

# WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020, 7.30 PM  
VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL

**Present:** Mrs Trudy Dean (Chairman)  
Ms Gwyneth Barkham  
Mr Keith Bullard  
Mrs Linda Javens  
Ms Sara Margetts  
Ms Camilla Medhurst  
Ms Min Stacpoole  
Mr Nick Stapleton  
Mr Peter Stevens  
Mr David Thompson

**Also Present** Nick Redding (Kings Hill Parish Council – until 9.20)

Minute		Action by	Action taken	Response
20/538	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b> were received from Mrs Yvonne Smyth and Borough Councillor Lee O'Toole			
20/539	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b> – Mrs Dean declared an interest in {20/548} as a resident of Offham Road and took no part in this agenda item.			
20/540	<b><u>MINUTES</u></b> – the minutes of the meeting held on 2 <sup>nd</sup> November were approved and are to be signed at a later date.	TD	✓	
20/541	<b><u>MATTERS ARISING</u></b> –  <b>20/484.3 – Broadwater Farm – meeting with Berkeley Homes.</b> The Clerk confirmed that Berkeley Homes had agreed to meet with WMPC and East Malling & Larkfield Parish Councils and that a date is to be agreed.			
20/542	<b><u>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></b> -  Christmas shop window competition – Mrs Dean reported that following shops had won the window competition:  Small shop window – Lucas Hair Large shop window – SB Hair & Beauty  It was agreed that the Clerk would write to the Chamber of Commerce to say that the judges were very impressed with the standard of the window displays this year and they recognised the amount of effort that had gone into producing them, bearing in mind how difficult 2020 has been for shops and small businesses.	Clerk	✓	
20/543	<b><u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</u></b> - none			

20/544	<b><u>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</u></b> – none			
20/545	<b><u>POLICING MATTERS</u></b>			
545.1	<b><u>Police Update</u></b> – the number of reported vehicle crimes was noted.			
545.2	<b><u>Annual Policing Survey</u></b> – the launch of the survey was noted. It was agreed that WMPC would not respond as a Council but individual members were encouraged to. <a href="http://www.makingkentsafer.co.uk">www.makingkentsafer.co.uk</a> <b>Deadline 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021</b>			
545.3	<b><u>Other Policing Matters</u></b>  Flytipping – Mrs Dean reported that the layby in Offham Road once again had rubbish dumped onto it. Clerk to report.  It was noted that the layby in Offham has now been coned off presumably to stop flytipping. Members to consider at a later date if this is something that WMPC should consider requesting for the Offham Road layby.  It was noted that PCSO James Robinson is self-isolating until February and that his replacement is PCSO Amy Sears.	Clerk	✓	
20/546	<b><u>LOCAL PLAN</u></b>			
	As of today's date, the Inspector's letter detailing why the T&MBC Local Plan has been paused has not yet been received.			
20/547	<b><u>WATES APPEAL</u></b>			
	Mrs Dean reported on the Wates Appeal and it was noted that 300 people watched the first day of the appeal.  Kevin Goodwin fees – it was noted that WMPC is in receipt of an interim bill of which WMPC is to pay one third. A cheque in the sum of £1667.00 made out to EM&LPC was authorised.  It was agreed that further invoices be circulated to all members on receipt and that where appropriate the Clerk use delegated powers to authorise payment.			
20/548	<b><u>THE SCARED CROW, 79 OFFHAM ROAD</u></b>			
548.1	<b><u>Application for Change of Use</u></b>  It was noted that a planning application for a change of use from public house to residential has been submitted to T&MBC. Mr Thompson reported that he had spoken to a number of Churchfields and Offham Road residents and that 78% of those were in favour of the premises remaining as a public house. Following a vote it was agreed that the Council would object to the application and the following comments were submitted:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>This development would constitute the loss of an important community asset and the last pub in West Malling not located on the High Street.</i></li> <li>• <i>The proposed alterations would remove the heritage aspects of this pub which has been in constant operation since the 1860's.</i></li> <li>• <i>The proposed dwellings sit on a very limited site, with no proposed exterior space. The site is surrounded by a green that is owned by the local authority, the integrity and cleanliness of which should be maintained for the benefit of local residents.</i></li> <li>• <i>There is already considerable pressure on the public highway because of high numbers of vehicles parking on two of the three sides of this triangle of land. Developing this site would be likely to mean more cars parking there for longer periods of time. This will further impede access, not only for local residents but for ambulances and other service vehicles attending adjacent St Mary's Court retirement housing.</i></li> <li>• <i>Please note that the tarmac path which runs immediately beside the building does</i></li> </ul>			

	<p><i>not form part of the pub property and therefore should not be used by potential new owners of the site. This is a dedicated footway which should be maintained and kept clear of waste bins should the use of the building change.</i></p> <p><i>Furthermore, it should be noted that the Parish Council has applied for the Scared Crow to be registered as an Asset of Community Value, pointing to its heritage and community value as a valued spaced for socialising and the vast majority of local residents who have indicated they wish to see it remain a public house. Members of the Planning Committee are asked to consider this application in the context of the application to have the premises included on the ACV register.</i></p>			
<b>548.2</b>	<p><b><u>Asset of Community Value</u></b></p> <p>Members were asked to decide whether or not the Council should apply to register the Scared Crow as an Asset of Community Value. Following a discussion and vote it was agreed that an application to register be made to T&amp;MBC.</p> <p>Mr Thompson to draft</p>	DT	✓	
<b>20/549</b>	<b><u>PROVISION OF PUBLIC TOILETS IN WEST MALLING</u></b>			
	<p>Transfer of facilities from T&amp;MBC to the Parish Council. The Clerk reported that she was still awaiting the updated cleaning costs from the current cleaning contractor; these costs would be based on a joint contract with other local parish councils.</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk had written to the Chamber of Commerce asking if shops / restaurants would consider being part of a scheme where participating businesses would allow the public to use their facilities free of charge, the Cornish Rest Room Scheme has been provided as an example. Response awaited.</p> <p>For budget purposes, the anticipated annual cost of running the existing King Street toilets is £16,750. This figure may alter depending on the response from the cleaning contractor.</p> <p>It was agreed that before T&amp;MBC could make a decision on possible transfer that further information was required. Clerk to advise T&amp;MBC that a decision on transfer had not yet been reached and to enquire with them as to whether or not the toilets in Tonbridge were to be transferred and if so with whom are T&amp;MBC consulting.</p>	Clerk	✓	
<b>20/550</b>	<b><u>.WMPC DRAFT BUDGET</u></b>			
<b>550.1</b>	<p><b><u>Draft Committee Budgets</u></b></p> <p>Draft committee budgets were noted.</p>			
<b>550.2</b>	<p><b><u>Council Tax Base</u></b></p> <p>The Clerk reported that the Council Tax base figure had just been received in the office and that she had provided a comparison of a 1 and 2% increase.</p> <p>The Council Tax Base has increased from 1,137.77 to 1,138.21.</p>			
<b>550.3</b>	<p><b><u>Possible projects for 2021/22 which will / could involve WMPC budget provision</u></b></p> <p><b>Scared Crow</b> – should an ACV be granted, it was agreed that this would be a commercial or community project and not one that would involve WMPC finance.</p> <p><b>Public toilets</b> – following a general discussion, it was agreed that if the current anticipated costs stay at £16,750 per year for the transfer of the existing toilets that members would prefer to budget for a lower figure in order to start a scheme in existing shop facilities. It was agreed unanimously that some form of toilet provision be budgeted for.</p> <p><b>Rotary House, Norman Road</b> – it was agreed that WMPC budget / pay for a surveyor to be appointed so as to ascertain the condition of the building and that the building / land also be valued. There was a general discussion regarding services which could be run from the building using outside agencies and other uses for the land / building / project manager etc.</p>			

	It was agreed that more enquiries be made. <b>Local Plan / Wates</b> – costs for Wates Appeal will need to be paid by end of January. Costs for Local Plan will need to form part of the 2021/22 budget.			
<b>20/551</b>	<b><u>CONFIDENTIAL ITEM</u></b>			
	It was agreed that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and asked to withdraw in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.  <u>Staff Appraisals</u>  Staff appraisals were discussed.  It was noted that the Clerk wished to commence the ILCA / CILCA training and it was agreed that CLCC membership fee be taken out of the staff training budget.			
<b>20/552</b>	<b><u>WEST MALLING CHRISTMAS TREE RISK ASSESSMENT</u></b>			
	Members had previously agreed the contents of the risk assessment via email – this decision was ratified.			
<b>20/553</b>	<b><u>SECTION 137 DONATION</u></b>			
	<b>Home-Start, South West Kent:</b> Recommendation from the F&GP Committee, to approve a donation in the sum of £500.00 Agreed unanimously.  Clerk to notify charity and to raise cheque for the January Full Council meeting.	Clerk	✓	
<b>20/554</b>	<b><u>KALC COMMUNITY AWARD SCHEME</u></b>			
<b>554.1</b>	<b>2021 Scheme</b> – it was agreed that the Council would adopt the 2021 scheme. Nominations were discussed and a recipient agreed.			
<b>554.2</b>	<b>2020 Scheme</b> – arrangements for the presentation of the 2020 award to Eileen and Bob Vago were agreed. This award is presented on behalf of the Council to recognise their work at The twitch Inn Heritage Centre.			
<b>20/555</b>	<b><u>FINANCIAL MATTERS</u></b>			
<b>555.1</b>	<b>Accounts for payment</b> - totalling £9.646.61 were approved - see attached.			
<b>555.2</b>	<b>Financial Statement</b> – bank reconciliation as at 30 <sup>th</sup> November was received – see attached			
<b>555.3</b>	<b><u>Section 3 External Auditor Report and Certificate</u></b>  It was noted that the external auditor report and certificate had been received from PKF Littlejohn LLP for the year ended 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020. The report stated:  <i>On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.</i>  The Clerk reported that a 'Notice of conclusion of audit' had been prepared and placed on both the noticeboard and the Parish Council website. No further actions to be taken.			
<b>20/556</b>	<b><u>MATTERS FOR REPORT</u></b>			
<b>556.1</b>	<b>Amenities Committee</b> – receipt was noted, of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2020			

	There were no questions.			
<b>556.2</b>	<b>Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee</b> - receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2020.  There were no questions.			
<b>556.3</b>	<b>Planning Committee</b> – receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24 <sup>th</sup> November 2020.  There were no questions.			
<b>556.4</b>	<b>Malling Action Partnership</b> – no report.			
<b>556.5</b>	<b>School Governors</b> – no report			
<b>556.6</b>	<b>Malling Society</b> - the Malling Society is to hold a Zoom meeting to discuss possible ways in which the £10,000 Covid grant could be spent.			
<b>556.7</b>	<b>Chamber of Commerce / Christmas Lights Committee</b> – it was noted that Roses (juice bar) had initiated a Crowdfunding page to raise funds for the Christmas lights to be installed. Following a successful fundraiser the lights were installed over the weekend of 5 <sup>th</sup> / 6 <sup>th</sup> December.			
<b>556.8</b>	<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling Borough Council</b> – receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the Parish Partnership Panel meeting held on 12 <sup>th</sup> November.			
<b>556.9</b>	<b>KALC/NALC/ACRK/CPRE:</b>  <b>KALC –</b> It was noted that the T&M KALC Committee meeting will be held on 10 <sup>th</sup> December. KALC News – receipt of the November KALC News was noted.			
<b>20/557</b>	<b><u>MEETING DATES</u></b>  Amenities Committee – Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2020 (concentrating on Churchyard)  Highways – Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2020  Planning Committee – Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2020  Full Council – Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2021			
<b>20/558</b>	<b><u>REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLOR, NICK STAPLETON</u></b>  Tonbridge and Malling BC have restarted their Community Hub following the introduction of the second lockdown, offering assistance to those in need. They will continue to pass as many requests as possible to the more local schemes run by parish councils, churches and volunteers groups. Even though the lockdown has ended, the hub is continuing to run, especially as Kent is currently in Tier 3.  I, along with a few other local Borough Councillors from East Malling, Larkfield and Kings Hill, had a meeting with Berkeley Homes regarding the application which they intend to submit regarding Broadwater Farm. They intend to submit the application this month. The following points were raised by Councillors (note that Borough Cllrs are not allowed to pre-determine applications, so these were points for clarification):  - Permanent closure of roads near the development, such as Pikey Lane, Broadwater Road and Lavenders Road.  -The link road between the development and the bypass, running through the countryside.  - Potential links with the current Kings Hill development.			

	<p>- A query over the building of a medical centre - bearing in mind that an empty unit has also stood in Leybourne Chase for around five years.</p> <p>- Public footpaths that currently run in or around the farm, and what will happen to those should the application be approved.</p> <p>- A query over the school sports fields, which are now to be located north of Pikey Lane, instead of south of it.</p> <p>Tonbridge and Malling BC will be signing up to be a White Ribbon Organisation. White Ribbon UK is a charity that is aiming to end male violence against women by engaging with men and boys to make a stand against violence. Their mission is for men to fulfil the White Ribbon Promise to never commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women. Members and officers are being asked to sign up as White Ribbon Ambassadors.</p> <p>There was a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at TMBC, where it was decided to recommend changing the Borough's CCTV from live to recorded, due to a saving of approx £100k. This will mainly affect Tonbridge and West Malling. The decision is not final, it will have to go to the next meeting of the Cabinet, where the final decision will be made.</p>			
<p>20/559</p>	<p><b><u>REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR –</u></b></p> <p>1. KCC has provided a copy of the consultation map and public notice for a proposed 20mph scheme for Larkfield. The consultation will begin in January. It is important to say two things.  A) Roads are divided into blue and red. The blue roads are those which KCC says can be recommended for 20 mph with new signage and possibly road markings only. Most of the funding for that will come from my Councillors Community Fund.  The red roads will need new funding in order to pay for physical measures to reduce traffic speeds. I understand designs and costs will be produced for those roads after Christmas. Both Lunsford Lane and New Hythe Lane are shown in the red colour. Officers tell me the greater speeds are experienced in Lunsford Lane.  The Parish Council has previously suggested that it might consider paying for the replacement of one of existing, now worn out Speed Indicator Devices.</p> <p>B) Owing to KCC officer time being limited by work to spend the Government's Activtravel Grant, they are unable to implement the works on the ground until after May 2021. However, I have agreed to allocate my outstanding Members Community Grant to this Scheme.</p> <p>2. KCC yesterday advised Government that they are now in a position to resume their responsibilities with regard to accommodation and care for Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers arriving in this country. KCC's action in withdrawing from this duty has resulted in greater government communication and funding for delivery of these services. However, there has been no move towards making the National Dispersal Scheme between all Local Councils mandatory. It is therefore possible that KCC will need to suspend the services again in the future.</p> <p>3. KCC Budget situation has now been significantly improved by a series of grants totalling over £50 million. I am assured that the County Council will not need to keep buildings closed which are currently closed eg West. Malling Library in order to balance. There is no sign yet of the root and branch review of Local Authority Funding, which KCC hope will be favourable towards it.</p> <p>4. Our PCSO is self- isolating and we have Amey Sears as a temporary replacement.</p> <p>5. The Police and Crime Commissioner has launched his Annual Policing Survey which determines spending and Policing priorities for the coming year. The survey closes on Jan 5th and can be found at <a href="http://www.makingkentsafer.co.uk">www.makingkentsafer.co.uk</a></p> <p>6. West Malling Parish Council has resolved, subject to additional information on cleaning costs, that they would prefer to work with local retail premises on a public toilet scheme,</p>			

	<p>identified by a window badge, and perhaps involving a donation to premises involved from the Parish Council. The Council does however think it is unwise for the Borough to press ahead with closure during a time when alternative premises might be closed due to CV19.</p> <p>7. The County Council continues to have serious concerns about arrangements for Brexit particularly in a no deal scenario. It expects to be given extra powers over traffic control, but staffing numbers remain a problem.</p>			
<b>20/560</b>	<b><u>CORRESPONDENCE</u></b>			
	<p>The following are available from the Parish Office:                  CPRE – Countryside Voices – Autumn / Winter                  Action with Communities in Rural Kent – Oast to Coast – Winter 20.</p>			
	<p>There being no other business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 10.03</p> <p><b>Signed..... Dated.....</b></p>			

<b>West Malling Parish Council</b>						
<b>Accounts for Payment 7th December 2020</b>						<b>cheques to be drawn</b>
<b>Authorised under Section 137</b>						
Mrs Trudy Dean (cheque 2245) (reimbursement for Remembrance Day overlay prints. Invoice made out to WMPC )						22.00 £ <b>26.40</b>
						VAT 4.40
Royal British Legion (cheque 2246) (Remembrance Day - donation in lieu of payment for trumpeter)						£ <b>50.00</b>
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East Malling & Larkfield Parish Council (cheque 2241) (KG Creative Consultancy - interim bill, split 3 ways with EM&LPC & Leybourne PC)						<b>£1,667.00</b>
Starboard Systems Ltd (cheque 2247) (invoice 1338 - Scribe Accounting, software licence & read only licence)						414.00 <b>496.80</b>
						VAT 82.80
All Wired Up Electrical (cheque 2248) (invoice 4006 - PAT test fee for Twitch Inn)						66.00 <b>79.20</b>
						VAT 13.20
Streetlights (single cheque 2249) (invoice 11825 - Column 96 - returned column to vertical)						175.00 <b>£210.00</b>
						VAT 35.00
Streetlights (invoice 11854 - column 1, replaced mercury lamp & column 37, relaced lampholder & reterminated burnt wiring. Replace 16A LST)						104.25 <b>£125.10</b>
						VAT 20.85
Four Seasons Gardens Ltd (cheque 2250) (invoice 3839 - hedge cutting of allotment, Macey's Meadow (internal & external), Norman Road playing field & Cricket Meadow)						3280.34 £ <b>3,936.41</b>
						VAT 656.07
Mr M Pearce (cheque 2251) (reimbursement for diesel, anti freeze, 2 stroke oil & tractor parts)						£ <b>128.07</b>
Mr William Moreno (Cheque 2252) (reimbursement for chainsaw repair - invoice made out to WMPC )						65.00 £ <b>78.00</b>
						VAT 13.00
Nurture Landscapes Services Ltd (cheque 2253) (invoice 6003864 November maintenance. Overmarking of football pitch strimming of benches, staples etc & village green cut)						111.70 £ <b>134.04</b>
						VAT 22.34
<b>December Salaries</b>						
Mrs Claire Christmas - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Clerk - net salary for December £1539.49 + reimbursement for fax £1.20, sundries £3.40, stationery £9.48 + £7.00 for planter flowers)						<b>£1,560.57</b>
Mrs Sarah Howard authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Ass Clerk - net salary for December £418.52 & reimbursement for allotment key cutiing £17.00)						<b>£435.52</b>
HMRC - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Deductions from salaries - December)						<b>£584.61</b>
Nest - authorisation to pay pension contributions by Direct Debit for December						
Employer's contributions						£ <b>57.94</b>
Employee's contributions						£ <b>77.25</b>
TOTAL						£ <b>9,646.91</b>



