

Aylesford Parish Council

Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Capel Morris Centre on 23 August 2022

Present: Councillor Mrs Gadd (Chairman) and Councillors, Balcombe, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Eves, Gledhill, Rillie, Sharp, Shelley, Smith, Sullivan, Walker, Winnett and Williams.

In Attendance: Melanie Randall (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillors Fuller, Ludlow, Mrs Ogun and Ms Oyewusi,

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Fuller, Ludlow, Mrs Ogun 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.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 July 2022

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Small Works Programme

The Clerk reported that although the works have been allocated to the Contractor the Councils Supervisor had painted the height barrier and five bar gate at the top of Forstal Recreation Ground to help with the Contractors workload. **Ongoing**

5. Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)

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

- a) **Blue Bell Hill Slip Road** – no further update received **Ongoing**
- b) **Tunbury Avenue, Walderslade – near School** – no further update received **Ongoing**

c) **The need for a Highway Improvement Plan**

No reply received from KCC

Ongoing

6. Bus Services

6.1 Bus Service

Councillor Gledhill will contact Norman Kemp of Nu-Venture to ascertain his availability to meet with the three villages (Aylesford, Burham and Wouldham Parish Council's) and report back to the Clerk a couple of possible dates.

Unfortunately, due to other priorities in the Parish Office the Clerk has not had opportunity to contact TMBC regarding the 620k from the Peters Village development.

Ongoing

7. Gap between Ferryfield and Rugby Club

The Chestnut Paling has been ordered and is due to be delivered first week of September.

Ongoing

8. Arch Lights on the Old Bridge Aylesford – Review

The Contractor is in the process of refreshing the quotes previously provided to the Council and are looking at all the options for replacement as regardless of what type of light is put on the bridge the issue remains in that the transformers are constantly being submerged in water due to the rising river level.

Ongoing

9. Request received from Aylesford Football Club

A one-off request was received to use pitch 4 on Forstal Recreation Ground which is located at the top end (near Waitrose) for parking during the weekend of the Tournament (3rd and 4th September). Members were asked to consider this request and to note that the 3G build is due to commence on the 5th September and pitch 4 will be built on. The one-off request was **Agreed.**

Closed

10. The Future of Aylesford Cemetery

The Clerk explained this had been brought to members a few years ago, however it was never progressed therefore it is now time to discuss the options again.

There are currently between 16 and 20 spaces left in the Cemetery of new graves, so based on current use between two to three years. The pre-purchasing of graves was suspended a couple of years ago due to decreasing availability, so graves are allocated at the time of the need.

The options are

1. Re-use some of the graves that are over 100 years old
2. Close the Cemetery when it is full
3. Extend into Ferryfield

Initial discussions indicated a desire to extend the Cemetery.

The Clerk highlighted a few points to members if the Council were minded to proceed with the extension

- Costs associated with planning permission, including pre-application advice/meeting
- Ground water surveys to ensure there is no risk of contamination to ground water
- Plan of the general layout of the proposed new area, to ascertain how many graves would be accommodated
- Landscape planting plan
- Cost to erect a tarmac/concrete roadway for the hearse etc
- Fence cost, to remove the old one and put a new one in
- Contingency fund for the unexpected
- There may be other things that are needed as a result of surveys and planning, like reptile surveys, design and access statement and a traffic survey.

Specialist Cemetery Development Services will need to be obtained,

The Clerk informed members that 30k was specifically raised in the 2022/23 precept towards the Cemetery Extension, therefore there is money available to start the process if that is what members decide.

After some discussion the following was **Agreed**

Option 1 – the Council **Agreed** this is not an option

Option 2 – the **Agreed** this would have to happen if it decided not to or for some unknown reason could not extend the Cemetery.

Option 3 – the Council **Agreed** this was the best option currently and asked the Clerk to make some enquiries and obtain prices.

In addition, the Clerk was asked to enquire from TMBC if they have any funding/grants available or access to any funding/grants etc.

It is thought that Hadlow Parish Council have recently extended or are about to extend their Cemetery, so the Clerk will contact them for information.

11. Any Other Items of Correspondence

Councillor Shelley reported on Climate Change as attached at Appendix A

12. Duration of Meeting

7.33pm to 8.03pm

Why we need address Climate Change and what we as a Parish Council can do about it.

To anyone who still does not accept climate change, I think the recent heatwave should be sufficient evidence that change is happening. In addition, numerous scientific studies of Earth's ancient history have shown that average temperature is closely related to CO2 levels, which have on occasion been much higher, even than today, allowing the poles to develop a tropical climate, very heavy rainfall and greatly increased sea levels.

<https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2019/06/data-from-earths-past-holds-a-warning-for-our-future-under-climate-change/>

The problem seems to be accelerating. Using a statistical method known to all engineers, μ , which is the average has increased a little, and its increase is accelerating, but $3 \times \sigma$, which represents outlying heat events now affects 10% of the global land area instead of 0.13%. http://www.columbia.edu/~7Ejeh1/mailings/2012/20120803_DicePopSci.pdf. We are also seeing the effects of positive feedback, which is what happens when you put a microphone too close to a loudspeaker and the sound from the speaker feeds back into the microphone until the system becomes unusable. In the case of climate, forest and grass fires release CO2 held in vegetation back into the atmosphere, ice melts and the seas reflect sunlight less, and the methane hydrates in the Northern Hemisphere decompose, releasing methane, which is a global warming gas 25 times as effective as CO2.

But what can we as a Parish Council do about it?

We had a KALC Climate Change Working Group meeting on August 17th 2022, and the answer is, we can do quite a lot.

1. We should encourage all TMBC residents not to idle their engines when stopped. This particularly applies to our level crossing in Aylesford. All we require is a couple of signs.
2. Defend our trees and hedges. Planting trees and then cutting trees down, grinding them into wood chips and burning them releases the stored CO2 back into the atmosphere, so there is no net benefit in CO2 reduction. I think we need to be more diligent in visiting sites where trees are to be cut down and seeing what is happening and how they can be retained
3. Tim Shaw, at the meeting suggested that responses for planning applications for house extensions should include green issues. There is presently no standard template. Perhaps we can produce one. It should be possible to ask each applicant

what they are doing to address climate change, including insulation and opportunities for solar panels, electric vehicles charging points etc

4. An overview of the new building regulations can be found at:
<https://democracy.tmbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=5291&x=1> I think we should all study them. TMBC says it does intend that they should be enforced
5. Any facilities that we have control over or influence need to be made as green as possible: solar on roof? Heat pumps? (The Audi application to TMBC was revised. The roof was re-oriented so that solar panels could be put on it)
6. All the old issues remain: e.g., loss of green spaces given up for building and increased traffic. We must continue to make our voices heard
7. We need to do what we can to galvanise people at the grass roots level. People have now taken to recycling, but to list the suggestions on the TMBC website, people need to be encouraged to:

Turn lights and appliances off when you don't need them

Replace light bulbs with LEDs or other low-energy lights

Repair and re-use or recycle if not possible to repair

And there must be other things that we could be doing as well, although I am not keen as one person is demanding, that we all go vegan, since if not managed carefully, this can and has led to bone problems in growing children.

8. Look for other things that could be done, e.g., local hydropower opportunities, and using the Medway as a source for heat pump systems
9. Sarah Barker is devising a 1-page questionnaire to be sent out to Parishes for debate, asking what they are doing and what they think should be done. I ask that when it comes, we debate it and respond to it.
10. Follow the example of the UK government, KCC and TMBC and declare a Climate Change Emergency and treat these matters as a priority

Tom Shelley 23rd August 2022.