



**Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at King George V Memorial Hall, Manor Rise on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024 at 7.30pm**

Present: Cllr David Hall Chairman  
Cllr Clive English  
Cllr Sean Turner  
Cllr Martha Monday  
Cllr Pat Catt  
Cllr Denis Spooner

**Also present was the Deputy Clerk Amy Bush and visiting members Cllr Richard Ash and Cllr Val Springett.**

**Reports from members of the public**

None.

**1. Declarations of intention to record**

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

**2. Apologies for absences**

Apologies received and noted from Cllr James Day.

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

None were declared.

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

The minutes of the Communications Committee meeting on the Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

**5. Office report**

The Chairman updated the committee on the background and current situation regarding the Cricket Clubs request to use covers on The Green.

The Chairman proposed to move item 7 ahead of item 6. This was agreed with all in favour.

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

- a) Newsletters items: Cllrs agreed the following items for the next newsletter: Cllr vacancy advert, traffic update including the station crossing, A20 speeding and speed watch, digging for giving, update to play areas, community payback.
- b) Website: The Deputy Clerk reported that the project was ongoing and will circulate a draft to Councillors for comments. The office hopes to launch the website in June.
- c) Social media: No updates.
- d) Noticeboards: The Councillors discussed the challenges with updating all noticeboards weekly and how this can be streamlined. Cllr Hall proposed 4 key boards should be used for Council communication only including agendas. These would be: Ashford Road, A20 BWT entrance, The Green shops and Madginford shops. All other boards could be used for approved community notices and updated monthly. Each board having a notice directing residents to where agendas can be seen. This was agreed with all in favour.

**6. Events (LGA 1972 s145 (1)(a))**

- a) Fireworks: The Chairman shared a paper highlighting the pros and cons relating to the event pointing out how resource hungry it has become over recent years. A huge amount of time is taken by the office team and Councillor's which takes them away from regular Council business. He advised that after some investigation the event is not profitable enough to interest an external events company and he is still chasing the Council's insurer to see if cancellation insurance can be provided in the event of bad weather. Insurance of £11k would be required to cover tickets and contractors. The lack of volunteers was also discussed with the suggestion of paying additional staff to help coordinate the event on the day. Cllr Hall proposed that in principle the event should go ahead with more information on staffing and insurance prepared ready for discussion at Full Council in May. This was agreed with all in favour.

- b) Market on the Green: Following the cancellation of some dates at the beginning of the year due to bad weather the Deputy Clerk is looking into costs to increase the matting on that section of The Green used for the market. This would enable vehicles to access the area in bad weather and prevent further cancellations.
- c) Playscheme: Due to the increase in the national living wage and additional staffing needs it was agreed with all in favour to increase the ticket price by £1 per day and offer places to an additional 5 children per day to cover these costs.
- d) Old Time Music: Alternative options had been investigated by the Deputy Clerk with no natural successor identified. The committee agreed BPC would continue to look at alternative events and how they can support and advertise other local groups and events which may interest the older demographic within the Parish.  
**ACTION: Cllr Turner**
- e) Christmas Market on the Green: Councilors discussed alternative options and it was agreed with all in favour to work towards an enhanced festive version of the regular Sunday market for December and to move the Christmas Light switch on to November.
- f) Other Event suggestions:  
Deferred.
- g) Externally organised events:
  - i. Bearsted Fayre: Event booked for Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2024 subject to formal application completion.
  - ii. Classic Cars on the Green: Event booked for 21<sup>st</sup> July 2024 subject to formal application completion.

**8. Councillors contact with residents**

This was discussed and it was confirmed that requests asking for a response from the Council should be sent from the office while general queries could be responded to by individual Councillors.

**9. Cricket Club 275 Year celebrations**

No updates.

**10. APM 2025**

Item deferred.

**11. Christmas lights**

The Deputy Clerk shared a forecast for the installation costs for 2024 and the potential need for two contractors. Further investigation will be made with another update in June.

**ACTION: Office**

**12. Rob Turner art project**

Cllr Turner updated the committee. He confirmed that an MBC grant could be applied for which opens for applications 1<sup>st</sup> May and closes 30<sup>th</sup> June. Cllr Turner and Cllr Catt would work on the application with support from the Chairman if needed.

**ACTION: Cllr Turner, Cllr Catt**

**13. Councillor vacancies**

With 3 vacancies on the Council the committee discussed advertising and it was agreed the advert with some amendments would be shared on the website and Facebook page this week and would be included in the latest newsletter.

**14. Budget review**

The budget was reviewed. Cllr Turner noted the available money for noticeboards and suggested upgrades. The committee agreed the board at The Green shops and Holy Cross Church should be monitored and upgraded if no other replacements were needed.

**15. Future Agenda Items**

Standing items – Events and Media.  
Art project update.  
Cricket 275 Celebrations.  
Christmas lights.  
Councillor vacancies.  
APM 2025.

**16. Date for next meeting**

18<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

**There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 21.25hr**

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