

# WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE  
HELD ON MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 7.30PM  
WEST MALLING VILLAGE HALL, NORMAN ROAD, WEST MALLING

**Present:** Mr P Stevens  
Ms S Margetts  
Miss G Barkham  
Mrs Y Smyth

**Co-opted Member:**  
Mr P Yeomans  
Mr M Doyle  
Ms I Macdonald

**2 members of the public**

| Minute |   | Action by | Action taken | Response |
|--------|---|-----------|--------------|----------|
| 23/617 | <b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b> : Ms M Stacpoole, Mrs L Miles, Mrs L Javens and Rev David Green   |           |              |          |
| 23/618 | <b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b> – none other than routinely declared   |           |              |          |
| 23/619 | <b><u>MINUTES</u></b> – the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 09 October 2023 were approved and signed.   |           |              |          |
| 23/620 | <b><u>MATTERS ARISING</u></b><br><br><b><u>[23/579.1 – Litter Pick]</u></b><br><br>Thanks was expressed to all those who volunteered to help litter pick.   |           |              |          |
| 23/621 | <b><u>CHURCHYARD</u></b>  |           |              |          |
|        | <b><u>Report by Rev David Green</u></b><br><br>Rev David Green had prepared the following report:<br><br><ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Huge thanks to the Maintenance Crews for a very successful year of care in the churchyard. I'm especially grateful for their efforts ahead of Remembrance Sunday in recent days.</li> <li>2. Likewise, our Volunteer Group has been growing and, thanks to some social media exposure, a number of local folk have come forward to help tend CWGC graves. Historically, folk haven't tended to last very long with that commitment but I hope the current crop will stick with it. Even if they don't, it certainly helps those war graves in the short-term to look good.</li> <li>3. The PCC paid for Day Tree Fellers to attend the Churchyard and cut back the yew nearest to the north porch. It's the one that had mysteriously not been part of our churchyard tree surveys. However, it was both blocking light into the Nave (around the children's area) and starting to impinge upon the footpath.</li> <li>4. We had to bring an end to an allotment holder's tenancy through a lack of care for the plot. The plot has now got new tenants. The other plot that has been a subject of concern for the last 18 months or so now they are on their absolute last</li> </ol> |           |              |          |

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|               | <p>chance. Some improvement has been made since but more needs to be done. Allotment holders usually renew in January so we may see some transition then.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. The wildflower meadow has been cut back for the winter. The team of volunteers who have helped there again deserve great credit (including Sara and Min).</li> <li>6. The two grave reservations went through and are now confirmed. We currently have a total of three with one previous reservation now fulfilled (i.e. occupied).</li> <li>7. Following the tragic death of an 18 year old living locally, I'm in discussions with the family concerning the possibility of a churchyard bench and/or the planting of a tree. All would be subject to further discussion and agreement with the Parochial Church Council and a Faculty Application would be required.</li> </ol> <p>Ms Macdonald said about the hole in the access path to the church. As this is a public right of way it has been reported to Kent PROW and is awaiting allocation. A traffic cone has been placed over the hole.</p> <p>Ms Macdonald said the Remembrance parade went well and thanked all the Marshalls who helped over the weekend.</p> |  |  |  |
|               | Ms Macdonald left the meeting at 7.40p.m.   |  |  |  |
| <b>23/622</b> | <b><u>ALLOTMENTS</u></b>  |  |  |  |
|               | <p><b><u>Plot 10</u></b></p> <p>Mr Stevens reported that the tenant had relinquished their tenancy and the plot had been left in a bad state. As this was a longstanding tenancy no deposit is held. A quotation had been obtained to clear the rubbish from site and to trim and cut down brambles, etc, for the sum of £1000.00. Discussion took place as to how this situation occurred. It was felt that the plot needed to be cleared as it would not be possible to re-let at this time. To be referred to Full Council to agree the cost.</p> <p>Ways to prevent this reoccurring to be discussed at the February meeting. The tenancy agreement, management plan and template letters to be available.</p>  |  |  |  |
|               | Mr Yeomans and two members of the public left the meeting at 8.00p.m.   |  |  |  |
| <b>23/623</b> | <p><b><u>MACEY'S MEADOW</u></b></p> <p>Mr Doyle reported that the internal hedges had been cut on Monday 6 and the hedge on Norman Road Monday 13 November 2023.</p> <p>Replacement kissing gates to be discussed at the next Macey's meeting. Ms Margetts said about the possibility of metal ones.</p> <p>Committee noted that £38.00 cash was paid into the Clerk's bank account and transferred to the Parish Council as there is not a facility to pay cash into the Parish Council account.</p>   |  |  |  |
| <b>23/624</b> | <p><b><u>Get Involved/Making Space for Nature Kent</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that the above consultation is on line should any members wish to complete it.</p>   |  |  |  |
| <b>23/625</b> | <b><u>PLAYING FIELD</u></b>   |  |  |  |
| <b>625.1</b>  | <p><b><u>Tennis Courts</u></b></p> <p>Works have not been completed due to contractor awaiting emergency exit fittings for the gate. A handover meeting to be arranged.</p> <p>A tennis licence to be drafted with Jimmy's Tennis.</p> <p>It was agreed that a contribution of £100.00 to be made to the village hall for the use of water by the contractor.</p>   |  |  |  |

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|        | The Assistant Clerk reported that the keypad entry system had been installed and had set up the booking system. The system will not go live until the courts are fully completed. The Assistant Clerk will enter Jimmy's Tennis coaching sessions 4 weeks in advance.   |    |   |  |
| 625.2  | <p><b><u>Playground Inspection Report</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that the inspection report had been received.</p> <p>There are several medium risks which need repairing. It was noted that Safeplay have been instructed to carry out repairs to seven items raised to the sum of £2007.00 + VAT. The remaining medium risks to be budgeted in 2024/25.</p> <p>The junior multi play equipment is not compliant to the BS EN1176 playground standards due the entrance/exit being 200mm too wide. Wickstead have been contacted and they advise a risk assessment be carried out to establish the degree of hazard posed by the unit. Older units that do not meet the current standards are not unsafe.</p> <p>Risk assessment to be carried out.</p> | SH | √ |  |
| 625.3  | <p><b><u>Tree Work – Children's Play Area/Playing Field</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that two quotations had been received for tree work.. Day Tree Fellers £150.00 + VAT. Down to Earth £90.00 + VAT.</p> <p>It was agreed to accept Down to Earth. Short fall of £7.50 to be funded from playing field additional work.</p>  | SH | √ |  |
| 625.4  | <p><b><u>Adult Gym Equipment</u></b></p> <p>The Assistant Clerk said that she will be working on a draft specification with a view to advertising on contract finder.</p>   |    |   |  |
| 23/626 | <b><u>CRICKET MEADOW</u></b>  |    |   |  |
| 626.1  | <p><b><u>Greenery on boundary of Cricket Meadow and 34 Norman Road</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that a complaint had been received from a resident of Norman Road in respect of the overgrown and invasive hedge to the left of the property. It was agreed to refer to the cricket club for action.</p>   | SH | √ |  |
| 626.2  | <p><b><u>Kissing Gate Handle – Cricket Meadow/Allotments</u></b></p> <p>It was noted that the closing handle on the kissing gate has broken off. A quotation has been received from Parkers for the sum of £180.00 + VAT. It was agreed to refer to Full Council for approval.</p>  | SH | √ |  |
| 23/627 | <p><b><u>BALL PARK</u></b></p> <p>The ball park remains locked at the weekend. A letter to be sent to the school to ask that it be unlocked as there were children in the park that had climbed over the fence. No Climb signs to be put on the fence.</p>  | SH | √ |  |
| 23/628 | <p><b><u>VILLAGE GREEN</u></b></p> <p>There was not anything to report.</p>   |    |   |  |
| 23/629 | <b><u>VILLAGE HALL</u></b>  |    |   |  |
|        | <p><b><u>Report by Village Hall Representative</u></b></p> <p>There was not anything to report.</p>   |    |   |  |

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| <p><b>23/630</b></p> | <p><b><u>WASTE/RECYCLING SERVICES</u></b></p> <p>Mr Stevens made comment that the refuse collectors are emptying the recycling box into the green bin and then putting it all in the lorry.</p>  |                  |                  |
| <p><b>23/631</b></p> | <p><b><u>FINANCE</u></b></p>   |                  |                  |
| <p><b>631.1</b></p>  | <p><b><u>Budget Statements</u></b></p> <p>The monthly budget statements were noted.</p>  |                  |                  |
| <p><b>631.2</b></p>  | <p><b><u>Tenders</u></b></p> <p>The Assistant Clerk reported that two contractors had declined to tender due to downsizing. One tender was received. Due to insufficient responses it was agreed to re-open the tender process with a closing date of 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Further contractors to be approached.</p>  | <p><b>SH</b></p> | <p>√</p>         |
| <p><b>631.3</b></p>  | <p><b><u>Consideration of Budget for 2024/25</u></b></p> <p>Village sign maintenance for 2 signs<br/>                 Playing field tree work - £300.00<br/>                 Village hall car park tree work - £180.00<br/>                 Litter picking equipment - £200.00<br/>                 Cost of play equipment repairs to be added<br/>                 Grounds maintenance cost to be added at the December meeting upon receipt of tenders.<br/>                 Churchyard tree survey - £350.00</p>  |                  |                  |
| <p><b>23/632</b></p> | <p><b><u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS</u></b></p> <p>Discussion took place regarding the amount of litter on pavements, including bottles and glasses outside of licenced premises, after Friday/Saturday nights in the town.</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk to contact TMBC asking if there is a clean-up of pavements on a Saturday and Sunday mornings.</p> <p>To be referred to F&amp;GP with a view to organising a meeting with the licencing department and establishments in the town.</p> <p>Mr Stevens will comment on this at the next Chamber of Commerce meeting.</p> | <p><b>SH</b></p> | <p>√</p>         |
| <p></p>              | <p><b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b> – Monday 11 December 2023 (concentrating on Allotments)</p>  |                  |                  |
| <p></p>              | <p>There being no further business the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.15p.m.</p> <p>Signed.....</p>  |                  | <p>Date.....</p> |