

Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 13 March 2017 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close commencing at 7.30 pm.

Councillors present: Mrs Wendy Hinder (Chairman), Ms L Clarke, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr Bob Hinder,) together with the Assistant Clerk and 3 members of the public.

- 1 **Apologies and absences**
Cllr Hollands (Holiday) Cllr Radcliffe-Godfrey (Absent).
- 2 **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying**
None.
- 3 **Minutes of the Meetings of 6th & 13th February 2017.**
The minutes were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.40pm to allow the members of the public to ask any questions. The 3 members of the public were from Grove Green and had attended the meeting to echo their concerns with the parking issues around Grove Green. The committee sympathised with them and encouraged them to lobby County Councillor Paul Carter with their concerns as the Parish Council has done and to lobby and attend the Joint Maidstone Transport Meeting due to be held on Tuesday 21 March as it is hoped these issues will be discussed.

The meeting reconvened at 7.55pm.

4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**
 - 4.1 Minute 2955/4.1 Inconsiderate parking Provender Way, yellow lines. Awaiting response from County Councillor Carter. **Noted.**
 - 4.2 Minute 2955/4.2 Grovewood Drive South yellow lines. Awaiting response from County Councillor Carter. **Noted.**
 - 4.3 Minute 2955/4.3. Land to the rear of Tesco Grove Green. Parish office is still attempting to locate the owners. **Noted.**
 - 4.4 Minute 2955/4.5 Development Wildfell Close. The planning officer has requested information on drainage and it is not yet clear when this application will be submitted to the MBC Planning Committee. **Noted**, however Members asked for clarification of what type of drainage the planning officer is referring to.
 - 4.5 Minute 2955/4.6. Grovewood Drive North Crossing facility. The resident has informed the office that she will soon be submitting the petition. **Noted.**
 - 4.6 Minute 2955/4.7. Parking at Grovewood Drive North, Shepherd's Gate Drive etc. Awaiting response from County Councillor Carter. **Noted.**
 - 4.7 Minute 2955/4.8 Grounds Maintenance, identification of potential contractor. Various contractors have been identified and action will be taken to contact them all for quotations. **Noted.**
 - 4.8 Minute 2955/4.9 Tonbridge and Malling BC Local Plan. **Noted**, the timetable has now changed and consultation will begin in the Autumn. The Clerk will bring the item back to committee at that point. **Action office.**
 - 4.9 Minute 2957/7.1 Highway report supplied to County Councillor Paul Carter. Response not yet received. **Noted.**
 - 4.10 Minute 2958/12 Co-mingled bin The Spinney. MBC was approached with a request for a bin to be installed. **Noted.**
 - 4.11 Any other matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda.
5. **Planning Applications for Consideration**

17/500388/FULL/ANJO Minor material amendment (variation of condition 2 drawing numbers) of planning permission 14/500290/FULL (Demolition of a number of disused temporary structures associated with Maidstone Studios and erection of 77 dwellings together with access, parking, garaging, landscaping and ancillary works on land to east of Maidstone Studios) - to introduce a 0.5 storey increase in height to 28 of the dwellings within the approved scheme. The Maidstone Studios Vinters Business Park New Cut

Road Maidstone Kent. **Ratified** Clerk's decision, after consulting with committee members.

Wish to see refused and reported to the Planning Committee.

This proposed amendment to the original planning application will result in a fundamental change to the balance of properties on the development. 13 x 3 bed dwellings will now convert to 4 x bed units so despite what the Persimmon letter, dated 23 February, states there will be an addition of at least 13 additional bedrooms.

The 2014 planning application originally had 145 vehicle spaces with 14 visitor spaces. Visitor spaces, at the request of KCC, were increased to 20. A study of the plot layout and car parking shows that allocated visitor car parking spaces are tucked away and very oddly placed. Examples: 2 visitor spaces are directly opposite 2 x 3 bed houses in what could be seen as a private area and in an area serving 14 properties there are no visitor spaces.

As visitor spaces are dotted about they would be difficult to locate and it is also considered that there is an insufficient number to serve such a large development. The Kent Design Guide Review - Residential Parking recommends visitor car parking spaces at 20% (0.2 per unit) of the number of dwellings. Therefore an additional 9 spaces should be sought. The parish council considers that these additional parking spaces be placed in a dedicated visitor car park close to the main entrance, a request made by KCC Highway in 2014. Since the 2014 permission the Park & Ride at Old Sittingbourne Road has closed and whilst Maidstone Studios currently has a private arrangement to use the site, coaching ticket holders to the studios, this cannot continue for much longer. Even with this arrangement large events at the Studios do cause huge parking problems at Grove Green and this will increase as the proposed development is on the main Studio car park.

Failure to provide sufficient car parking spaces will result in on-street car parking and the design of the development provides few opportunities that do not cause problems for residents accessing and egressing junctions and their own allocated parking areas.

17/500951/FULL Construction of two semi-detached one bedroom houses with associated vehicular access and a total of 5 car parking spaces for both the existing apartments and the new dwellings. 1A and 1B Vineholme Forstal Road Aylesford Kent ME20 7AE. **Do not wish to object.**

17/501066/TPO Tree Preservation Order: Sweet Chestnut group (G1) - reduce encroaching South West branches back to rear boundary. 23 Silver Tree Close Walderslade Kent ME5 9ST. **Do not wish to object.**

17/500979/FULL Erection of two storey side extension with internal and external alterations. Sandhurst Grove Green Road Weaving Kent ME14 5JT. **Do not wish to object.**

17/501083/TPO Application - Hornbeam x 3 - Reduce canopies (height 15m, removing 5m, leaving 10m). Thin canopies by no more than 10%, Willow Tree - Pollard tree at approx. 4.5m (height 7.5m, removing 3m, leaving at 4.5m). 7 Cinnabar Close Walderslade Kent ME5 9PF. **Do not wish to comment – Defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.**

6. **Planning Decisions, Appeals and Appeals Decisions**

6.1 Gibraltar Farm appeal. GRANTED. **Noted.**

6.2 16/506065 1A & 1B Vineholme Forstal Road. Erection of single storey extension to existing apartment along with 2 storey etc.

Members did not object but raised concern over parking. MBC refused on the grounds that its height and projection from the rear of the building would have a detrimental impact on the neighbouring property. **Noted.**

6.3 16/506571 The Granary, Court Lodge Farm, The Street, Boxley, outline application for one detached dwelling. Members did not object but MBC refused because a new dwelling was unsustainable and would distract from the group of converted buildings

and would fail to conserve, maintain or enhance the countryside. **Noted.**

- 6.4 16/502179 Bethany, Boxley Road. To ratify the Clerk's decision, after consulting with committee members that the parish council would amend its response, and thus not attend the MBC Planning Committee meeting, to Do not wish to object. An amendment to the plans dealt with the parish council's main reason for objecting. The MBC minutes are not yet displayed on the Council's website. **Noted.**
- 6.5 Willow Farm, Tyland Lane 2 x 3no bedroom bungalows. Written Appeal deadline 5 April 2-17. Residents have been notified by a community alert e-mail. The parish council's objections have been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by MBC. As the parish council's reasons for objecting reflect the MBC decision to refuse the Clerk suggests that there is no need to send another letter. **Noted.**
- 6.6 TPO application. Members are notified that an application to fell a sycamore tree at 20 Spenlow Drive was refused as the Landscape Officer identified it as an Ash Tree which makes *a positive contribution to local landscape and environment.* **Noted.**
7. **Highways and Byways**
- 7.1 MJTB. Members received the clerk's report that the parish councils has been successful in getting its Highways Issues Report placed on the MJTB agenda as a standard item under 'Questions/Statements from members of the public. A statement or question will need to be submitted by 17 March latest so that the proper officer can decide whether it is appropriate for the question/statement to be asked. The date of the meeting will be Tuesday 21 March, members **agreed** that Cllr Bob Hinder would attend and speak on behalf of the Parish Council. A statement is to be drafted. **Action: Cllr Bob Hinder/Clerk.**
8. **Grounds Maintenance**
- 8.1 Springclean. **Noted** two KCC operatives have been working in the parish undertaking the tasks identified on the task list. MBC has also undertaken the footpath clearance between Badger Road and the Timber Tops Play Area. The plan is now to try to get the Community Payback Service to work in the parish and maintain/improve areas.
- 8.2 Community Payback Service. Still no response received to the meeting and submission of documents however the Clerk was warned that there would be a delay in getting back to the parish council. **Noted.**
- 8.3 Volunteer litter picking. The parish office was unsuccessful in attracting any volunteers to arrange a large litter picking event. However, the residents who undertake volunteer litter picking have been out and about. The Environment Committee had purchased some litter picking equipment and members **agreed** to allow the Clerk to loan equipment ie litter pickers and fluorescent jackets to regular volunteers keeping a list of where it is. The Clerk also regularly issues the MBC green Volunteer Clean bags.
9. **Highway Projects**
- 9.1 Short list and criteria form. Members deferred this item to the April meeting to allow them time to consider the form and shortlist. **Action: Environment Committee,**
- 9.2 Crowdfunding. Members **noted** the Clerk's reference to an article in The Clerk's Magazine, that Frome Town Council also appears to be looking at releasing funds for highway work and is encouraging residents to consider using Crowdfunding to part fund projects that the Town Council has approved. The article will be considered by the F&GP Committee at its 14 March meeting.
- 9.3 Verge Boxley Road/Travertine Road Verge. Members requested that one of the KCC/BPC letters concerning parking on verges should be placed on cars parking on verges and delivered to local properties. This was undertaken at this junction and a resident's letter had been received with their suggestions for alternative solutions. Also received was an e-mail expressing support of the letter being sent out. Members **agreed** that a response should be sent to the resident thanking

them for their letter and observations which have been noted and to respond appropriately to each suggested point. Members requested that in future they would like to see all correspondence both positive or negative as this gives a more realistic picture. **Action: office**

- 9.4 Cllr Bob Hinder proposed the purchase of spring bulbs (approx. 4 sacks) for planting in public areas this autumn. It was **agreed** that residents are approached for suggestions of suitable planting areas and to find volunteers to carry out the planting. **Action: office.**
10. **Policy and Procedures**
10.1 Sale of Public Land – Members **agreed** with the Clerk’s suggestion that this is dealt with under housekeeping and should the occasion arise when it is required the Clerk will check that it is still fit for purpose.
11. **Members Reports**
11.1 Maidstone KALC Ancient Woodlands – As the next meeting is being held on 22 March members asked for this to be included as an agenda item. **Action: office.**
12. **2017/2018 Budget Project**
To agree the cost of installing a seat at Timber Tops Play Area. Members **agreed** to the total cost of £829.85 which includes the supply and installation of a phoenix seat with arm rests. Cllr Dengate passed on thanks to the Clerk for her hard work on this item.
13. **Volunteer Groups**
Cllr Bob Hinder reported that the FoBW task day had taken place on Sunday 12 March which involved clearing the area around the memorial seat. He also stated that Section 1 of the bunding was about to take place with the removal of a Sycamore tree. He also met officers from the ‘Off Road Bike’ team who were undertaking an operation to catch illegal bike users in the area.
14. **Matters for Information – Received.**
14.1 Article on Foreign Truckers parking in lay-bys in Sunday Times - to be scanned and circulated to members. **Action: office.**
14.2 Email from Resident – Olivine Close. Cllr Bob Hinder informed members that he had received an email from a resident in Olivine Close who is concerned that possible drug dealing/taking is occurring close to the Open Space in Impton Lane, cars are parked up with loud music being played and smoking of illegal substances. The Police have been notified and the resident has been asked to keep a log of activity and to encourage other residents to report this activity to the police.
14.3 Planning Rota – Cllr Bob Hinder has requested that the rota is altered so that Councillors are not tied to a date to attend and that members attend as and when needed taking it in turns on the list. **Action: office.**
15. **Next Meeting**
Next full Environment Committee meeting 10 April 2017 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7:30pm.
16. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC**
Members **noted** the Clerk’s report on outstanding MBC Section 106 Payments which no longer included £40,000 for Weaving Heath.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman Date