



**Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at Madginford Hall,  
Egremont Road on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 7.30pm**

Present:	Cllr David Hall (Chairman)	Cllr Martha Monday
	Cllr Denis Spooner (Vice Chair)	Cllr Alan Rowe
	Cllr Pat Catt	Cllr Val Springett
	Cllr James Day	Cllr Sean Turner
	Cllr Clive English	Cllr Chris Waters
	Cllr Mike Harris	

Also, in attendance were the Clerk Joanne Upton, the Deputy Clerk Amy Bush, 3 members of the public and the Community Warden.

**Reports from members of the public**

There were no reports from members of the public.

**1. Declarations of intention to record.**

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

**2. Apologies and absences.**

Apologies were received and noted for Cllr Richard Ash, Cllr Frank Jagger and Cllr Carolyn Smith.

**3. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying.**

None declared.

**4. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting.**

The minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were signed as a true record of the meeting.

**5. To resolve to go into closed session and to exclude the press and public at item 16, Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 in accordance with standing order 10 (xi) Legal Matters**

This was proposed by Cllr Hall, seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

**6. Reports:**

- a) Borough Councillors: Cllr Springett and Cllr Spooner had nothing to add to their reports and no queries were raised.
- b) Community Warden: The Community Warden advised it has been business as usual and very busy with new referrals. Cllr English expressed support of BPC for the valuable role she plays within our community.
- c) Police: The Clerk advised that the beat officer was unable to attend the meeting and had nothing to report.
- d) Clerk: The Clerk advised that KCC had been contacted regarding vegetation on the Ragstone Road footpath, KCC had completed a site visit and reported no safety concerns, but to continue to report overgrown vegetation on the website. The request to have this footpath designated a Public Right of Way has been passed to the Environment Committee to consider. KCC had passed the request for lighting on Egremont Road to the Highways department and this will now be reviewed at our Traffic & Transport Committee. The Environment Committee will also be looking at possible dates for additional meetings in 2024.

The Clerk reported details of the bank charges on the current account.

The Clerk thanked the Council for their support and help with the Fireworks and Old Time Music events, which were both hugely successful and costs for these events were reviewed. Councillors were reminded to complete the GDPR training.

- e) Chairman: The Chairman advised that a resident who attended the Full Council meeting in November 2022 had requested a formal apology to everyone who's email address was disclosed to a member of the public. Cllr Hall suggested we add a formal apology to the website and minute the Council's assent that Bearsted Parish Council did not act within the law regarding personal data. Cllr Spooner suggested assuring residents that steps have been taken to ensure we are fully compliant with Data Protection regulations in the future via the newsletter.

## 7. Committee Meeting and Working Group Reports

- a) Communications Committee: Cllr Hall advised that the Cricket Club will be hosting many events next year to celebrate 275 years of cricket on the village Green and BPC have pledged to support their events and assist with publicising these. The Committee will also be requesting a £1000 increase in budget to allow for event insurance cancellation and licence fee renewals.
- b) Planning Committee: The Deputy Clerk read a statement on behalf of the Committee Chairman Cllr Ash. Cllr James Day has been elected as Vice Chair and the committee requires no budget for 2024. Four applications had been reviewed and all were recommended for approval.
- c) Finance Committee: Cllr English advised that the charges for the Church Lane car park need to be raised with the Valuations Tribunal who decide charges, not with MBC. It was agreed the office will investigate this further.

### ACTION: OFFICE

Cllr Spooner advised that the Committee had considered quotes and policies, all of which will be reviewed later on the agenda.

- d) HR Committee: Cllr English advised that the Committee are arranging an objective setting meeting with the Clerk and reviewing the appraisal process and new staff contracts are being worked on.
- e) Reports from members of the Council for outside bodies: Cllr English explained that the closure of train station ticket offices is no longer being considered due to the feedback received. Instead, Community Infrastructure Levy money is being considered to improve access, lighting and security at stations.

## 8. Finance (Accounts and Audit Regulation 2011/817)

- a) Resolution to approve/ratify quotations or payments.
- i. Repairs to Noticeboard & Concrete Bollard: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the £75.00 cost, this was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with all in favour.
  - ii. Event cancellation Insurance & PL increase: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the £373.60 cost, this was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.
  - iii. Music license for Fireworks and Christmas Market: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the cost of £832.07, which was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.
  - iv. NALC pay scales 2024/25. Cllr English proposed to accept the new pay scales, which was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with all in favour.
- b) Cleaning budget for office: The Clerk request a £50 monthly budget for office cleaning. Cllr Hall proposed to accept this cost, Cllr Rowe seconded the request, and it was resolved with all in favour.
- c) CIL funds allocation: Cllr Hall confirmed that Cllr Ash had requested the £12350.40 CIL funds recently received to be added to the budget for the Traffic Committee and will be put towards the cost of the pedestrian crossing at the station. Cllr Rowe proposed to accept this, which was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with all in favour.
- d) Grants and Donations requests: Cllr Turner proposed to approve the £500 donation to Beam to support 10 families in Bearsted with the Cygnet course for ASD. This was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.
- e) Authorise October payments: Cllr Springett proposed to accept the payments, this was seconded by Cllr Catt and resolved with all in favour.
- f) Finance Reports: Cllr English proposed to accept the finance reports, this was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with all in favour.
- g) Balances of accounts: The Clerk advised that bank statements had not yet been received.

## 9. Policies

- a) Scheme of Delegation: Cllr English confirmed the document has now been completed and circulated to all Councillors, it was agreed to defer this until the next meeting to allow all Councillors the chance to review the wording.  
**ACTION: ALL CLLR'S**
- b) Civility & Respect: Cllr Turner enquired if the wording could be amended to include 'people's opinions or beliefs'. Cllr English explained that this would not be appropriate to include in the policy. Cllr Turner requested that the technical notes are published alongside the policy but with one sentence removed. Cllr Hall proposed to adopt the policy and publish with the technical notes, with the agreed amendment, this was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with ten in favour and one against.
- c) Accessibility Statement: Cllr Springett queried the wording around WordPress, the Clerk advised the policy will need to be reviewed once the new website is up and running and it may not use WordPress. Cllr Springett proposed to adopt the policy, this was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.
- d) Grants & Donations: Cllr Spooner proposed to adopt the policy, which was seconded by Cllr Rowe and resolved with all in favour.
- e) Memorial Bench Policy: Cllr Spooner proposed to adopt the policy, this was seconded by Cllr Rowe and resolved with all in favour.
- f) Record Management & Retention Policy: The Clerk requested this is deferred as further work is required to ensure the policy is up to date.
- g) Recording Meetings Policy: Cllr Hall proposed to adopt the policy, this was seconded by Cllr Rowe and resolved with all in favour.

## 10. Meeting dates for 2024

The Clerk requested the Council agreed to the planned dates for meetings next year, allowing the AMOC to be held prior to the Finance meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> May, after the election and the APM on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, with the Communication Committee to decide on the venue and format for the APM. Cllr Hall proposed to accept this, which was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

## 11. Christmas Market

The Deputy Clerk advised that the Market Manager is progressing well with the organisation of the event and has asked for volunteers to assist on the day with setting up and packing away the fencing. The Deputy Clerk will email all Councillors with further details.

**ACTION: DEPUTY CLERK**

## 12. Madginford Hall Committee

Cllr English declared an interest as a member of the Hall Committee. The Clerk advised that we have now been able to contact the Vice Chairman of the Committee who will raise annual tree inspections at the next meeting. Cllr English confirmed the Committee is now moving forward with new members and suggested BPC continue to assist with advertising for members.

**ACTION: OFFICE**

## 13. Hall Hire Cost

The Clerk advised the hourly cost for hiring Madginford & the Memorial Halls. Cllr Spooner proposed to accept the cost of hall hire for KALC to host their meetings and this will be reviewed after one year. This was seconded by Cllr Waters and resolved with all in favour.

**ACTION: CLLR ASH**

## 14. Ashford Road Post Office

Cllr Hall advised there was no update yet on the application.

## 15. Christmas Tree on the Green

The Deputy Clerk explained that the snowflakes would not be put up on the streetlights this year due to several being broken and in need of repair but that we had contracted a company to dress both the tree on the Green and the Madginford tree with lights. Cllr Springett suggested we mention in the Newsletter why the snowflakes would not be used this year. Cllr Springett advised that the tree on the Green needs reshaping, although there is not a TPO, planning permission is required which would take at least six weeks so this will need to be done next year.

Cllr's Catt and Turner suggested a 'switching on the lights' ceremony for the Madginford tree and will engage with residents and the Madginford School to arrange this.

**ACTION: CLLR's CATT & TURNER**

**16. 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) Legal Matters.**

Cllr Spooner updated the Council on an on-going legal matter. Cllr Spooner will contact KCC to request assistance with this.

**ACTION: CLLR SPOONER**

**17. Future Agenda Items**

GDPR Training.

Legal Matter.

Ashford Road Post Office.

Scheme of Delegation.

Policies.

Court Farm update.

**18. Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 21.34 hrs**

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