

KEMSING PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in the Small Hall, St. Edith Hall, Kemsing, on Wednesday, 20th July 2016 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT : Mrs. M. Cole (in the Chair)
Mr. A. Andrews, Mr. D. Bennett, Mr. P. Burfield, Mr. G. Croughton, Mr. R. Dawes,
Mr. P. Eaton, Mr. R. Lang, Mrs. M. Robarts, Dr. P. Walker, Mrs. R. Wedderburn-Day

IN ATTENDANCE: 1 Member of the Public
Mrs. Y. Tredoux (Clerk)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received and noted from Mr. B. Buttifant.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC & PRESS**

There were no questions from the public.

4. **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS**

There were no reports from the District Councillors.

5. **MINUTES**

Mrs. Cole proposed:

"That the Parish Council approves the minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2016, Ref KPC/06/2016."

CARRIED unanimously

6. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

(a) Village car park (Minute 6 (a) KPC/06/2016)

The Car Park Group met recently to discuss the outstanding matters. Mrs. Cole briefly summarised the main points discussed; a final completion statement is yet to be received and a number of matters previously raised were still unresolved. The Group had asked the Clerk to chase up Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) with a view to receive an update on the outstanding matters. The District Councillors would be kept informed. During a telephone conversation following the meeting, the Clerk had been advised by a SDC representative that SDC's records showed no evidence of them installing a concrete base and therefore SDC could not take any responsibility for it. The Clerk had asked for a written response which is awaited.

The general appearance of the car park area was discussed with particular attention drawn to the overgrown vegetation.

Mrs. Cole proposed:

"That the Parish Council makes available up to £500 (already in the budget), to be used for minor work such as cutting back hedges, clearing overgrown vegetation etc. with a view to improve the general appearance of the car park area."

CARRIED unanimously

(b) Parish Councillor Vacancy (Minute 6 (d) KPC/06/2016)

Mrs. Jarrett resigned on Monday, 11th July 2016. The Clerk would notify the District Council accordingly.

Given that this was the second resignation of a newly appointed Councillor in the past 6 months, Members considered whether it would be more feasible to reduce the current number of Councillors from 13 to 12 as opposed to advertising the casual vacancy for the third time in 11 months.

The Clerk advised that an application with an explanation giving the reasons for the request would have to be made to SDC.

Mrs. Cole proposed:

“That the Parish Council asks SDC’s advice for the procedure to reduce the number of Parish Councillors from 13 to 12.”

CARRIED 9 in favour, 2 abstentions

(c) Park Lane Nature Reserve Area & Fairfield Close Area (Minute 6 (e) KPC/06/2016)

Responses from Moat Housing and the householders at Park Lane were awaited.

The Parish Council noted a quotation totalling £350 recommending the removal of the two birch trees.

Mr. Andrews proposed, seconded by Dr. Walker:

“That the quotation totalling £350 to remove the two birch trees was accepted”.

CARRIED unanimously

(d) Claim of damage to Church Lane track (Minute 6 (f) KPC/06/2016)

A response was awaited.

(e) Global Adventure Challenges (Minute 8 KPC/06/2016)

The organisation offered a sincere apology for the unauthorised use of the car park.

On the 7th July 2016 a request was received for an event planned for Wednesday, 20th July 2016 to use the Sir Mark Collett Pavilion car park as a water stop between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. The Pavilion Manager had agreed to make available their toilet facilities. Given that the event was scheduled to take place before the next Parish Council meeting, the Clerk had invited Councillors’ comments via email. Some potential issues were highlighted but no objections were made and permission was granted. On the 20th July the Clerk had visited the site at 7.50 a.m. and found that it had already been in use. Mr. Andrews reported visiting the site at 7 a.m. and at that time there had been no activity. Mr. Burfield went along at around 9.30 a.m. and found the site had been cleared. It would appear, therefore, that the water stop was set up between 7.30 a.m. and 9 a.m.

A further request to use the Pavilion car park site as a water stop on Wednesday, 14th September 2016 was received. The Parish Council was not aware of any inconvenience suffered by other car park users as a result of the event. The site had been left in a satisfactory state and Members were content with the way in which the last event was held. Mrs. Cole proposed:

“That the Parish Council has no objection for the water stop to be set up at the Pavilion car park on 14th September 2016”.

CARRIED unanimously

(f) Parish Council Website (Minute 11 KPC/06/2016)

Members noted the Clerk’s report which briefly summarised the history of the Parish Council’s website, explaining the current situation and recommendation for the Council to continue using the web hosting services provided by Kent County Council (KCC). Since the last meeting, Parish Councils had been advised that the introduction of a charge for the webhosting service had been withdrawn and KCC funding was re-approved to continue the service free of charge.

Mrs. Cole proposed:

“That the Parish Council continues with using the KCC web hosting services.”

CARRIED unanimously

- *It was suggested that the Finance Committee made provision in next year’s budget for potential website costs.*

7. STAFFING COMMITTEE

In previous years the staff appraisals were held informally by three Members of the Parish Council (normally the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council as well as the Finance Committee Chairman). In order to formalise the process and to assist with the Council's statutory duty to offer an employee pension scheme, the Clerk recommended the appointment of an official Staffing Committee who would be charged with exploring available options and to make a recommendation for the full Parish Council to consider. Introducing a new Committee would require the Standing Orders to be updated.

The Parish Council considered the Clerk's recommendation and noted the draft Committee structure as well as draft terms of reference. Objections were made to formally appoint another Committee which would require amendments to the Standing Orders and would also involve the appropriate preparation of agenda and minutes. Instead, a proposal was made for the proposed Staffing Committee to be reduced to a Staffing Group with the following terms of reference:

The Group shall:

- (a) *Consist of the following three Parish Councillors :*
 - * *Chairman of the Council*
 - * *Vice-Chairman of the Council*
 - * *Chairman of the Finance Committee*
- (b) *Review performance management of staff by conducting annual appraisals in October of each year*
 - * *Clerk's appraisal to be conducted by Chairman of the Council, Vice-Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Finance Committee*
 - * *Other Staff appraisals to be conducted by the Clerk and one Member of the Staffing Group*
- (c) *Discuss performance, future development objectives, training, improvement and motivation issues with Staff*
- (d) *Set objectives for a framework for the coming year's work*
- (e) *Discuss issues and find solutions to any problems*
- (f) *Review job descriptions from time to time, to be recommended to and ratified by the full Council*
- (g) *Review salaries for all Staff to recommend to Finance Committee and ratified by full Council*
- (h) *Review Pension Scheme to be recommended to and ratified by full Council*

Mr. Andrews proposed, seconded by Mr. Eaton:

"That the Parish Council appoints a Staffing Group to deal with staffing matters as set out in the Terms of Reference above".

CARRIED unanimously

8. CAR PARK LIGHTS NEAR THE TENNIS COURTS, HEAVERHAM ROAD

The existing contract with British Gas expires on 5th August 2016. Members considered options to enter into a new agreement for one, two or three years with the same supplier.

Mr. Croughton proposed, seconded by Mrs. Cole:

"That the Parish Council accepts the three year contract (14.421 p/kwh unit charge and 31.616 p/day standing charge)."

CARRIED 9 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstaining

9. DONATIONS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

(a) Victim Support

Members considered a request for financial support.

Mr. Eaton proposed, seconded by Dr. Walker:

"That the Parish Council makes a financial donation of £100 towards the Victim Support organisation."

CARRIED 9 in favour, 2 abstaining

- *Members were interested to find out the number of Kemsing residents who had received support within the past 12 months.*

10. **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

Mr. Eaton proposed, seconded by Dr. Walker:

“That the Parish Council approves the list of payments (Vouchers 51 to 66) and approves a payment of £74.40 to be paid from the General Contingency fund to purchase a new battery and electrode pads for the defibrillator.”

CARRIED unanimously

11. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

(a) Planning Committee

Mr. Dawes proposed, seconded by Mr. Andrews :

“That the Parish Council accepts the minutes of the meetings held on 6th June 2016 (Reference P/09/2016), 20th June 2016 (Reference P/10/2016) and 4th July 2016 (Reference P/11/2016).”

CARRIED unanimously

(b) Downland Management Committee

Mr. Bennett proposed, seconded by Dr. Walker:

“That the Parish Council accepts the minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2016, Reference DM/02/2016”.

CARRIED unanimously

12. **CONSULTATIONS**

There were no consultations.

13. **COMMON FIELD RECREATION GROUND TRUST INVESTMENT**

Members considered the Clerk’s report regarding correspondence received in relation to an inactivity fee which has been introduced. The report included the various options available.

Mr. Croughton proposed, seconded by Mr. Bennett:

“That the Parish Council accepts option 2 (Pay £15.00 to issue a certificate, a total of £30.00 for the two holdings. The account can then be downgraded to a certificated account with no further charges).”

CARRIED 10 in favour, 1 against

14. **INFORMATION REPORTS**

(a) Chairman’s Report

Flooding, Greenlands Road – Mrs. Cole received a phone call from a Greenlands Road resident on Saturday, 26th June regarding flooding in the gardens of some properties. Mrs. Cole suggested the residents to call on the Environment Agency and Thames Water. A subsequent email correspondence from the resident was received to inform the Parish Council that the appropriate authorities had been contacted and action was being taken to investigate the drainage issues.

(b) Reports from Councillors

South Eastern Railway meeting – Mr. Croughton had attended a Rail Summit hosted by Senior Managers in London to consider the services after the Thames Link expansion were completed. Plans are being considered to introduce a semi-fast service from Maidstone East to London, with intermediate calling points, one of which is Otford. Surprisingly this service will not terminate in London but its final destination would be Cambridge. Mr. Croughton stressed that this proposal was only at the very early stages of the planning process at the moment.

(c) Publications for information

Police Community Support Officers – Information regarding changes to the distribution of PCSO’s was noted. It would appear that Kemsing would not be affected by the changes.

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

16. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Wednesday, 21st September 2016

The meeting closed at 8.39 p.m.

Signed by Chairman : Date: