

PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
26th APRIL 2018
AT IGHTHAM VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr M Willingham (Chair), County Cllr Rayner, Borough Cllr Mr Robin Betts, Tamsin Ritchie, TMBC, PCSO Mark Thomas and 20+ parishioners including 3 Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerk.

Apologies: Tom Tudenghat MP, Ightham Primary School, Ightham Club, Cllr Brewer, Cllr Brierley, Cllr Cracknell

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.

Tamsin Ritchie from TMBC spoke about some recent campaigns that have been run to collect litter such as the Great British Spring Clean which involved 400,000 volunteers nationwide, including 1000 from Tonbridge and Malling. In Kent there is a Keep Kent Clean campaign and the Ightham Flood Forum Group have recently had a clean up in Ightham. TMBC have resources and template posters for people to use if they want to organise an event.

TMBC are also working with Highways England who are responsible for keeping motorways and trunk roads clean. They have recently appointed Tamsin as a co-ordinator; they have a lot of infrastructure and verges to maintain.

A letter strategy is being run by Defra and some campaigns are being used in Kent such as the Food on the Go scheme whereby petrol stations and take –aways have a responsibility to keep their frontages clean.

The Great British Spring Clean is running a Big Plastic Pick Up on 11-13 May.

Setting up a group is free and TMBC have some tidy up kits to give to these groups with a view to seeing a return on the investment ie less demands being put on Waste Services.

A question was asked about the recycling facility in Ightham which is often overflowing. Tamsin reported that recently some of the vehicles had been out of action but that had now been rectified.

A question was asked about what was being done to prevent people littering in the first place. Tamsin said that they talk to schools and youth groups.

A question was asked about fly-tipping and should the fines be more stringent? Tamsin said that there are schemes in place to report fly tipping, that fines are fairly hefty and that there have been a number of arrests.

PCSO Mark Thomas has his report – Recently it has been fairly quiet in Ightham, Borough Green, Wrotham and Plaxtol. He normally attends the Shipbourne Farmers market and Ightham Coffee Morning to meet up with residents.

Mark reported that there had recently been fraud related crime; calls to residents claiming to be from the police and requesting that money needs to be transferred, he said that the police will never ask for pin numbers or bank details. Another nuisance is doorstep duster sellers; people need to have a Pedlar's Licence to sell door to door so always ask to see one.

Mark reminded residents to call 999 in an emergency and 101 for non-emergencies.

The Parish Clerk read a short report by Tom Tugendhat MP.

The Minutes of the 2017 meeting were approved as a true record of the meeting. They will be available on the website.

The Chairman gave his report:

Cllr Willingham began by thanking everyone for attending and thanking our MP Tom Tugendhat, our County Councillor, Harry Rayner, our Borough Councillor, Robin Betts and fellow Councillors.

Cllr Willingham reported that the newly installed lights in the recreation ground had been vandalised last autumn shortly after being installed. The parts had been very difficult to replace but we hope to be able to fix them soon and put the lights on a timer which will hopefully deter future vandalism.

The Scouts continue to progress the project to provide a new Scout Hut in the Recreation Ground and the Parish Council has funded the professional and survey fees. The Parish Council have agreed to donate £80,000 towards building the new facility.

The Parish Council no longer receive a separate grant from TMBC to maintain the churchyard, so we raised our precept to fund this service.

Thanks to Bob Lee-Amies for looking after the War Memorial and to James Hayward for looking after the recreation ground.

The exterior of the Village Hall has been repainted and the windows replaced with double glazed window. The lower hall has also been converted to an archive to store Parish Records and is open twice a month.

The Flood Action Group have recently collected 12 bins of rubbish from the Busty Stream, Sanjay will report further later in the meeting. Cllr Willingham asked residents to keep their frontages free of litter.

We continue to receive around 5-10 applications a month from TMBC for our opinion, and the Parish Council is generally supportive of all but a very few applications.

TMBC is going through the process of updating the Local Plan and the first draft will be available on 5th June and thereafter a consultation period. No sites have been taken up in Ightham but Borough Green Garden City has been put forward. We don't know yet whether it will feature in the plan.

Cllr Willingham gave thanks to the Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerk.

Parish Council Finance

The accounts for our last financial year were circulated. Ightham Parish Council increased the Parish Precept this year by 3% to cover the aforementioned cessation of grant funding to maintain St Peter's Church. Our annual routine expenditure is around £35-£40k and we have earmarked money for the new Scout hut, a new village hall roof, road traffic calming and signage and some other smaller projects.

COUNTY REPORT

Cllr Rayner said that in his manifesto he wanted to propose a roundabout for the Sevenoaks Road and Oldbury Lane junction; this has been rejected in the past. A traffic survey has been carried out and it is now back with Highways. He is also pursuing the possibility of a speed reduction in Oldbury Lane; there will be a consultation with residents.

TMBC currently collect waste and then it is KCC's responsibility to recycle it. There are 2 KCC recycling facilities in Kent, but none in TMBC. Some of the refuse is recycled into fuel "refuse derived fuel", this helps to reduce the amount of coal used.

The Government Consultation on roads closed recently and as part of the consultation, Tim Shaw drafted a template letter for parishes to use to request a slip road at junction 5 M25. Tom Tugendhat has now taken this up.

A question was asked about the proposed waste collection services and whether a charge to take away garden waste would lead to more fly tipping? Cllr Rayner said that he raised this with the leader at TMBC and believes that there should be no charge as we don't have a recycling facility in the borough. It is believed that the cost for removal of garden waste will be approx £30-£40 per household per year. It will be an optional service.

BOROUGH REPORT

Cllr Betts said that he addressed the Parish Council last week about the proposed timetable for the Local Plan; the next key date will be the PTAB meeting on 5th June 2018 where the draft plan will be presented. There will be an opportunity to consider the plan and recommendations will be made. There will be a full public consultation for 6 weeks. He asked for any representations to be made to him direct. There are various meetings over the next few months such as the

JPCTCG and PPP where the plan will be discussed. He urged the Parish Council to give the draft plan full consideration. There is a lot of pressure to finalise and deliver the plan by the end of the year or be subjected to increased housing figures that were published in the most recent NPPF.

The Council are facing cuts and so far have saved £1.8 million without affecting services. They need to save a further £1 million over the next 3 years.

Cllr Betts reported that there is a Village Stores Initiative that will offer funding to local stores over the next 12 months, please let him know if there are any candidates.

Regarding recycling, the new waste services contract will be implemented in March 2019 and Cllr Betts believes that this will be a massive improvement in waste collection; garden waste removal will be optional with an approx charge of £40 per year. All other services will be massively improved and everything will be collected kerbside with a different bin for bottles, plastics, food, paper and card. It will be accessible to everyone and will increase recycling.

There are currently measures in place to improve M20, heading East to Junction 2a which is frequently at a standstill from 4pm. Junctions 3-5 will become a smart motorway which involves using the hard shoulder to ease congestion. Works have started and there will be some land and speed reductions as well as night time closures. It is due for completion in 2020.

The Tonbridge Leisure Trust has recently been awarded an Industry Standard Crest. 2 TMBC facilities out of 12 facilities in the UK received an outstanding rating. Larkfield is currently undergoing a £1m refurbishment and will open in summer 2018.

Unfortunately, despite the low crime figures, Cllr Betts was burgled for the second time this week and believes that there is a spike in rural crime and asked if anyone is aware of anything to report it to the Clerk.

REPORTS FROM PARISH ORGANISATIONS Reports were received from various village organisations on their activities over the past year. Highlights Below:

Ightham History Project – Jean Stirk reported that the archive is now set up in the lower village hall and is opened for 2 usually on the second Monday of each month, please phone beforehand if you want to go along. They need some help with indexing, please contact Jean or David if you can help.

Ightham Mote - Jan Monahan reported that Ightham Mote had a record 165,000 visitors in 2017. The Antiques Roadshow broadcast had attracted a number of new visitors. They've borrowed John Singer Sargent's 'A Game of Bowls, Ightham Mote, Kent, 1889 from Sothebys, New York and hope to be able to purchase it, it will be displayed until June 2018. There was a service at Ightham Mote to commemorate 100 years of the death of Thomas Riversdale Colyer-Fergusson VC, who was an English recipient of the Victoria Cross. Ightham Primary School had their end of year play in the gardens in summer 2017 and there will be more open air theatre in June 2018.

St Peters Church – Rev Tim Hatwell gave thanks to the Parish Council for keeping the churchyard looking good. He reported that all parishioners have a right to be buried in the churchyard and that they are in the process of cataloguing the gravestones; some have had to be excavated as they have sunk into the ground. The Church has been organising breakfasts at church which has been successful in drawing in more families. The coffee mornings on Wednesdays have proved very popular and as a result they are looking at having a modest extension to the parish room. There will be a centenary of the end of the 1st world war on 11th November and they are looking into having a special service and display of silhouettes "There but not there."

Ightham Primary School – Hugh Stirk reported that recent national statistics showed that the school was in the top 10% and 20% nationally. They have also had some recent sporting successes and recently represented the Borough in cricket, swimming and netball. Funding is in good shape despite the capital budget remaining at £6k. The PSA usually contribute £12k per year for fund raising events and also play an important part in the local community. The Head is also currently standing in for the Head of Plaxtol School. The school has recently received a lottery grant to set up a forest school and an Arriva grant to spend on computers. There will be a pop up circus on 13th May.

Ightham District Gardens Club - Pippa Coulthard reported that they had a good year and that the Village Fete at Ightham Mote had been very successful. She gave thanks to the Parish Council for the use of the village hall and to Ightham Mote for the Fete and to the children of Ightham primary School who took part in their summer show.

Scouts – Graham Tyler reported that they currently have around 30 Beavers, 30 cubs and 30 Scouts and 40% members are now girls. There is a waiting list and they also need more volunteers. They have had an active year going on hikes, canoeing, sailing, visits and summer camp. They raise funds through the textile bank at the village hall and the major fund raising event, Party in the Car Park which usually raising around £10k. Graham gave thanks to everyone that had supported the Scouts. Graham gave an update on the new Scout Hut fund raising plans. They are busy fund raising and have secured matched funding from a local charitable trust and have already been given £25k. For every

£100 donated they will receive £250 including the gift aid. They are also running a campaign for anyone donating £50+ to have an brick engraved. Leaflets will be delivered to each household soon. The Scouts are working with advisors on a new Scout HQ as the existing hut is not fit for purpose. The new building will be in the recreation ground near to the existing pavilion and will also be used by the football club. The Scouts have conducted a tender process and the cost estimate is £600k including the demolition of the existing pavilion. The draft lease and license is currently with the lawyers. The Scouts already have around £200k towards funding and with the Parish Council contribution of £80K and matched funding are near to their target. The Scouts gave thanks to the Parish Council for their support.

The WI – Helen Johnson - The WI have had 12 new members this year, they catered at the Village Fete in 2017 and now have a face book page. The WI celebrated 100 years this year and Ightham WI will celebrate 100 years next year. .

Ightham Cricket Club – Jeffrey Preston gave thanks to the Parish Council for the grant to replace the mower shed which is now up and running. The next phase will be to renovate the toilet block and provide drainage and they are busy fund raising. They are hoping to have junior members on a Saturday morning if there are enough volunteers.

Ightham Tennis Club – Colin Mitchem reported that the Tennis Club now has 94 adult members the club house in a good condition. A recent survey showed that a few repairs were necessary and the court surface is good for another few years. One of their members, Several of their junior members are within the top 10 in the County. They now have their own website hosted by the ITA and hope to be able to take bookings and subscriptions online.

Ightham Club – A short report was read out on behalf of the Ightham Club.

National Flood Forum – Sanjay Johal reported that he is supporting the local community with a Flood Action Group made up of volunteers who were affected by the recent flooding. They have met several times and have had a meeting with the stakeholders to come up with an action plan. They have also had meetings with the riparian owners and had a walk through the village to identify risk areas. On 14th April the group had a clean up day and removed a lot of debris from the stream. The Group is very active and the next meeting will be to discuss resilience.

Ightham Open Gardens – Colin Mitchem said that the next Open Garden event will be on 1st July; there are 7 gardens including 4 new ones. Proceeds will go to Hospice in the Weald and the event will be opened by Len Goodman. They are looking for volunteers to help with parking. More information on www.ighthamopengardens.co.uk.

KALC Award - Cllr Willingham then presented a KALC award to Gill Averill for her services in organising the previous Open Garden Events.

Broadband – Cllr Willingham suggested that anyone still experiencing problems with broadband should contact Tom Tugendhat.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting, which closed at 10.10 pm