



Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at George V Memorial Hall, Manor Rise on Tuesday 14th March 2023 at 7.30pm

Present:	Cllr David Hall (Chairman)	Cllr Mark Peters
	Cllr Denis Spooner (Vice Chair)	Cllr Alan Rowe
	Cllr Richard Ash MBE	Cllr Val Springett
	Cllr Clive English	Cllr Carolyn Smith
	Cllr Frank Jagger	Cllr Sean Turner
	Cllr Pat Marshall MBE	Cllr Christopher Waters

Also, in attendance were Administrators Amy Bush and Joanne Upton and 5 members of the public.

Reports from members of the public

One member of the public thanked the Parish Council for their work towards the Community Bus project which is much needed for many parishioners in the village. He also mentioned the allotment fence which was damaged some time ago and the sheds were vandalised and he requested the Parish Council look to repair the fence.

A second member of the public asked the Council to introduce themselves as she was unaware who everyone was.

1. Declarations of intention to record

The Administrator declared that the meeting would be recorded for minuting purposes.

2. Apologies and absences

Apologies were received and duly noted for Cllrs G. Hannington and M. Harris.

3. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

Cllr's Ash and Marshall declared an interest in payments to Madginford Hall.

Cllr Smith declared an interest in Bearsted CAN.

Cllr English stated he would be unable to discuss any planning applications as he sits on the MBC Planning Committee.

4. To resolve to go into closed session and to exclude the press and public at item 15, Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 in accordance with standing order 13 (xi) HR Matters.

It was proposed by Cllr Ash, seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

5. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of 14th February 2023 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

6. Reports:

- a) Borough Councillors: The reports from Cllr Spooner and Springett were duly noted.
- b) Community Warden: The report was duly noted.
- c) PCSO: No report this month.
- d) Chairman: The Chairman confirmed all the items he wishes to raise are on the agenda.

7. Committee Meeting and Working Group Reports.

- a) HR Committee: Cllr Hall confirmed the HR Committee held a closed session meeting and he will update the Council in the closed session.
- b) Traffic Committee: Cllr Ash thanked Cllr Hall for his hard work in obtaining a £14,000 grant towards the Community Bus Service, BPC will contribute £2,000 over two years and Detling Parish will contribute £1,000. Cllr Hall will continue to work with Compaid and Detling to work out a timetable and route for the bus service. Cllr Ash confirmed he attended a meeting with Hollingbourne Parish along with Cllr's Hall and Springett to discuss options for reducing the speed limit on the A20, including additional islands and widening the pathway to include a cycle path between Roundwell and Lilk Hill. Cllr Ash confirmed that the Traffic Committee are working with KCC to install a gateway on the A20 and a pedestrian crossing at Bearsted Train Station. MBC have advised they do not have a solution to traffic concerns outside of schools, they have agreed to increase patrols. Cllr Ash advised the initiatives being considered for Cavendish, Shirley and Copsewood Way to alleviate parking issues.
Cllr Ash advised that BPC can continue to add items to the Highways Improvement Plan but this is only reviewed annually by KCC in October or November.
Cllr Turner asked about permits for the business operating in the Cavendish Way area. Cllr Springett advised that it is likely the all day parking for work is causing the issues for residents.
- c) Environment Committee: Cllr Hall reported that the committee had discussed the need for someone trained to undertake weekly inspections of the play areas. The Administrator advised that the cost to outsource this is approximately £6500 per year, outside the existing budget that allows for monthly and annual inspections. Cllr Hall proposed that BPC pays for weekly inspections until two Councillors can attend training. Requested delegated authority to work with the Administrators to arrange this and report back to Full Council. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: CLLR HALL/ADMINISTRATOR

The Administrator reported that the Environment Committee had authorised a resident on Hampson Way to cut back branches overhanging his property from a tree on Meadow Bank, the resident has now requested to cut the entire tree down. Cllr English proposed to refuse this request and allow only to cut back overhanging branches, this was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with eleven in favour and one abstention.

Cllr Peters reported he had discussed the impact of fitness groups on the Green with the groups and had some good feedback from them, with an understanding of how they can reduce damage.

Cllr Hall reported that the existing report for the Church Lane car park surface is an old report. Cllr Jagger advised that BPC need Civil Engineers to complete a survey. Cllr Hall confirmed he will speak to the KCC Drainage

Manager to move this forward and report back to the Environment Committee.

- d) Planning Committee: Cllr Ash reported that the Committee has now agreed for MBC planning department to make the decision on the Beech House planning application without the need to call it to the MBC Planning Committee.
Cllr Ash advised that the Committee did not object to the base station being proposed but asked if other locations had been considered.
Cllr Ash confirmed the Committee is supporting the Bearsted and Thurnham Society's objections to the windows at the Old Library.
- e) Reports from members of the Council for outside bodies: Cllr English advised there will be a meeting for the Community Rail Project on the 27th April 2023 at Maidstone Town Hall should anyone wish to attend.

8. Donated Land

Cllr Hall reported that he and Cllr Jagger met twice with Mr Ashness to discuss the future of the donated land. Mr Ashness is keen to support the Bearsted Tennis Club with additional playing capacity on his land subject to planning. Mr Ashness will consider the use of the remaining land for community use. Cllr Hall proposed that he contact Whitehead Monkton with a view to transferring the land back to Mr Ashness and BPC will pay for this transaction, this will be reported back to Council. BPC to support the landowner in any community project proposed. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

9. Finance (10 mins) (Accounts and Audit Regulation 2011/817)

- a) Resolution to approve/ratify quotations or payments.
- i. SLCC Membership. Proposed by Cllr Ash for both Administrators to apply for membership, seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.
 - ii. CPRE Membership. Proposed to renew by Cllr Jagger, seconded by Cllr Rowe and resolved with all in favour.
 - iii. SAFE I.S new fire equipment. Cllr English proposed to accept the quotation, seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.
 - iv. Voltage, Parish Lighting. Cllr Hall proposed to accept the quotation, seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.
 - v. Chair Person Plaque. Cllr English proposed to accept the quotation, seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with all in favour.
 - vi. Repairs to bench on the Green. Cllr Jagger proposed to accept the quotation, seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

- b) Grants and Donations requests: None.
- c) Authorise payments: Cllr Jagger queried the £500 cost for Pond Water. Cllr Hall proposed to accept the payments with delegated authority to investigate the cost of the Pond Water and report back to Council. Seconded by Cllr English and resolved with ten in favour and two abstentions.
- d) Finance Reports: The reports were duly noted.
- e) Balances of accounts: The balance of accounts were accepted with eleven in favour and one abstention.
- f) Parish Bank Card. Cllr Hall advised the Parish Bank Card can only be used by the individual named. The member of staff the card is assigned too is currently off sick and this is impeding the office staff in making savings via on-line purchases. Cllr Hall suggested a new bank card be requested in the Administrators name until the Clerk returns to work. The Administrators advised they are not signatories on the account. Cllr Hall proposed a new card be requested in his name, this was seconded by Cllr Peters and resolved with all in favour.
- g) New External Auditor. The Administrator advised the Council that the new external auditor company will be Mazars.

10. Bearsted & Thurnham Carnival and Fayre

Cllr Hall reported he had attended a meeting with two members of their committee and confirmed BPC's support for the event. Cllr Spooner proposed to accept the 24th June 2023, this was seconded by Cllr Marshall and resolved with all in favour.

Cllr Hall reported that he had discussed the use of the electrical box for the Fayre and parking on the Elizabeth Harvie field. Cllr Marshall suggested that photos be taken of the electrical box before and after use. Cllr Waters recommended an inspection of the box to understand the maximum capacity. The Administrator confirmed an Electrician is due to undertake repair work to the electric box and he can confirm capacity and discuss if it can be increased. Councillors discussed various options for visitor parking and made some suggestions for the Fayre Committee to follow up. Cllr Hall proposed that BPC allow parking on the EHF for traders only, this was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with eleven in favour and one abstention.

11. Hazlitt Theatre Production

The administrator advised that the Hazlitt held a similar production on the Green last year and was very successful. Cllr Ash proposed to accept the date, this was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

12. Annual Parish Meeting

Cllr Hall discussed the format he would like the meeting to take with Chairs from each committee contributing. Cllr Ash recommended all Councillors sit at the front so that residents can ask questions.

13. Correspondence

Cllr Hall advised the correspondence received had been requested by the resident to be shared with all Councillors. BPC are unable to discuss the complaint as the matters raised are being investigated. Due to the seriousness of the allegations made Cllr Hall requested delegated authority to engage with a solicitor to seek legal advice. Cllr Waters asked if our insurance has indemnity cover for councillors. Cllr Jagger stated we should check with the insurance first. BPC should obtain three quotes. Cllr Hall proposed the Council grant him delegated authority to investigate indemnity cover and liaise with a solicitor should the need arise. This was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: CLLR HALL

14. Urgent Matters

None.

15. The Council moved to closed session and excluded the press and public, Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 in accordance with standing order 10 (xi) HR Matters.

The Administrators left the meeting.

- a) Cllr Hall proposed to ratify the appointment of DAS Law to support the Parish Council with HR matters, this was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.
- b) Cllr Hall proposed The Council give the Chairman delegated authority to appoint suitably qualified HR support if required. This was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.
- c) An update to the April meeting of Full Council will be provided.

16. Future Agenda Items

Standing Orders
Donated Land
Electrical Box
Smarts Cottage public right of way

17. Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 11th April 2023

There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 21.13 hrs

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