

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 10TH JUNE 2021, 7.45 PM
AT WEST MALLING VILLAGE HALL NORMAN ROAD

Present: Mrs Trudy Dean (Chairman)
Ms Gwyneth Barkham
Mrs Linda Javens
Ms Sara Margetts
Mrs Yvonne Smyth
Mr Peter Stevens
Mr David Thompson

Also Present: Mr Keith Mann (co-opted members of the planning committee)

This meeting commenced at 7.55

Minute		Action by	Action taken	Response
21/301	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> were received from Ms Camilla Medhurst; Ms Min Stacpoole; Mr Nick Stapleton and Borough Councillor Lee O'Toole			
21/302	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – none			
21/303	<u>MINUTES</u> – the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5 th May 2021 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 21 st May 2021 were approved and signed.			
21/304	<u>MATTERS ARISING</u> 21/268 – West Malling Group Practice - the letter from the practice detailing the closure of The Hollies was noted.			
21/305	<u>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u> – none			
21/306	<u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</u> - none			
21/307	<u>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</u>			
	Ms Margetts commented that the village sign (on village green) was in need of some refurbishment. Ms Barkham to speak with The Malling Society to try to ascertain ownership and to establish who originally designed and produced the sign. Mrs Javens commented on patient health records being used by the NHS (data grab) and that people need to opt out of the scheme within a short timeframe if they did not want their data to be used. It was agreed that few people would be aware of this and further agreed that if the Parish Council were to advise residents of the data grab that the message would need to be clear and preferably from an NHS source so as not to alarm people. The data would not be used for media and marketing purposes and it was generally agreed that the use of data could be beneficial for research & planning. It was agreed that the Clerk would			

	<p>seek to find an NHS document on the subject which could potentially be put onto social media.</p> <p><i>Subsequent to the meeting, the data grab date was delayed until 1st September and at the time of writing it is unclear the timeframe for opting out.</i></p> <p>Mrs Javens commented on speeding cars in Woodland Close and non residents parking there during the day. Mrs Javens was advised that speeding measures were a matter for KCC and parking permits T&MBC; Mrs Javens would report back to concerned residents.</p>			
21/308	<u>POLICING MATTERS</u>			
308.1	<u>Police Update</u> – receipt of the May Tonbridge & Malling police update was noted.			
308.2	<u>Other Policing Matters</u> – Mrs Dean reported that there is to be an area meeting regarding traffic issues. Members expressed concern regarding speeding on Swan Street, St Leonards Street and a dangerous stretch of the A228.			
21/309	<u>LOCAL PLAN</u>			
	It is understood that the final report is due very shortly and that the Inspector is not minded to change the conclusion and recommendation that the Plan is not adopted.			
21/310	<u>ROTARY HOUSE</u>			
	<p>Mrs Dean hopes to be meeting with Roger Gough (Leader of KCC); the Head of Property Services and KCC Chief Solicitor to progress discussions on the possible purchase of the site.</p> <p>It was agreed that subject to any representations made by 5pm on Friday 11th June, that the briefing note previously sent to Gullands Solicitors be shared with KCC.</p> <p>Public consultation – the Parish Council will need to consult with residents if they are to move ahead with the purchase of the site and in particular if taking out a loan from the Public Works Loan Board to purchase the site will result in a precept increase. Residents will be asked their views on WMPC buying the site and potential uses for the site.</p> <p>Ms Margetts agreed to draft a leaflet which would be delivered door to door. Draft leaflet to be considered at next Full council meeting.</p> <p>An audit of spaces available to hire within the parish is being undertaken alongside St Mary's Church. Organisations will be approached to try to determine a pattern of uses and availability.</p> <p>Members agreed in principle that consideration be given to purchasing the access road.</p>	SM	✓	
21/311	<u>PLANNING APPEALS</u>			
311.1	<p><u>Development Site South West of West Malling Railway Station, Station Approach</u> – the Clerk reported that she was awaiting confirmation from the Planning Inspectorate as to whether or not they would accept comments outside of the timetable. It was agreed that comments be submitted regardless. Comments submitted as follows:</p> <p><i>Re: Development Site South West of West Malling Railway Station, Station Approach, West Malling, Kent.</i></p> <p><i>I am writing on behalf of West Malling Parish Council regarding the above appeal. As per my previous correspondence with yourselves, I am aware that this representation is being submitted outside of the timetabled deadline. On the basis that the Borough Council did not consult on this application, ourselves and other interested parties have only been able to view the application since the end of April and the Parish Council has only recently had the opportunity to meet to formulate comments. I would ask that the representations below be taken into account when considering this Appeal.</i></p>			

	<p><i>The site sits within the historic curtilage of adjacent St Mary's Abbey, being formerly part of the agricultural land that supported it and its development. In particular it lies adjacent to the Abbey's Fair Field, upon which previous development has been rejected owing to its proximity and the potential impact on the setting of the Abbey as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.</i></p> <p><i>The site sits within land designated as part of an extension of the Green Belt under the draft TMBC Local Plan. The aim of this extension is to preserve the distinct boundaries of the settlements of West Malling, East Malling and Larkfield and development on this site would contribute to continuous development from West Malling eastwards to the proposed development at Broadwater farm and onwards to Kings Hill.</i></p> <p><i>WMPC supports the protection of the rural setting of the historic market town of West Malling with its exceptional 11th century Abbey and large Conservation Area based on its architectural value. WMPC is therefore keen to see high architectural standards maintained in our town, and an outline application does not allow a judgement on this crucial issue.</i></p> <p><i>The Parish Council has asked the Borough Council to extend the Conservation Area to include the fields granted protection by the Inspector in her Bellway Appeal decision. (APP / H2265 / W / 19 / 3227034) They have advised this would be best carried out after the completion of the Local Plan. This site (Gladman) lies alongside the putative boundary of the Conservation Area, which it would be expected to enhance, and close to the listed Station.</i></p> <p><i>Development on this sight will have a negative impact on the eastern approach to West Malling and the rural viewpoint from the nearby grade II listed railway station. The loss of the views upon arrival at the station are regularly cited by those using it as significant cause for concern. The rural station is part of the Blue Plaque Scheme commemorating the links with George Orwell, whose writings about his rail travels in Kent as a farm labourer record his search for employment with Mr Cronk at New Barns farm , and his stay at the 'Spike' across the fields at Lavenders Road and St Leonards Street respectively.</i></p> <p><i>The site sits on high-quality agricultural land which should be preserved for its current use, particularly given the dwindling stock of high quality land for food production in the UK and particularly in Kent</i></p> <p><i>The local area is already subject to significant pressure on local services, in particular NHS services. Significant additional development of this nature will place further pressure on these services at a time when they are being reduced, with no promise of additional services in the future.</i></p> <p><i>This development will have a severe impact on local road and transport infrastructure, adding vehicles to the already regularly congested A20, as well as adding to the number of traffic movements along a vital stretch of the A228.</i></p> <p><i>WMPC has concerns that any development of this site may encourage the use of Station Approach as a short cut to West Malling Town centre via the very narrow and congested Swan Street, and to East Malling and A20 via the rural routes of Lucks Hill and Winterfield Lane. There is no master plan to judge its appearance, and so we can only request that any permitted development allowed should be well set back from, and well screened from the A228 to minimise this effect.</i></p> <p><i>The location of this site close to the A228 and its junction with the slip road to the station, is very noisy. WMPC supports requests for details of how acceptable standards of acoustic protection and clean air could be provided to residential properties.</i></p> <p><i>Any permitted development should have electric charging points and solar panel roofs to all properties.</i></p>			
<p>311.2</p>	<p>It was agreed not to engage Kit Wedd at the appeal hearing so as to outline the historical context of this site; Ms Wedd was of the opinion that she would be unable to add any more detail.</p>			

21/312	<u>WEST MALLING PUBLIC CONVENIENCES</u>			
	Members noted that a letter had been received from a resident regarding the closure of the toilets. The response from the Clerk outlining the financial position of the Council was also noted. Mrs Dean reported that she is querying the consultation and decision making process used by T&MBC when reaching the decision to sale the toilets; in particular the conclusion that residents will not be affected by the closure.			
21/313	<u>HIGH STREET WELCOME BACK FUNDING</u>			
	It was noted that West Malling is to receive the sum of £10,000 from the Welcome Back Fund and that the funding is to be rolled out to the High Street by the Parish Council as a Delivery Partner. There was a general discussion regarding using some of the fund for porta loos (which can only be sited on a temporary basis as per the terms of the fund) and that these could be hired for when events are held within the town; for instance for the Farmers Market and other community events. Locations for the porta loos were discussed and Mrs Dean will discuss these further with T&MBC. T&MBC have indicated that they would prefer for porta loos not to be situated in the car park as this will result in a loss of car parking spaces; Members were of the opinion that people were not visiting the town due to the lack of toilet facilities and that the loss of car park spaces was an acceptable disadvantage. The Chamber of Commerce has suggested the some of the funds be spent on a flower festival to attract visitors to the town, members were keen to explore this option.	TD	✓	
21/314	<u>FACE TO FACE MEETING RISK ASSESSMENT</u>			
	The face-to face meeting risk assessment was agreed. This encompasses actions to be taken to ensure compliance with Covid 19 guidance.			
21/315	<u>FINANCIAL MATTERS</u>			
315.1	Accounts for payment - totalling £3635.16 were approved - see attached.			
315.2	Financial Statement – bank reconciliation as at 31 st May was received – see attached			
315.3	Audit 20/21 Internal Auditor's Report – it was noted that written report had been received by the office. The auditor commented that the way in which the 21/22 budget calculations were recorded in the minutes was in breach of s49A LGFA 1992. This has been noted. The Annual Internal Audit Report had been signed by the auditor – noted.			
315.4	Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 - was agreed and signed.			
315.5	Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 - was agreed and signed			
21/316	<u>MATTERS FOR REPORT</u>			
316.1	Planning Committee – receipt was noted, of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 25th May 2021 There were no questions.			
316.2	Malling Action Partnership – no report.			
316.3	School Governors – no report			

316.4	<p>Malling Society – Ms Barkham reported that the Malling Society had made donations to various organisations within the town; these donations were funded from the Covid Business Rate grant.</p> <p>Ms Barkham further reported that the Malling Society is hoping to be able to open The Twitch during The Heritage weekend.</p>			
316.5	<p>Chamber of Commerce / Christmas Lights Committee – no report</p>			
316.6	<p>Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council – Parish Partnership Panel –it was noted that the meeting scheduled for 10th June has been postponed. The next scheduled date is 2nd September.</p>			
316.7	<p>KALC/NALC/ACRK/CPRE: KALC: Receipt was noted of the KALC Chief Executive Bulletin for May 2021 Receipt was noted of the KALC News May 2021</p>			
21/317	<p><u>MEETING DATES</u></p> <p>Amenities (concentrating on allotments) – Tuesday 15th June – Village Hall (main hall). Highways Committee Monday 21st June 2021 – The Clout - tbc Planning Committee - Tuesday 22nd June 2021 Village Hall (main hall)</p> <p>July Full Council – Monday 5th July or Tuesday 6th July - tbc</p>			
21/318	<p><u>REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLOR, NICK STAPLETON</u></p> <p>As was briefly mentioned at our recent meeting, the Boundary Commission have decided to move forward with the proposal of 43 Councillors on TMBC. A public consultation has now started and is open until mid-July. This gives the public the opportunity to have input regarding the warding patterns.</p> <p>TMBC have responded to the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan. There are major concerns that a huge number of houses are proposed for Capel and Tudeley, right on the border of TMBC. These developments would have a far greater impact on Tonbridge and Malling than they would on Tunbridge Wells, yet all of the Council Tax money would go to Tunbridge Wells. Concerns were raised regarding infrastructure, building on green belt land and a vast increase of traffic to Tonbridge and the surrounding villages.</p> <p>I have received a few more complaints from residents of Nevill Court, regarding lorries turning at the end of the road. This is something we have tried to address via our Highway Improvement Plan, but as that is taking some time to progress, I suggest we put it on our next Highways Committee agenda for discussion.</p> <p>TMBC are hoping to install electric vehicle charging points in car parks which they own across the Borough. More information on this can be found on the TMBC website, in the papers for the Communities and Housing Advisory Board on 25th May.</p> <p>At a recent Cabinet meeting, it was decided to keep live CCTV in the Borough, despite many Councillors and Cabinet members arguing for the opposite only a few months ago. TMBC received a number of complaints from residents regarding the decision to no longer have live CCTV, especially in Tonbridge.</p>			
21/319	<p><u>REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLOR, LEE O'TOOLE</u></p> <p>Cllr, O'Toole when sending his meeting apologies commented that he has suggested to T&MBC that the West Malling toilets remain open during daylight hours and close in the evening.</p>			
21/320	<p><u>REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR</u></p> <p>1. I am pleased to say that the almost final costs for the 20mph scheme in Larkfield allow all the residential roads on the map which Syretta is circulating to be included</p>			

within the 20mph zone. This includes the section of New Hythe Lane from A20 to the crossing at the lights north of the Fire Station and Kingfisher Road which KCC has so far been resisting. I have also been advised that a further £5k from my existing year's community Fund will bring Brooklands, Sheldon Way and possibly the Lakes within the zone also. I have authorised this extra spending, making a total of £38,500 spent from my Members Community Fund on this scheme. Once this scheme is underway I shall commission a design for consultation purposes in East Malling, and then West Malling.

The roads within the zone will be signposted and roundels marked on the road surface.

Lunsford Lane has been excluded together with New Hythe Lane north of Kingfisher Road due to the need for further study on what can be safely achieved through engineered features such as chicanes or road narrowing without creating unacceptable tail backs. We are also awaiting details of what Pannattoni may be prepared to fund at the Bellingham Way Roundabout and New Hythe Lane/Lunsford Lane to keep lorries on Leybourne Way /A228 as promised.

Lunsford Lane north of Leybourne Way is likely to require a separate consultation, and my view is that this should be part of the plans for the opening of the visitor centre which is likely to increase the popularity of the park.

2. KCC has advised the Home Office that it is for the second time unable to fulfil its statutory duty to accommodate unaccompanied asylum seekers arriving in Kent. The result is that Border Force and the Home Office are obliged to take on direct delivery of the service and find alternative placements. Local Authorities have been urging the Government for several years to make the national dispersal scheme mandatory so that no authorities are required to accept an unfair burden, but the Government has refused to do so. Priti Patel has announced a new scheme involving a 'rota' which will give local authorities a better idea of how many placements it will be expected to make, and includes higher rates of reimbursement, together with specialist social worker advice for councils. Whilst this had been welcomed as an improvement, the failure to make the scheme mandatory has been criticised again, and is likely to lead to a repeat of the situation in Kent.
3. Larkfield Library roof is being almost completely replaced and this will take some time before opening is possible. I am awaiting confirmation of the expected reopening date.
4. The Local Government Boundary Commission looking at new arrangements for electing Borough Councillors in Tonbridge and Malling held a Community Event yesterday and stated that they were now open to receive suggested boundaries from communities including Parish Councils, for a part or whole of the Borough. The need for reasons to support arguments was stressed. The Commissioners stressed they wanted to hear of community links such as churches, voluntary organisations, shops, GPs, schools and so on to justify suggested linkages of parishes into wards. Whilst variances of over 10 % from the average were sometimes accepted, strong arguments would be needed to justify it. Commissioners said they would future proof their proposals by calculating growth in population to 2027, but it is not clear in their figures which developments they are taking into account.
5. The Review of Parliamentary Constituencies has announced its proposals for Kent. It proposes the splitting of the Malling Parishes in a new pattern, creating a **Maidstone and Malling Constituency** comprising Allington, Aylesford South, Barming, Teston, Bridge, Ditton, Maidstone East, Fant Heath, High Street Kings Hill, Wateringbury, Leybourne, and West Malling. **Chatham and Aylesford Constituency** remains virtually unchanged except that Ditton and Aylesford South will go into the new Maidstone Constituency. So East Malling, Larkfield, Burham, Wouldham, Chatham Central, Lordswood and Capstone, Luton and Wayfield, Princes Park, Rochester South and Horsted, Snodland and Walderslade will make up Chatham
6. The Open Gardens in West Malling last Saturday raised £2,172 for the National

	<p>Garden Scheme Charity. Larkfield Community Group are restarting their Coffee mornings from the Larkfield Priory Hotel from next Tuesday. They take place fortnightly at 10.30am and cost £5 per head including parking which require licence plate details to be registered at reception.</p> <p>7 The Household Waste recycling Centres must still be booked for a slot, though KCC is considering setting aside certain times of the day when people can just turn up and queue.</p> <p>8 TMBC yesterday voted not to reinstate the Freighter Service until September.</p> <p>9 South Eastern trains are laying on extra services to the coast during the summer with increased ventilation provided.</p> <p>10 West Malling GP Surgery has now finally closed for face to face consultation at the Hollies which has been sold for residential conversion. A prescription box will be retained in the High Street, for collection from either of the Leybourne or Kings Hill, or any named pharmacy.</p> <p>11 The toilets at West Malling remain closed but are causing increased numbers of Complaints of fouling of nearby areas including residential properties. A temporary grant from Government has been approved for reviving High Streets, and West Malling Parish Council has asked TMBC for permission to locate temporary portaloos in the High Street Car Park.</p> <p>12 I have asked Soft Landscaping at KCC to carry out dead brushwood clearance along the southern verge of Leybourne Way as it appears to be attracting litter and fly tipping.</p> <p>13 The next Clare Lake gardening tidy up and litter clearance will be from 10am at the school turning circle Clare Lane on Saturday 5th June.</p> <p>14 Parents are being encouraged to register their children at school as soon as possible for Free School Meals as this also generates further 'Pupil Premium' money for the school to help their child's classroom work.</p>			
	<p>There being no other business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 10.01</p> <p>Signed..... Dated.....</p>			

West Malling Parish Council

West Malling Parish Council							
<u>Accounts for Payment 10th June 2021</u>							cheques to be drawn
Malling Action Partnership (cheque 2293) (JPCTCG subscription renewal 21/22)							£ 35.00
Kent County Council (Laser) (Single cheque 2294) (Electricity supply period April 21 at 5% VAT)							9.58 £ 10.06
							VAT 0.48
Kent County Council (Laser) (Electricity supply periods April 21 at 20% VAT)							394.13 £ 472.96
							VAT 78.83
Lionel Robbins (cheque 2295) (Ref 2021/48 - internal audit 2020/21)							150.00
June Salaries							
Mrs Claire Christmas - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Clerk - net salary for June £1566.16 + reimbursement for fax £1.20, stationery £2.85, sundries £5.67, travel £4.70, key cut £7.00, Weebly Pro Site plan renewal £72.41)							£1,659.99
(reimbursement for LCN renewal)							159.95 £ 191.94
							31.99
Mrs Sarah Howard authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Ass Clerk - net salary for June £385.62)							£385.62
HMRC - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Deductions from salaries - June)							£591.69
Nest - authorisation to pay pension contributions by Direct Debit for June							
Employer's contributions							£ 59.10
Employee's contributions							£ 78.80
TOTAL							£ 3,635.16

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL						
Financial Statement as at 31 May 2021						
Reconciliation						
Balance b/f from 2010/21						£ 115,499.31
<u>plus</u>						
total receipts 1.04.21-31.03.22						£ 66,226.47
<u>less</u>						
total payments 1.04.21-31.03.22						£ 18,564.05
					Total	£ 163,161.73
Deposit account						£ 72,048.47
Current account				£101,507.46		
				£10,394.20		
						<u>£ 91,113.26</u>
					Total	£ 163,161.73
Unpresented Cheques			Date Issued			
2268	Metcalfe Briggs	£1,319.40		01.03.21		
2280	T&MBC	£117.00		15.03.21		
2283	Allotment Tenant	£50.00		12.04.21		
2287	M Stacpoole	£100.00		05.05.21		
	DD Nest	£137.90		17.05.21		
2288	Sreetlights	£1,814.98				
2289	UK Power Networks	£2,476.80		21.05.21		
2290	Silva Arboriculture	£1,055.00				
2291	KCC	£2,933.12				
2292	Outdoorsy	<u>£390.00</u>				
		£10,394.20				