

# WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION & STREETLIGHTING COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 7.00PM  
AT 9 HIGH STREET WEST MALLING

**Present:** Ms Gwyneth Barkham  
Mrs Camilla Bridgeland (until 8.30)  
Mrs Trudy Dean  
Mr Keith Mann  
Ms Sara Margetts (Chair)  
Mr Peter Stevens

| Minute        |   | Action by | Action taken | Response |
|---------------|---|-----------|--------------|----------|
| <b>23/706</b> | <b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b> – Mr Thompson   |           |              |          |
| <b>23/707</b> | <b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b> – Mrs Dean declared a non-pecuniary interest at minute number 23/716 as a TMBC councillor as did Mrs Bridgeland as a High Street resident.   |           |              |          |
| <b>23/708</b> | <b><u>MINUTES</u></b> of the meeting held on 16 <sup>th</sup> October were approved and signed.   |           |              |          |
| <b>23/709</b> | <b><u>MATTERS ARISING</u></b><br><br><b>23/587</b> – TRO on A20 – the Clerk updated members on her enquiries to date. Further clarification needed regarding parish boundaries.<br><br><b>23/585</b> – extension of 20mph scheme - Mrs Dean reported that she had approved spending from her Members Community Fund to cover the design cost of the 20mph scheme in West Malling. Full costings for design and signage for the scheme is currently being confirmed. |           |              |          |
| <b>23/710</b> | <b><u>STREETLIGHTING</u></b>  |           |              |          |
| <b>710.1</b>  | Annual survey – it was noted that Streetlights had not yet undertaken the annual survey/ report of the parish streetlights.   |           |              |          |
| <b>710.2</b>  | Column 55 King Hill – it was noted that Fernham Homes had requested the removal of this column as required by planning conditions. It was noted that this has been agreed, with WMPC retaining the lantern for future use. Fernham Homes to pay all costs.  |           |              |          |
| <b>710.3</b>  | Column 53 King Hill – it was noted that Crest Nicholson have advised that they will not negotiate with WMPC over the removal of the column, the column being removed without the express consent of the council. Way forward was discussed including seeking advise from Streetlights as to the cost of the lantern. Letter to be drafted once this information is received.  |           |              |          |
| <b>23/711</b> | <b><u>HIGHWAYS RISK ASSESSMENT</u></b>  |           |              |          |

|               |   |       |   |  |
|---------------|---|-------|---|--|
|               | <p>Receipt was noted of the updated risk assessment – amendments agreed.</p> <p>To be considered for adoption at Full Council.</p> <p>Clerk to note Full Council agenda</p>   | Clerk | √ |  |
| <b>23/712</b> | <b><u>HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN</u></b>   |       |   |  |
| <b>712.1</b>  | <p><b>Update on previous HIP matters:</b></p> <p>Bollards – it was noted that potentially both sets of bollards are to have larger red reflectors added to aid visibility for pedestrians.</p> <p>Parking outside of Tesco – it was noted that a prohibition on customer parking forms part of the TMBC parking consultation.</p> <p>Gateway – the finalised designs were noted.</p>  |       |   |  |
| <b>712.2</b>  | <p>Matters to be added to HIP as part of the annual review:</p> <p>It was agreed that the following be added to the updated HIP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of a handrail by the steps on the raised footpath in Ryarsh Lane</li> <li>• Junction of Offham Road / Norman Road / West Street – to request that KCC consider raising the dropped kerb due to safety concerns.</li> </ul> <p>Ms Margetts to contact KCC officer</p>   | SM    | √ |  |
| <b>23/713</b> | <b><u>KCC KENT LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024-2034</u></b>   |       |   |  |
|               | <p>Following a general discussion, comments were agreed including mention of poor drainage. To be submitted by Ms Margetts on behalf of WMPC.</p> <p><a href="#">Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2024-34   Let's talk Kent</a> Deadline 30<sup>th</sup> January.</p>   | SM    | √ |  |
| <b>23/714</b> | <b><u>KENT CYCLING &amp; WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN</u></b>  |       |   |  |
|               | <p>Following a general discussion, comments were agreed. To be submitted by Ms Margetts on behalf of WMPC.</p> <p><a href="#">Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan   Let's talk Kent</a> Deadline 10<sup>th</sup> January</p>   |       |   |  |
| <b>23/715</b> | <b><u>HIGHWAYS DRAFT BUDGET 2024/25</u></b>   |       |   |  |
|               | <p>It was noted that costs for streetlight phased repair and projected energy costs were still awaited.</p> <p>Energy costs – the figure of £10,000 was agreed.</p> <p>It was noted that the streetlight phased repair scheme had brought all lights up to a good working standard and therefore it was agreed that the 'phased repair' budget line be deleted – all repairs be carried out under a 'repairs and upgrades' budget heading.</p> <p>Repairs and upgrades – the figure of £6,000 was agreed.</p> |       |   |  |
| <b>23/716</b> | <b><u>TMBC PARKING CONSULTATION</u></b>   |       |   |  |
|               | <p>Draft response was discussed and agreed. Deadline 7<sup>th</sup> January</p> <p><a href="#">Off-street parking consultation 2023 – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (tmbc.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">On-street parking consultation 2023 – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (tmbc.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>The following response was submitted to TMBC on 7<sup>th</sup> January.</p>   |       |   |  |

### **West Malling Parish Council response to TMBC Parking Consultation January 2024**

Councillor Matt Boughton confirmed at a Chamber of Commerce meeting that TMBC needs to raise an additional £50k of annual revenue in our area. West Malling Parish Council prides itself on being open and constructive in our dealings with the Borough and will assist, where possible, with achieving this while requesting that the concerns and views of our residents, business owners and visitors to our town are given due consideration.

As a means of raising additional income, the Council would suggest that TMBC only increases the parking charges in the car park behind Tesco with a view to seeing how much additional income this would generate. Not only would this produce an immediate source of additional income, but there would be savings from the considerable infrastructure costs needed for the other proposals within these consultations. There would also be the cost saving of not needing to employ additional traffic wardens to monitor the proposed new designated areas.

#### **Introduction of off-street parking charges – Ryarsh Lane car park**

West Malling Parish Council is **strongly against** the introduction of any parking charges for the Ryarsh Lane car park other than the present business permits. We also do not wish to see the extension of parking charges to 8pm. This will have a serious impact on all the side roads where the parking restrictions end at 6pm. Residents returning from work, or from an evening out will be unable to find anywhere to park. It will also impact on all the early cafe, pub and restaurant trade pushing people to make later bookings and increase noise and disturbance into the night or to find alternative locations where parking is easier.

This car park is also essential for the thriving monthly Farmers Market which has an excellent reputation. The free car park is used by both stall holders and market goers and because it is free on Sundays draws in visitors from all around the area. Should these parking charges be introduced then we could see the number of stall holders and visitors reduce and the market close.

Nearby allotment holders are also regular users of the car park dropping off heavy bags and equipment.

The consultation document does not make it clear whether residents of Ryarsh Lane, with parking permits, will be covered for 24/7 parking. This section of the consultation document does not open properly on some devices.

#### **Introduction of on-street parking charges – West Malling High Street and Swan Street**

The Council is **strongly opposed** to the introduction of charges for these areas.

The Parish Council believes that there is only a small number of cars that park in the High Street and Swan Street one-hour bays for longer than is permitted. We agree that this is a concern and would like to work with the Borough to alleviate this.

Local businesses, shops, pubs, restaurants, cafes, West Malling CE Primary School, and St Mary's Church will all be affected in different ways, a business may have fewer clients, shops lose footfall, people may spend less in pubs and eateries. The longer-term knock-on effect could be profound. For example, fewer users of Tesco supermarket may mean that they withdraw from the town. This would lead to a complete downgrading of the town's viability and a reduction in the chargeable business rates.

The environmental impact of these changes cannot be overstated. Residents use the 1-hour free parking in the High Street to shop in Tesco. Shopping is heavy and awkward to carry. If they must pay for their hour then they will drive to Lunsford Park, Larkfield where parking is free, or to Kings Hill. This will have an environmental impact on the borough and increase poor air quality. TMBC should be encouraging people to shop as locally as possible, and this was particularly necessary during Covid. The first free hour is also essential for people visiting both the church, and churchyard, throughout the week and school drop off and pick up times. We ask that if charges are introduced then it is important that the 1 hour free remains.

We ask that TMBC take into consideration that West Malling is within a Conservation Area and that any alterations to the town need to be carefully considered. The introduction of

|                      |  |  |  |
|----------------------|--|--|--|
|                      | <p>numerous paying machines &amp; information display signs around the town will detract significantly from the historic attributes that currently make West Malling an attractive place to live and visit. We also ask that TMBC take into consideration previous work undertaken to de-clutter the High Street so as to create an inviting area for residents and visitors alike; WMPC have previously agreed with TMBC a Design Statement to ensure only high quality coordinated street furniture is installed.</p> <p>Both TMBC and West Malling Parish Council have a duty to consider all changes and how they will affect disabled, less well-off, older visitors and residents. Anything that restricts people with mobility issues (not just blue badge holders) from getting from A to B is detrimental to their wellbeing. Getting from your car and finding a machine can be no straight forward task. The ability to use the parking app particularly in an area which is renowned for poor mobile reception is a serious concern. We stress, for ease of use, that should the Pay &amp; Display machines be introduced then they must be able to take cash and debit cards. The increased cost of an outing is a huge disincentive for those who struggle economically. For those disadvantaged, these worries lead to a loss of confidence and living a more restricted life. It is known that this can have a dramatic effect on people's mental health.</p> <p>Visitors to the town are needed to keep West Malling as the vibrant and attractive place it is to shop and enjoy hospitality. West Malling should be welcoming and accessible to all ... regardless of their means. Mary Portas said, 'town halls ignore at their peril the risk of driving trade out of the high street to shopping malls ...' also stressing that parking charges risk undermining the vitality of the high street.</p> <p><b>Alteration to the loading bay outside Tesco, West Malling</b></p> <p>West Malling Parish Council agrees with this part of the proposal as it agrees that the current parking arrangement can present danger to road users. We ask TMBC to be mindful of the loss of parking bays this would cause. The Council believes that this is another reason that the one-hour free parking remains for the rest of the High Street and Swan Street.</p> <p><b>Increase to on-street parking charges</b></p> <p>Residents parking permits - West Malling Parish Council agrees with this part of the proposal.</p> <p>Residents parking permits, non-UK registered vehicle - West Malling Parish Council agrees with this part of the proposal.</p> <p>Visitor 24-hour vouchers - West Malling Parish Council agrees with this part of the proposal.</p> <p><b>Increase to off-street parking charges</b></p> <p>Business parking permit - We would ask TMBC to investigate making this more equitable and efficient. Presently there are far too many spaces not being used.</p> <p>In conclusion we are asking TMBC to take a holistic look at the impact of these proposals and not just the impact to parking, but on the fabric of the town and the lives of the people who live and visit here. We agree with the sentiment of the present Government's Levelling up strategy ...<b>creating opportunities for everyone across the UK by improving jobs, pay and living standards, making streets safer, protecting health, and wellbeing &amp; investing in high streets and town centres.</b></p> <p>The Parish Council would welcome a meeting with TMBC to work towards achieving the Borough's goals. We are both concerned and perplexed by the confusing consultation documentation on TMBC's website. Residents are understandably annoyed and upset by the seemingly, if unintended, lack of clarity and are left with a belief that their views are not genuinely sought. Working together, both TMBC and West Malling would be stronger and better placed for having a healthy and prosperous future.</p> |  |  |
|                      | <p>Mrs Bridgeland left the meeting at 8.29</p>   |  |  |
| <p><b>23/717</b></p> | <p><b>KCC PLAN TREE STRATEGY</b></p>   |  |  |
|                      | <p>Ms Margetts to review alongside the Climate Change &amp; Biodiversity Action Group.</p>   |  |  |

|               |   |           |  |  |
|---------------|---|-----------|--|--|
| <b>23/718</b> | <b>HIGHWAYS / PAVEMENTS / DRAINAGE / SALT BINS</b>  |           |  |  |
|               | <p>Salt/grit supply – it was noted that the KCC supply had been delivered and distributed to parish owned salt bins by the WMPC contractor.</p> <p>Fatal accident on the bypass and concerns regarding speeding – on the advice of KCC, no action to be taken by WMPC.</p> <p>Ms Margetts provided an update on the Manor Park/Frog Lane flooding issue – it was noted that KCC have cleared the channel ready for the new grate in Water Lane.</p> <p>Blocked drains in St Leonards Street – all 3 have been reported via the KCC portal and are still waiting to be done.</p> <p>Brickwork outside of Boots still to be re-instated following recent utility works – to monitor.</p> <p>King Hill – the deterioration of the road surface on King Hill was noted; the deterioration presumably down to heavy plant machinery being used in the construction of the Crest Nicholson/Lancaster Park site. Mr Mann to see if the developer is under any planning obligation to make good the road surface.</p> <p>Water pooling in Fartherwell Avenue junction with Ewell Avenue – Clerk and or Mr Stevens to provide evidence for logging on the fault portal.</p> <p>London Road/Parkfoot/Brickfields reports of blocked drains – Mr Stevens to provide details for logging on the fault portal.</p> <p>Swan Street / Lucks Hill – foul smelling drains under the railway bridge – reported on KCC faults portal by Ms Margetts.</p> | <b>KM</b> |  |  |
| <b>23/719</b> | <b>FINANCE</b>  |           |  |  |
| <b>719.1</b>  | Receipt was noted of year to date budget statement – see below  |           |  |  |
| <b>719.2</b>  | Accounts for payment in the sum of £5,315.10 were agreed – see below.   |           |  |  |
| <b>23/720</b> | <b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b> - none  |           |  |  |
| <b>23/721</b> | <b>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</b> - none  |           |  |  |
|               | <b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> – 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2024  |           |  |  |
|               | <p>There being no further business the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.02</p> <p>Signed.....</p> <p>Date.....</p>  |           |  |  |

## Budget 23/24

| <b>Highways and Transportation Committee</b> |              |                       |                  |
|--|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|
|  |              |                       |                  |
|  |              |                       |                  |
| <b>Income</b>                                |              | <b>Budget 2023-24</b> | <b>YTD</b>       |
| Written Back Cheque                          |              |                       |                  |
|  |              |                       |                  |
|  | <b>Total</b> | <b>0.00</b>           | <b>0.00</b>      |
|  |              |                       |                  |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                           |              | <b>Budget 2023-24</b> | <b>YTD</b>       |
|  |              |                       |                  |
| Energy                                       |              | 10273.00              | 3799.79          |
| Maintenance                                  |              | 4874.92               | 3656.19          |
| Painting & numbering of columns              |              | 1408.00               | 1056.00          |
| Phased repair programme                      |              | 4560.00               | 6460.00          |
| One off repairs                              |              | 2000.00               | 293.25           |
| Seasonal (Salt)                              |              | 150.00                |                  |
| Village Gateway                              |              |                       | 1621.00          |
| Fingerposts and Noticeboard                  |              |                       |                  |
| Additional Streetlight (planning fee)        |              |                       | -231.00          |
| Speedwatch materials (safeguarded)           |              | 100.00                |                  |
|  | <b>Total</b> | <b>23365.92</b>       | <b>16655.23</b>  |
|  |              |                       |                  |
| <b>Surplus/-deficit</b>                      |              | <b>-23365.92</b>      | <b>-16655.23</b> |
|  |              |                       |                  |
|  |              |                       |                  |

Accounts for payment:

## West Malling Parish Council

| <b><u>Accounts for Payment 18th December 2023</u></b>   |     |                  |                 | <b>cheques to be drawn</b> |
|---|-----|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Viking (cheque single cheque 2657)  |     | 61.18            | £ 73.42         |                            |
| Invoice 3479669 stationery  | VAT | 12.24            |                 |                            |
| Stamps - first class x 50   |     |                  | £ 62.50         |                            |
| Mr K R Veares (2658)  |     |                  | <b>1,000.00</b> |                            |
| (invoice 100, clearance of allotment plot & disposal of rubbish - Plot 10)  |     |                  |                 |                            |
| C&A Landscapes Ltd (cheque 2659)  |     | 510.00           | £ 612.00        |                            |
| (invoice CA37479 Churchyard grounds maintenance 9th November)   | VAT | 102.00           |                 |                            |
| Commercial Services Trading Ltd (single cheque 2660)  |     | 680.12           | £ 816.14        |                            |
| (invoice LS207999 maintenance costs for July, Aug, Sep for playing field, children's play area, staples, village green) | VAT | 136.02           |                 |                            |
| (invoice LNS6342 mowing costs for July, Aug, Sep for playing field & children's play area)                              | VAT | 649.78<br>129.96 | £ 779.74        |                            |
| Mr P Sellick (cheque 2661)  |     |                  | £ 25.00         |                            |
| (allotment deposit refund - plot 23A)   |     |                  |                 |                            |
| Mr M Roberts (cheque 2662)  |     |                  | £22.00          |                            |
| (refund of allotment rent paid in error)  |     |                  |                 |                            |
| Ms Margetts (cheque 2663)   |     |                  | £ 23.98         |                            |
| (reimbursement for engraving costs - Xmas window trophies)  |     |                  |                 |                            |
| Malling Memorial Institute (single cheque 2664)   |     |                  | 60.00           |                            |
| (invoice 34/23 - November room hire @ £20.00 per session)   |     |                  |                 |                            |
| (invoice 36/23 balance of rent owed from 11/8/23 - 11/2/24 - new lease terms)   |     |                  | <b>313.00</b>   |                            |
| Parkers Gates & Fencing Ltd (cheque 2665)   |     | 180.00           | <b>216.00</b>   |                            |
| (invoice 0465 - welding repairs to allotment footpath kissing gate)   | VAT | 36.00            |                 |                            |
| Roth Creative (single cheque (2666)   |     | 86.75            | <b>104.10</b>   |                            |
| (invoice 3702 - Christmas cards artwork & print)  | VAT | 17.35            |                 |                            |
| (invoice 3703 - play area signs - artwork & production)   |     | 110.00           | <b>132.00</b>   |                            |
|   | VAT | 22.00            |                 |                            |
| (invoice 3704 - design of Green West Malling flyer)   |     | 50.00            | <b>60.00</b>    |                            |
|   | VAT | 10.00            |                 |                            |
| N Hill (cheque 2667)  |     |                  | <b>850.00</b>   |                            |
| (invoice ref 23025/21023 - survey fee for King Street toilets)  |     |                  |                 |                            |
| Mrs C Christmas (single cheque 2668)  |     | 91.86            | <b>110.23</b>   |                            |
| (reimbursement for PDF Editor Suite)  | VAT | 18.37            |                 |                            |
| (reimbursement for Norton AntiVirus)  |     | 45.82            | <b>54.99</b>    |                            |
|   | VAT | 9.17             |                 |                            |
|   |     | <b>Total</b>     | <b>5,315.10</b> |                            |