

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 16 JANUARY 2017 AT 7.30PM AT VILLAGE HALL, NORMAN ROAD, WEST MALLING

Present **Mr R Selkirk (Chairman)**
Mrs L Javens
Mrs Y Smyth
Miss G Barkham
Mr L Collins

Also in Attendance
Mrs Sarah Howard (Assistant Clerk)

Minute		Action by	Action taken	Response
17/26	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> were received from Mrs T Dean, Mr P Stevens, Mr M Doyle, Ms I Macdonald, Rev D Green and Mr J Musker			
17/27	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – Mrs Smyth declared an interest in 17/30 (Allotments) as she is an allotment tenant.			
17/28	<u>MINUTES</u> - the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12 December 2016 were approved and signed.			
17/29	<u>MATTERS ARISING</u> <u>(16/705.2)</u> It was noted that Bruce Dickson is very unwell and Members, on behalf of the Parish Council, pass on their best wishes. <u>(16/713.1)</u> It was noted that a reply had been received from the Borough Council regarding street cleansing in the High Street. It is already manually swept and litter picked on a Saturday and Sunday as well as during the working week. It was agreed that a letter be sent saying the bins are overflowing on both mornings and need to be emptied early. Could they confirm which areas and at what times the cleansing is carried out. Additional cleans need to take place after the farmers market.	SH	✓	
17/30	<u>ALLOTMENTS</u>			
17/30.1	<u>Replacement barrier on footpath between Allotments and the Cricket Meadow</u> The Assistant Clerk reported that this is to be referred to Full Council for agreement. Once agreed a sign should be placed on each end of the footpath informing of the installation. A letter to be sent to West Malling Primary School and the Cricket Club informing them of the works and the reasons why it is necessary to have a kissing gate installed and that it is buggy and wheelchair friendly.	SH		
17/30.2	Mr Selkirk reported that there had been two enquiries for an allotment from outside of West Malling. He stressed that the Management Document states that allotments are for the benefit of people who live within the West Malling Parish boundary only.			
17/31	<u>MACEY'S MEADOW</u> In his absence, Mr Doyle had provided a report:	SH	✓	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have been chipping material from the hedge cutting to put on the paths • Pruning of some trees • Pruning of the apple trees and cobnut trees to take place soon <p>The Assistant Clerk reported that Mr Doyle, Mr Wickenden, the Clerk and herself had met with the contractor to discuss the cutting of the hedge on the boundary of Macey's Meadow and Norman Road. The meeting had been successful and everyone was happy with the work to take place. Possible date for the work is July.</p> <p>Mr Selkirk said that the working party dates are on the Parish Council website.</p> <p>It was noted that Pippa Palmar is on long term sickness leave.</p> <p>Mr Selkirk said that some new tools were needed and the Assistant Clerk to ask Mr Doyle to provide a list.</p> <p>Mrs Smyth asked about the compensation from Network Rail (707.1 refers). It is for the damage to the fencing and land when works took place on the railway.</p>			
17/32	<p><u>PLAYING FIELD</u></p> <p>Mrs Javens said that the ivy was still growing prolifically at the back of her garage. The Assistant Clerk said that she would speak with Turfsoil but this area had not been included in the original quote.</p>	SH	✓	
17/33	<p><u>BALL PARK</u></p> <p><u>Bolt On Extension</u></p> <p>It was noted that West Malling School had approached Park Leisure for a quotation to provide a bolt-on extension as follows:</p> <p>Supply, deliver and erect fencing to raise the height of the existing muga perimeter – 22.00m long x 20.00m wide.</p> <p>84.00 lin metres of 600mm high fencing, to the muga perimeter, consisting of a 1.00m high x 2.10m wide Standard spike topped Twin Bar panel, installed above an existing fence to raise the overall height utilising a bolt on post extension.</p> <p>Standard Twin Bar panels comprise of 6mm vertical wires sandwiched by twin 8mm horizontals (8/6/8 spec) to form a 200x50mm mesh to the complete height of the panel.</p> <p>All posts to be galvanised and polyester powder coated RAL 6005 Moss Green finish.</p> <p><u>For The Sum of £12.000.00 + VAT</u></p> <p>To on-site weld, stoppers to 3 gates to prevent from being removed, clean down and re-spray where needed.</p> <p><u>For The Sum of £1000.00 + VAT.</u></p> <p>It was felt that the works were very expensive. The Clerk is obtaining quotes from other contractors.</p> <p>The Clerk to schedule the next anti-social behaviour meeting.</p>	Clerk		
17/34	<p><u>CRICKET MEADOW</u></p> <p>The Assistant Clerk did not have anything to report.</p>			
17/35	<p><u>LAND WEST OF AGE CONCERN</u></p>			

	<p><u>Lime Tree</u></p> <p>It was noted that a reply had been received from Town Malling Cricket Club as follows:</p> <p>“We discussed a replacement for the Lime tree at our committee meeting last week. We were unanimous in our desire to have tree planted in the same spot or as near as is possible. All of players have always had a tree in that position and for some, especially me that is a very long time! In particular that tree forms a key part of the picture on the old £10 note.</p> <p>I know that the PC had had some advice in that it was not possible to replant. We were unsure of how to proceed but fortunately one of our members has a contact who is a professional. His advice was as follows;</p> <p>'</p> <p>'From a disease perspective alone there should be no problem replanted in the stump area of the original tree – Ganoderma is not soil borne and typically invades via wounds. However, if the stump has been chipped what is left in the soil may be a bit of a mush of decaying wood chips with real soil a few centimetres below. It would be useful if a new tree was planted in mineral soil at about the same level as surrounding soil (if planted in a dip it will just fill with water and drown the new tree). So it would probably be useful to remove some of the wood chips from the old stump and import some mineral soil into the dip created by the removal of the wood chip.'</p> <p>If the tree cannot be replanted in the same spot we are very strongly against the idea of a 'Canterbury type solution' i.e. planting a replacement within the playing area. Planting near to Age UK MAY be possible but we would have concerns about possible impact to their building and we would not want to impinge on the possibility of one day restoring the youth football pitch that used to run parallel to the entrance road. I know that this fits with your idea of offering young people more sporting options”.</p> <p>After discussion it was agreed that a site meeting take place and to be arranged at the February meeting.</p>	SH	✓	
17/36	<p><u>VILLAGE HALL</u></p> <p>It was noted that arrangements have been made for the new boiler and heating system to be installed in the week commencing 13 February 2017, this is half term holiday so will not affect the pre-school. Heat will be available through the air conditioning system for those clubs that wish to go ahead with their classes.</p>			
17/37	<p><u>VILLAGE GREEN</u></p>			
	<p><u>Shrub Bed Maintenance</u></p> <p>It was noted that a letter had been sent to the estates surveyor at Kent County Council regarding the maintenance of the Village Green.</p> <p>The village green was gifted to the Parish Council some time before his death in 1914 by Ralph Pelham Nevill, High Sheriff of Kent and brother to the Earl of Abergavenny, of the Nevill family living in Malling House, Town Hill. Members of the family had planted fine trees, some rare, on the green at least one of which survives. The green occupies a central location between some of the best listed buildings within the Conservation Area and is well used as a through route for pedestrians and relaxing area using the two benches provided by TMBC. It was the site chosen for the statue 'Hope' commissioned by TMBC as part of a competition for public art. (If you google 'West Malling Blue Plaques' the photograph shows the green and its fine trees and border to the right of the road.)</p> <p>In 1952 the West Malling Parish Council of the day transferred ownership of the 'village green ' to KCC, to be maintained as a garden marking the coronation. Unfortunately the County Council did not maintain the green as a garden and over the years it became</p>	SH	✓	

	<p>unkempt. The Parish Council protested about this on many occasions and were advised that KCC had difficulty in maintaining it because its size was too small for KCC contractors' to deal with. The Parish Council requested the return of the land to the Parish but this was declined by KCC. Under the circumstances a compromise agreement was negotiated whereby KCC paid the West Malling Parish Council a small amount of money annually towards the PC costs of taking over the maintenance, the money paid representing the cost saved by KCC. We recently discovered that KCC has failed to make even this small contribution since 2009 and we have requested the outstanding balance of £442.40. We would be pleased to have your assistance in achieving this payment.</p> <p>Whilst we recognise KCC ownership, the Parish Council is reluctant to see KCC return to maintain this land. KCC standards of maintenance are simply insufficient to maintain this well used amenity strip at the heart of our town at the level required to keep it to the current standard. We understand in particular that KCC mowing regime is to reduce still further to six cuts per year which represents a cut every six weeks during the growing season; but this area must be maintained to the same regime as a residential lawn i.e. weekly during much of the growing season.</p> <p>Since taking over maintenance we have arranged bulb planting in the grassed area, and shrub and perennial planting along the roadside strip, all done by volunteers. This work has much improved the area. It now requires a mowing and gardening regime sensitive to this planting and we would be interested to see the specification of work proposed by KCC. If KCC will still not return the green to Parish ownership, but it cannot match the level of care provided by the Parish Council currently, we respectfully suggest you leave the current arrangements in place, and continue to pass to WMPC the small cost KCC would have incurred had it maintained the site itself.</p> <p>A reply is awaited.</p> <p>Mr Selkirk proposed that the KCC give ownership back to the Parish Council, seconded by Mrs Smyth.</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk was asked to make enquiries regarding ownership of the overgrown shrubbery areas by the Scared Crow and Teston Road.</p> <p>Mr Selkirk asked if the benches had been repaired by the Borough Council. The Assistant Clerk to check.</p>			
17/38	<u>RECYCLING, CLEANSING & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES</u>			
38.1	<p><u>WEEE Recycling</u></p> <p>It was noted that the WEEE collection service is continuing until the end of the current collection contract in 2019. A separate vehicle will continue to visit all of the same sites as the Saturday Bulky Collection Vehicle.</p>			
38.2	<p><u>Saturday Freighter Service</u></p> <p>It was noted that a reply had been received regarding the Saturday Service, the dates are available on the TMBC website http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/recycling,-rubbish-and-waste/household-waste-special-collections-for-large-items/saturday-household-waste-service. The site currently shows dates for January through to March. The new schedule from February onwards does not allow for West Malling to be visited on alternate weeks without impacting on other areas and on the efficiency of grouping the locations together to reduce travel time between sites. The revised schedule has achieved some financial savings that assist in enabling us to continue with the separate WEEE service.</p> <p>It was agreed that a letter be sent saying Members felt that there was no need to change the old fortnightly service which had run successfully for many years. West Malling is the only Parish that will now have a collection two weeks running.</p>	SH	✓	

17/39	<u>PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY</u>		
	<p><u>MR141</u></p> <p>It was noted that a reply had been received from the PROW Officer regarding MR141. He had met with the landowner who apologies for it not being marked out. His reason is that at this time of year it is too wet to mark it properly. He claims that he will for the time being place a couple of steaks in the ground to show where the path goes until he is able to get a machine in.</p>		
17/40	<u>FINANCE</u>		
	<p><u>Budget Statement</u></p> <p>The statement of receipts and payments to the date of the meeting was received.</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk said that the only large expenditure to the end of March was the tree work in the Churchyard and the hedge cutting at the allotments.</p>		
17/41	<p><u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS</u></p> <p>Mrs Javens asked that the Parish Walk be put on the next Agenda.</p> <p>Comment was made regarding St Leonard's Tower and it was agreed to put an item on the next Agenda</p>	SH	✓
	<u>Date of Next Meeting</u> – Monday 13 February 2017 (concentrating on Churchyards)		
	<p>There being no further business the Chairman thanked Members for attending and closed the meeting at 8.30 p.m.</p> <p>Signed..... Date.....</p>		