

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
HOO ST WERBURGH PARISH COUNCIL
Held on Thursday 7th July 2011 at 7.30pm
At the Red Cross Centre, Stoke Road, Hoo St Werburgh.

Present: Councillors Mr Andrews
 Mrs Bamber
 Mr Bhattal
 Mr Bunkall
 Mrs Chambers
 Mrs Counsell
 Mrs Gatfield
 Mrs Hipsey
 Mr Pearce
 Mrs Perfect
 Mrs Rees
 Mr Sands
 Mr Tildesley

Also present: Mrs Babington (Clerk), Catherine Smith (MC Rural Strategy Manager) and members of the public.

1. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Pratt and Mr Flack.

2. To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for Co-opted Councillor.

Mr Bhattal signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took his seat around the table.

3. Declaration of Interests.

No interests were declared.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting.

It was resolved to accept the minutes as a true record subject to a minor alteration, Chambers/Gatfield) these were then signed and dated by the Chairman.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes.

The Chairman reported on the current situation with the Beacon at Hoo Common, he stated that he would report on this further during the meeting.

6. Urgent Matters.

Councillor Chambers reported that a crack in the concrete part of the village sign was becoming more noticeable. Councillor Pearce stated that he would inspect this and report back to the next meeting.

Councillor Perfect reported on a problem with the tree roots in the alleyway from Church Street to Brookside. This was approved as an urgent matter.

The Chairman informed members that he had received a request from the Youth Worker, Lindsay Hartley, to use Pottery Road Recreation Ground during the summer holidays. This was approved as an urgent matter.

Kingshill Rec. was also approved as an urgent matter.

7. **Presentation by Catherine Smith Rural Strategy Manager re Hoo Partnership.**

The Chairman introduced Catherine Smith to the meeting to give a talk regarding the future of the Hoo Partnership.

Catherine Smith spoke regarding the Hoo Partnership and its history. She informed members that it was set up in 2005 as a group and good progress had been made, it had been supported by the Parish Council, the local school, health, police and business interests in the area.

She informed members that it was now under review, Medway Council was currently undergoing changes and it was anticipated that these would affect the Rural Strategy Partnership over the next year; she suggested that the Hoo Partnership should consider a new direction and focus on different priorities and projects.

She stated that the post of Rural Strategy Manager would not exist in the same format in the future, she stated that Medway Council had committed to retaining the rural strategy at 50% of its current level and prioritise would be set by MC Managers and as resources were being cut there was a need to prioritise.

She spoke regarding Neighbourhood Planning and funding that may be available for this. She stated that Hoo was a service centre for the surrounding villages on the Peninsula and this made the area prime for Neighbourhood Plans.

The Chairman thanked Catherine Smith for her presentation asked members for their questions.

Following questions the Chairman summarised the options for the future of the Hoo Partnership and stated that this item would be placed on the September Agenda for further consideration.

Action: Clerk to place item on the next agenda.

8. **Police Matters.**

Councillor Gatfield introduced PCSO Jo Ford to the meeting.

PCSO Ford informed the meeting that he was based at Hoo School and he outlined his duties to members.

A discussion took place regarding the changes proposed for the police force and the affects that this would have on the policing of the area and in particular Hoo St Werburgh.

9. **Chairman's Report.**

The Chairman gave his report; he spoke regarding the options open for the Beacon at Hoo Common. Councillor Andrews stated that he would establish further details regarding the options for the beacon and report back to the next meeting.

Action: Councillor Andrews to progress.

10. **Clerks Report.**

The Clerks report was noted by all present.

1. Lindsay Hartley re summer youth activities – Urgent Item.

2. Email for member of the public re speeding in the village – This concern was noted and it was agreed that this should be forwarded to the Highways Department and the police should be asked to undertake speed checks along Stoke Road.

Action: Clerk to progress.

3. Email from resident re bins and weeds at Kingshill Recreation Ground – This matter was discussed and it was agreed that the parish council would look into the use of weed killer in order to treat the weeds.

It was further agreed that Medway Council should be chased regarding the emptying of the bin.

Action: Chairman to progress.

11. Public Question Time.

No matters were raised.

12. Financial Matters.

It was resolved to accept the financial statement. (Bunkall/Gatfield)

13. To Consider Grant Requests.

No grant applications were received.

14. Rural Liaison Committee.

A report was circulated to all members regarding the representatives for the Rural Liaison Committee. It was noted that at the annual meeting two representatives were selected to attend the Rural Liaison Committee meetings on behalf of the Parish Council. The Clerk informed members that only one representation could formally attend these meetings. This was discussed by members and it was agreed that the role should be shared and each representative should alternate their attendance at the meetings.

It was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with Medway Council regarding this matter.

Action: Clerk to action.

Councillor Bamber gave members a report on the recent Rural Liaison Meeting that she had attended on behalf of the PC.

15. Parish Allotments.

Councillor Perfect reported on the recent allotment inspection that she had undertaken.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.50pm for refreshments.

The meeting was reconvened at 9.05pm.

16. Burial Ground.

Councillor Andrews reported on the land the PC purchased for use as a burial ground and he outlined the hurdles that the PC would need to get through before other uses could be considered.

He stated that the various options for alternative uses would need formal planning permission.

Councillor Rees stated that there would be other problems associated with the site, as there was a restrictive covenant on the land; she informed members that this type of covenant could usually be brought out, however this process was lengthy.

Councillor Andrews stated that he would progress this further with the working party; he confirmed that Councillor Rees had given him some paperwork on this matter. He stated that he would report on this matter further at the next meeting.

Action: Councillor Andrews to progress.

17. Planning Matters.

Members considered the planning applications received during the course of the month:

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

MC/11/1317 Land east of Bells Lane (northern parcel of land) – No Objections.
Application to erect 5 flag poles.

MEDWAY COUNCIL DECISIONS**APPLICATION NUMBER: MC/11/1128 – APPROVED BY MEDWAY COUNCIL**

PROPOSAL: Excavation of front garden to facilitate hard standing area, retaining wall & new vehicular crossover

LOCATION: 151 KNIGHTS ROAD, HOO ST WERBURGH, ROCHESTER, ME3 9BX

APPLICATION NUMBER: MC/11/0788 – REFUSED BY MEDWAY COUNCIL

PROPOSAL: Construction of manufacturing unit and alterations to existing office building, alterations to car parking and associated landscaping

LOCATION: BUTTERCROCK WHARF, VICARAGE LANE, HOO ST WERBURGH, ROCHESTER, ME3 9LQ

18. The New Working Hours for Retained Fire Crew at Hoo.

Councillor Sands reported on this matter and the cover for the fire service on the Peninsula. He informed members that there was one pump in Hoo and one in Strood; he spoke regarding the decrease in the retained fire crew at Hoo.

He informed members that Cliffe Parish Council were lobbying and campaigning for the fire crews on the Peninsula and he asked if the Parish Council would support this.

He raised concerns regarding this and the risks it put Hoo under.

Councillor Pearce asked Councillor Sands to put together a report for consideration at the September meeting, this was agreed.

Action: Councillor Sands to progress.

19. Recreation Grounds.

The Chairman reported on the play areas in the parish.

Kings Hill – The Chairman informed members that the new bench had been vandalised, however the contractor as goodwill gesture had repaired this.

Pottery Road – Members agreed that specification for the footpath repairs at Pottery Road Recreation Ground and the Clerk was asked to instruct the contractor to undertake the work.

Action: Clerk to action.

Hoo Common – The Chairman informed members that he was due to have a site meeting with Mr Brice and Chris Valdas from Medway Council regarding the Section 106 play area. Councillor Andrews and Rees asked to be involved with this.

The Clerk asked for member's authority to arrange for the annual safety inspections to be undertaken at the play areas. This was approved.

Action: Clerk to progress.

20. Delegated Authority for August Recess.

It was agreed that Councillors Pearce, Bamber and Chambers be given delegated authority to tend to Parish Council matters during the August recess.

21. Ward Councillors Report.

A written report from Ward Councillor Tony Watson was circulated to all present and noted.

A discussion took place regarding the development at Bells Lane and the anti-social behaviour associated with this.

22. Urgent Items (referred from item 7.)

The Chairman informed members that a request had been received from the Youth Worker, Lindsay Hartley, to use Pottery Road Recreation Ground during the summer holidays. Members approve this request.

Action: Clerk to respond.

The Chairman referred to a problem with the tree roots along the footpath between Brookside and Church Street. He confirmed that Medway Council did not own this pathway.

Councillor Perfect suggested that this might be owned by the occupant of a property in Church Street.

The Chairman asked Councillor Perfect if she could establish further details and he asked Councillor Rees to undertake a land search to ascertain ownership of the area.

Councillor Perfect reminded all Councillors that the Summer Fair would take place in the Village Centre on 20th August.

23. Date of next meeting – Thursday 1st September 2011 @ 7.30pm.

There being no other business to discuss the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Signed.....
Chairman

Dated.....