

Aylesford Parish Council

Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Aylesford Parish Council Office, Aylesford on 20 June 2023

Present: Councillor Ms Dorrington (Chairman) and Councillors, Balcombe, Mrs Birkbeck, Chapman, Fuller, Gledhill, Mrs Ogun, Ms Oyewusi, Rowe, Sullivan, Sharp, Shelley and Smith.

In Attendance: Melanie Randall (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillors Craig, Mrs Eves, Mrs Gadd, Rillie and Walker.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors, Beadle, Mrs Gadd, Fuller and Ms Oyewusi were received, and the reason for absence agreed.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members Interests; except Councillor Fuller declared an interest in items 10 and 11 as he is Chairman of Aylesford Football Club. He left the room and took no part in the discussion or decision.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 May 2023

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 May 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Small Works Programme

The Clerk reported that works were due to restart in May, with Tunbury being the first location on the list. She informed the committee that the contractor has said he cannot complete the work now, so a replacement will be sourced. A Councillor stated he knows someone that can paint the gate and height barrier at Tunbury Recreation Ground, the Clerk said he will need to email the Parish office directly with his details, how much he charges per hour or for the job and in order to comply with the Councils own insurance policy provide her with a copy of his insurance certificate.

The Clerk will redo the spreadsheet as the items that have already been painted/stained will now need doing again. **Ongoing**

5. Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)

The Agreed Action Plan was submitted to KCC on 30 April 2022.

a) **Tunbury Avenue, Walderslade – near School** – the Mini Wardens project is due to be implemented on 5 July 2023. **Ongoing**

b) **Junction of Tunbury Avenue and Robin Hood Lane**
further to the last meeting of this committee the Clerk had received three questions from one councillor for submission to KCC regarding the criteria for KCC to intervene at a location and consider making improvements. There were no other questions so the Clerk will email them to KCC and report back when she has a response. **Ongoing**

6. Climate Change and Environmental Strategy for Aylesford Parish Council

Councillors Shelley and Sharp had not had opportunity to walk round the Tunbury Recreation Ground yet.

The Clerk is trying to schedule a site meeting in with herself and councillor's Shelley, Sharp and the council's tree surgeon to discuss what types of trees are best suited to Tunbury and the best location for them. Borough Councillor Keers will also be invited to attend.

The Clerk informed the committee that she is in the process of obtaining quotes for solar panels to go on the Parish Office roof. She has two quotes and will find another company to invite to give a third. **Ongoing**

7. Damage to Ragstone Wall

The Clerk informed the committee that the Councils Solicitor will be writing to the relevant parties to ask if they could provide a timeframe for the repairs to be completed, again bringing to their attention the dangers the wall poses to users of the Councils site. **Ongoing**

8. Metal Coronation sign for Coronation Gardens

It was **Agreed** to defer this to the next meeting of this committee due to the absence of Councillor Rillie who raised this. **Ongoing**

9. Damage to Bluebell Hill Planter

The Clerk reported that one was hit by a lorry and needs to be completely removed. She is in the process of obtaining a quote.

The remaining ones are coming to the end of their life, and it was **Resolved** that the Council will look at replacing them in the next financial year (2024/25) with recycled plastic ones.

Closed

10. Request from Aylesford Football Club

The Clerk informed the committee that the football club had asked to use Forstal Recreation Ground in July and August for evening and weekend training including some friendlies.

The Council was hesitant to permit the request for several reasons:

In the past the Council has been lenient with allowing some limited use outside of the football season (June, July, and August), however now with the 3G built the Council feels this should be utilised as it was understood it was built to not only help when there is wet weather but also to relieve the use of the grass pitches. The Council would also like to give the ground/grass chance to rejuvenate during those months before the football season starts again and is of the opinion that the 3G should be used during these months not the grass pitches.

Another concern raised by several members was that they are peak times of the year during the school summer holidays and families may want to use the recreation ground for picnics etc and dog walkers want to walk their dogs in the evenings when it is cooler.

The Council did note that the football club do carry out pitch repairs which is a requirement of their hire agreement for the recreation ground and the Council pays for various enhancements for example weed and feed.

Before the Council can make a decision, it would like to know more about how much use there will be; so, what evenings do they want to use it? Saturday or Sunday or both? What times? How many teams will there be using it? Are they able to just use the top pitch nearest to the 3G meaning all football is kept at one end of the recreation ground leaving the rest of the site for general users. If the answer is no, why not?

Subject to receiving the above information this will be reviewed again at the next meeting of this committee on 25 July 2023.

It was **Resolved** to refuse the use as requested and the Forstal Recreation Ground must not be used in June, July, or August. The same applies for Eccles too. **Ongoing**

11. Planning Obligations Infrastructure Statement

The Infrastructure Statement was discussed as prepared by the Clerk, and it was **Resolved** to accept the document. The Clerk will submit it to the TMBC Planning Obligations Team.

Closed

12. Grass Cutting Contract

The Clerk informed the committee that unfortunately the contractor can now not commit to the work they agreed to do, and she is in the process of obtaining quotes as quickly as possible. After discussion it was **Resolved** that due to time constraints with having to source another contractor at very short notice halfway through the grass cutting season the Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman can make the decision on who to appoint.

13. Ferryfield – Phase 2 of the Play Area Renewal

The Clerk reminded the committee that she had applied for a grant from the FCC Communities Foundation back in March 2023 on behalf of the Council and she was pleased to tell the Council that it had been successful in its application and had been awarded up to £58,974.74 to renew the remaining old end of life play equipment in Ferryfield, Aylesford. The Clerk stated that the FCC Communities Foundation have a number of rules the Council needs to comply with to ensure it remains eligible for the grant. One is that they must approve any press releases before they are released and have provided the Council with various templates, therefore all information for the public must only come from the Parish Office. Members are not permitted to post anything on social media unless it has been through the office and approved by the FCC Communities Foundation.

The Council thanked the Clerk for her hard work at applying for and obtaining the grant as the replacement equipment is very much needed.

This item will be removed from the agenda and any updates will be given under Any Other Correspondence. **Closed**

14. Any Other Correspondence

The Clerk informed the committee that residents are leaving rubbish, like empty boxes and old items they no longer want on the brick verge to the left of the main gates to the Councils car park. Not only is it fly tipping, but it looks terribly unsightly. Signs have been put up but still it continues. A suggestion was that the Council could look at changing the brick tops of both sides of the gate to a planted area as people are less likely to leave their unwanted items in plants. It will also make the entrance much nicer. The situation will be monitored and revisited at a later date if this problem continues.

15. Duration of Meeting

7.58pm to 8.45pm