

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 6TH FEBRUARY 2023, 7.30 PM
AT WEST MALLING VILLAGE HALL, NORMAN ROAD

Present: Mrs Trudy Dean (Chair)
Ms Gwyneth Barkham
Mr Keith Mann
Ms Sara Margetts
Mrs Lorna Miles
Mrs Yvonne Smyth
Ms Min Stacpoole
Mr Peter Stevens
Mr David Thompson

Also Present: Cllr Paul Boxall (until 7.52)

Minute		Action by	Action	Response
23/66	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from, Mrs Javens and Ms Medhurst,			
23/67	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - none			
23/68	MINUTES - the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9 th January were approved and signed. The minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on 16 th January were approved and signed.			
23/69	MATTERS ARISING - none			
23/70	CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS - none			
23/71	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC - none			
23/72	<p>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</p> <p>Mrs Smyth reported that there had been another incident of flooding in Frog Lane; the cause of the flooding is currently unknown. Ms Margetts has contacted KCC to ask if the stream had recently been cleared by KCC as this might have caused the water surge. Ms Margetts is awaiting a response.</p> <p>Clerk to establish the use by date of the flood sacks that are stored in Frog Lane.</p>	Clerk	√	

	Ms Barkham reported that Mrs Earl's funeral is to take place on 3 rd March at St Marys West Malling. Letter of condolence to be sent.	Clerk / TD	√	
23/73	<u>POLICING MATTERS</u>			
73.1	Police Update – receipt of the January police report was noted.			
73.2	<p><u>Other Policing Matters</u></p> <p>Ms Margetts reported that Headcorn village appear to have monthly speed enforcement carried out by Kent Police. Clerk to email Insp. Stubberfield to ask the criteria for police speed checks / enforcement within parishes.</p> <p>Ms Margetts reported that the team leader of the KCC Community Warden Service (TMBC area) had attended a Kings Hill Parish Council meeting and that a monthly warden's surgery is to be set up in the Kings Hill Community Centre. This will enable Kings Hill residents to speak with the Community Officer regarding any concerns that they may have. Mrs Dean commented that although a similar service has not been set up in West Malling, the East Malling Community Warden does cover the West Malling area when required.</p>	Clerk		
23/74	<u>REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLOR</u>			
	<p>It was agreed that Cllr. Boxall provide his report at this stage of the meeting. Cllr. Boxall reported the following:</p> <p>Tmbc are warning residents of a parking fine scam. Some residents have received a letter reportedly from TMBC stating that they have received a fixed penalty notice and must pay a fine, a mobile telephone number is provided for payment – this is a scam.</p> <p>ID required for voting – it was stressed that the TMBC will need to publicise the new requirements to residents, not just by using social media.</p> <p>Birling Road – it was reported that this matter will not be taken to Appeal.</p> <p>Rotary House – it was reported that TMBC had not yet published their decision on the planning application submitted in August.</p> <p>Both TMBC & Tunbridge Wells Borough Council are to pay an additional £150,000 each to Urbaser to help fund trucks which will be powered using high rated vegetable oil.</p>			
	Cllr. Boxall left the meeting at 7.52			
23/75	<u>LOCAL PLAN</u>			
75.1	Green Belt extension petition – Mrs Dean reported that the petition had reached 1600 signatures. There followed a discussion as to when the petition should be closed and submitted and it was agreed that this should not happen until TMBC have had their next meeting; it is expected that the Local Plan will next be discussed at TMBC at a meeting of the Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee in March or an extraordinary Cabinet meeting.			
75.2	<p>Levelling - up & Regeneration Bill – reforms to national planning policy – receipt was noted of Mr Thompson's draft WMPC response. Members thanked Mr Thompson and it was agreed that the response be considered further at the next planning meeting scheduled for February 28th – any comments to be provided in writing before that date.</p> <p>Responses of other organisations including CPRE and Broadwater Action Group to be considered. BAG response to be circulated.</p> <p>Deadline 2nd March https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-reforms-to-national-planning-policy</p>	TD	√	

23/76	<u>ROTARY HOUSE</u>			
	It was noted that the Rotary House site had been sold for £500,000. With regards to the current planning application, it is understood that TMBC will publish a planning decision within a couple of weeks.			
23/77	<u>BUS SERVICES</u>			
77.1	Mrs Dean reported that due to the withdrawal of KCC funding, the number 58 and 70 bus services will stop running at the end of the week. Nu-venture will continue to run both services once a week (Fridays) until July. The number 58 will not run to Maidstone Hospital during this period. It was noted that a number of neighbouring parishes have been in joint discussions regarding possible options to re-instate the services in some form and Cllr. Taylor has been preparing a KCC grant application for funding in the names of West Malling Parish Council and other neighbouring parishes. WMPC is supportive of this in principle, subject to Maidstone Hospital being part of the route. Following additional information from Cllr. Taylor, members of WMPC are asked to consider a payment of up to £700 from reserves to fund an initial 6 month trial of a number 58 bus service (provided that the service will stop at the hospital). Other parishes are to consider making similar payments. It is estimated that the figure of £700 will equate to 12 months of operation costs for WMPC. Ms Barkham proposed that WMPC fund £700 from reserves and this was seconded by Mr Thompson. Agreed unanimously. Clerk to clarify the power under which this donation can be funded.			
77.2	It was agreed that this route should be publicised widely to increase passenger numbers.			
77.3	It as agreed that this item be progressed via the Highways Committee			
23/78	<u>WEST MALLING PUBLIC CONVENIENCES</u>			
	The Clerk reported that she is expecting to receive a Service Level Agreement from TMBC to cover the management of the existing toilet block. Cllr. Boughton has clarified that with regards to a potential new toilet block, that WMPC will be updated on the results of any Title searches undertaken; TMBC having been notified of their favoured site in September 2022.			
23/79	<u>THE FARMHOUSE</u>			
	It was reported that there had been an alleged assault inside the public house on Saturday 14 th January causing the pub to close early; two other assaults relating to the premises had been recorded by the police in December 2022. It was noted that Licensing at TMBC were satisfied with the manner in which the licensee and staff had dealt with the incidents. It was agreed that the situation would be monitored and that the parish council should hold a licensing meeting which would be open to all licensed premises, perhaps in the month of August. Clerk to schedule later in the year.			
23/80	<u>AMENITIES COMMITTEE RISK ASSESSMENTS</u>			
	The risk assessments for the ball park, playing fields, children's play area and allotments were received and agreed.			

23/81	<u>KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2023</u>			
	It was noted that the Council had agreed to adopt the 2023 scheme at their meeting on 16 th January. Nominations were discussed and a recipient agreed. Certificate wording to be confirmed.	SM	√	
23/82	<u>WEST MALLING CORONATION EVENT</u>			
	It was noted that the Macey's Meadow volunteers would be holding their Spring Blossom event on Bank Holiday Monday 8 th May; the event will be organised as in previous years but would have a Coronation theme. The Bank Holiday Monday has been designated by the Palace as 'The Big Help Out', raising awareness of volunteering, the committee therefore thought it appropriate that their event be held on that date. It was agreed that the Council would look to hold additional events both on Macey's Meadow and possibly also on the cricket meadow; additional volunteers would be needed. It was agreed that it would be a good opportunity to showcase local volunteer groups and organisations. Clerk to speak with TMCC to see if a cricket match is scheduled for Monday 8 th May	Clerk	√	
23/83	<u>FINANCIAL MATTERS</u>			
83.1	Accounts for payment - totalling £11,874.49 were approved - see attached.			
83.2	It was noted that payments in the sum of £288.34 were authorised at the extraordinary meeting held on 16 th January.			
83.3	Financial Statement – bank reconciliation as at 31 st January was received – see attached			
23/84	<u>MATTERS FOR REPORT</u>			
84.1	Amenities Committee - receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 23 rd January. There were no questions.			
84.2	Planning Committee – receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24 th January. There were no questions.			
84.3	Macey's Meadow Advisory Group – Ms Margetts provided a verbal report of the meeting held on 25 th January and reported that subsequent to that meeting, 300 whips had been planted to form a new hedge and to fill gaps in the Norman Road hedge.			
84.4	Climate Change & Biodiversity Action group – Ms Stacpoole provided a verbal report of the meeting held on 31 st January. This meeting was attended by James Maguire who runs a company that specialises in the installation and maintenance of EV charging points, the rest of the meeting concentrated on the 'Greener West Malling' public meeting which is being held on 12 th March. Leaflet distribution for the public meeting was discussed.			
84.5	Broadwater Action Group – notes of the meeting held on 31 st January had been circulated by Mr Thompson and Mrs Dean circulated notes of her meeting with the Chairs of Broadwater Action group and East Malling & Larkfield Parish Council. It was agreed that Mr Mann would be the substitute representative for WMPC when Mr Thompson was unable to attend a BAG meeting.			

84.6	Malling Action Partnership – no report			
84.7	School Governors – no report			
84.8	Malling Society – Ms Barkham reported that meetings would re-start in March and be held at West Malling Primary School on Tuesdays at 7pm.			
84.9	Chamber of Commerce / Christmas Lights Committee – no report			
84.10	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council: Parish Partnership Panel – it was noted that the next meeting will take place on 9 th February 2023.			
84.11	KALC/NALC/ACRK/CPRE: KALC T&M meeting – KALC T&M meeting – it was noted that the next meeting is to take place on 30 th March and receipt was noted of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 15 th December. KALC News – receipt was noted of the January edition.			
23/85	<u>MEETING DATES</u> Planning (ad hoc) Friday 10 th February – Clout Amenities – Monday 13 th February – West Malling Village Hall Highways – Monday 20 th February – Clout Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Group – Wednesday 22 nd February 3pm – Clout Planning – Tuesday 28 th February – West Malling Village Hall March Full Council – 6 th March - West Malling Village Hall Macey's Meadow Advisory Committee – Thursday 23 rd March - West Malling Village Hall			
23/86	<u>REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR</u> GREEN BELT PETITION. The Green Belt petition passed 1,500 signatures in the first 13 days and now stands at around 1600. Please add your signature to put the maximum pressure on TMBC to support it in their Local Plan. https://www.change.org/p/extend-the-green-belt-between-west-malling-east-malling-and-kings-hill ROTARY HOUSE In an email circulated earlier, TMBC have replied to my enquiry that they need no further information from WMPC, and have said they are likely to make a recommendation in about two weeks or thereabouts. PLAN FOR 1600 HOUSES FOR EAST MALLING RESEARCH On Thursday this week the East Malling Trust are displaying their plan for 1,600 houses between Hermitage Lane and Kiln Barn Lane at Orchard Conference Centre, East Malling Research, New Road East Malling between 1.30 and 7pm. A new spine road is also planned (dotted in blue on the map) from the Poppy Fields roundabout right across Hermitage Lane to Kiln Barn Lane and on to New Road East Malling. The plan includes clearing parked cars from East Malling High Street and forcing residents into a new car park off the station car park access road.			

This may well tempt general A20 traffic, as well as from this development, into the congested East Malling High Street and Mill Street, and potentially on into West Malling as drivers attempt to avoid the jams on the A20. I believe WMPC should therefore respond to the application.

NEW HYTHE LANE TRAFFIC

A couple of weeks ago I asked for a multi-partner meeting about the speed and volume of traffic in New Hythe Lane, between Bellingham Way roundabout and the river.

This week I have been offered three meetings, one with KCC Highways officer and the other with the Police and the MP. After that I have a meeting with a top Highways Officer, to talk about what the meetings discussed.

KCC SALE OF COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

KCC sale of around 40 Community Buildings to raise around £6m towards a property maintenance backlog of over £150 million.

There will be a consultation drop in session at Larkfield Library from 10 till 1pm on Wednesday 8th February.

The only affected property locally is our Woodlands Childrens Centre in East Malling. Woodlands is not proposed for closure, but we still need to respond to the consultation to see that KCC doesn't change its mind. It delivers a wide range of support for children and potentially will in future deliver more virtual, outreach and group activities as well as providing office space for staff sharing accommodation.

No details have yet been provided of any adaptations to the building to allow this increase of services to take place.

In the rest of Tonbridge and Malling, KCC Gateway advice centre will move from Tonbridge Castle into Tonbridge Library . Tonbridge Youth Hub, and 2 Childrens Centre will all remain open. Snodland Holmesdale school will provide a family hub and youth centre

In debate I pointed out that investment in local bus services was needed to allow the best use of these buildings.

'Outreach work" in WM, and Leybourne was to be provided.

58 AND 70 BUS ROUTES

No 58 and 70 daily bus services end this week, after KCC withdrew its subsidy, despite many objections.

Operator Nu Venture have however decided to offer at their own cost a one day per week return shopper journey on both routes until July.

They hope by then that the service will have become self funding , or that KCC will agree to share its cost with affected Parish Councils.

On Mondays from Feb 13th a number 70 service will run from Borough Green to West Malling, allowing one hour shopping in West Malling before it returns.

On Fridays from Feb 17th , a no 58 bus will run from Wrotham Square via Offham, Ryarsh, Birling, Trottiscliffe, Leybourne, West Malling, East Malling and Larkfield to Maidstone along the A20. This allows two hours shopping in the town centre, but will not include the Hospital on the route.

The Parish Alliance group of Parish Councils including West Malling and East Malling and Larkfield agreed to explore in principle the idea of part funding this one day per week shopper service after July. KCC will be asked to contribute £10,000 from a Government Bus Improvement Scheme grant . Parish Councils are considering making contributions based on their population to make up the remaining cost.Both West Malling and East Malling and Larkfield Parish Councils have stipulated that the service must stop at Maidstone Hospital as

the single journey by taxi now costs around £20.

(West Malling will decide if it want to back this idea at February's Parish Council meeting).

WEST MALLING LIBRARY REOPENS.

KCC say they are 'hopeful' that the West Malling Library will finally open on Tuesday this week. The Library has been closed for many month due to Covid, water leaks and an iffy carpet! I've asked for the outside to get a lick of paint too.

Councillors heard this week that a consultation on the future of all KCC libraries will be held later this year.

FOOD BANKS.

A special appeal has been made for Tinned Fruit, Cleaning and Hygiene products for the East Malling Community Centre Food Bank at Chapman Way. Tinned meat, rice and pasta are all in demand too. You can drop them off at 49, Offham Road, West Malling, the Kings Head Offham alternate Mondays, or deliver direct to the centre.

TREE PLANTING.

I've been out looking at possible sites for trees from my KCC £5,000 allocation. The West Malling CoE Primary School has planted 180 trees in a mini forest as part of the KCC scheme to plan a million trees. Medway Valley Countryside Partnership staff were helping the children to plant trees, each pupil planted at least one.

SEND COFFEE TO AN NHS WORKER

'Everydoctor' has created a scheme where people order coffee, which Every Doctor then post free to an NHS staff member who has requested it. Almost 2500 bags of coffee have already been sent to NHS staff, who appreciate this small sign of support during their long shifts.

Google "Everydoctor" to take part.

SINGLE USE PLASTIC BAN

A ban on some single-use plastics will come into force in England from October, the government has announced. To tackle the growing plastic problem, takeaways, restaurants and cafes must stop using single-use plastic cutlery, plates and bowls.

VOTER ID.

The Government says that in May elections this year, everyone must have photo identification before they are allowed to vote.

There was one conviction for voter fraud each year in 2016, 2017 and 2028, with none in intervening years.

A Drivers Licence, Passport, Seniors bus pass or Oracle Card (but not the over 18 one,) will be accepted. A Seniors Bus Pass is OK too, and an Oracle card, but NOT the one for 18 year olds.

We are encouraging people to apply for a Postal Vote as this does not need a photo, and the voting paper comes to you at home with a reply paid envelope. Search <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk> and follow the link for voting by post.

Another alternative is to apply online for a Voter Authority Certificate. This is just a piece of paper, not robust like a Polling Card so you will probably need a new one for every election. You apply to the electoral commission for the application form, which has to be returned to TMBC with a digital photograph.

	<p>The Borough Council are concerned that they will get swamped with up to 3,000 requests for the VAC.</p> <p>Polling Station staff are also worried they will have to deal with many confused, and angry people who do not have the necessary identification to vote when it is too late to get it.</p> <p>ROADWORKS</p> <p>Norman Road, West Malling will be closed to through traffic, on 23rd February 2023 for up to 1 day. The road will be closed between numbers 105-115. The alternative route is via Sandy Lane, London Road, Town Hill, High Street, West Street. This closure is for further drainage cleansing and CCTV works by KCC</p> <p>Temporary Road Closure & Temporary 40 mph Speed Restriction - Aldon Lane & A20 London Road, Offham - 20th March 2023 (Tonbridge and Malling District) with estimated completion by 24th April 2023. Aldon Lane will be closed at the junction with A20 London Road, to the extent indicated by signs and barriers on site.</p> <p>A temporary mandatory 40 mph speed restriction will be imposed on A20 London Road at the junction with Aldon Lane, to the extent indicated by signage displayed on site. The restrictions are for public and workforce safety while gas replacement works are undertaken by SGN.</p>			
<p>23/87</p>	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE</u></p> <p>TCPA – January newsletter</p>			
	<p>There being no other business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.35</p> <p>Signed..... Dated.....</p>			

West Malling Parish Council					
<u>Accounts for Payment 6th February 2023</u>					cheques to be drawn
<u>Section 137 donation</u>					
West Malling Chamber of Commerce (cheque 2526) (annual donation towards Christmas trees)					£ 1,188.00
West Malling Chamber of Commerce (cheque 2527) (annual donation towards Christmas event)					£ 1,062.00
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A.T.E.M Limited (single cheque 2528) (invoice 10287 PAT test for Parish Office)					66.00 £ 79.20
					13.20
(invoice 10286 PAT test for Twitch Inn)					54.00 £ 64.80
					10.80
Premier Group Recycling Limited (cheque 2529) (shredding charge for confidential waste)					75.00 £ 90.00
					15.00
Malling Memorial Institute (cheque 2530) (invoice 1/23 room hire on 16th Jan, 31st Jan & 20th February - £20.00 per session)					£ 60.00
Specialist Hygiene Services Ltd (cheque 2531) (invoice 44063 - King Street toilet cleaning costs for January)					503.70 £ 604.44
					100.74
Kent County Council (Laser) (Single cheque 2532) (Electricity supply period November 22 at 5% VAT)					16.06 £ 16.86
					0.80
Kent County Council (Laser) (Electricity supply period November 22 at 20% VAT)					605.95 £ 727.14
					121.19
Kent County Council (Laser) (Electricity supply period December 22 at 5% VAT)					16.95 £ 17.80
					0.85
Kent County Council (Laser) (Electricity supply period December 22 at 20% VAT)					714.45 £ 857.34
					142.89
Streetlights (cheque single cheque 2533) (invoice 13455 payment of 4 (of 4) 2022/23 streetlighting maint. contract) (maintenance £1160.48 + painting of columns £352)					1512.48 £ 1,814.98
					302.50
Sara Margetts (single cheque 2534) (reimbursement for pear tree £30.50 / shield engraving £20.00)					£ 50.50
(reimbursement for hedging - invoice made out to WMPC)					742.50 £ 891.00
					148.50
Open Spaces Society (cheque 2535) (annual subscription fee)					£ 45.00
Mr M Pearce (cheque 2536) (reimbursement for tree pruners, oil for tractor & diesel)					£ 474.39
February Salaries					
Mrs Claire Christmas - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Clerk - net salary for February £1994.09 + reimbursement for fax £1.20, sundries £11.20)					£2,006.49
Mrs Sarah Howard authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Ass. Clerk - net salary for February £654.17 + reimbursement for stationery £13.49)					£667.66
Mr Nathan Howard authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Litter picking duties for February - 6 hours @ £9.50 per hour)					£ 57.00
HMRC - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Deductions from salaries - February)					£918.48
Nest - authorisation to pay pension contributions by Direct Debit for February					
Employer's contributions					£ 77.75
Employee's contributions					£ 103.66
TOTAL					£ 11,874.49

West Malling Parish Council

Prepared by: SH

Date: 05/01/23

Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: CC

Date: 05/01/23

Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

Bank Reconciliation at 31/12/2022

Cash in Hand 01/04/2022	137,374.94
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ADD

Receipts 01/04/2022 - 31/12/2022	146,807.89
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	284,182.83
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SUBTRACT

Payments 01/04/2022 - 31/12/2022	92,682.45
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A	Cash in Hand 31/12/2022	191,500.38
	(per Cash Book)	

Cash in hand per Bank Statements

Petty Cash	06/04/2021	0.00
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Current Account	31/01/2023	121,952.72
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Deposit Account	31/12/2022	72,084.01
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	194,036.73
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Less unrepresented payments	2,536.35
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	191,500.38
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Plus unrepresented receipts

B	Adjusted Bank Balance	191,500.38
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A = B Checks out OK

2461	Allotment Tenant	£25.00	12/9/22
2476	Day Tree Fellers	£222.00	3/10/22
2487	SHS	£1208.88	7/11/22
2492	TMBC	£231.00	7/11/22
2508	SHS	£604.44	4/12/22
2510	Allotment Tenant	£50.00	4/12/22
2511	Allotment Tenant	£25.00	4/12/22
DD	Nest	£170.03	4/12/22