

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON 13TH MAY 2019, 7.30PM
AT VILLAGE HALL, NORMAN ROAD, WEST MALLING

Present: Mrs Trudy Dean
Miss G Barkham
Mr Keith Bullard
Ms Camilla Medhurst
Ms Min Stacpoole
Mr Nick Stapleton
Mr Peter Stevens
Mr David Thompson

Also Present: Two residents of West Malling
Borough Councillor Brian Luker from 7.35

Minute		Action by	Action taken	Response
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Mr Byatt, Mrs Smyth, Mrs Javens & Borough Councillor O'Toole (received on 14/5/19)			
2.	MINUTES of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14 th May 2018 were approved and signed.			
3.	MATTERS ARISING from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda - none			
4.	REPORTS It was agreed that the following reports be taken as read:			
4.1	<p>REPORT OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE</p> <p>Allotments The allotments continue to be well used, but some vacant plots remain. It continues to be difficult to find community groups interested in communal plots or to find people interested in smaller raised beds to justify introducing these. Work in the next year or so will concentrate on replacing and improving infrastructure such as water storage.</p> <p>Churchyard The long-term tree management plan nears completion with the final phases of work now being completed, and a new five-year plan being drawn up in due course. The committee worked with the Parochial Church Council to undertake renovation works to the war memorial ahead of the 100th anniversary of the Armistice. Generous donations and funding enabled the work to be undertaken without recourse to council funds. Particular thanks must go to Rev Green for driving the fundraising campaign.</p> <p>Village Hall & Playing Fields The football pitch remains in high demand, although we have been very keen to ensure that it is not damaged through over-use. The Village Hall goes from strength-to-strength, based significantly on the hard work of one or two individuals. Special thanks should be given to the Management Committee for all their hard work.</p>			

	<p>A plan to replace the fencing is progressing with the work being programmed over a couple of years. A comprehensive tree management plan is in the process of being drawn up. Sadly we had a further incursion from travellers early last summer, which caused a significant amount of damage. Following their removal, we undertook a full review of the security aspects of the village hall car park and playing field entrance, and new fencing and height barriers have been introduced. It is hoped these will deter future visits. The Parish Council would like to thank Gallagher Group Ltd for their assistance in providing and installing the ragstone boulders at short notice.</p> <p><u>Cricket Meadow & Ball Park</u> Tree work has now been undertaken to open up the Ball Park to the rest of the Cricket Meadow and to deter anti-social behaviour. A replacement bench has been installed and we now await the installation of a new rubbish bin. A review is being undertaken to look at the security aspects of the cricket meadow and possible improvements to fencing and gates to deter incursions by travellers. It is hoped that the work will be carried out later in the year.</p> <p>Peter Stevens, 4 May 2019</p>				
4.2	<p>Highways, Transportation & Streetlighting Committee Report</p> <p>Throughout the past year, the Highways Committee has continued to work on the streetlights within the town, bringing them all up to an acceptable standard. We have now completed the majority of the work on the original phases.</p> <p>We have had to introduce a fifth phase, to start working on changing our mercury streetlights over to L.E.D. This work will begin this summer, and will be done in stages, spread across a few years. For this year, we have picked streetlights that we felt were in the most strategic places should they go out - mainly on the High Street. Work on painting the streetlights will also begin this summer.</p> <p>Speedwatch has fully started now and special thanks should be given to Ben Merchant for getting the scheme up and running. We have made steady progress, doing sessions in the various locations around the town. After multiple social media posts, as well as a leaflet that went out towards the end of last year, we are now starting to get more interest from residents wanting to join the scheme. The aim is to get the sessions as frequent as possible.</p> <p>The committee has been looking into possible traffic calming schemes for Swan Street, as this is the road which we receive the most complaints about from residents, as well as being the road with the highest speeding figures from our Speedwatch sessions. This will be discussed further in the coming months.</p> <p>Nick Stapleton 6th May 2019</p>				
4.3	<p>Planning Committee</p> <p>Due to illness, Mr Byatt, the Chairman of West Malling Planning Committee was unable to produce a report</p>				
4.4	<p>Macey's Meadow</p> <p>2018 marked the 20th Anniversary of the transformation of a 20 acre derelict orchard into Macey's Meadow. It was conceived as a Millennium Project by the Parish Council and in recent years it has been part of the Kent County Council's Orchards for Everyone Project. Recognising that this was coming to an end and wanting to build on the success of the first 20 years, it was decided to set up "The Friends of Macey's Meadow," in order to attract more volunteers with a</p>				

	<p>wide range of skills and to investigate future funding opportunities. This was launched at the Applefest in September and will be ongoing.</p> <p>The two major events to take place during the year were the Blossom Picnic in April and the Applefest in September. These were well supported and successful, even though in the case of the Applefest, the weather was not as kind as usual. Incidentally, the trees in the apple orchards have now been surveyed to establish the apple varieties and it is hoped to have the trees labelled in time for the next Applefest.</p> <p>For the first time this year, a hay crop was taken from the two meadow areas and a third container has been located on site to house the hay-baling equipment, which is on loan. It only proved possible to sell a proportion of the hay but in future years, it is planned to have arrangements in place to sell all of the crop, which will be a useful source of income.</p> <p>On other matters, the development of two wildflower areas has continued , it is intended to establish more beehives near to the railway boundary of the Meadow, Malling Lionesses have kindly made a donation for a wooden bench, which will be installed during the Summer and discussions are ongoing on the possible translocation of reptiles from a nearby development site in London Road.</p> <p>Malcolm Doyle Chairman of Macey’s Meadow Advisory Committee</p>			
<p>4.5</p>	<p><u>MALLING ACTION PARTNERSHIP</u></p> <p>There was no report</p>			
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>CHAIRMAN’S REPORT 2018/19</u></p> <p>This year began with the news that the GP Surgery had been sold, without any decision on the part of the Practice as to the configuration of surgeries in the future.</p> <p>After several years of dispute, during this year the Parish Council finally agreed terms of the lease with Douces Manor Property Ltd. for the <u>Twitch Inn local museum</u> managed by the Malling Society.</p> <p>The Council appointed a professional <u>internal auditor</u> for the first time in Mr Lionel Robbins who had offered some useful advice.</p> <p>KCC had commissioned a study into <u>the capacity of all A20 junctions</u> between Leybourne and Coldharbour, which revealed that the majority had capacity problems which would require redesigning of the junction to increase capacity to accommodate existing and future traffic generated by the Local Plan. Designs were likely to be shared in June 2019.</p> <p>The Borough Council published its <u>draft Local Plan</u>, including sites for 6,600 additional houses by 2031. WMPC was pleased that the campaign to press for an extension to the Green Belt to Wateringbury Road had been successful and was supported by the Borough Council. However, TMBC did not support the Parish Council’s strategic proposals for a GP Surgery, commercial car park and affordable housing development. In November the Borough Council revealed that it had a shortfall on its five year land supply which resulted in the loss of the appeal for a retirement village in the Green Belt land behind London Road/ Town Hill properties. In April the Borough Council also granted permission for a development of 120 houses behind the former Startled Saint public house off King Hill. We are currently awaiting the Borough Council officers report on Bellway Homes application between the Station and the Abbey.</p> <p>Planning consent was granted on a 240 space car park opposite More Park School which the Parish Council opposed as too dangerous.</p> <p><u>Traveller incursions</u> cost the WMPC £2,000 in repairs and clean - up costs. We are currently awaiting a Government consultation on strengthening Police powers of removal.</p>			

	<p><u>The War Memorial cleansing and refurbishment</u> was ready for Remembrance Day in November.</p> <p>This year has seen proposals by upper tier authorities to pass services down to Parish Councils without the costs to support them. This includes the withdrawal of the no 58 bus, WMPC opposed the move, and the decision was overturned in place of a plan to continue the route to Maidstone Hospital only.</p> <p>Borough Council's Public Conveniences, WMPC signalled it was ready to discuss cooperation but still awaits the associated costs.</p> <p>The WMPC Litter pick group had won an Environmental Award from Veolia.</p> <p>At the end of the year, rumours were circulating about the future of the Malling Age Concern Centre.</p> <p>During the year we said goodbye to Ben Merchant and Larry Collins, and welcomed Camilla Medhurst and David Thompson in their place. In May all Parish Councillors were re-elected to the Council unopposed.</p> <p>At the local Borough Council elections, Nick Stapleton had been elected, this being the first Borough Councillor resident in West Malling for many years.</p>				
6.	<p><u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS</u> – None</p>				
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 7.40</p> <p>Signed.....</p> <p>Date.....</p>				