish Council.

- f. The waste bin in the playground area is too small and it overflows very quickly. The bin needs to be emptied more often or a bigger bin sourced. The Clerk will investigate this matter. **Action: The Clerk**
 - g. Cllr Marshall enquired whether she can obtain twenty-five litter-picker devices for the Parish Council, which can be lent out for the volunteers to use. This matter had been spoken about last March, before the country went into COVID-19 lockdown and litter-picking events had to be cancelled. Even though group events cannot be organised at the present, volunteers can work individually in keeping the village tidy, and the litter-picker devices will be very useful. The Parish Councillors agreed to make this purchase as soon as possible.
 - h. There is fly-tipping present along the Station Approach road, particularly half-way up on the left-hand side, as well as street-lights not working. It may also be a good idea for the new litterbin to be positioned near the gateway for the railway line. The Clerk will write to Network Rail about these issues urgently.
 - i. Please see item 6.d. Chairman's Report and refer to the Parish Council minutes of January 2021, item 6.a. Chairman's Report.
 - j. There is now a fish and chip van within the village on Wednesdays. The van is initially in the Church Approach until approximately 5.15pm and it then moves towards The Windmill PH end of the village. The food has good reviews.
16. **Exercise Equipment proposed for the Village**
- a. Cllr Ardley and Cllr Marshall will go to look at the exercise equipment in the next few weeks before the Parish Council commit to receiving it.
17. **Finance Committee Report**– Cllr D Ardley / Cllr S Hulme
- a. There is a total of £26,641.16 in the Parish Council's combined bank accounts as of the 2nd February 2021. There has been income of £104 from the pre-school for the rental of the Cardwell Pavilion, which is gratefully accepted, and £900 grant funding from KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils) towards the costs involved in the new fully compliant website. Larger costs this month for the Parish Council were the Millennium Green insurance, and from grass cutting contractors. In total £2,701.76 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).
 - b. The cost of grass cutting and field maintenance within the village is going out for quotations, to make sure that the costs the Parish Council are paying are competitive.
18. **Highways and Infrastructure Committee Report** – Cllr D Ardley / Cllr C O'Meara
- a. Please see items 12.d. and 12.e. of the County Councillor's report. Various road markings, as well as a new gateway to the village have been installed. *Please see items 12.c. and 12.d. of the County Councillor's Report.*
 - b. Cllr O'Meara advised the snowy weather took its toll along the A20 this month, and some drivers were stuck in the snow for two to three hours in the Park Gate area. This road should be on the route for salt gritting, but the grit needs vehicles to drive upon it for it to be effective, and additional snow fall will cover the grit making it obsolete. Drivers need to be prepared for driving in the snow. For useful advice please see the link [Driving in Adverse Weather Conditions | UK Highway Code \(theukrules.co.uk\)](https://theukrules.co.uk)
 - c. Cllr O'Meara advised that the Highways England had sent her a letter advising that they would be digging out the drainage channel along the M20 in the local area. This should stop the land of properties along the Ashford Road from getting regularly flooded.
19. **Fête Sub-Committee Report** – Cllr D Ardley & Cllr A Ward–
- a. Although the likelihood of a fete in 2021 does not look great, if COVID-19 restrictions have lessened a smaller gathering could take place in June 2021.

Date of next meeting: Monday 8th March 2021, 7.30 pm, via Microsoft Teams

Signed as a true record:

Chairman:

Date: