



**Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at Madginford Hall,
Egremont Road on Tuesday 11th June 2024 at 7.30pm**

Present:	Cllr David Hall (Chairman)	Cllr Frank Jagger
	Cllr Val Springett (Vice)	Cllr Martha Monday
	Cllr Richard Ash	Cllr Jodie Pottage
	Cllr Pat Catt	Cllr Carolyn Smith
	Cllr James Day	Cllr Denis Spooner
	Cllr Clive English	Cllr Sean Turner

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

Reports from members of the public

One member of the public asked why the Parish Council had not commemorated D-Day, what was happening with the new Post Office and why the road on the new development has been called Longley Close. The Council advised that preparations for D-Day celebrations would have had to have started last year and the Council did not have the resources to achieve this and would have had to forgo a long-standing event to accommodate a one off D-Day event. The Parish Council have no further information on the opening of a new Post Office. The Parish Council can contact MBC for more information on why the close has been named Longley Close.

The second resident advised the Council that the Madginford Hall Committee is still struggling to recruit committee members and the constitution states that if the committee cannot run, then the management of the Hall will revert back to the Parish Council.

1. Declarations of intention to record.

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

2. Apologies and absences.

The Clerk requested that the apology and reason be noted as advised by KALC. Cllr's English & Springett advised that this is not necessary and that KALC have misinterpreted the NALC topic note on this. The Council decided to continue to only note that the apology has been received. Apologies were received and noted for Cllr Chris Waters.

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

Cllr English declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Treasurer of the Madginford Hall Committee. And stated that he is no longer on the Planning Committee at MBC.

4. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting.

- a) The minutes of the Full Council meeting 14th May 2024 were signed as a true record.
- b) The minutes of the Finance meeting 5th March 2024 were signed as a true record.

5. Co-option of Councillors

- a) Cllr Hall confirmed that a resident was expected to attend this evening to be co-opted but was not present at the meeting.
- b) Cllr Pottage requested to join the Environment meeting, Cllr Hall proposed to accept this, which was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

6. Cricket Club

Cllr Hall proposed to allow the marquee on the Green from the 4th to 7th August providing the location is agreed by the Market Manager, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

7. Internal Audit Report

The Clerk advised the Council on the three items highlighted as medium risk. The signatories on bank accounts, due to difficulties dealing with the banks. The other two areas highlighted refer to the 'Notice of Appointment of date for the exercise of public rights' not being correctly added to the website last year. Cllr Springett noted that the breach of GDPR is related to previous Councillors and not anyone serving on the Council today. The Council thanked the office team for their hard work towards the audit. Cllr Hall proposed to accept the report and to publish it on the website, this was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

8. Statement of Internal Control

Cllr Hall proposed to accept and sign the statement, this was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the statement of behalf of the Council.

9. Annual Governance Statement for 2023-24

See addendum 1 for details on each statement.

Statement 1: Cllr Hall proposed 'yes', this was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.

Statement 2: Cllr Hall proposed 'yes' this was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with all in favour.

Statement 3: Cllr Hall proposed 'yes' this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

Statement 4: Cllr Ash proposed 'no' as this relates to the Notice of Appointment of date for the exercise of public rights not being added to the website correctly, this was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.

Statement 5: Cllr Springett proposed 'yes' this was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

Statement 6: Cllr English proposed 'yes' this was seconded by Cllr Springett and resolved with all in favour.

Statement 7: Cllr Hall proposed 'yes' this was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.

Statement 8: Cllr Ash proposed 'yes' this was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with all in favour.

Statement 9: Cllr Hall proposed 'N/A' this was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with all in favour.

The Chairman and the Clerk signed the statement of behalf of the Council.

10. Accounting Statements for 2023-24

Cllr Jagger raised a query on the difference between the figures in boxes 7 & 8 on the statement. Cllr Hall proposed delegated authority to accept and sign the statement once the Clerk provides details to Councillors. This was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with 11 in favour and one abstention.

ACTION: CLERK

11. Exercise of Public Rights

The Clerk explained that the unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return would be available to review by the public between Tuesday 18th June and Monday the 29th July 2024. This was proposed by Cllr Ash, seconded by Cllr Hall and resolved with all in favour.

12. Reports:

- a) Borough Councillors: Cllr Springett advised most meetings had been moved due to the elections and has mostly been dealing with bin collection issues. Cllr English confirmed that the majority of the issues were due to the new technology, but this is being resolved. Cllr Ash thanked MBC for clearing the debris around the Traffic Islands but commented on how scruffy the verges are looking.
- b) Community Warden: The Community Warden report was read and noted.
- c) Police: The police report was noted.
- d) Clerk: The Clerk raised the suggestion from Cllr's Catt & Turner that Councillors arrive from 7pm for Full Council meetings to allow time for social interaction, this would incur a minimal additional cost of £1.25 and the Hall Committee have confirmed availability. Cllr Catt proposed this, which was seconded by Cllr Turner and resolved with all in favour.
The Clerk reported that the works to repair the sewage pipes would mean the office will be closed on Wednesday the 19th and staff will be working from home.
The Girl Guides work for improvements to the roof and installing solar panels will begin soon. Cllr Frank Jagger volunteered to meet with the CPS this Sunday.
The Clerk reported that the Beat Officer will be attending playscheme.
The Clerk requested the Council decide what information should be provided to the residents regarding the Bearsted Road works as KCC have not yet provided details to publish. Cllr Springett will provide wording for the office to publish.
- ACTION: CLLR SPRINGETT / OFFICE**
- e) Chairman: The Chairman reported that Golding Homes will be providing a license agreement for BPC to manage the newly built shed by the EHF. BPC will look to insure both the building and contents. Once details have been confirmed this will be reported back to Full Council. Cllr Hall advised he is challenging the decision to abandon the Thameslink rail project.

13. Committee Meeting and Working Group Reports

- a) Finance Working Group: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the quote for £75 to repair the bench on the Church Landway, this was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.
Cllr Hall proposed to accept the 3% pay increase for the Financial Officer, this was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.
The Clerk advised that many banks that cater for Parish Councils are no longer accepting new applications for bank accounts, including Nationwide which we had previously applied for. Cllr Hall proposed to close the Skipton, Cambridge and two NatWest accounts and set up fixed term accounts with Redwood, Unity & NatWest and an instant access with Barclays, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
The Chairman advised Outset are working to draw up a new lease for the Tennis Club and the working group have requested some information from the Tennis Club and to arrange a meeting that will be attended by Cllr's Springett and Waters.
KCC have given the go ahead to apply for planning permission for the office extension and the architect has made the application.
- b) Environment Committee: Cllr Smith reported that due to several complaints by residents of camper vans parking in the Church Lane car park, the Committee are looking into using a consultant to advise on the rules, regulations and risks of preventing overnight parking and the best means to do this. Cllr Smith has contacted the website advertising the car park to ask them to remove the details and is waiting to hear back.

ACTION: CLLR SMITH / OFFICE

Cllr Smith proposed to accept the quote for £7730 +VAT from Maidstone Tree Surgeons to undertake the work highlighted by the annual tree inspection. This work will be undertaken over the next year. This was seconded by Cllr Hall and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: OFFICE

The Committee received two requests for memorial benches on the Green one for a long time resident and one for a friend who used to visit the village, as there are already 26 benches on the Green the Committee agreed to the long term resident but not the visitor to the village. Cllr Hall proposed to amend the policy to state no further requests for benches on the Green, this was seconded by Cllr Monday and resolved with all in favour. The Committee will look into the option of memorial plaques and a possible location on the stone memorial.

Cllr Smith proposed 9 benches to be revarnished at the previously agreed cost by Lee Harrison of £50 per bench. This was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: OFFICE

- c) Traffic Committee: Cllr Ash noted that Cllr Day is a great asset to the Committee. Cllr Ash reported that a new information pack on HIP information has been received from KCC. The station crossing is now installed with the reflecta bollards. Otham Lane signage and the double yellow lines at Cavendish/Copsewood/Yeoman Lane will all be completed with in the next 90 days.
Cllr Springett advised the Co-ordinated Parishes Traffic Group met with the KCC Officer and a KCC Planner to discuss speed reductions on rural lanes. KCC advised that speed signs could have the opposite effect of reducing the speed as the majority of drivers drive quite slowly on rural lanes. Other signs may have a better impact and they are going to investigate this further starting with options for Pilgrims Way.
Cllr Ash advised that 7 speed surveys were undertaken between Bearsted and Lenham on the A20 and initial findings show no major issues of speeding. Seven people have volunteered for the Speed Watch Initiative, and this is in the process of being set up.
Cllr's Spooner & Day are going to report to KCC areas in the village where white lines need repainting.
The consultation for double yellow lines at the junction of Roseacre Lane and the A20 is underway.
- d) Reports from members of the Council for outside bodies: Cllr Ash reported on the KALC meeting where the need for a community resilience group/forum may be needed, was discussed.
Cllr's Ash & English advised that Bearsted CAN are leading the project for improvements to the train station and will be supported by the Parish Council.

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

- a) Resolution to approve quotations or payments.
- i. Cllr Hall proposed to accept the cost of £244 addition to the insurance policy for the Fireworks event, this was seconded by Cllr English and resolved with all in favour.
 - ii. Cllr Hall proposed to accept the cost up to £1200 +VAT to Brays for the removal and storage of the shed contents whilst the works to the sewers are completed. This was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.
- b) Grants and donations: There were none to consider.
- c) Authorise June payments: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the payments, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.
- d) Finance reports: Cllr Jagger raised concerns on how the information is presented on the Unity reconciled comparison report, it was agreed that a meeting will be arranged with the Finance Officer to review this with the Clerk and Cllr Jagger. Cllr Hall proposed to accept the reports, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.
- e) Balance of accounts: Cllr Hall proposed to accept the balance of accounts this was seconded by Smith and resolved with 11 in favour and one against.

15. Policies

Memorial Bench Policy: It was agreed this should be reviewed and wording agreed by the Environment Committee. Cllr Turner requested that bench maintenance and repairs costs be added to the budget for next year. This was agreed by the Council.

ACTION: ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

16. 100th Birthday Celebrations

Cllr Springett has been asked if the Parish Council do anything to acknowledge residents for their 100th birthday and advised a resident has their birthday on the 21st of June. Cllr Hall proposed that the Chair & another Councillor will visit with flowers and a card, this was seconded by Cllr Spooner and resolved with all in favour. This will be referred to Communication Committee to discuss arrangements for future birthdays.

ACTION: COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

17. Madginford Hall

Cllr Hall reiterated the comments from the member of public regarding the need for more volunteers to join the Madginford Hall Committee, the Council committed to helping advertise this via social media. The groups that use the Hall receive a discounted rate in return for a member being on the Committee, but this is not being adhered to. Cllr English is the Secretary and apologised as he had been unable to attend the last few meetings. Cllr Pottage agreed to work with Cllr English and attend meetings when necessary.

18. Future Agenda Items

Leases.
Office extension.

19. Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 16th July 2024

There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 21.35 hrs

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