

KEMSING PARISH COUNCIL

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**Minutes of a Meeting held in the Small Hall, St. Edith Hall, Kemsing,
on Wednesday, 16 February 2011 at 8.00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Mrs. M. Cole (in the Chair)
Mr. D. Bennett, Mr. P. Burfield, Mr. B. Buttifant, Mr. G. Croughton, Mr. R. Dawes,
Mr. P. Eaton, Dr. P. Walker, Mr. A. Waters, Mrs. R. Wedderburn

IN ATTENDANCE: 9 Members of the Public
District Councillor Miss L. Stack

APOLOGIES: Mrs. W. Ross, Mr. I. Rumgay

Councillors were reminded to disclose personal and prejudicial interests on matters to be considered at this Meeting.

Mrs. Cole welcomed the public and Mr. Mark Butler (Prospective Conservative candidate for District Councillor), and Ms. Angela Culver (West Kent Housing Association Tenants Representative)

1. MINUTES

Mrs. Cole proposed:

"That the Council approves the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 January 2011, Reference KPC/01/11, previously circulated, subject to the following amendment:

Item 5(a) – Insert 'Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Cole expressed personal interests as members of CPRE'."

CARRIED unanimously

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(a) Capital projects (Minute 2(a) KPC/01/11)

St. Edith Hall - Ongoing.

Play Areas - Recreation Grounds Committee is obtaining quotations.

Public car park - Response from landowner is still awaited.

(b) West End – safety issues on footpath (Minute 2(b) KPC/01/11)

KHS had advised that the analysis of the surveys had been delayed due to staffing issues.

(c) Terms of reference for the Kemsing Downs Nature Reserve Advisory Group (Minute 3(c) KPC/11/10)

Mr. Bennett proposed and Mrs. Cole seconded:

"That the Council adopts the terms of reference, circulated prior to the Meeting."

CARRIED unanimously

(d) Road surface in Childsbridge Lane, Seal (Minute 3(d) KPC/01/11)

KHS was asked on 27 January to carry out repairs as a matter of urgency. A number of potholes were filled, however, the road surface remain in a very poor condition. The Council noted various potholes in the village which had been reported to KHS.

(e) Wooden post and rail fence along West End, Kemsing (Minute 2(f) KPC/01/11)

No further update available.

(f) Public conveniences - village car park (Minute 2(h) KPC/01/11)

The Council noted Sevenoaks District Council's (SDC) response confirming that, due to the reductions in government grants, considerable budget savings had to be made and unfortunately SDC resolved to incur no expenditure on the conveniences after 1 April 2011. The Parish Council is invited to take over full responsibility.

The following correspondence was noted:-

- SDC letter dated 28 January.
- Evening Women's Institute letter dated 9 February 2011 signed by 32 Members urging the Parish Council to keep the conveniences open.
- Copy of letter from Parochial Church Council to SDC.
- Copy of letter from Womens' Institute to SDC.

A discussion took place and various suggestions were considered, including approaching volunteers to do the cleaning in order to save costs. Most Members felt that there was a strong representation of support in the village to keep the conveniences open, but others thought that this was possibly not a totally correct statement as a formal survey to gauge public opinion, had not been done.

A factor to take into consideration is the uncertainty over the future of the car park, which has an impact on the public conveniences. It is assumed that the building will become the property of the landowner in 2016 when the existing lease with Sevenoaks District Council expires and should the Parish Council enter into a sub-lease, whilst spending potential monies on the upkeep and maintenance of the structure, the building will not become the property of the Parish Council. Setting up a charity to look after the running of the public conveniences may prove to be less expensive.

The last three year's maintenance, cleaning and other costs relating to the upkeep and running of the public conveniences were presented to Councillors. It was thought that the cleaning costs could be significantly reduced, but it was not easy to estimate maintenance and repair costs as these could vary quite significantly.

Mr. Croughton proposed and Mr. Eaton seconded:

"That the Council obtain quotes for cleaning and maintenance costs for the public conveniences in Kemsing car park, with a view to enter into a contract or contracts for a trial period of 12 months, from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012, to be reviewed after 9 months. This would be subject to acceptance of the quotes received at the March 2011 Parish Council Meeting."
CARRIED 9 in favour, 1 abstention

(g) Salt bin survey (Minute 7 KPC/01/11)

Members considered a list of suggested locations for new salt bins prepared by Mr. Buttifant and the Clerk.

Mrs. Cole proposed:

"That the Council put forward these suggested locations to KHS."
CARRIED unanimously

Miss Stack had many phone calls from residents during the last snow fall who expressed their willingness to spread the salt if it is provided. It is hoped that the installation of additional bins would be helpful. The issue with regard to public liability was also briefly discussed. More information can be found on the KHS website.

(h) Standing Orders (Minute 10 KPC/01/11)

The amended draft Standing Orders prepared by Mr. Bennett and the Clerk will be put forward for approval at the March Parish Council Meeting.

- (i) Annual Parish Meeting (Minute 11 KPC/01/11)
Subject to a few minor amendments the draft agenda was approved. The distribution list will be as usual.

3. **COMMITTEE AND OFFICER REPORTS**

(a) Planning Committee

Mr. Dawes proposed and Mr. Waters seconded:

“That the Council approves the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 January 2011, Reference No P/01/2011, previously circulated.”

CARRIED unanimously

Mr. Dawes proposed and Mrs. Cole seconded:

“That the Council approves the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 February 2011, Reference No P/02/2011, previously circulated.”

CARRIED unanimously

(b) Recreation Grounds Committee

Mr. Burfield proposed and Mr. Eaton seconded:

“That the Council approves the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 January 2011, Reference No RG/01/2011.”

CARRIED unanimously

(c) Report from Chairman

M26 resurfacing - Mr. Roy Willmore reported that only slight repairs had been made over three nights. The stretch of the proposed one lane had not been fully resurfaced as originally indicated.

Hospice in the Weald - A thank you note was received from Mrs. Joyce Course for the Parish Council's financial contribution.

Tryangle Awards – Nominations for young people who are deserving of an award should be made by 30 April 2011.

Sustainable Communities – Correspondence dated 2 February from the National Co-ordinator at Local Works was noted.

(d) Reports from Councillors

Allotments - Mr. Dawes explained that the Allotment Holder Association (AHA) intends to tidy up the allotments for the forthcoming Kemsing Festival. A guided tour is planned and the AHA asked for financial assistance from the Parish Council. The project will include, repairing the rotavator, purchasing plants and flowers, and repairing the fence, which is the Parish Council's responsibility.

Mr. Dawes proposed and Dr. Walker seconded:

“That the Council contributes £250 towards the repair of the fence.”

CARRIED 9 in favour, 1 abstention [Mr. Buttifant as being Chairman of the AHA]

These funds will be paid from the contingency budget under the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908, ss.23, 26 and 42.

Road closures - Mr. Buttifant reported that resurfacing work will take place in Honey Pot Lane on 23 March 2011 and Watery Lane on 25 March 2011.

Incident on footpath SR49 - Mr. Buttifant reported that a visually impaired resident had suffered verbal abuse from members of a cycling club whilst walking along the footpath. This has been reported to the Police Community Support Officer, who has spoken to some members of the cycling club. The Public Rights of Way Officer was also informed.

Flooding at The Well - Mr. Buttifant reported that the Well had flooded following heavy rain due to a blocked drain. Despite various reports to Thames Water, Environment Agency, Sevenoaks District Council and Kent Highway Services, none of these bodies were willing to take any responsibility. It is a fact that surface water from the highway is directed from the High Street into the stream and that KHS are responsible for clearing drains.

4. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC & PRESS

The Council was asked if any action can be taken against young people who have been driving vehicles on Nightingale Road Recreation Ground. The surface of the field has been badly damaged as a result. There are also regularly high volumes of broken glass in and around the youth shelter and this has spread onto the field, which is very dangerous for dog walkers and younger children using the Recreation Ground. The Clerk reported that PCSO Harwood is investigating these reports and the Litter Warden has expressed his concern regarding the increasing volume of broken glass. This will be put forward for further discussion at the next Recreation Grounds Committee meeting on 9th March 2011.

9.15 p.m. Mr. Dawes briefly left the Meeting.

5. DONATIONS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

(a) Play Place

Members considered correspondence dated 3 February 2011 including a request for financial assistance. Unfortunately there is no funding available for the remainder of this financial year. The request would be reviewed at the April Parish Council Meeting.

9.22 p.m. Mr. Dawes returned to the Meeting.

(b) Society of Local Council Clerks

Mrs. Cole proposed

"That the Council renews the membership for 2011/12, totalling £135."

CARRIED unanimously

6. KENT RAIL FRANCHISE

The Kent Rail Franchise is due to be renewed by Government in 2014. KCC had hosted two Rail Summits (at which Kemsing Parish Council had been represented) as part of the process of seeking improvements to rail services through the publication of a Kent Rail Action Plan. Comments are invited by the end of February prior to its approval at the next Rail Summit to be held on 19th April. The Plan proposes, inter alia, a regular all day service between Maidstone and Blackfriars and onward to Luton and Bedford, in addition to the existing service to Victoria.

RESOLVED: That the Council welcome the new service. Mr. Croughton and the Clerk would prepare the response in detail.

7. SUMMER ACTIVITY WORKSHOP

Due to budget constraints, SDC is unable to deliver the 'Youthzone' Family Fun Days this summer. A Summer Activity Workshop on Thursday, 3 March has been arranged by SDC to bring together town and parish councils and agencies which provide activities for young children and young people to explore the possibility of providing joint activities. It was suggested that Mrs. Ross attends the workshop.

8. OFFICE EQUIPMENT - PHOTOCOPIER

Ricoh has announced that they will terminate the photocopier maintenance contract from March 2011. The contract commenced in 2002. Various quotations are being obtained and it is hoped that these can be put forward to the Council for consideration at the March Parish Council Meeting.

9. DRAFT POLICIES FOR RATIFICATION

As part of the Clerk's CiLKA (Certificate in Local Council Administration), the Council is asked to consider the following policies for approval:-

(a) Policy for the procedure of handling complaints

Mrs. Cole proposed:

"That the draft policy is adopted, subject to a few minor amendments."

CARRIED 8 in favour, 2 abstentions

(b) Grant awarding policy

It was agreed that this policy should not be adopted in the draft form. Appropriate amendments would be made for consideration in due course.

10. **CONSULTATIONS**

(a) **Revision and consolidation of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2001(SI 2003 No 533) as amended**

The consultation (organised by the Local Government Finance Directorate in the Department for Communities and Local Government), was noted.

(b) **Consultation on Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on data transparency**

The consultation (organised by the Local Government Finance Directorate in the Department for Communities and Local Government) was considered. Mr. Bennett had prepared a response.

Mr. Bennett proposed and Mrs. Cole seconded:

"That the Council approves the draft response."

CARRIED unanimously

11. **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

Mr. Burfield proposed and Dr. Walker seconded:

"That the Council approves the list of payments (Vouchers 281-283, 286,287, 289-305) and note the list of receipts (Vouchers 284,285, 288)."

CARRIED unanimously

12. **INFORMATION REPORT**

The information report was noted.

13. **MATTERS TO BE RAISED AT THE NEXT MEETING & GOOD NEWS**

Proposed closure of local Post-Offices - Mrs. Cole drew attention to a paper circulated at the meeting. The National Federation of SubPostmasters are campaigning for an amendment to the Postal Services Bill, which will bring changes to the universal postal service and may result in the closure of many rural Post-Offices. To be discussed at the next Meeting.

West End Convenience Store – District Councillor Miss Stack gave an brief update on planning matters relating to the extended opening and closing times of the shop.

Casual Gardener

9.50 p.m. Mrs. Cole proposed:

"That the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted."

CARRIED unanimously

The discussion is summarised in a Confidential Report.

9.55 p.m. Mrs. Cole proposed:

"That the Meeting be opened for the press and public."

CARRIED unanimously

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

16 March 2011.

The Meeting closed at 9.58 p.m.