

# Aylesford Parish Council

## Environmental Services Committee

### Minutes of the Meeting held in the Aylesford Parish Council Office, Aylesford on 24 January 2023

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**Present:** Councillor Mrs Gadd (Chairman) and Councillors, Balcombe, Ms Dorrington, Mrs Eves, Mrs Gadd, Gledhill, Mrs Ogun, Sharp, Shelley, Sullivan, and Walker.

**In Attendance:** Melanie Randall (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Councillors Fuller, Ludlow, Smith, and Winnett.

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillors Fuller, Ludlow, Smith, and Winnett, 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 13 December 2022

It was **Agreed** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 December 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

#### 4. Small Works Programme

The Clerk reported that no further works have been carried out, she had updated the spreadsheet and will forward to the Contractor. **Ongoing**

#### 5. Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)

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

- a) **Blue Bell Hill Slip Road** – the Clerk asked Inspector Mark Stubberfield at Kent Police if any enforcement action had been carried out on the lorries parked there and confirmed that no tickets have been issued; however verbal warnings may have been given but these are much harder to identify. **Ongoing**

b) **Tunbury Avenue, Walderslade – near School** – the Mini Warden project is due to start in January 2023. No further update has been received. **Ongoing**

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

The Clerk reported that she has received further information from KCC about the purpose of the Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) as a result of making it clear that it is not in a position to contribute financially towards any project.

It is approx. £500 per Parish that is available per Parish that KCC can spend on items on the Highway Improvement Plan. The majority of their funding goes towards crash remedial sites as this takes priority on Kent's roads. Items raised on the HIPs are a wish list and if they can fund any projects they will but if any of the items on the wish list do not meet the crash remedial criteria, they will need to be funded by the Parish Council. **Ongoing**

In addition, KCC have also asked for a meeting to discuss the results of the traffic count/survey they recently carried out by Tunbury School. After discussion it was Agreed that a meeting is held to obtain an update on the results. It was also suggested that Borough Councillor Keers be invited to attend. The Clerk will contact KCC and make the arrangements. **Ongoing**

## **6. Bus Services**

A Councillor reported that Nu-Venture have had to put a double decker bus on for the morning school service due to increased demand. **Ongoing**

## **7. Arch Lights on the Old Bridge Aylesford – Review**

The lights were rewired, and the arch lights were switched on. **Closed**

## **8. Aylesford Cemetery Extension**

The Clerk reported that Phase 1 – Intrusive Investigation was carried out in Ferryfield on 6 January 2023 and the report received. Due to the water depths encountered it is likely that the Environment Agency will require seasonal groundwater monitoring to assess the levels on site before they can assess the suitability of the site for expansion. On this basis they recommend installing 3x 5m deep groundwater monitoring wells into the proposed area of extension to enable water levels to be monitored up to the end of April this year. The Clerk and Supervisor will be trained in how to take the weekly readings and log them.

The cost for this next stage in the process is £2,545 (net), after this the Council will likely need to still have Phase 2 – T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment carried out, which has already been agreed at the committee meeting on 22 November 2022.

After discussion it was **Agreed** to proceed with the monitoring wells. **Ongoing**

## **9. Climate Change – KALC Questionnaire**

The draft questionnaire was discussed and subject to a few amendments was **Agreed**. The Clerk will make the amendments and submit it back to KALC. **Closed**

## **10. Climate Change and Environment Strategy for Aylesford Parish Council**

After discussion it was **Agreed** there will be a small working group consisting of Councillor's Shelley and Sharp. If there are other Councillors who would like to be a part of the group, they are more than welcome. **Closed**

## **11. Hire of Ferryfield for North West Kent Dog Training Club**

A request was received for an obedience dog show to be held on 22 and 23 July 2023 with set up taking place on the afternoon of 21 July. The show is mostly based in the Rugby Club with some parking and competition rings in Ferryfield. It is for two and a half days hire and with the new charges taking effect from 1 April 2023, the hire fee will be for £750.00 plus the usual £300 deposit, which will be held and not banked.

It was **Agreed** to allow the hire at the above fees, subject to the Clerk receiving the Risk Assessment and proof of Insurance. **Closed**

## **12. Eccles Coronation Fun Day – Eccles Recreation Ground 6 May 2023**

The fun day was previously agreed in principle subject to receiving a proper proposal, proof of insurance and risk assessment.

The proposal and risk assessment have been received and the Clerk reported that these meet with the Council's requirements. Proof of insurance will be provided nearer to the event date. The organiser had asked for permission to have 2-3 porta-loos on site and for the council to consider waiving the hire fee.

After discussion it was **Agreed** to authorise the fun day, the request for porta-loos and to waive the hire fee. However any damage caused to the ground is the responsibility of the organiser to rectify completely to the Council's satisfaction. **Closed**

## **13. Trim Trail – Ferryfield**

The Clerk reported that the Hurdles and Sit up Station are at the end of their useable life, and it is therefore recommended by the playground inspection that these two are removed. She also reported that all of the pieces have splits, cracks and damage to them in some form. After discussion it was **Agreed** that as all the pieces have some splits etc in the wood they should be removed. The Clerk will arrange for the removal to happen as soon as the ground conditions allows for vehicular access. **Closed**

## 14. Ferryfield Play Area Replacement – Phase 2

The Clerk reported that she is applying for a grant from the FCC Communities Foundation and a 10.75% of the grant amount being requested is a compulsory contributing 3<sup>rd</sup> party payment (CTP). This payment doesn't have to come from the Parish Council, it can come from elsewhere.

At the moment; the CTP stands at approximately £7k, after discussion it was **Agreed** to continue with the grant, acknowledging that this figure will change due to the expected rise in costs which will affect the overall final quote.

Members also considered how much of its own funds it wished to contribute in addition to the CTP and it was **Agreed** a maximum of £15k. the Clerk was authorised to commit any amount up to that value. The Clerk will report back in due course with an update on the funding situation. **Closed**

## 15. Tunbury Recreation Ground

The Clerk reported that she had received some correspondence from a member of the public regarding Tunbury Recreation Ground as follows:

1. Mopeds and quad bikes are able to access the recreation ground via the wooded area just beyond the car park which has been torn up multiple times. It was suggested that a metal fence be put up to stop them. Members stated that a fence in that area will not stop them as they will be able to access the site through the gate and via the Fossington Way underpass. It was suggested that some form of hedge could be planted or trees, however these are likely to be trampled on and it still doesn't solve the problem due to the other access points.
2. The top path is quite muddy, and it was asked if the Parish Council were considering clearing the muddy path as other Councils do. Members understand the issue, however it was felt that if the Council does it in one area, it should give all other areas the same attention and unfortunately it doesn't have the staffing capacity to commit to this. Leaves are blown off with a petrol blower when workload allows, but the Council doesn't clear mud from paths.
3. It has also been reported that there are young adults congregating around the play area causing a nuisance, setting fireworks off in the wooded area between the houses and the park and playing loud music. Local members for Walderslade have not received any complaints regarding this and the Clerk was asked to inform the resident that these issues should be reported to Kent Police as it is an anti-social behaviour.

A Councillor raised the current condition of the Teenage Shelter, it no longer has all of its Perspex in it, it is quite dirty and the youth congregate in it. There is regularly smashed glass and rubbish in it and it does make some people feel quite anxious walking past when there are youths in it. After discussion it was **Agreed** to remove it as the Council will not be replacing the missing Perspex and it might help stop the youths congregating in the park.

**Closed**

## **16. Any Other Correspondence**

A Councillor raised the condition of the bus stop on the A229 Blue Bell Hill and asked if it can be removed. The Clerk confirmed that this bus stop belongs to the Parish Council and she is aware of its condition, however it is far too dangerous for staff to stop there and take it down due to the constant speed of traffic. It was therefore **Agreed** that unfortunately although it looks an eye sore unless it is safe for staff, then the bus stop will have to stay as it is for now.

## **17. Duration of Meeting**

7.48pm to 7.55pm