



Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at King George V Memorial Hall, Manor Rise on Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 7.30pm

Present:	Cllr David Hall (Chairman)	Cllr Alan Rowe
	Cllr Richard Ash MBE	Cllr Carolyn Smith
	Cllr Pat Catt	Cllr Val Springett
	Cllr James Day	Cllr Sean Turner
	Cllr Martha Monday	Cllr Chris Waters

Also, in attendance were the Clerk Joanne Upton and 2 members of the public.

Reports from members of the public

One member of the public advised that the Digging for Giving project was underway and thanked the Council for the allotment plot. Another resident asked about the Police Beat Officer as no one has seen them around the village. Cllr Val Springett explained the Beat Officer only qualified in January to patrol alone, has a large area to cover but has requested more presence.

1. Declarations of intention to record.

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

2. Apologies and absences.

Apologies were received and noted for Cllr Clive English, Cllr Mike Harris, Cllr Frank Jagger and Cllr Denis Spooner.

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

None declared.

4. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the 13th January 2024 meeting were signed as a true record of the meeting.

5. Reports:

- a) Borough Councillors: Cllr Springett provide an update on the new refuse service. MBC will raise the Council Tax by 3% and discussion was had at the Ward Cluster meeting about the parish potentially funding or part funding the Community Warden.
- b) Community Warden: No report received.
- c) Police: No report received, the Clerk reported that the Beat Officer had been in contact about several reported incidences.
- d) Clerk: The Clerk reminded the Council volunteers were needed to assist with the CPS team and to complete GDPR training.

ACTION: CLLR's

The Holy Cross Church are hoping to have a new Vicar by late spring early summer.

The Clerk also reported that the Privacy Policy was on hold as details of our ticket seller are still being confirmed for the new website. The Financial Regulations are still in the process of being rewritten, Cllr Hall confirmed Cllr English has sent a draft copy.

The Clerk advised the Council that after completing all forms for updating signatories to Skipton Bank last year, the bank has advised this was not actioned and all paperwork must be redone.

ACTION: OFFICE

Cllr Ash gave a brief update on the work undertaken by the CPS team over the last two visits.

- e) Chairman: The Chairman advised that with several other Councillors they attended a small birthday celebration for former councillor, Pat Marshall. The Cricket Club 275 dinner and dance is on the 13th April if anyone would like to attend. Cllr Hall noted that due to excess wet weather over the last two months both The Green and Elizabeth Harvie Field are extremely waterlogged and therefore essential maintenance has not yet been undertaken, maintenance vehicles would cause further damage.

6. Committee Meeting and Working Group Reports

- a) Communication Committee: Cllr Hall advised the Council that playscheme will only run for 8 days this summer instead of 10 due to teacher training days. The Bearsted & Thurnham Carnival & Fayre will take place on 29th June and Classic Cars on the Green will be on 21st July 2024.

Cllr Hall proposed to accept the quote for £266.00 to install the new noticeboard, this was seconded by Cllr Rowe and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: OFFICE

Cllr Turner updated the Council on a meeting with artist Rob Turner and Senacre School to look at a map of the village project. This will now go back to the Communications Committee to consider further.

- b) Planning Committee: Cllr Ash advised that the Committee had reviewed two applications, both to recommend approval, with certain conditions being met on the Tennis Club project. Cllr Ash will be attending an MBC planning committee regarding 62 Bramley Crescent.
- c) Finance Committee: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the quote for £205 to replace the defib battery, this was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: OFFICE

Cllr Hall proposed to accept the cost of £120 for the Deputy Clerk to undertake iLCA training, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

Cllr Hall proposed to ratify the cost to use Whitehead Monckton for the renewal of the Tennis Club lease, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.

Cllr Hall proposed to accept the architects' drawings for the office extension, this was seconded by Cllr Rowe and resolved with all in favour. Cllr Hall proposed to accept the fee of £289 for the planning application, which was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour. The Clerk advised KCC have been sent the drawings for comment and approval.

ACTION: OFFICE

- d) Environment Committee: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the quote for £228 to remove the broken steps at the Church Lane car park and add an additional handrail. This was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: OFFICE

The Clerk advised that the Committee added some additional conditions for the Tennis Club planning application, including details of where and how large vehicles will turn around and a condition survey, confirming repair work to surface will be undertaken during and after completion of the works.

Cllr Springett asked the Council to consider some remedial works at the Cross Keys entrance to EHF as it is very wet and dangerous. It was agreed the office will speak to Waring's.

ACTION: OFFICE

Cllr Hall proposed to accept the quote for £1200 to cut back vegetation on the Cinder Path and Church Landway, this was seconded by Cllr Rowe and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: OFFICE

Cllr Springett proposed to accept the quote for £120 to remove the conifer on the allotments, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION :OFFICE

Cllr Hall proposed to increase the allotment plot rent to £80 for new allotment holders, this was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: OFFICE

Cllr Springett proposed to accept the changes to the tariffs for Green Space use, ticketed events £500 per day, activity classes £80 per year, football clubs £150 per season. This was seconded by Cllr Rowe and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: OFFICE

Cllr Ash proposed to accept the cost of £1160 for 4 workdays from Medway Valley Partnership for work at the pond and Meadow Bank, this was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: OFFICE

Cllr Hall proposed to allow a second-year trial for the cricket covers on the Green, providing the Cricket Club's insurers confirm in writing they are satisfied with the measures taken to secure the covers, which is the responsibility of the cricket club and these need to be secured both on and off the pitch. This will be an addendum to the license until it can be renewed. BPC need to approve location for covers on match days and must be removed from the Green immediately after the last game of the season. The Chair of Environment and the Clerk to have delegated authority to approve the use of covers once this information has been received. This was seconded by Cllr Waters and resolved with all in favour.

Cllr Smith requested we write to the Air Ambulance to update them and to reassure them that the Green is available as a safe landing stage in the event of an emergency.

ACTION: CLERK / CLLR's HARRIS & HALL

- e) Reports from members of the Council for outside bodies: Cllr Ash updated the Council on the Joint Transport meeting, once road works at Bearsted Road are complete the Willington Street works will commence. Our Ward Cluster which includes Bearsted, Downswood, Leeds and Otham have the lowest crime rate.

7. Finance (Accounts and Audit Regulation 2011/817)

- a) Resolution to approve quotations or payments.

Cllr Ash proposed to accept the cost of £188 for the Clerk to renew membership to SLCC. This was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.

- b) Authorise March payments: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the payments, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

- c) Finance Reports: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the reports, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

- d) Balances of accounts: The balances were duly noted.

8. Committees and Meetings review

- a) Cllr Hall proposed to change the Finance & General Policy Committee to a Finance working group, which will meet in the office once a month to review finances and make a recommendation to Full Council. Policy reviews will be undertaken by Full Council, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour. The new Terms of Reference for the Finance working group were agreed. This process will be reviewed in 6 months.

ACTION: CLERK

- b) Cllr's Ash & Springett explained an alternative option of reviewing planning applications without the need for a committee, whilst still being able to support residents. Queries were raised about denying residents the opportunity to speak in a formal meeting. Cllr Springett proposed to trial a working group to review the applications and any contentious ones being brought to Full Council to consider. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with 9 in favour and one abstention. This will be reviewed in 6 months.

ACTION: CLERK

9. Policies

- a) Biodiversity Duty Statement: Cllr Turner suggested two wording amendments. Cllr Hall proposed to adopt the statement including the amendments, this was seconded by Cllr Turner and resolved with all in favour.

- b) Publicity Statement: Cllr Hall proposed to adopt the statement, which was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.

- c) Term of Reference for Finance Working Group: These were approved under item 8a.

10. Meeting Allowance

The Council agreed that the legislation is clear that meeting allowance can only be paid to elected members. Cllr Waters proposed to pay non-elected members the allowance, this was rejected with 14 against. Cllr Waters requested clarification of then payment will be made and whether this is in line with the HMRC tax year. The Clerk will seek clarification and report back.

ACTION: CLERK

11. Future Agenda Items

Community Warden Funding
Legal Matters

12. Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 16th April 2024

There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 21.10 hrs

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