



Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 17th November 2022 at 7pm at Cuxton Library

Present: Cllr Hutchfield (Chair), Cllr Reynolds, Cllr Savage, Cllr Thorley, Cllr Wilson, Cllr Jensen, Cllr Burley, Cllr White and Ward Councillor Fearn

In attendance: Mr C. Jensen, Clerk

There were no members of the public present.

121) Apologies for absence

Cllr Porter – prior engagement.

It was resolved to accept these apologies.

122) Declarations of Interest (DPI, conflict of interest and personal interests) and alterations to the Register

None.

123) Minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2022 – for approval

No amendments required.

It was resolved to accept these minutes as a true record of the meeting.

124) Matters Arising

The clerk advised the CCTV cameras had been cleaned and improvement was seen but the final outcome would not be determined until drier conditions arrived. The replacement basket swing had been received for the playground. Allotment invoices had been issued and the details of those people who asked to terminate their agreements had sent to the Cuxton Allotment representative. The Library Services Manager had been asked if he had sourced a brown bin for the use of the library garden volunteers and an update was awaited.

Medway Councillor's report and Public Session

It was resolved to suspend the meeting for Medway Councillor's Report and for the Public Session. Matters raised may be placed on the agenda for the next or a future meeting.

Ward Cllr Fearn gave a verbal report as follows:

Christmas Tree Lighting Event – Cllr Fearn confirmed his donation towards the event had been released by Medway Council and the clerk thanked Cllr Fearn for his help.

Traffic Light Loop on A228 – Cllr Fearn advised this was to be addressed tonight, 17th November. It transpired when the A228 was resurfaced in July 2022, the loop was not reactivated.

Christmas Household Waste Collection Dates – These are Thursday 29th December and Friday 6th January 2023.

Vegetation Cutback by Allotments – Cllr Fearn advised Medway Norse had completed this recently and the request for a ‘concealed entrance’ sign before the allotments had been approved and sent to the sign shop for fabrication.

Priority on Bush Road – Cllr Fearn confirmed he was in consultation with David Warner, Acting Road Safety Manager, Medway Council, regarding the right of way. Cllr Wilson advised an accident had occurred near the site recently and she would forward the details to Cllr Fearn.

Following Cllr Wilson’s request, Cllr Fearn advised he was not aware of any planning updates regarding the vacant shop in Bush Road and no application had been submitted for planning consent. He confirmed the previous applicant had withdrawn their appeal.

Kent Wine Vault Application – Cllr Fearn advised, following consultation, Cuxton had to be a Rule 6 party to the appeal but this was probably the best option. Cllr Hutchfield requested Cllr Fearn contact the Environment Agency to make enquiries regarding the possible contamination from the washing of vehicles on the site as silt had blocked drains on Bush Road. Cllr Fearn would report back to Council.

125) Finance

a) Bank Balances as at Statement Date 31st October 2022

Cllr Burley advised he had checked all accounts to 31st October and there were no issues.

It was resolved to accept these balances as correct.

b) Approval of payments made since the last meeting

The clerk provided Councillors with details of payments made since the last meeting. No issues were raised.

It was resolved to accept these payments as correct.

c) Approval of accounts for payment

The first account from Baylis Landscaping was for the repair of the playground gate. Cllr Thorley expressed her frustration why the further repairs mentioned in the subsequent playground report, were not addressed when the gate was repaired. The clerk stated this was because it was not in their remit. Cllr Hutchfield suggested as the gate was repaired regularly, the Parish Council should in future consider re-siting or replacing it.

The second account from Spatial Dimensions was to determine the exact location of the oil pipeline as a consequence of Exolum’s insistence regarding the proposed pavilion re-development. The clerk advised the project managers had sent the account to an old email address in error and it had only recently been brought to his attention by them.

The two accounts from Logic related to the preparation of the costings for the redevelopment proposals and the supervision of the recent excavation works regarding the location of the pipeline.

It was resolved to approve these payments.

d) Update on Rialtas and consider booking audits for 2023

The clerk advised Rialtas have sold their business to a Canadian company, Harris & Co but would continue trading under their branding. The clerk requested Council's approval to book auditors for May 2023 in order not to repeat the late audits conducted this year.

All Councillors approved the clerks request and it was resolved the clerk arrange dates and book external audits for the end of year, 2022/23.

e) Purchase of battery-operated strimmer for removal of weeds in village

Cllr Hutchfield stated the quotation for the strimmer was in response to discussions with the street cleaners and a complaint from a resident regarding weeds in Tar Tank Lane. The purchase would allow the street cleaners to resolve weed issues quickly and effectively once noticed.

It was resolved to request the clerk to purchase the Stihl strimmer equipment as per the quotation provided.

126) Pavilion Re-Development

a) Project Cost

Cllr Hutchfield confirmed a meeting had been arranged with Logic, the project managers, on 24th November, when the final project costings would be provided.

b) Management of Pavilion and CIO development

Cllr Hutchfield advised, following the clerks' consultations with KALC, the Parish Council was unable to manage the prospective café within the redevelopment as it cannot lawfully trade. Trading can be conducted through a Limited Company, or the Parish Council could lease or franchise the area to a third party and receive income without trading in its' own right. Cllr Hutchfield advised she and Cllr Reynolds had prepared documentation within a previous steering group to apply as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) in this regard.

c) Funding for All

Cllr Hutchfield confirmed, following an initial meeting with Funding for All, that they had allocated three mentors to assist with the current Football Foundation funding application, the CIO application and to consider further funding streams. Meetings had now been arranged with two of the mentors with feedback to be provided at the next Council meeting.

127) Recreation Ground

a) Playground Inspection

The clerk advised Councillors of the main findings of the report and stated one of the moderate risks detailed, repair to the surface under the swings, had previously been approved by the Parish Council and was due to be undertaken in the near future. The clerk confirmed the other moderate risk concerned one of the basketball backboards which needed removal.

The clerk had removed the redundant cable ties and broken signage noted in the report and he was attempting to clear the algae from the playground but a lasting solution would be required to eradicate the spread.

In order to regenerate grass growth in worn areas, Cuxton 91's groundman had suggested to the clerk the purchase of fine sharp sand which, when mixed with grass seed, would stimulate growth. The clerk advised he had telephoned suppliers today and prices for a 1-ton bag of sharp sand delivered ranged from Wickes £98.50, MBM £79.36 and Homeleigh £60. The clerk was advised to contact DBM Gravesend, to obtain a further quotation. *It was resolved the clerk contact DBM and order a 1-ton bag of fine sharp sand from the cheapest supplier.*

128) Events - Firework Display

a) Feedback on the event

Due to the recent adverse weather conditions, Cllr Thorley advised that affected areas had to be rolled by Cuxton 91's groundsman after the event. The clerk advised the decision to run the event was made much later than normal but Cllr Thorley requested a timeline be provided for future events.

b) Fencing and clearance of the bonfire site

Cllr Hutchfield advised additional fencing had recently been purchased to enclose the bonfire site and the Parish Council had already approved the quotation for the clearance of the site this year. Cllr Hutchfield suggested Council discuss in 2023 whether a bonfire should be lit at future events.

c) Village contribution to fireworks

Cllr Hutchfield advised the 'Wheel of Cuxton' was in discussion as to whether they would ask residents, who did not visit the firework display but watched from their homes, for donations to help funding in lean years.

129) Planning

a) Winery Planning Inquiry

(i) Rule 6 status

Cllr Hutchfield advised that Rule 6 status had been approved and allowed the Parish Council a voice at the Inquiry. Cllr Thorley advised she would send the clerk a web link regarding Rule 6 status to be forwarded to all Councillors for information.

(ii) Statement of Case

Cllr Hutchfield advised the 'Statement of Case' was being formulated to be submitted by 9th December and an advocate needed to be instructed.

(iii) Timeline

Cllr Hutchfield confirmed as the date of the Inquiry had been moved to March 2023, she did not have the exact timeline to hand as it had been altered.

(iv) £100 for Ordnance survey access

Cllr Hutchfield confirmed this request was not needed as it had been funded from an alternative source.

b) Planning Application MC/22/1933 – Update

Due to an error by Medway Council with the planning application, the clerk advised the Parish Council's objection had now been submitted and showed on Medway Council's planning portal.

130) Christmas Tree and Carols event

a) Christmas Tree Lighting event volunteers and confirmation of arrangements

Cllr Hutchfield expressed concern with the lack of volunteers, although Cllrs Thorley and Wilson stated they would be able to assist even though they were performing as part of the choir. Following discussion, it was agreed a charity collection would be made at the event in aid of the Heart of Kent Hospice. Cllr Wilson to request donation buckets from the organisation for use at the event.

b) Approval of costs

(i) £54 hall hire

Cllr Hutchfield advised as a further session had been arranged the cost was now £72.00.

It was resolved to approve this payment in the sum of £72.00.

(ii) £130 for pianist for rehearsals and performance

The clerk advised he had not received an invoice from the pianist and Cllr Hutchfield confirmed she would ask for it to be sent to the clerk.

It was resolved to approve this payment when the invoice was received.

(iii) Cost of light and sound at the event

The clerk advised he had not received an invoice regarding the light and sound at the event and Cllr Hutchfield confirmed last years' charge was £70. Cllr Thorley advised the cost of the mulled wine was approximately £50 and would provide receipts.

It was resolved to approve these payments when the invoice/receipts were received.

c) Lift platform for Christmas Tree lights

Following notification that SGN was unable to assist, Cllr Thorley advertised on social media for assistance and a resident offered their services and time for free and this had been gratefully accepted by the clerk on behalf of the Parish Council. The clerk advised the Christmas tree was to be delivered on Monday 21st November. Cllr Hutchfield advised, following several discussions with the company who supplied the 'live' Christmas tree in January 2022, that they would not provide a replacement. Cllr Thorley suggested the Council contact a Christmas Tree farm to determine if they would provide a tree without cost. Cllr Thorley to report back to Council.

131) Civility and respect Pledge

Following a request at the October Council meeting, the clerk confirmed group training for Councillors and lay members was not available. He provided web links for you tube videos and the current training courses available. The clerk advised he would forward all the details to Councillors and lay members and ask they read the documentation and confirmed they would be willing to sign up to the pledge.

132) Casual Vacancies

Cllr Hutchfield handed an anonymised document received from a parishioner who had expressed interest in becoming a Councillor. Following the agreement of all, Cllr Hutchfield stated no interview of this candidate would be required. Cllr Hutchfield advised another parishioner had expressed an interest but had yet to provide any documentation for consideration.

It was resolved this parishioner be offered the position of one of the two remaining vacancies on the Parish Council.

133) Reports of meetings attended on behalf of Council

a) KALC

Cllr Hutchfield advised the Parish Council was unable to send any representatives to the meeting scheduled on 19th October. Cllr Hutchfield confirmed that Cllr Jensen and the clerk would be attending KALC's AGM on behalf of the Parish Council on Saturday 19th November.

b) Rural Liaison

Cllr Hutchfield advised she was unable to attend the next meeting scheduled on Tuesday 22nd November. Cllr Fearn confirmed he would attend.

c) Cuxton Academy of Schools

The clerk advised no meeting had been scheduled but conversations regarding the locking of the gates at the end of the Junior school drive were ongoing. The school had confirmed staff would lock the gates on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and if activities were cancelled. The school requested the organisers of the after-school activities on the other weekday evenings were provided with a key to the gate. Cllr Hutchfield confirmed the Parish Council's agreement provided the school supplied the keys. The clerk to advise the school.

d) Police Liaison

The clerk advised a Police Surgery had been arranged for Tuesday 22nd in the library and was widely advertised in the village. Cllr Thorley asked if drug paraphernalia was still being found in the village by the street cleaners. The clerk advised the amount found had reduced recently.

134) Correspondence

Cllr Wilson was already dealing with the Heart of Kent Hospice request in respect of the Christmas Tree Lighting event.
The clerk provided a 'Befriending Together' poster received from Medway Voluntary Action group who had requested it be added to noticeboards in the village. Cllr Wilson to contact the organisation to request further details.

135) Information Exchange

No motions may be proposed, nor decisions taken under this item but may be placed on the agenda for the next or future meetings.

136) Members Future Agenda Items

'Live' Christmas tree - update

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:42 pm

Next meeting 8th December 2022, 7pm at Cuxton Library

Signed *Julie Porter* **Chairman**

On the *8th* **day of** *December* **2022**