Minutes of Mersham with Sevington Parish Council Meeting held in

the Church Room, St John the Baptist Church, Mersham on Monday, 21st November 2016

**Present** Geoffrey Fletcher (Chair) Gavin Murphy Jan Oakley-Hills Henrietta Sawdon

Kenton Stewart Pete Turley

Lee Whitehead

In attendance: Tracey Block (Clerk), Graham Kingston (Community Warden)

18 members of the public

To be actioned by

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| The meeting started at 7.30pm |  |
| Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Hansen, Kibble and Smithers. |  |
| **Declaration of interest in items on the agenda**  There were no declarations of interest. |  |
| **Minutes** of the Meeting on 17th October 2016 were approved as a true record and signed accordingly. |  |
| **Matters Arising from the Minutes**  There were no matters arising to be discussed. |  |
| **Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item.**  **Mersham Play Area** – Mr Pollock expressed concern over the lack of maintenance of the play area and said he was very disappointed with the state of the play area in Mersham. Mr Pollock expressed concern over the slide and the mats.  The Chairman explained that the caretaker checks the equipment on a weekly basis. There is a plan for some winter maintenance to be undertaken in the winter months. Cllr Turley offered to visit the play area with Mr Pollock and Paul Rodway (the caretaker) to check the equipment over and to undertake some form of review as to what is required so that an action plan can be put in place.  **Sevington**   1. A member of the public asked whether the caretaker covers Sevington.   Cllr Fletcher explained that the caretaker does not cover Sevington as the Borough Council and KCC fund the most part and Sevington area is just too large an area for the caretaker to cover.   1. When the Parish Council is going to address the problems in Sevington as currently I am feeling ignored and discarded?   Cllr Fletcher explained that he has attended and will continue to attend the Barrey Road/Junction 10A meetings and has spent many evenings fighting the cause of the junction at Barrey Road. Highways England have taken this matter out of the hands of the J10A committee and passed it on to Area 4. Now the matter is in the hands of the Planning Inspectorate. There is an initial hearing at Holiday Inn, Hothfield on 2nd December 2016 and a site visit on 14th February 2017 with an open floor hearing on 15-17 February 2017. Residents/Businesses alike are encouraged to register to speak at this open floor hearing.   1. As the Parish Council pay towards the caretaker for Mersham, what can the Parish Council provide Sevington?   The Parish Council encourages people to bring forward specific projects for Sevington.  It is felt there is disconnect as far as Mersham is concerned with the people of Sevington. There is a feeling of community in Sevington North and it is felt that the Parish Council should come forward to connect with Sevington North.   1. A member of the public asked if they could protest?   The Chairman felt that the public time would be best spent talking calmly and rationally to the Planning Inspectorate as that might be more effective.   1. There are numerous lorries parked over night in Barrey Road and a lot of the lorries are parking in Church Road. What can be done about this?   The Chairman assured the meeting that the Clerk would write to KCC and request better signage.   1. The signage when turning right in to Barrey Road is very distracting and the Smyths sign on the footbridge is hanging, signage is a real problem on the J10 side of the Business Park, one of the Barrey Road signs has been knocked down and there should be a no U-turn sign on the right hand turn slip road.   The Clerk is to contact KCC with regard to these issues and the Chairman will discuss the matters with Andrew Wickham, County Councillor for Mersham and Sevington.   1. Litter is an issue on the footpaths and rats have become an even bigger problem in the area. More bins are needed and bins with lids are required.   The Clerk has received notification that following a review of the bins in the area a letter is due imminently regarding bins. The Clerk will forward to the Parish Council as soon as it arrives and the matter will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.   1. Every year No.20 Church Road cover their tree with lights at Christmas. Could the Parish Council assist by purchasing some replacement bulbs?   It was agreed that the Parish Council would pay for this up to the value of £100. An invoice is to be addressed to the Parish Council and sent to the Clerk.   1. Ashford Borough Council has never listened to the residents of Sevington north and it is so dangerous to have only 1 entrance/exit to Church Road. The problems in the Business Park mean that there are often vehicles parking at the top of Sevington Lane affecting traffic and pedestrians in Sevington Lane, Willesborough.   The possibility of having a hatched no parking area near the entrance to Church road is to be considered and Ashford Borough Council to be approached with regard to this. These are beyond the limitations of the Parish Council but the Parish Council can certainly request.   1. The lorries parking over-night is an issue for parking enforcement and yet they never come to Church Road or Barrey Road at night.   The Parish Council will request their attendance.   1. The road sweeper stops outside no. 11 Church Road, why can it not sweep up to No.8?   The Clerk will contact Ashford Borough Council about this.  The Parish Council will set up a sub-committee with Cllr Whitehead as the Chairman. This will consist of 3 Parish Councillors and a number of residents. | PT  All  TB  TB/GF  TB  TB  TB  TB  LW |
| **Report from Borough Councillor**  Cllr Bartlett had sent the following report:  **BARREY ROAD**  A further meeting with councillors and Highways England was held on 18 October.  Highways England has promised to upgrade the junction with Barrey Road and A2070 to include a slip road accessing the A2070 northbound from Barrey Road.  The plans show a very short slip road so I am not at all sure this will much assist traffic leaving the junction.  Nevertheless, I think this is some progress and the next step is for us to lobby hard the Planning Inspectorate at the forthcoming meetings for a better solution and at least a longer slip road.  There is an initial hearing on 2 December, a site visit on 14 February 2017 and an open floor hearing 15-17 February 2017.  **BRIDGEFIELD PARK**  There was a well-attended consultation over the plans for a park at Bridgefield on Thursday 3 November at the Queens Head.  Thank you to all who attended.  The plans were reviewed carefully and comments were submitted, amongst other things, on the size of the grazing area and the possible allotments.  A planning application for the play equipment and parking arrangements is intended for February 2017.  **WATERBROOK**  The footpath from Church Road, Sevington into Waterbrook did not re-open on 16 October as planned, an extension to its closure was granted by KCC until 19th April 2017.  There is no date scheduled for the planning committee which will consider the permeant use of the rail head, so watch this space for further news.  **DAMIAN GREEN MP**  Damian will be at the Village Hall, Mersham at 6.30pm on Friday 17th February 2017.  Please come along and hear from the Town’s MP.  This is a great opportunity to ask questions on matters that are important for the area. |  |
| **Report from Community Warden**  The Community Warden reported that Halloween and Bonfire Night both went off without cause for concern. There is a new PCSO in post, her name is PCSO Julia Ghost.  As it gets colder, please ensure you are checking on elderly or vulnerable neighbours. If you are concerned, contact Graham Kingston.  If there is a power cut, the number to call is 105, this will keep you updated on the problem and an expected resolution time.  There was an attempted theft from Lady Brabourne’s estate and there has been a car break-in. Please remain vigilant.  A duster seller has been found in the area and he has been moved on. |  |
| **Planning Matters:**  A list of Planning Applications was circulated as Appendix A with the agenda, those requiring a response were:  Reference: 16/01644/AS  Address: Cranwell House, The Forstal, Church Road, Mersham  Proposal: Reserved matters application for details of layout, access, scale, landscaping and appearance pursuant to outline permission granted under 16/00053.  The Parish Council raises no objection to this application  Reference: [16/01667/AS](http://planning.ashford.gov.uk/Planning/details.aspx?systemkey=104448)  Address: Unit 3, Hall Avenue, Orbital park, Sevington, Ashford TN24 0AA  Proposal: A new development of 18 small starter industrial/warehouse units with B1(c), B2 and B8 use classifications.  The Parish Council raises no objection to this application in principle but have concerns over parking and parking given the density of the build. |  |
| **Noticeboard for Sevington South**  The potential for a noticeboard in Sevington South was discussed. It was decided that as there is little land for a notice board to be placed on, it was perhaps more practical to create a newsletter for people to sign up to receive. The Clerk is to investigate ways of doing this via the website. | TB |
| **To consider the request to renovate the telephone box in Church Road**  The Clerk had contacted BT and they have added the phone box to their painting projects list for 2017. |  |
| **To discuss and agree the replacement of the bench near the Royal Oak**  The bench near the Royal Oak needs replacing but it is on Borough Council land and the existing will need removing. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Ashford Borough Council about this issue. | TB |
| **To agree to create a Sevington Specific Sub-Committee**  Electing Sub-Committee Members – the Sub Committee will comprise of 3 Councillors, Cllrs Whitehead (Chair), Oakley Hills and Sawdon. The additional members of the sub-committee will be members of the public.  The Chair of the sub-committee will create an augural meeting, the Clerk will minute the meeting. It is intended to meet prior to Christmas with the meeting potentially being in Willesborough Church.  The sub-committee will bring items to the main Parish Council meeting in January for agreement as an agenda item.  Borough Councillors Bartlett and White are to be invited to attend. |  |
| **Financial Matters**  **To approve the following financial documents:**   * + 1. **To note/authorise the following:**   To note the Parish Council’s financial position: The Parish Council has a bank balance of: £33,924.64.  To authorise any payments including the Clerk’s Salary and the Litter picker’s Salary  The following payments were authorised:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Cheque | Payee’s Name | Reason for Payment | Amount | Notes | | 501751 | Smeeth Parish Council | Contribution to the Caretakers Pension | £901.50 |  | | 501752 | T Block | Clerks Salary – November | £387.89 |  | | 501753 | I King | Litter Pickers Salary – November | £ 93.60 |  | | 501754 | HMRC | Tax paid on Salaries (2 months) | £ 58.60 |  | | 501755 | I King | Litter Pickers Salary – December | £133.60 |  | | 501756 | T Block | Clerks Salary – December | £382.24 |  | | 501757 | PKF Littlejohn LLP | External Audit | £240.00 |  | | 501758 | T Block | Stationery expenses | £ 58.15 |  |   A budget over expenditure and financial statement had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting.  The draft budget had been circulated. The Parish Council agreed that draft budget.  The Council agreed to precept for £15646.80 for2017/18. |  |
| **Any Other Business**  Cllr Sawdon reported incidents of Hare Coursing near Collier’s Hill.  The caretaker has received a comment to say that he is cutting old Rectory Close land that is private. The Parish Council discussed this and Cllr Murphy explained that the vegetation Paul is cutting is not privately owned as it has been adopted y the Borough/County. The Clerk is to respond to Susan Wood to clarify.  Cllr Murphy agreed to contact the residents of rectory Close to this regard.  A Frames have been offered to be placed outside T Denne and Sons at the school to deter to parents parking in the way when undertaking school collections. Cllr Fletcher is to contact Mr Bourne at T Denne and Sons in the first instance with regard to this matter.  The litter picker vacancy has received 2 applications. The Parish Council is to give the date of closure for applications to the public. This will be a week on Friday – 2nd December. The interviews will be conducted by Cllrs Whitehead, Sawdon and Oakley-Hills. The Clerk is to investigate the terms of employment. | TB  GF  LW/HS& JO-H  TB |
| **The next meeting** was confirmed as Monday, 16th January 2017, the Clerk would like any items for the agenda by Friday 10th January, please. | All |
| There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 9.50 PM. |  |