



7th December 2020
Minutes of the Virtual Meeting
7.30 pm

Present

James Perkins (Chair), Roger Hiskey, Helen Hennig, Lyndsey Jenkins, Charles Wilkinson and Chris Vane

In Attendance: District Councillor Mick Burgess and the Clerk Mary Philo

Members of the Public: 18

1. Formalities

- I) The council was quorate. (LGA Act 1972 schedule12, 12/28/45)
II) Apologies had been received from Councillor Winter. It was resolved to agree his absence from recent meetings. County Councillor Hill also sent his apologies. (LGA 1972 schedule12, 12)
III) Declarations of interest and dispensations: None. (Code of Conduct)

2. Approval of Draft Minutes

Following minor amendments, it was resolved to agree the minutes of the meetings held on 2nd November 2020 as a true record. Proposed Councillor Hiskey and seconded Councillor Vane.

(LGA Act 1972 schedule12,19.1)

Adjournment of Meeting for Reports and Public Questions

The meeting was adjourned at 7.47 pm

Report from Borough Councillor Mick Burgess

Councillor Burgess had spoken by telephone to clarify with the Highways Development Planner, Highways stance on the pedestrian crossing included within the parish council residential development application. Maintenance of any crossing is the responsibility of Highways. Bearing this in mind, the highways planner believed that a suitable crossing for pushchairs, mobility scooters and the like, for the location can be achieved using dropped curbs with white lines either side. Any zebra crossing with hazard lines require a traffic survey. The parish council would have to pay for the survey to ascertain if a zebra crossing met highways requirements.

Public Questions.

Pedestrian Crossing and Footpath in front of the Recreation Ground

The council clarified that the proposed footpath rather than pavement ran on highways only ground, in front of the recreation up to Hawthorn. It was suggested that speed bumps would be preferable to a crossing.

Sale of Council Field

There was a very lengthy discussion, the following are some of the issues covered:

- A suggestion to co-opt residents to lead discussions with Martello
- A request to listen to what some considered a large number of residents who did not agree with the refurbishment works
- A proposal for a zoom meeting between Martello, chairman and residents to appeal to good will of the developer to seek a way forward
- Whether the pandemic was a legally acceptable reason to allow the contract to be renegotiated

- A suggestion that the council 're-do' the questionnaire sent out by concerned residents
- The independent valuation of the council field plus the two closed bids from contractors
- The independent valuation was lower than the sum (in cash or refurbishment works) achieved in the contract
- The requirement to have three bids and wider marketing of the field during sale
- The independent costing of the refurbishment works
- The independent surveyor working on behalf of the council to verify quality and costs of the refurbishment works
- The contract requirement for the council to work positively towards a conclusion
- The costs incurred by the developer to date for architectural, legal, planning and other fees are in the region of £80,000
- The council cannot consciously break the law, if it were to do so the council's insurance would not cover councillors
- A suggestion to re-assess the refurbishment works to ensure that the toilets and hall will be covid safe. At the request of the Village Hall Trustees and the Parish Council the architect has already reviewed the proposed works with reference to the latest covid guidelines and determined that they are compliant with government guidelines
- The council regard investing in the hall as an investment in the community and as such should not be assessed in terms of a financial return on investment
- The hall is already a community centre

Reconvening Meeting at 9.10 pm

3. Planning

(Town and Country Planning Acts 1990 schedule 1/2010)

3.1 Planning Decisions by Ashford Borough Council:

20/01316/AS 45 The Street: Installation of Flue. It was resolved to support the application – Permitted.

3.2 Planning applications to consider

20/01564/AS and 20/01565/AS Listed Building Consent- Queen's Arms, 2 Court Lodge Road: Provision for lime mortar render to lower half of flank wall. It was resolved to support both applications. Proposed by Councillor Vane and supported by Councillor Wilkinson.

4. Policies

It was resolved to include the following statement on the Clerk's and Councillors emails: In order to assist you with your enquiry, your personal details may be held and used by the Clerk and Councillors as well as other tiers of local authority, however it will not be used for any other purpose. Proposed by Councillor Vane and seconded by Councillor Jenkins.

The confirmation of various other policies was deferred to the next meeting.

5. Highways Update

Councillor Hennig had recently met with our contact from KCC and received an apology for works not completed from our Phase 1. which are:

- Removal of the Roundels saying 40/30 just before Tenterden Junction and road repairs after removal
- The replacement of a missing "Welcome to Appledore" sign
- Replacement of the National Speed limit sign on the Woodchurch Road
- A small repeater 30mph sign near Heathside

The above should be completed in the next few weeks.

Small "repeater" 30mph signs through the village

The council has asked for these only to be told repeatedly that these are not permitted on roads with street lights, in spite of other local villages having them.

However, an agreement has been obtained to put 30/30 roundels through the Street to Fourwents. The number and spacing is still to be decided.

Priority Sign at the Narrows

Councillor Hennig raised the request for a priority sign again but the response remains in the negative due to distance / visibility requirements.

Signs to Appledore Station requested by FOAS

These were approved and will be incorporated in the new rationalised directional signs. It was also agreed that we could have a sign to Appledore and the Romney Marsh at the Station.

Phase 2 works which were also discussed.

Faults/concerns reported

Unfortunately, the warden for our area has been away for some time so there is a back log. The steps on the footpath up onto the canal bank have been reported as unsafe. Also, the footpath sign is missing from Park Farm.

Speed Watch

This can only start after the above works have been completed and of course Covid allows it.

Pedestrian Crossing

Councillor Hennig would move forward with the pedestrian crossing and obtain a quote for the traffic survey and enquire about the process.

6. Update on Public Conveniences

There had been a recent onsite meeting reviewing progress. The works are on schedule but there have been delivery delays for the internal fittings. The high windows which were difficult to keep clean have been removed to provide a more hygienic facility. The internal light already comes on automatically during the day. It also improves the building's security.

7. Finances

7.1 Bank Account: as at 31st October 2020 £42,984.22

7.2 October Receipts

£0.17	October Bank Interest
£100.42	Public Donations from toilets
£3.33	Pett PC: Share of paper for printer

7.3 November Receipts

£216.00	KALC: Health and Wellbeing Conference; Infrastructure payments Seminar; Planning Conference (vat £36.00)
£42.00	Refund C Vane: Leaflet
£144.00	Gibbs & Son Grass cutting Annual charge for cutting grass in front of recreation ground and around the public Conveniences (vat £8.80)
£41.00	Refund C Vane: Council Field Update Leaflet
£1,026.08	November Salaries
£67.50	Refund L Jenkins: Christmas Tree
£173.88	Refund M Philo administration cost £143.88 annual fee for zoom and £30.00 additional Christmas tree lights

7.4 Precept Projects and budgeting for 2021 - 2022

Ashford Borough Council has advised that it may cease paying the concurrent function grant and the council tax support grant to parishes. Concurrent grant is paid to parishes in respect of work that parishes carry out on behalf of the borough such as litter picking. The clerk would not recommend taking on any further projects which might need funding from the precept as the budget is already close.

7.5 Council Insurance

The council's insurance will be due for renewal in January.

7.6 Grass cutting contract for 2021

This item was delayed to the next meeting while a quote from Aspire was obtained by Councillor Hennig.

8. High Speed Broadband

The Council has been approached by a resident and asked to assist with looking into the possibility of improving the broadband speed across the parish. Grants are available and should there be sufficient interest the improved infrastructure cost may be covered by these. The Council is playing a supporting role. A leaflet drop to all households had started on the day of the meeting. The council would be updated at the next meeting.

9. Residential Enabling Car Park Court Lodge Car

A decision on the latest application for 5 dwellings is expected shortly.

10. Communication

Councillor Hennig suggested that the council should hold an open day when permitted again under Covid measures. An item to be scheduled for March meeting.

11. Christmas Tree

Courtesy of Councillors Jenkins and Hennig the council has organised a Christmas tree for outside the Black Lion to fit alongside the tree in the churchyard which will also be lit this year.

12. Date of Next Meeting - Virtual

Monday 4th January 2021, 7.30pm

13. Pursuant to section 1) of the Public Bodies (Admissions Act) 1960, it was resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during the item regarding council staff. Proposed by Councillor Perkins and Councillor Vane. **1972 LGA sch. 12A part 1.3**

It was resolved to Increase the Clerk's pay for 1st April 2019 and 1st April 2020, in line with the National Association of Local Councils. Central Government for Public Sector Workers. Back pay would be due. **It was further resolved to agree, effective 1st December 2020, to increase the Clerk's pay scale to scale point 23, under the new revised scales as agreed by the National Association of Local Councils. In additional, it was resolved to increase the Clerk's hours to 16 per week effective 1st December 2020** Proposed by Councillor Hiskey and seconded by Councillor Wilkinson.