



## Bearsted Parish Council

Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at Madginford Hall, Egremont Road on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Carolyn Smith (Chair) Cllr Frank Jagger  
Cllr Richard Ash MBE Cllr Jodie Pottage  
Cllr Pat Catt

Also, in attendance was the Clerk, Joanne Upton and two members of the Cricket Club.

### **Reports from members of the public**

There were no reports from members of the public.

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

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

2. **Apologies and absences**

Apologies and reasons were duly noted for Cllr Denis Spooner. Cllr English was absent.

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

There were none declared.

4. **To resolve to go into closed session and to exclude the press and public at item 15 (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 in accordance with standing order 10 (xi) Contract Matters**

Cllr Ash proposed to go into closed session at item 15, this was seconded by Cllr Jagger and resolved with all in favour.

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

The minutes from 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

6. **Clerk report**

The Clerk reported the office is still working on contacting the newsagents and The Yeoman about a defibrillator on the Ashford Road.

The Clerk had contacted MBC and there is no option to increase the payment for the Parish Service Scheme amount.

The office is still working on additional quotes for the play area repairs.

The quotes for the Church Lane allotment fence along the car park side were returned too late to be included in the agenda for this meeting so will be circulated to the committee and brought to Full Council.

7. **Church Landway/Church Lane Car Park** (Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s57(1)(a) and LGA 1972s126)

Cllr Jagger reported that 5 companies have provided provisional prices, none have quoted like for like. One company raised a third option of drilling a bore hole, this could be a possibility but would cost £5000 just to investigate if it could be a suitable solution. Cllr Smith proposed to go out to tender with the original specification, from Evans & Langford, to put soakaways into the verges. This was seconded by Cllr Pottage and resolved with all in favour.

The Committee thanked Cllr Jagger for his hard work on this project.

**ACTION: Clerk**

8. **General Maintenance** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10 and Highways Act 1980 s96)
- a) Community Payback Scheme: Cllr Smith reported the CPS continued work at the Holy Cross Church in January, clearing ivy off the walls and the Clerk advised they would be attending again in February and then will continue work at Meadow Bank from March. Cllr Smith advised the CLAA would also like the CPS to come back this year.
  - b) Annual Tree Inspection: Cllr Ash proposed to accept the quote from Landscape Services of £1265.19 for the annual tree inspection. This was seconded by Cllr Pottage and resolved with four in favour and one abstention.
  - c) Tree Work, footpath from Roseacre to St Faiths: Cllr Pottage proposed to apply for planning permission to cut back the Beech Tree (T1) under TPO No. 19 of 1976 by the recommended amount, from the MBC tree specialist, providing further quotes are sought for the works. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with all in favour.

**ACTION: Clerk**

9. **Bearsted Green** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)
- a) Cricket Club, Safety procedures during practice: Cllr Smith and the Clerk attended a meeting with the Cricket Club to discuss options for increasing awareness of the dangers to other users of the Green and mitigating risks where possible. The proposal, which has been approved by the Cricket Club, was for the Parish Council to install 4 permanent signs and the Cricket Club to put out 3 portable signs, during matches and practice, with additional warning signs on the nets and site screen. The Cricket Club will confirm their insurance includes practice and update their risk assessment to address the risks specifically during practice. BPC will also help to advertise when training is taking place to raise awareness with other users of the Green. Cllr Ash proposed to accept this proposal, which was seconded by Cllr Pottage and resolved with four in favour and one against.
  - b) The Pond: Cllr Catt proposed to accept the proposal by the Clerk and Cllr Smith to monitor the pond over the next 12 months, this will include taking water samples, measuring the depth, clearing litter and keeping records of the wildlife and vegetation. Investigate options to replace the temporary fencing which has fallen and to fill in the filter with large boulders. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved with all in favour.
  - c) Road Gullies: Cllr Jagger reported that the number of leaves and debris is again blocking the drains south of the Green and the six weekly road sweeps by MBC are not enough. The Committee requested the Clerk request a cleaning schedule from MBC and to arrange a meeting with a drainage consultation from KCC.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**ACTION: Cllr Smith / Clerk**

**ACTION: Clerk**

10. **Allotments** (Small Holding and Allotment Act 1908 ss23,25)
- a) Cllr Smith proposed to accept the cost of Tarpaulin at £87.35 for the CLAA to cover empty plots. This was seconded by Cllr Ash and was resolved with all in favour.
  - b) Cllr Jagger explained the proposal from the Tennis Club and CLAA to cut back, reduce the size of the trees along the border between the two. The Committee supported the proposal with BPC being responsible for removing the barbed wire along the top.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**11. Open Spaces** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)

Meadow Bank: The Clerk advised that there are two workdays booked for the 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> March and then the steps will be installed in April.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**12. Conservation Area**

Cllr Jagger advised that some residents have queried why the field opposite the Elizabeth Harvie Field has been removed from the Conservation area and is concerned when the trustees of the Bearsted Woodland Trust change it could leave this area open to development. Cllr Ash advised the area is inaccessible and therefore highly unlikely to be developed. The Clerk reminded Councillors that they are welcome to respond to the consultation as residents and raise their concerns but if BPC wants to respond as a council this will need to be discussed, agreed and voted on at Full Council.

**13. Spot Lane Nature Reserve**

The Clerk advised that Cllr Springett is requesting that BPC supports the MBC project by advertising this to residents and inviting volunteers to assist on workdays. The Committee are happy to support this.

**ACTION: Clerk**

**14. Correspondence**

- a) Bearsted CAN: The Committee agreed that Meadow Bank is not ready to host an event for the Maidstone Big Day Out.
- b) Meadow Bank: Cllr Smith agreed to check out the reported unauthorised use of Meadow Bank by a resident. Cllr Smith will survey the area, should items have been removed then no further action is required. If the items are still present the Committee recommended the Clerk sends a letter to all residents whose properties back on the Meadow Bank asking them to remove the items within 14 days or they will be removed and disposed of.

**ACTION: Clerk / Cllr Smith**

- c) Additional bin request: The Clerk advised that MBC have been contacted to see if a bin can be installed along the two footpaths running from Mynn Crescent to the Landway to help deal with dog mess. Awaiting a response.
- d) Additional Lighting in Egremont Road: The Clerk advised KCC have refused to install additional lighting by the school entrance. Cllr Pottage proposed to reject the residents request that BPC pays to install new lighting, this was seconded by Cllr Ash and resolved with four in favour and one against.

The members of the Cricket Club left the meeting.

**15. Closed Session**

Contract Matters

**16. Future Agenda Items**

- Allotments
- Pond updates
- Community Pay Back Scheme
- Church Lane car park
- Road drain gullies

**17. Date of next Meeting, 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

**There being no further business to transact, the meeting ended at 21:21**

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