

BEARSTED PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON TUESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2022

BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT BY CLLR DENIS SPOONER

This report needs to be read in conjunction with the report that I prepared for the September meeting of BPC which was cancelled. Since then, I have been unwell for some time and unable to keep up with some of the issues that I deal with. I have nevertheless still been able to attend most MBC meetings.

THE MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2021 – 2035 (LPR)

The Public Hearing into the LPR began Tuesday 6 September but has now been adjourned until the beginning of November to enable recently submitted further evidence about housing need and supply to be considered by all the parties. The Hearing is an iterative process and it is inevitable that fresh and further evidence may be submitted as each party seeks to ‘fight their respective corners.’ This further evidence may then require adjournments to allow it to be properly considered. Housing need and supply will be the most critical issue for the LPR.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW OF MBC WARDS

As previously reported, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) has recommended that a new 2-member Ward be created for ‘Bearsted and North Madginford’ and a new 1-member Ward created for ‘Downswood’ which will include south Madginford.

These changes and others throughout the Borough were considered at a meeting of the MBC Democracy and General Purposes Committee on 21 September. I attended that meeting as a ‘visiting member’ and requested that that it agree to join the proposed two new Wards into a single new 3 – Member Ward to be called ‘Bearsted and Downswood’. I considered that this would make for administrative convenience, be instantly recognisable and prevent the Madginford Area from being divided between two Wards.

The committee agreed to my request which was subsequently endorsed by the full MBC on 28 September. MBC’s proposed changes will now be conveyed to the LGBC and it remains to be seen if it will approve them.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW (PARISHES)

MBC will shortly be starting on a review of all parishes within MBC to take into account all the demographic changes that have taken place in the Borough over the past 20 years. The review may consider creating, merging, altering or

abolishing parish councils. It may also consider changing parish council names, their electoral arrangements and their numbers of councillors.

The general ‘direction of travel’ for all such reviews is to reduce the number of councils and their numbers of councillors.

MEETINGS ATTENDED

13 September: I attended a Ward Cluster Meeting for the MBC Wards of Bearsted, Downswood, Otham and Leeds. This was attended by Borough and Parish Councillors from each Ward, Kent Police and MBC Community Protection Officers. Val Springett, Sandra Knatchbull, Richard Ash and I represented Bearsted. We raised the issues of anti-social behaviour, especially in the Church Lane car park, and the need for a 40 or 50 mph speed limit on the A20 Ashford Road, etc.

20 September: I attended the Planning Committee Chairman’s briefing by MBC Planning, Highway and Legal Officers about the forthcoming MBC Planning Committee to be held on 22 September – see below.

21 September: I attended and spoke as a ‘visiting member’ at the MBC Democracy and General Policy Committee about the proposed Ward changes affecting Bearsted – see above.

22 September: I chaired a meeting of the MBC Planning Committee. There was only one item on the agenda that had implications for Bearsted residents and this was an application for works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order to the rear of Gault Close.

28 September: I attended a full meeting of MBC which *inter alia* approved the proposed changes to the MBC Wards which I had requested – see above.

5 October: I attended:

- a) a day-long planning study tour for MBC councillors and officers of several new housing estates throughout the Borough which included the Sycamores Housing Development in Bearsted; and
- b) a briefing by MBC Officers for Borough Councillors on the cost-of-living crisis and what MBC is doing to help Maidstone residents.

Borough Councillor Denis Spooner

Bearsted Ward

06 October 2022



Minutes of the HR Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at the Parish Office, Madginford Hall, Egremont Road on Monday 3rd October 2022 at 12noon.

Present:	Cllr Sandra Knatchbull
	Cllr Suzanne Camp
	Cllr Martin Broughton

Also, in attendance was Clerk Erin Sugden.

There were no reports from the members of the public

1. Declarations of intention to record.

None.

2. Apologies and absences

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Graeme Hannington.

3. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

None.

4. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of 12 September 2022 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

5. To resolve to go into closed session and to exclude the press and public at item 6 (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 in accordance with standing order 10 (xi) for consideration of staff salaries/employment contract and Code of Conduct.

6. Closed Session

- a) To consider the conclusion of a code of conduct: It was reported that MBC had sent a decision notice in reference to the Code of Conduct complaint which found that Cllr Richard Ash had breached the code in the way of bullying on one account. The decision notice recommended that the parties involved should attend mediation. The committee felt that protective measures should be put in place to further protect staff as Cllr Ash continues to breach the protective measures already in place. It was proposed for Cllr Knatchbull to seek guidance from KALC about ways the council could protect staff members which was resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: CLLR KNATCHBULL

- b) To review any findings of the staff review: The Local Council Consultancy has arranged to interview all members of staff on 4th October and will compile a report soon.
- c) To consider employment contracts: Due to the delay in reviewing the council's staff pay scale it was proposed by Cllr Knatchbull that an addition is inserted into the Administration Officer's new contract to allow for a change in salary should the review recommend it. This was resolved with all in favour.

- d) To consider the additional hours worked by staff and how this can be compensated: As the Parish staff have been operating with 10 hours unallocated for a number of months it was proposed by Cllr Broughton to pay the Administration Officer for the additional hours that were worked in the months of August and September which equates to £241.51. This was resolved with all in favour.
- e) To consider the need for a Site Officer: The Clerk explained that a number of tasks are not being completed by councillors and that further tasks are legally required to be carried out. It was proposed by Cllr Broughton that the Clerk put together a Job Description to be presented to the Full Council with was resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: CLERK

- f) To consider the Informal Complaint raised in September 2022: A member of staff had raised an informal grievance about a non-elected member of the Project A Working Group. Cllr Knatchbull proposed that Cllr Broughton arranges to meet with the non-elected working group member to explain the council's Harassment, Bullying, Abuse and Intimidation Policy which is in place to protect employees at their place of work. She also proposed that the non-elected member should not be permitted to attend a Project A Working Group meeting until Cllr Broughton had met with them. This was resolved with all in favour.
- g) Clerk's Appraisal: The appraisal has been set for the 7th November 2022.

With no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 14.05hrs

Signed..... **Date**.....



Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish
Council held at Madginford Hall, Egremont Road on Tuesday 4th October
2022 at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr Adam Powell (Chairman)
Cllr Suzanne Camp
Cllr Sandra Knatchbull
Cllr Pat Marshall MBE
Cllr Denis Spooner

Also, in attendance was Clerk Erin Sugden, Administrator Amy Bush and Cllr Richard Ash.

There were no reports from members of the public.

1. Declarations of intention to record.

The Clerk declared the meeting would be recorded for minuting purposes.

2. Apologies for absences

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Joanna Tribley

3. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

None.

4. To appoint Vice-Chairman of the committee.

It was proposed by Cllr Camp for Cllr Knatchbull to be appointed as the Vice-Chairman which was resolved with all in favour.

5. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the Communications Committee meeting on the 21st June 2022 were agreed as a true record and duly signed

6. Clerks report

Nothing to report.

7. Media, printed and internal communications (LGA 1972 s142)

- a) Correspondence: None.
- b) Newsletter: The committee considered the newsletter. Articles about the by-election written by Cllr Spooner and Tribley were combined and prosed by Cllr Knatchbull. The resolution passed with 4 in favour and 1 abstention.
- c) Website: Advice was provided to give options to increase the website's capacity for the day the Playscheme tickets are release. It was proposed by Cllr Powell that the added cost did not provide enough benefit throughout the year and proposed that no changes were made. This was resolved with all in favour.
- d) Social media: Nothing to report.

- e) To nominate Councillors to be interviewed for YouTube channel and agree on the costs: Cllr Powell proposed to spend £750 with Bright Media to produce councillor engagement interview videos with Cllrs Broughton, Camp, Knatchbull Peters and himself. This was resolved with all in favour.
 - f) To review the use of blind copying recipients into emails: An explanation was given about the recommendations from a recent training course attended by Cllr Camp and the Clerk. Cllr Powell proposed that it was the discretion of the author of an email as to whom they address their email and that no procedures are to change. This was resolved with all in favour.
8. **Events** (LGA 1972 s145 (1)(a))
- a) Playscheme: A report was given about the sold-out event and positive feedback that had been received. However, due to the increased numbers of staff and the staffing costs, the event did not meet the budget. It was suggested that the ticket costs should increase by £1 a day but to also manage the number of staff more effectively. This was proposed by Cllr Knatchbull and resolved with all in favour.
 - b) Fireworks: The Clerk provided an update about the event plan and put forward recommendations for suppliers:
 - £390 – WC Hire (toilets) proposed by Cllr Powell- Unanimously resolved.
 - £170 – Urban Blue Bus (first aid) proposed by Cllr Powell. Unanimously resolved.
 - £175 – MBC (bins) proposed by Cllr Camp. Unanimously resolved.
 - £1320 – Paladin (security) will be recommended to the Full Council.
 - £1075 – Ben Heaslip (AV) will be recommended to the Full Council.
 - £1075.62 – Brandon Tool Hire (equipment) will be recommended to the Full Council.
 - £100- PRS (music license) proposed by Cllr Powell. Unanimously resolved.
 - c) Old Time Music: Cllr Knatchbull provided an update about the event and requested for more councillors to assist at the event. Cllr Powell to produce the programmes.
 - d) Christmas Market on the Green: Cllr Spooner reported that he spoke to the Market Manager who informed him that plans for the event were already in place. The Clerk provided a full update about the event, explaining that the income will not cover all the costs and requested the following costs be considered:
 - £700- WC Hire (toilets) proposed by Cllr Powell. Unanimously resolved.
 - £300 Ben Heaslip (AV) proposed by Cllr Powell. Unanimously resolved.
 - £150 Police Band (music) proposed by Cllr Camp. Unanimously resolved.
 - £100 PRS (music license) proposed by Cllr Powell. Unanimously resolved.
 - Up to £1000 Paladin (security) proposed by Cllr Powell. Unanimously resolved.
 - e) Other event suggestions. None
 - f) Externally organised events:
 - i. Hazlitt Theatre – Robin Hood: The event sold out and BPC have been told that if they hold it again, they may increase the ticket numbers. The Clerk reported that one of the bollards on the Green was damaged and a repair solution is being researched. Any cost will be invoiced to the Hazlitt Theatre.
 - ii. Music on The Green: The organisers informed BPC that the event will not be going ahead due to the cost of living.
 - iii. Carols on the Green – A request was received from the local churches to hold the annual Carols on the Green on the 14 December at 7pm. Cllr Powell proposed that the event go ahead with the caveat that the electrical box is inspected before the organisers use it and afterward. This was resolved with all in favour.
9. **To discuss ideas for the celebration of the Coronation** (LGA 1972 s145 (1)(a))
- The committee discussed some ideas about the upcoming Coronation but felt they should engage with residents to find out what they felt they would like to happen in the Parish. The Administrator will put an engagement survey out on social media to gain ideas.

ACTION: ADMIN

10. Beautification of Bearsted (Local Government Act 1972, s. 144)

Cllr Marshall suggested new daffodil bulbs should be planted. This will be recommended to the Environment Committee.

11. Review Budget (Accounts and Audit Regulation 2011/817)

- a) To review and update a draft version of the action plan for 2022-2023: This item was not discussed and will be added to the next meeting.
- b) To consider the budget requirement for 2023-2024: The committee reviewed the current budget and started to plan for the next year’s budget

12. Noticeboard (LGA 1972 s142)

Cllr Spooner explained that he was waiting to hear back from St Peter’s Church regarding relocating the Shirley Way noticeboard. As the new noticeboard has been delivered to the office two additional weeks will be given for an agreement before the noticeboard is installed back at Shirley Way.

13. Premise License

- c) To review the events that require a Premise License on the Elizabeth Harvie Field: It was proposed by Cllr Camp that the license should be applied for with all options except for the sale of alcohol at a cost of £100. This was resolved with all in favour.
- d) To review the events that require a premise license of the Green: The Clerk explained that MBC had failed to invoice the council for a number of years. The original license was applied for in 2009 and is still valid. The license stays in place at an annual charge of £100 to allow for events to take place on the Green. Plays and the sale of alcohol are not included and therefore a TEN licenses will need to be obtained for these types of events.

14. To consider the costs of the festive lights throughout the Parish

Cllr Powell proposed to appoint LRH Property Maintenance to install the festive lights at a cost of £2898.50 which was resolved with all in favour.

15. Future Agenda Items

- Review Action Plan 2022-2023
- Parish Booklet
- Coronation
- Budget 2023-2024

16. Date of next Meeting

22nd November 2022

There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 21.39hrs

Signed..... Date.....

Additional Training to promote Civility & Respect in the Council

- **Personal Resilience and Emotional Intelligence**

What does emotional intelligence and resilience mean in practice for Clerks, Council Officers and Councillors?

In this session we develop a better understanding of where our behaviour comes from and we'll consider what resilience means for us in the context of our roles within the council.

There will be opportunities to explore role-focused scenarios and consider how we might respond to them. We'll also explore strategies to deal with and manage a range of situations.

Individual bookings are £30+VAT per delegate. Whole-council bookings are £395+VAT for up to 20 delegates from one council. Please [email us](#) to make a group booking. All bookings provide access to pre-training content, access to the live virtual workshop and access to the post-workshop toolkit

- **Leadership in Challenging Situations**

Whether you are a Clerk, Officer or an elected Councillor, all of us take on leadership roles within our council and in the wider community.

We will consider different leadership styles in the context of your role at the council, exploring which styles we personally 'default' to and which styles can work effectively for different situations. We will explore scenarios of different challenging situations we might face in our role, and discuss how we might deal with these effectively and appropriately. We will also discover how to build, support and get the most from an effective and motivated team.

Individual bookings are £30+VAT per delegate. Whole-council bookings are £395+VAT for up to 20 delegates from one council. Please [email us](#) to make a group booking. All bookings provide access to pre-training content, access to the live virtual workshop and access to the post-workshop toolkit.

- **Respectful Social Media**

How Clerks, Officers and Councillors can get the most from social media and realise the opportunities it presents whilst dealing effectively with the problems that can arise.

For Clerks and Officers, we'll consider the opportunities and risks across different social media platforms from a civility and respect perspective. We will explore a range of proactive and pre-emptive strategies councils can put in place to set themselves up for success. We'll learn what to do if things go wrong and how to manage a range of scenarios from trolling to harassment and practical what steps you can take.

For Councillors, we will consider what our personal 'digital tone of voice' sounds like on social media, our use of language and its role in positive two-way communication. We will explore methods for dealing with attacks, bullying and 'trolling' and ways in which you can

control your social media. We'll share best practice and discuss when you need to be mindful of council policies as well as the Code of Conduct.

Individual bookings are £30+VAT per delegate. Whole-council bookings are £395+VAT for up to 20 delegates from one council. Please [email us](#) to make a group booking. All bookings provide access to pre-training content, access to the live virtual workshop and access to the post-workshop toolkit.

Understanding psychopathic and narcissistic behaviour by Becky Walsh

Delegate fee: £15

Both psychopathic and narcissistic people generally lack empathy and tend to have unrealistically high opinions of themselves. They often exploit and manipulate others and can be hard to spot as they can also be superficially charming. They are also attracted to power roles and are often found in high leadership positions such as company chief executives and political roles. In this webinar, we learn how to spot them and also how to monitor your own behaviour to lessen their impact on you and your organisation. Each webinar will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

For councillors only session

17 October 2022 — 1.30 pm (60 minutes)

To register a place, clerks, please email [\[redacted\]](#), copying in your councillor delegate(s). For all other enquiries, please email [\[redacted\]](#).

What makes people become challenging? by Becky Walsh

Delegate fee: £15

In this webinar, we dive into human psychology, neuroscience and power dynamics. What triggers people to behave from the worst of themselves? How, as leaders can we create environments with fewer trigger situations and more safety? We will discuss real-life situations and how to turn them around when they start to get out of hand. Each webinar will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

For clerks-only session

29 November 2022 — 2 pm (60 minutes)

Please see the [SLCC website](#).

Personal resilience and self-protection by Becky Walsh

Delegate fee: £15

Having a good understanding of yourself means you'll know what to do when someone tries to push your buttons. This webinar discusses emotional resilience and

emotional intelligence and how this applies to specific council situations. Each webinar will give real situation scenarios and what to do in each of them.

For clerks-only session

6 December 2022 — 2 pm (60 minutes)