



Coxheath Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Coxheath Parish Council held on Tuesday, 26th March 2024 at 7.15 p.m. in the Small Hall of Coxheath Village Hall.

Present: Parish Cllrs: C Parker (Chairman), C Bird, D Carpenter, G Down, N Gardner, E Potts, S. Thomas
R Webb, K Woollven

In Attendance: Irene Bowie, Parish Clerk and a member of the public

1. Apologies and absences:

- 1.1 Apologies for absence received and confirmed by the Council Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 75(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted. There were none.
- 1.2 Declaration of Changes to the Register of Interests. There were none.
- 1.3 To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda.
In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.
- 1.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were none.
- 1.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were none

2. CO OPTION of Parish Councillor/s: To consider candidates for co-option.

RESOLVED:

That Mr Sean Thomas was co-opted as a Parish Councillor. Councillor Thomas signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3. Public comments and observations. (Maximum 15 minutes)

The meeting will be adjourned to allow members of the public to speak. Individuals may speak for up to three minutes at the discretion of the Chairman. The Minute Book will be closed.

The cutting of Huntington Village Green to commence shortly. Parish Council village planters are at the growers and should be ready for the second week of May.

4. Reports from external parties (if present).

Kent County Councillor, Maidstone Borough Councillors, Police, Community Warden, Community Protection Officer. The available reports are attached as Appendix 1.

5. Coxheath Parish Councillor Reports

- 5.1 Chairman of the Parish Council Cllr Parker
The Chairman reported that he had attended the Calara March Meeting and the Church Coffee Morning. He also reported that the Noticeboards had been replaced and that he was making a photographic record of the Parish Council assets for the asset register.
- 5.2 Playground Inspection Report Cllr Parker
Report to follow. A New Councillor is to be identified and trained as soon as possible.
- 5.3 Councillor's Reports All Cllrs
Councillor Down reported that:
 - The kissing gate at Forstal Mead had been vandalised. Councillor Webb will report to the developer.
 - Huntington Village Green substantial litter being dropped by the sub-station. Report to the Community Warden.
- 5.4 Community Litter Pick Cllr Down
21st and 23rd April 2024
- 5.5 Social Media Clerk
All election notices had been posted.

6. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting:

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27th February 2024 were taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

7. Clerk's Report: (not included in other agenda items)

The Clerk reported that she would be activating the Members Area of the Parish Council website.

8. Finance:

8.1 To receive and authorise payments listed on the schedule (to be provided at the meeting)

RESOLVED:

The Payments on the schedule were approved for payment:

Payee	Description	
Ionos	Email and Domain Hosting March 2024	60.60
Vodafone	PC Mobile March 2024	16.00
HP Instant Ink	HP Instant Ink £22.49 March 2024	22.49
Adobe	Adobe 19.97 March 2024	19.97
Amazon	Amazon Office Supplies	60.15
Irene Bowie	Staff Costs	Confidential
HMRC	PAYE NI Q4	Confidential
DB Works	Completion of Agreed Works	22,768.00
Irene	Salary March Paid by SO	Confidential

8.2 Late Payment Request/s to be discussed for approval and payment.

RESOLVED: That the following late payments were authorised:

1. Commercial Services Ltd	Mowing of Fields	£ 589.93
2. Mickleburgh Maintenance Ltd	Replace and fit new toddler Swing	£ 330.00

8.3 Banking Arrangements – Update.

RESOLVED:

- 1. Councillors Parker, Bird, and Carpenter would be signatories on the Unity Bank Account**
- 2. Councillors Parker, Bird and Carpenter would be signatories on the CCLA Account**

8.4 To consider any grant or donation requests

Request received from We Are Beams. Defer to the August Finance Committee meeting.

8.5 To consider any late financial matters. There were no matters to be considered.

9. Planning:

9.1 To receive the decisions and recommendations from the Planning Committee. The planning committee had not met.

Councillor Webb reported that the MBC Local Plan had been adopted and that Forstal Lane/ Forstal Farm had not been included. Beacon Park allocated 250 houses rather than 85.

It was noted that Coxheath, East Farleigh and West Farleigh would be a new ward.

10. Working Groups: To receive Updates

10.1 Recreation & Youth Working Group

10.1.1 To receive recommendations from the Working Group.

The three new benches had been installed and looked superb. The sports wall area had been de-compacted, topsoiled, and turfed, along with regrading the middle field path and installing a soakaway. The clerk will email DB Works and express the Parish Council's appreciation.

10.2 Traffic & Community Safety Working Group

10.2.1 KCC Highway Improvement Plan

The clerk will contact KCC regarding replacement Vehicle-Activated Signs (VAS). The Parish Council will pay for the VAS.

10.2.2 Parish Portal Report. Received and noted.

10.2.3 To receive recommendations from the Working Group.

10.3 Seasonal Events Working Group

10.3.1 To receive an update on planned and future events
Coxheath Parish Council 60th Anniversary Linked with Custard Pie Event. Councillor Webb to contact Clockhouse Farm regarding the 60th Anniversary. Councillor Webb to advise further at the April PC meeting.

10.3.2 To receive recommendations from the Working Group.

10.4 Environmental Initiatives Group

10.4.1 To receive recommendations from the EIG group

The group would look at from April 2024

- Three planning on Beacons Field
- Huntington Village Green Tree Planting - Need to check for Utilities. DB Works can provide this service.

RESOLVED:

The Parish Council would contribute to a memorial bench for Brain Mortimer. The location and type of bench to be reviewed at a later meeting. A formal request from the Mortimer Family will be required.

The Village Hall Management Committee Chairman stated that the VHMC would also contribute.

11. MBC Elections 2nd May 2024: Noted

12. Correspondence:

e:

12.1 To table items of late correspondence:

12.2 Items circulated:

12.2.1 KCC Member Annual Report

12.2.2 Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review

12.2.3 Notice of Election 2024

12.3.4 MBC Elections Annotated nomination paper example.

12.3.5 Community Groups email re Parish Newsletter

The clerk had replied.

13. Consideration of items to be taken in private (Exclusion of Public and Press):

There are only a few reasons as to why, legally, the public and press can be excluded from a meeting. The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Sec 1 (2) states "A body may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings; and where such a resolution is passed, this Act shall not require the meeting to be open to the public during proceedings to which the resolution applies." It is generally considered acceptable to exclude the press and public if the agenda item relates to the consideration of tenders, leases, purchases of assets, for matters relating to staffing covered by the Data Protection Act and to consider complaints against the council or a code of conduct complaint.

13.1 Email from MBC Planning Enforcement

The contents of the email were discussed and considered.

Meeting Dates 2024:

FULL COUNCIL: 30th April, 14th May Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, 25th June, 30th July, 27th August, 24th September, 29th October, 26th November.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 6.45 pm prior to the Full Council Meetings listed above. *Please note Planning Committee meetings may be cancelled if not required.*

FINANCE COMMITTEE: 25th April

Annual Meeting of the Parish and 60th Year of Coxheath PC to be held on the 28th May 2024

These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting but a record of decisions made.

There being no further business to be transacted, the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:45 pm.

Signed on behalf of the Parish Council

Chairman Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX 1:

Community Warden Diane Wakeling.

I continue to be busy in all of my other areas, which are ever expanding due to Wardens leaving the service because of the uncertainty of job security as the consultation has now come to an end. There was a meeting on Monday last, attended by all wardens.

The staff consultation has now started, and all wardens need to apply again for the job as community warden. The applications will then be scored on a point system before being offered an interview. Each warden also needs to state which area they would like to work in if they are successful in attaining retention of their job.

Meanwhile, In the last month I have had a couple of really happy outcomes. Managing to rehome a gentleman who was homeless and another resident who had no white goods in his home.

I also report fly tips are always on my list of jobs and this month I have reported 4 so far, in and around Coxheath and Hunton, there seems to be an unwritten rule to dump things on the corner just past the nail bar on the entrance of Crispin Court. As soon as one item is removed something else seems to be put there.

Unfortunately I am only in the village on a Monday, but I make sure I am a visible presence to the community, and if there are any issues residents know they can approach me or phone me. I try to attend the social groups, even if I just pop in to show my face.

I like to think that I am approachable and am always available to help our community.

If you need anything, please contact me on 07813713740

Maidstone Rural West Residents' Update 2023/24

Dear Resident,

It has been my privilege to represent you at County Hall for the last three years.

The third year has been even more challenging than the first two, as you all are aware, the impact of the war in Ukraine, the high level in inflation, the cost of living crisis and the resultant rises in service, delivery and unit costs have required KCC to undertake some radical financial cuts. The 2023/24 budget was the most challenging yet, as can be read in the KCC Auditors report.

The continuing refusal of Central Government to equitably fund Adult and Children's Social Care has been the most frustrating part of seeking to bring back a budget deficit and also ensure that the services both vulnerable adults and young people receive meets their immediate needs.

Within Education here are equal challenges from the increase in Home to School transport and the rising cost of SEN (D) EHCPs; and given a grant from the government to cut our costs, they seem to be growing higher than ever.

I am fortunate to have been on both the Governance and Audit and Scrutiny Cabinet Committees this last year and both committees have been able to significantly challenge the Cabinet Members on the decision they have made.

For the financial year 2023/24 I was allocated a Members grant of £3,600 and I have been very careful to allocate some funds to support a wide range of projects, for vulnerable groups. In the coming year 2024/25, quite rightly the grant continues to be £3600.

At the current time, I am working closely with:-

- a) Nettlestead Parish to try to reduce the speed limit through the village
- b) Coxheath Primary School to reduce the speed limit to 20 mph term time, outside of the school
- c) Loose Parish Council and Loose Amenities Association to develop a 20 mph speed limit through the village.

I sit on two cabinet committees, (a change from last year) which gives me a broad section of work to complete, these:-

1. Scrutiny Committee
2. Audit and Governance Committee

I would like to pay tribute to the Leader of KCC, Mr Roger Gough, who leads by example and continues to fight for our residents at both a local, regional and national level.

I list below the exact details of the Members Grant to show complete transparency.

Communities		
Applicant	Project	Amount
Yalding Parent and Toddler Group	Replace tables and games equipment for the children	£1200
East Farleigh Parish Council	Playground refurbishment	£1000
Hunton Wanderers Cricket Club	End of Season Renovations 2023	£300
Loose parish Council	Safety in Loose: 20mph	£408
Yalding Youth and Community Centre	Front Door Replacement	£300
Hunton & Linton under 5's Pre-School	New Garden Playhouse	£300
Highways – Barming Bollards	Road Safety	£300

As a Member of the County Council, I welcome contact with residents, support groups and local business. The Member Grant will always be available to assist vulnerable groups, be they of any age and if I can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to be in contact with me.

Simon
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