

MEOPHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the extra-ordinary Full Council held on Tuesday 22nd March 2022 at 7.30pm at the Cricket Pavilion, Meopham

Members:

Cllr D Bramer
Cllr M Bramer
Cllr S Buchanan – Chairman
Cllr C Dalby
Cllr S Gofton
Cllr G Green
Cllr J Ogden – Vice-Chairman
Cllr C Price (*joined at 19:35*)
Cllr A Rose
Cllr B Wade

In attendance:

Mr S Fishenden – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Ms C Collings – Assistant Clerk
Cllr F Wardle – Borough Councillor

Item 1: Apologies for Absence: To receive and accept apologies

F.C. 175 There were apologies received and accepted from Cllr McTavish (Covid), Community Wardens; M Cason and J Fuller (prior commitment), PCSO; K Lowe (prior commitment) and Borough Cllrs; E Aslam (prior commitment), D Tiran (holiday) and G Harding (illness)

Item 2: Declarations of Members' Interests: To receive declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests

F.C. 176 Cllr Wade declared an interest in item 8.5 as a committee member of Meopham Cricket Club. Cllr Wade confirmed she would abstain from voting on this item.

During the meeting; Cllr M Bramer declared an interest in item 14.3 as a Trustee of Meopham Windmill Trust.

Item 3: Casual Vacancy in Culverstone and Harvel Ward

3.1 Co-option: To co-opt the candidate recommended by the Interview Panel

F.C. 177 The Chairman introduced Mrs C Price as the candidate recommended by the interview panel for co-option.

Cllr M Bramer PROPOSED Mrs C Price be co-opted to the Culverstone and Harvel ward. SECONDED: Cllr Gofton. All in favour.

Cllr Price immediately signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form which was witnessed by the Proper Officer. Cllr Price had also received the agenda and papers in accordance with the summons period and was therefore able to vote on all further agenda items.

3.2 Administration and Resources Committee: To consider appointing the co-opted councillor to the A&R Committee

F.C. 178 Cllr M Bramer PROPOSED that Cllr Price is added as a member of the A&R Committee. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden. All in favour.

Item 4: To approve the minutes of the previous meeting: 22.03.22

F.C. 179 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22.03.22 were approved. PROPOSED: Cllr Wade. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden. 7 in favour and 4 abstentions due to absence at previous meeting.

Item 5: To consider any matters arising from the above Minutes

F.C. 180 **F.C. 170: Streetlights** - The Clerk reported the maintenance contract with Streetlights had now been signed

F.C. 171: Rotary Club Plaque - The Clerk reported that this had now been installed by the Rotary Club.

F.C. 174: Judsons Pavilion - Meopham Colts had indicated they would make payment although this had yet to be received. The Clerk had asked them for an update on payment in advance of this meeting but had not received a reply.

The Clerk was therefore asked to re-convene the proposed meeting with the Colts to discuss this issue.

Item 6: To receive reports from:

6.1 County Councillor

F.C. 181 The County Councillor was not present and therefore no report was received.

6.2 Borough Councillors

F.C. 182 Cllr F Wardle reported on;

- The Fowlers Stone Wood appeal is to be heard in May 2022
- There are limited numbers of volunteers for the Speedwatch initiative and new volunteers are needed.
- Gravesham Town Pier is being sold to Thames Clippers; the Conservative Group at GBC has raised concerns about this due to ensuring public access rights and ensuring no monopoly.
- Cllr Wardle wished for it to be noted at the efforts of local volunteers in feeding the homeless which has been going since the start of the Covid pandemic.

Cllr D Bramer enquired whether the Tilbury-Gravesend ferry service would still operate. It was confirmed it would.

6.3 Community Warden and PCSO

F.C. 183 The Community Warden was not present and therefore no report was received.

The Chairman read a report from the PCSO; K Lowe which comprised of the following;

- PCSO Lowe was currently serving the whole of rural Gravesham although an additional officer was being recruited for.
- A special constable had been appointed; a mounted police officer whom was looking to build links with the rural community

Item 7 Public Session: Questions from the public

F.C. 184 No members of the public were present

Item 8 Financial Matters

8.1 To receive Meopham Parish Council's income and expenditure report up to 15.03.22

F.C. 185 This was received without comment. PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr Gofton. All in favour.

The Chairman then moved item 8.4 forward on the agenda to be considered prior to item 8.2 and item 8.3

8.4 To approve the expenses claim form submitted by the Clerk and Assistant Clerk

F.C. 186 The Chairman highlighted the reason for the expenses appearing high was due to issues in getting a council debit card meaning the Clerk and Assistant Clerk had to resort to using their personal cards. This issue was soon to be rectified.

Cllr Green therefore PROPOSED approval of both claim forms on the condition the Personnel Committee meets to review the situation to ensure the council's employees don't have to use their personal cards again. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden. All in favour.

8.3 To receive the bank statements balance as at 15.03.22

F.C. 187 These were received without comment. PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr Dalby. All in favour.

8.2 To receive the schedule of payments in accordance with Financial Regulations 5.2

F.C. 188 The schedule of payments were approved including the ten payments awaiting formal authorisation. PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr Rose. All in favour.

8.5 To determine the financial contribution for the Parish Council wishes to make to Meopham Cricket Club for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations they are hosting

F.C. 189 After discussion, the Parish Council agreed to provide a £1,000 grant to the Cricket Club. PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr Green.

7 votes in favour, 1 against, two abstentions (one being due to pre-declared interest). The motion was carried.

Item 9 Committee Minutes and Recommendations

9.1 Administration and Resources Committee: 02.02.22

F.C. 190 The Chairman deferred this item until the next meeting due to the minutes not being circulated whilst the Chairman of A&R reviews the draft provided by the Clerk.

9.2 Environment and Amenities Committee: 25.01.22

F.C. 191 The Chairman deferred this item until the next meeting due to the minutes not being circulated whilst the Chairman of E&A reviews the draft provided by the Clerk.

9.3 Planning and Projects Committee: 01.03.22

F.C. 192 These were noted. There were no recommendations arising from them.

Item 10: Council Governance and Policies

10.1 Terms of Reference for Planning Applications Working Group: To approve the amended terms of reference in recognition of the change from Committee status to an advisory Working Group

F.C. 193 The terms of reference were approved subject to two minor amendments;

- 1.1 - remove 'Committee' and replace with 'Working Group'
- 2.2 - remove 'Committee and' from the sentence.

PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr Green. All in favour.

10.2 Agenda Items: To consider the request from the Clerk to remove the Correspondence List from all meeting agendas

F.C. 194 The Clerk confirmed it is not a statutory requirement to have them. It was agreed the Council wishes to continue with correspondence lists. PROPOSED: Cllr M Bramer. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden. All in favour.

Item 11 Parish Online – To consider the report from the Clerk on purchasing an annual subscription of the Parish Online digital mapping software

F.C. 195 This was deferred to be considered at the next Administration and Resources Committee meeting. PROPOSED: Cllr M Bramer. SECONDED: Cllr Price. All in favour.

Item 12 Parish Council Land and Assets

12.1 Noticeboards: To consider the report from the Clerk and agree any actions arising

F.C. 196 This was deferred to be considered at the next Environment and Amenities Committee meeting.

PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr M Bramer.
10 votes in favour, 1 abstention. The motion was carried.

12.2 Village Green posts: To consider agreeing that future replacement post works for Village Greens utilise Plaswood bollards instead of wood.

F.C. 197 It was agreed to defer this item to be considered at the next Environment and Amenities Committee meeting. It was also agreed to delegate to the Clerk to seek prices and specification information ready for that meeting.

PROPOSED: Cllr D Bramer. SECONDED: Cllr Ogden. All in favour.

12.3 Streetlights: To receive an update on the Clerk on the process of transferring streetlights back to MPC and seeking electricity suppliers

F.C. 198 The Clerk and Chairman provided a verbal update on being unable to seek electricity supply quotes due to the failure by Gravesham Borough Council to provide adequate details in the lighting inventory in order to contact suppliers.

GBC's supplier would continue to provide the electricity from 01.04.22 and MPC would be asked to cover those costs in due course when we transfer to our own supplier.

It was therefore agreed to write to the Leader and Chief Executive Officer of GBC to express disappointment at the failure to provide information that would enable us to protect our tax-payers by being able to identify best value. We would also request a timetable for when we will receive the information we require.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr M Bramer. All in favour.

Item 13 Memorial Request – To consider the request for a memorial for former Parish Clerk; Melda White

F.C. 199 The Clerk confirmed Melda worked as Clerk to the Parish Council from 1967 until 1975.

The Council agreed in principle to a memorial to Melda, subject to the final details being acceptable to the Environment and Amenities Committee.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr D Bramer. All in favour.

Item 14 Parish Office

14.1 Office Fridge: To authorise the sale of the fridge in the office

F.C. 200 The Clerk and Assistant Clerk confirmed they did not use the fridge. After discussion, it was agreed to retain it for future use but in storage, either the container or an external location.

PROPOSED: Cllr Buchanan. SECONDED: Cllr Green. All in favour.

14.2 Office Cleaning: To consider terminating the office cleaning contract

F.C. 201 This was deferred to the next Administration and Resources committee meeting.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr Rose. All in favour.

14.3 Hot-Desking: To consider the report from the Clerk.

F.C. 202 After discussion, it was agreed the Council could not allow it due to public liability insurance not covering the Community Warden as she is not a parish council employee.

The Chairman also agreed to write to Cllr Sweetland to ask when the Warden would be able to work from the library again.

Item 15 Plan Tree Consultation: To consider drafting a response to KCC's Plan Tree consultation

F.C. 203 It was agreed to delegate the completion of the response to the Clerk/Assistant Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the Environment and Amenities Committee.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr D Bramer. All in favour.

Item 16 Community Engagement: To consider having a presence at the Meopham Community May Fair on 2 May 2022

F.C. 204 It was agreed in principle the Council would have a stall at the event. It was suggested we use it to consult with residents about youth provision in Meopham.

Cllr Dalby and the Assistant Clerk stated they may be around to assist on the day.

PROPOSED: Cllr Dalby. SECONDED: Cllr Gofton. All in favour.

The Clerk was asked to add an agenda item to the next Full Council meeting to discuss whether the Council wished to have a presence at the Jubilee event on Meopham Green on 4th June.

Item 17 Chairmans Announcements

F.C. 205 The Chairman gave the following announcements;

- The Assistant Clerk was congratulated on completing the ILCA qualification. She will commence her CiLCA in September.
- Councillors should be set-up with their council email address now. Any councillors with remaining issues should contact the Clerk or Assistant Clerk
- Councillors are reminded to send E&A and P&P matters to the Assistant Clerk. A&R, Full Council and any other matters should go to

the Clerk.

The Chairman asked informally if councillors are happy for the Clerk to ask the cleaners to leave the public toilets open later on Saturday 4th June for the Jubilee event. Councillors confirmed they were happy with this arrangement.

F.C. 206 Cllr Green PROPOSED the Council enters closed session. SECONDED: Cllr Gofton. All in favour

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that due to the confidential nature of the next item, the public and press are asked to leave the meeting.

Item 18 **Personnel**

18.1 Clerk Appraisal: To note the successful completion of the appraisal for the Clerk by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council

F.C. 207 This was noted.

18.2 Annual Leave: To approve the request for the Clerk to be paid in lieu for the remaining 2021-22 annual leave entitlement.

F.C. 208 The Chairman asked Cllr Green to speak on this item. He circulated a paper amongst members present and gave them an opportunity to read it.

It was resolved to adopt of all the recommendations from the paper and authorise the payment of equivalent to seven days as a discretionary bonus, without setting a precedent.

PROPOSED: Cllr Green. SECONDED: Cllr M Bramer. All in favour.

18.3 NALC Pay Scales: To note the pay scales for 2021-22 have been agreed and the difference in pay for the Clerk and Assistant Clerk will be back-dated. This will also apply to the former Clerk, Assistant Clerk and Clerical Assistant for the hours worked between April-November 2021

F.C. 209 The Council wished to endorse the back-payment to both the current and former staff.

PROPOSED: Cllr M Bramer. SECONDED: Cllr Price. All in favour.

The meeting closed at 20:49pm

Signed:

Date:

DRAFT