

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 6TH JANUARY 2020, 7.30 PM
AT WEST MALLING VILLAGE HALL, WEST MALLING

Present: Mrs Trudy Dean (Chairman)
Ms Gwyneth Barkham
Mr Keith Bullard
Mrs Linda Javens
Ms Sara Margetts – arrived at 7.45 and left at 8.50
Ms Camilla Medhurst
Mr Nick Stapleton
Mr Peter Stevens

Minute		Action by	Action taken	Response
20/01	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Mr David Thompson, Ms Min Stacpoole, Mrs Yvonne Smyth, Borough Councillor O'Toole and Borough Councillor Luker.			
20/02	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – none			
20/03	MINUTES – the minutes of the meeting held on 2 nd December were approved and signed following amendments at 19/702 at which the sentence 'The possibility of obtaining an events alcohol licence was discussed' was added and at 19/707.7 at which a grammatical error was corrected.			
20/04	MATTERS ARISING			
	19/694 – Boots Chemist – Following a question from Ms Barkham, Mrs Javens and the Clerk confirmed that there had been no update on the possible movement of pharmacy lines from behind the unmanned till to nearer the dispensing till.			
20/05	CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS - none			
20/06	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC – none			
20/07	QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS – The Farmhouse – Mrs Dean asked that the Clerk write to the management of The Farmhouse requesting again that they place cones outside the premises the night before West Malling Farmers Market so as to stop vehicles parking; this had previously been agreed.	Clerk	✓	

20/08	<u>POLICING MATTERS</u>			
08.1	<p data-bbox="193 217 384 253"><u>Police Update</u></p> <p data-bbox="193 282 655 318">The Police report had been circulated:</p> <p data-bbox="316 427 836 472" style="text-align: center;">West Malling Police Report</p> <hr data-bbox="240 481 1318 486"/> <p data-bbox="316 495 970 553">Information provided by: PCSO James Robinson.CSU</p> <p data-bbox="193 622 384 658">Crimes of note:</p> <ul data-bbox="193 658 970 745" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="193 658 970 689">• 15.12. Theft. Swan street. Theft of phone from handbag. <li data-bbox="193 712 970 745">• 22.12. Vehicle crime. King street. Car window smashed. <p data-bbox="193 808 783 844">Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:</p> <ul data-bbox="193 844 480 880" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="193 844 480 880">• None reported. <p data-bbox="193 931 440 967">Items of good work:</p> <ul data-bbox="193 967 807 1003" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="193 967 807 1003">• Hi vis patrol around the area, no concerns. <p data-bbox="193 1055 632 1090">Updates of previous reported issues</p> <ul data-bbox="193 1090 663 1126" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="193 1090 663 1126">• No reports of nuisance youths. 			
08.2	<p data-bbox="193 1173 491 1209"><u>Other Policing Matters</u></p> <p data-bbox="193 1238 1214 1274">Mr Stapleton had been made aware of a car being broken into on St Leonards Street.</p>			
20/09	<u>BUDGET 20/21</u>			
09.1	<p data-bbox="193 1361 1238 1433">Notification has been received from T&MBC that the Council Tax Base for West Malling 2020/21 is 1,137.77 (this being the number of equivalent Band D properties)</p>			
09.2	<p data-bbox="193 1462 464 1498">Committee Budgets:</p> <p data-bbox="193 1525 1286 1704">Mrs Dean reported that since the last Full Council meeting the following amendments to the F&GP draft budget had been made: Assistant Clerk's salary increased by 3% (NALC agreed pay scales not yet released) Employers National Insurance contributions increased as per 19/20 rates Downs Mail – figure increased to £350 to reflect payments made during 19/20 Agreed</p> <p data-bbox="193 1738 1302 1861">Amenities draft budget – Mr Stevens requested that an additional £1150 be added to the Amenities Committee budget for playground repairs; a low risk hazard having been identified (shrinkage of play surface) in a recent inspection report. Agreed</p> <p data-bbox="193 1895 807 2094">Total Committee Budgets: F&GP total budget = £53180.32 – agreed Highways total budget £29,820.00 agreed Amenities total budget £19,931.20 – agreed. Allotments total budget £5299.31 – agreed Churchyard total budget £4420.10 agreed Macey's Meadow total budget £10,154.20 - agreed</p>			

	<p>Planning total budget £3210.00</p> <p>Committee budgets total £126,015.13 – agreed.</p>			
09.3	<p>Precept: Following a general discussion regarding the level of precept to be set, members voted unanimously in favour of a 3.2% increase per Band D property. It was noted that this figure reflects the current wage inflation figure.</p> <p>It was agreed that the precept be set at £126,015.13</p> <p>Clerk to notify T&MBC</p>	Clerk	✓	
20/10	<u>LOCAL PLAN</u>			
	<p>The public consultation exercise on the documents published since January concluded on 23rd December. WMPC commented as follows:</p> <p>1. Green Belt</p> <p><i>a) Document ED13 considers the proposed extension of the Green Belt eastwards towards the settlement of East Malling. The Green Belt in this area is largely high-quality agricultural land which not only provides a suitable habitat for a number of important species, but is also critical in maintaining the separation of the historic settlements of West Malling and East Malling. The Green Belt between East Malling and West Malling supports the integrity of these distinct communities. The document in question pits economic activity squarely against the environmental justification for maintaining and extending the Green Belt. Crucially, this negates the value – both economic, social and environmental - of green, open spaces and therefore inappropriately undermines the case for Green Belt extension. The Parish Council is strongly supportive of the Green Belt extensions proposed in the Local Plan and sees them as a central part of its plans for the future of West Malling.</i></p> <p><i>WMPC supports the TMBC proposal for an extension to the Green Belt generally to Wateringbury Road. Recent proposals in the Maidstone and TMBC Local Plans will result in development infill of the green fields formerly designated as the Medway Gap green wedge between Maidstone and Aylesford built up areas, around Hermitage Lane. This means that the area proposed for the MGB extension between West and West Malling will be the first worked area of farmland encountered along the A20 travelling westward from Maidstone town centre some nine miles away.</i></p> <p><i>Though WMPC would have preferred an extension even further eastward to protect additional area of the best and most versatile soils from the south of East Malling Research to the wooded greensand ridge, we accept the suggested boundary as a specific and long lasting line in the landscape, and enclosing a significant extension of MGB. We have submitted evidence to the draft Local Plan of the considerable local public support for this policy.</i></p> <p><i>In particular, the land to the east of St Marys Abbey in West Malling , which forms part of the proposed Green Belt is of special importance. This site not only forms part of the green space which separates nearby settlements and a home to a great deal of wildlife, but also has an historic relationship with the abbey itself. At the recent inquiry into the Bellway application to build on this site, the rural nature and pastoral appearance of the site was noted as being of importance to the abbey in its status as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and the lengths to which the Parish Council and the local community have gone to to protect this site from development should be held up as evidence of its value in decision making on the Green Belt extension.</i></p> <p><i>WMPC also supports the views of KCC regarding the need to support the PROW network to facilitate continued recreation, and walking routes between West and East Malling across the bypass. These paths are well used, particularly across Banky Meadows and Forty Acre Field.</i></p> <p>b) Document ED10 deals with the exceptional circumstances justifications for</p>			

development on two parcels of Green Belt land in the parish – the site to the north of London Road and the site to the south of existing development on Offham Road. While the Parish Council will always remain a firm defender of our open spaces, we recognise that there will be instances in which the need for some, small scale development must be treated with greater importance, notably in the case for the provision of appropriate, small scale provision of affordable housing. While the Parish Council accepts the justification provided for these two sites, we maintain that any future development must be appropriate and aligned to a genuine need in the community.

2. Road capacity

a) The capacity of roads in and adjacent to the parish is already an issue for road users and others who live and work in the area. Growth in traffic from increased car ownership and new development has outstripped the ability of council budgets and developer contributions to mitigate its effects, including on air quality and noise pollution. In addition, the requirement to prove traffic impact is 'severe', so far an unquantified figure, seems to have led to a situation where KCC very rarely object to applications on traffic grounds, or provide evidence to justify their judgement. Neither the Borough Council nor the Parish Council have the resources to challenge this unsatisfactory position.

b) In the context of the Local Plan it is vital that the real impact on road capacity of development such as the plans for Broadwater Farm are understood and considered, either with a view to rejecting proposed development or to providing sufficient mitigation measures. From the figures contained in this document, the Parish Council is not satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed for the A20 are satisfactory, and that in our Parish support for additional infrastructure is required, but not allowed for in the Local Plan. We make the following detailed points :

The factors set out above have resulted in several of the A20 junctions being at or above capacity now, hold ups at peak hours are frequent, and bus services have had to be recently rescheduled to allow for these delays. The problem is most acute at the eastern end of the KCC/Amey study area, and the accessibility of Maidstone Hospital and impact of nearby retail units on Hermitage Lane is a matter of great concern locally.

The proposed junction improvements in our immediate area rely heavily on the construction of Bellingham Way serving the former Aylesford Newsprint industrial site. This 100 acre site employed approximately 350 people producing paper for the newspaper industry in highly automated plant. The Local Plan proposes that redevelopment of the site can be more intensely developed than the previous, now demolished mills. The Df Transport has denied requests for a new link to M20 from the site. We understand that no HGV traffic is intended to move eastward to Station Road, and HGVs will continue to travel westward onto A228 and junction 4 along Leybourne Way which runs through residential areas unused to this quantity of traffic.

Between Leybourne Way and Blaise Farm Roundabout there are six sets of traffic lights on A228 and as a result many drivers divert onto local residential roads including New Hythe Lane, Lunsford Lane, Swan Street, West Malling High Street, and New Road and High Street East Malling. Apart from New Hythe Lane, none of these roads show any improvement in traffic numbers as a result of the junction improvements proposed. It is imperative that these roads have effective enforcement against HGV traffic.

We are concerned to receive more clarity on the access route to the Blacklands Farm development termed north Kings Hill. This route is potentially very damaging to the Conservation area of New Barns and Broadwater. We have seen no further detail of any more sensitive route. The junction of the access directly opposite the station also has the potential to increase through traffic onto Swan Street and into West and East Malling centres via very narrow country lanes. The need to protect the rural sylvan nature of both Swan Street and Lucks Hill have both been recognised in recent applications for additional car park (approved) and housing (refused). It may be necessary to break the through route between the bypass and Swan St and return to its original status of a route to Snd from the station only.

	<p><i>We also understand land has been acquired for a second access to the bypass from the Blacklands development possibly at the request of KCC. We have no further detail of this proposal and are therefore unable to assess its possible impact.</i></p> <p><i>The current Local Plan proposes no infrastructure improvement in our Parish despite the considerable proposed developments locally at Broadwater Farm, East Malling Research , the London Road and King Hill sites already consented, totalling over 1,600 units.</i></p> <p><i>After Tonbridge, West Malling is the prime retail and business centre in the Borough.</i></p> <p><i>We have submitted evidence of our comprehensive professional survey of parking requirements to the Borough Council in our evidence to the Local Plan. It demonstrates a shortfall in parking requirement for some 600 vehicles.</i></p> <p><i>Many Malling residents use West Malling for specialist retail, business and recreational uses including pubs, restaurants, cafes, banking, hair and beauty salons, vet, dentist and other medical facilities, 3 churches, and community group activities. Apart from the construction of West Malling bypass a decade ago, and a 100 space long stay car park, our Parish has seen no further infrastructure improvement to accommodate shoppers despite considerable changes in the balance between commercial and residential development on Kings Hill. Parking charges from our car parks exceeds the costs of their maintenance and supports parking elsewhere in the Borough.</i></p> <p><i>The challenges of on line shopping and charged car parking competing with free superstore car parks are combining to produce extremely challenging trading conditions for many independent traders. The Parish Council requested support in the Local Plan for a new car park for workers in the town to free up additional shoppers parking, but this was declined by the TMBC.</i></p> <p><i>West Malling Parish Council feels that West Malling requires infrastructure support from this Local Plan. Without it, West Malling is faced with a future where its considerable Historic importance and outstanding Conservation Area surrounding the Ancient Scheduled Monument Abbey site may survive as buildings only, but its function as a vibrant rural market town with local retail and business concerns which have survived since 1100AD may not.</i></p> <p>There was no other update.</p>		
<p>20/11</p>	<p><u>NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN</u></p>		
	<p>The first meeting of the neighbourhood Plan Steering Group took place on 17th December at which objectives, policy themes, timeframe and vision were discussed.</p> <p>The following policy themes were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Sustainable design • Community facilities • Transport • Protecting the historic & natural environments <p>Existing committees are to take on elements.</p> <p>Steering Group meetings are to concentrate on a separate policy theme enabling councillors / members of the public to only attend sessions that are of particular interest to them.</p> <p>It was agreed that the plan cover a 10 year period but with short term objectives i.e. 2/3/5 year aims.</p> <p>It was agreed that community engagement is a valuable part of this process.</p>		
<p>20/12</p>	<p><u>KALC COMMUNITIES AWARD SCHEME 2020</u></p>		

	Following the adoption of the scheme at the December Full Council meeting, nominations were discussed and agreed. Time and place of awarding the certificate to be discussed further – Clerk to note future Full Council agenda. Clerk to notify KALC	Clerk	✓	
20//13	<u>DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY</u>			
	Mr Stapleton had drafted and distributed to all members a draft response to the consultation. It was agreed that any amendments / comments should be with the Clerk by the morning of 10 th January. Mr Stapleton to submit	NS	✓	
20/14	<u>PLANNING</u>			
	TM/19/01814/OA - Wates Developments Ltd – Development Site Land West of Winterfield Lane East Malling – to note amendments to original planning application and to consider response – deadline 9th January West Malling Parish Council considered the amendment to the application and commented as follows: <i>West Malling Parish Council support the amendment to this application i.e. the removal of the link road between the A20 and Winterfield Lane, but in principle still object to the application. All other comments submitted by WMPC on 10th October 2019 still stand.</i> Clerk to submit to TMBC	Clerk	✓	
20/15	<u>ST THOMAS MORE RC CHURCH</u>			
	A letter has been issued by the diocese outlining the financial difficulties that the church is facing in sustaining The hermitage, adjacent nursery and the church. It is the intention of the diocese to put the whole site up for sale in Spring 2020. The following issues were discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any TPO's on the site? If not, should there be? It was agreed that this be a matter for the planning committee to consider and would request that the tree wardens visit the site. • To consider if it is possible to upgrade the listing of the Hermitage. Clerk to contact T&MBC in the first instance. • To see if any of the buildings are listed on the Community Assets register. <i>Subsequent to the meeting it was confirmed that the buildings were not listed on the Community Assets register.</i>	Clerk	✓	
20/16	<u>FINANCIAL MATTERS</u>			
16.1	Accounts for payment - totalling £4535.91 were approved - see attached.			
16.2	Financial Statement – bank reconciliation as of 23 rd December was received – see attached			
16.3	The following payment made since the last Full Council Meeting was noted: £800.00 authorised at Amenities meeting on 9 th December			
20/17	<u>MATTERS FOR REPORT</u>			
17.1	Amenities Committee – receipt was noted, of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 th December There were no questions			

17.2	<p>Highways & Transport & Streetlighting Committee – receipt was noted, of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16th December</p> <p>There were no questions</p> <p>There was a general discussion regarding the condition of the High Street, in particular the dip in the road near the Drs surgery. New brick samples have been requested.</p>			
17.3	<p>Planning Committee – receipt was noted, of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 17th December</p> <p>19/743 – Neighbourhood Plan – following on from the first steering group meeting, the policy themes were discussed in particular, community facilities.</p> <p>It was agreed that public engagement was essential to establish need in the community and that members of the public who have a specific interest in a policy theme should be encouraged to attend the relevant policy meeting.</p>			
17.4	<p>Malling Action Partnership – Mrs Dean reported that a grant has been approved for a defibrillator to be attached to the Green Café in Manor Park and that the East Malling PCSO is undertaking drop in sessions, donations for which are being held by MAP until a bank account has been set up.</p>			
17.5	<p>Rotary House – no update</p>			
17.6	<p>School Governors – no report</p>			
17.7	<p>Malling Society – it was noted that the next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for 17th January</p>			
17.8	<p>Chamber of Commerce / Christmas Lights Committee – the next meeting date of 14th January, 7.30 at The Swan was noted. Mrs Dean hoped to be in attendance.</p>			
17.9	<p>Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council</p> <p>Parish Partnership Panel meeting – the next meeting date of 6th February was noted.</p>			
17.10	<p>KALC/NALC/ACRK/CPRE:</p> <p>KALC – receipt was noted of December KALC news.</p>			
20/18	<p><u>MEETING DATES</u></p> <p>Amenities Committee – Monday 13th January (concentrating on allotments)</p> <p>F&GP Committee – Monday 20th January at The Clout 9 High Street</p> <p>Planning Committee – Tuesday 28th January</p> <p>Macey’s Meadow Advisory Committee – Wednesday 12th February</p> <p>Blaise Farm Liaison Meeting – Tuesday 10th March 2020 at T&MBC offices</p>			
20/19	<p><u>REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLOR</u> - no report</p> <p>Borough Councillor Stapleton reported as follows: New waste service - T&MBC state that the scheme is improving and that the Christmas and New Year period will always have a higher tonnage which will exacerbate any problems.</p> <p>Mrs Dean asked that the Clerk establish the route of Clive, the T&MBC litter picker who covers the West Malling area.</p>	Clerk	✓	

	<p>Parking Permits – in future, permits will no longer be displayed on the windscreen but will be registered via the car registration number.</p> <p>Arundel House – an application has been submitted to T&MBC for the removal of the rotten front facing timber sash windows and installation of replacement timber sash windows to exactly replicate the existing windows.</p>			
<p>20/20</p>	<p>REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR – no report</p>			
	<p>There being no other business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.16</p> <p>Signed..... Dated.....</p>			

West Malling Parish Council

Accounts for Payment 6th January 2020						cheques to be drawn	
Nurture Landscapes Ltd (single cheque 2147)						234.90	£ 281.88
(invoice 116605 November maintenance, churchyard cut x1, strim x 1, paths x1. Playing field pitch re-mark x5)						VAT 46.98	
(invoice 117072 - playing field overmarking x3)						40.50	£ 48.60
						VAT 8.10	
Viking (cheque 2148)						84.87	£87.84
(invoice 562587 stamps and mousemat)						VAT 2.97	
Outdoorsy Living Ltd (cheque 2149)						325.00	390.00
(invoice 267 Play equipment inspection and report)						VAT 65.00	
Starboard Systems Ltd (cheque 2150)						289.80	347.76
(invoice 0806 - Scribe Accounting, software licence & read only licence)						VAT 57.96	
Royal British Legion Industries (cheque 2151)						25.59	30.71
(invoice 032987 village hall contact sign)						VAT 5.12	
Streetlights (cheque 2152)						501.75	602.10
(invoice 10986 column 5 repair & column 7 replacement lantern)						VAT 100.35	
West Malling Village Hall (cheque 2153)							144.00
(room hire fees July - December 2019)							
Mrs Claire Christmas - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments							£1,498.88
(Clerk - net salary for January + reimbursement)							
£1494.68 + fax £1.20, sundries £3.00							
Mrs Sarah Howard authorisation to pay via Faster Payments							£406.44
(Asst. Clerk - net salary for January)							
HMRC - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments							£566.45
(Deductions from salaries - January)							
Nest - authorisation to pay pension contributions by Direct Debit for January							
Employer's contributions						£	56.25
Employee's contributions						£	75.00
(Employees's contributions have already been deducted from salary)							
TOTAL						£	4,535.91

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL							
Financial Statement as at 23 December 2019							
<u>Reconciliation</u>							
Balance b/f from 2018/2019							£ 99,830.54
<u>plus</u>							
total receipts 1.04.19-31.03.20							£ 213,469.02
<u>less</u>							
total payments 1.04.19-31.03.20							£ 200,397.51
						Total	£ 112,902.05
Deposit account							£ 71,634.55
Current account					£41,286.65		
less unrepresented cheques					£19.15		
						<u>£ 41,267.50</u>	
						Total	£ 112,902.05
<u>Unrepresented Cheques</u>				<u>Date Issued</u>			
2128	Ms G Barkham	£	19.15	25/11/2019			