

EAST PECKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council, Mrs M Piscina,
East Peckham Jubilee Hall, Pippin Road, East Peckham, Kent, TN12 5BT
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27th February 2024

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 21st February 2024

7pm in the Jubilee Hall Meeting Room

1. Apologies for absences and absentees:

Present: Councillors M. Williams, T. Eastwood, M. Joannes, R. Mewett, D. Fairless, S. North. and Parish Clerk M. Piscina, 10 residents, Green Party Candidate A. Cope

Apologies: Councillors T. Fryer, D. Seal, Borough Councillor M. Boughton, County Councillor S. Hudson.

2. Declarations of Interests and/or lobbying

None

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

It was resolved that the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 17th January 2024 were a true and accurate record of the meetings.

Proposed: M. Joannes **Seconder:** T. Eastwood **All in favour**

4. To receive an update on items discussed and resolved at previous meetings

Bye-laws: due to the amount of work required, this is still an ongoing job.

Legionella Testing – the circulated pump failed, it has now been replaced and the system is working as it should. The final aspect for the weekly check-list is now complete and ready to go.

Jubilee Hall roof – 1 quote has been received, still require 2 more, so was resolved to defer the decision until next month until they have been received.

5. Elections and Vacancies

Councillor vacancies: 3 vacancies

TMBC have confirmed that an election would not be required if potential councillors step forward, can co-opt.

6. Reports from County Councillor, Borough Councillors, PCSO & Community Warden

M. Boughton provided a full report, covering a wide variety of issues that he and Sarah Hudson have been dealing with – due to the length it has been included at the end of the minutes.

Community Warden – D. Wakefield provided an update: she continues to be busy in East Peckham, and her ever-expanding areas due to Wardens leaving the service because of the uncertainty of job security. The staff consultation has now started, and all wardens need to apply again for the job as community warden. The applications will then be scored on a point system before being offered an interview. Each warden also needs to state which area they would like to work in if they are successful in attaining retention of their job.

In the last month she has had a couple of really happy outcomes; rehoming a gentleman who was homeless, and helping another resident who had no white goods in his home to work with PW Lions to gain some. She has also reported 4 fly-tips this month.

7. To adjourn in order to enable members of the public to address the meeting

7.1 To receive correspondence from residents

The main correspondence received was to do with issues that have already been addressed within M. Boughton's report. There is a streetlight requiring fixing in Snoll Hatch, but have explained we are now waiting for all street lights to be replaced at the same time in the next financial year. 1 complaint received regarding the main entrance to the Jubilee Hall – upon exiting the building, a young child caught his head between the two doors, parent complained the door catch had been changed and was unsafe. The door had been inspected recently and the clerk also checked it again to ensure it was still functioning safely. No issues were found, but are now trialling a slow-closing arm, although this means the previous safety catch that enabled the door to stay open at full extension no longer works.

7.2 To take questions from residents

Residents present requested to discuss their concerns over the Church Lane Planning Application listed under Point 16, not limited to but including the risk of flooding, the land being designated Green Belt, lack of escape for elderly residents in the case of flooding, lack of medical infrastructure such as gp surgeries given neither Hadlow or Paddock Wood GP's are taking on new patients. Frustration at how difficult they found the new TMBC Planning website to access the relevant documents was also expressed.

Councillor Williams stated that the council had met previously with Wealden Homes to understand the proposed amendments to the planning application and that their only course of action at this meeting was to vote on whether to accept or object to the application. He gave a reminder that when residents submit comments, they need to state specific examples / legislation as opposed to generic comments. A handout was made available to those present as to what powers the Parish Council have concerning planning applications and valid / irrelevant reasons for comment / objection. The Council has gained an extension on the response deadline until the first week of March, which is in line with the Public Consultation deadline of Monday 4th March.

Councillor North asked if the number of homes built would be part of the Local Plan, but it was confirmed it would not be, as that is still out for allocation at this time.

A resident enquired about a Community Speed Watch in the village due to the speed of some drivers around the village. This has been previously discussed with Kent Highways in line with our current Highways Improvement Plan and will be looked into further.

8. To receive a report from the Chairman / Clerk:

Chairman: A full building application for the proposed perimeter track is required; drawings, dimensions etc. Have met with SJM Planning to understand the process and costs involved: £750 / a daily rate of £500 if required. It was resolved to have the drawings done.

Proposed: M. Joannes **Seconded:** S. North **All in Favour**

The cost for a viewing of the space and drawings of a potential Pump Track is £750.

It was resolved to go ahead and request them.

Proposed: R. Mewett **Seconded:** M. Joannes **All in Favour**

Parish Clerk: Gave a reminder that the Asset Register needs to be reviewed by the end of March – T. Eastwood to complete with support from the office if required.

9. **Groups & Organisations:** To receive reports from the Chairman of Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups that have met in the last 4 weeks

Events: M. Joannes: D-Day celebrations will take place in June – the beacon will be lit and bells rung at St. Michael's on Thursday 6th June and the Council will hold a Village Picnic on Sunday 9th June. External food and drink suppliers have been sought, with entertainment provided by a Punch and Judy show. Halloween event will take place on Saturday 26th October, in the Jubilee Hall.

10. Members who attended any meeting on behalf of EPPC not included elsewhere on the agenda are invited to give a report

M. Williams and J. Perretta attended a Planning Application training session – both found it very informative and useful.

M. Piscina attended an Internal Audit session run by Scribe to help with the Year End preparation.

11. Finance

11.1 To review and approve Bank Reconciliations and Accounts for December'23 and January '24
It was resolved to approve the bank reconciliations and accounts.

Proposed: T. Eastwood **Seconded:** S. North **All in Favour**

11.2 To review and approve Schedule of Upcoming Payments

KS Cleans	£715.00
Salaries	£ 3173.66 (may vary due to overtime if needed)
Engie	£296.03
Veolia	£116
HMRC	£623.68
Nest	£226.45
Castle Water	£40 (circa)
Drax (electric)	£140.29
British Gas	£28.50
Screwfix	£159.06
Online Playground	£2514.30
Plaice	£27.60
Trees for J. Fields	£754.46
Wall Goal Brackets	£53.84
Pest Control	£90
Grassland Services	£TBC
Mark Edwards	£TBC

It was resolved to approve the schedule of payments:

Proposed: M. Joannes **Seconder:** D. Seal **All in favour**

11.3 To discuss and resolve received and proposed requests for grants and donations;
Grant request received from Hi Kent, a charity that offers

11.4 To discuss and resolve quotes received:

12. Review of 'Regular Hire' Terms and Conditions

This was deferred in order to include more detailed costs that will be incurred when the change in pitch hire T's and C's take place next season.

13. 2024/25 Council Meeting Dates

The council reviewed a draft schedule of Council Committee Meeting Dates for the next financial year. Following feedback on a couple of proposed dates, a final schedule will be emailed out in due course.

14. Open Letter to residents regarding dogs and owner etiquette.

The updated Open Letter was discussed along with the possibility of a trial of dogs on leads whilst using the playing fields. D. Fairless has received complaints from residents regarding dog mess on the fields,

dogs out of control, owners not in control of their dogs or aware of where they are all the time.
Discussion was had on the legality of being able to ban dogs off lead under current Bye-laws and also realistic possibility of being able to enforce it. It was resolved that:
The Open letter would be published online and on the noticeboards
The trail of dogs on leads would not go ahead
The Parish Clerk will contact the dog warden regarding a having a presence at the playing fields / speaking to residents and for any advice on practical measures the council could enforce.
If nothing changes in the coming months then this will be reviewed again.
Proposed: M. Joannes **Seconded:** T. Eastwood **All in Favour**

15. Easter Event

It was resolved the Parish Office would hold the Easter biscuit decorating event again, using the proceeds to buy Easter Eggs for the community. Proposed date of Friday 15th March, but to be confirmed inline with any school events.
Proposed: M. Joannes **Seconded:** T. Eastwood **All in Favour**

16. To Discuss and Resolve any comments to be submitted on the following Planning Applications:

LOCATION: YEW TREE COTTAGE, 437, BELLS FARM ROAD, HADLOW, TONBRIDGE, TN11 0JR
PROPOSAL: ref: 24/00053/PA Construction of new single storey double garage

No Objections

Proposed: R. Mewett **Seconded:** T. Eastwood **All in Favour**

LOCATION: Brook Farm Buildings, Church Lane, East Peckham, Tonbridge, TN12 5JH
PROPOSAL: ref: TM/21/03353/FL/FLMAJ Erection of residential dwellings (Use Class C3) including market homes, homes for older persons (over the age of 55) and affordable homes, a new community facility (Use Class E(e)) alongside hard and soft landscaping including access, public open space, SuDS, and associated infrastructure

Having met with Wealden Homes to review the amendments to the planning application, the Council felt their original concerns and requests had not been met. It was resolved to object to the amended planning application, and for the Local Development Committee to formulate and submit the full response to TMBC. Local Development Committee to meet at 6.30pm on Tuesday 27th February.

Proposed: R. Mewett **Seconded:** S. North **All in favour**

17. Methodist Church External Grounds

Having reviewed the request for a decision on various aspects of the work, the following was resolved:
The WI sign will remain part of the design and be repaired at a cost of £200
The hanging basket poles will be removed permanently
The current thorny bushes will be removed, but consideration given to any smaller shrubs that could remain. EPPC to gain advice on best plants to replace them with and arrange ordering.
Handrails and bollards etc to be ordered in chrome / stainless steel
The suggested path colour is agreed.
The current large planters / tubs placed outside the Pound shops will be redone by the Parish Office to match the new beds outside the Methodist Church
Proposed: M. Joannes **Seconded:** T. Eastwood **All in Favour**

18. Update on ongoing Planning Matters

To Alcohol Licence application for a residence in Old Road was approved.
Kent Highways will be trialling new road markings outside the school in Church Lane. These are designs currently used in Holland and it will be the first time they have been used in the UK.
The road mess caused by the building works at Brunswick Yard – covered in Matt Boughton's report.

19. Mereworth Speed Consultation

It was resolved that the Council had no objections to the proposed plan of reducing the speed limit to 40mph on a permanent basis.

Proposed: M. Joannes **Seconded:** T. Eastwood **All in Favour**

20. Matters for discussion in private

None

21. Matters to be discussed and decided at the next meeting.

None

22. Date and Time of next meeting: *Wednesday 20th March at 7pm*

Appendix 1 *Report Received from Matt Boughton and Sarah Hudson due to their absence due to a clash with an Area 2 Planning Committee meeting at Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council this evening, which we are both members of, Sarah Hudson and I are unable to attend.*

The past month has been very busy so we have combined both KCC and TMBC matters as follows:

Church Lane closure

We have found communication very difficult with SGN for many months given the recent road closures at Church Lane. As David Seal will confirm the smell of gas never really left the site after the previous road closure last year and the Wednesday before half-term SGN used an emergency permit to return, prior to the Southern Water works on Hale Street concluding.

We questioned why they used this permit to close the road (which KCC cannot deny if considered an emergency) but found responses unconvincing. In addition, they subsequently informed us the works would finish many days before they actually did. Communication with KCC Public Transport and Arriva was also lacking which created a quite unsatisfactory situation. It is one that we will be following up with the company.

Given the recent excavations the pavements are covered in mud and tomorrow (Thursday 22 February) TMBC have arranged for the hit-squad to attend for a couple of hours. The next scheduled clearance will be Thursday next week, 29 February, to complete any clearance that is not done tomorrow. The road sweeper will also be attending Church Lane in coming days to make the surface better.

Church Lane Planning Application

We are aware that the Parish Council has requested more time to consider this from TMBC. We know this is on the agenda elsewhere this evening and would be grateful if the Parish Councils views could be shared with us, given the application is due before the Area 2 Planning Committee should officers wish to approve it. We have been in contact with a number of residents and encouraged them to share views – whether they are in favour of the proposals or against, and there are definitely some different views coming to us.

Following the closure of the consultation on the amendments we have arranged to meet with the Case Officer to make sure every new issue is picked up in the analysis and to work through the timeline towards a decision.

Brunswick Yard

We are continuing to liaise with TMBC Planning Enforcement about how much can be done through this process to deal with the lack of wheel washing from construction vehicles prior to it leaving the development site at Brunswick Yard.

Hale Street traffic calming

Sarah was contacted by residents on Hale Street about issues with the current traffic calming measures, specific concerns being the cats eyes in the middle of the road being very loud and making a thudding noise that is audible for properties along Hale Street

Unfortunately removal of the cats eyes will be tricky due to what is underground and the high likelihood of damage to the road surface in the centre of the carriageway on Hale Street.

16 Old Road Licensing Application

This was discussed at last months Parish Council meeting and the application has been approved. Hopefully the e-mail from Matt at the end of last month helped outline the considerations for the application.

Westwood Green

It has been well over a year since the bench on the green on Westwood Road was first damaged. We have been pursuing this and the reason for the lack of action by Clarion is because they did not realise they had responsibility for it! However, with the help of TMBC Property Services we believe we have a breakthrough in them accepting responsibility and hope to have this matter sorted sooner rather than later.

Waste bin on Old Road, opposite the Pharmacy

The collection schedule for this bin has changed. It was previously 3 times a week (Thursday, Saturday and Sunday). This has been increased to 5 times a week (every day bar Tuesday and Thursday) due to it reaching capacity often.

Safety at the junction of Addlestead Road and Snoll Hatch Road

We both spent a morning with residents who live in Snoll Hatch assessing safety of the tight bend at the junction of Addlestead Road and Snoll Hatch Road. We are working with KCC Highways on some immediate changes aimed at slowing down traffic as it approached the blind bend.

KCC Highways have committed to an additional pair of roundels and replacement repeater signs on the approach to the bend, subject to an additional solid white lines to discourage cars heading too far off carriageway.

One of the potential options is for a 7.5t weight limit to be put in place on these two roads, and wonder if this might be a consideration for the Parish Council Highways Improvement Plan too?

Another measure suggested is to have 'STOP' signs painted on the highway.

We would be interested in the Parish Councils views on this.

Sanctuary Housing

Numbers 104 – in Old Road are Sanctuary Housing properties. Over recent months we have been dealing with individual issues and are pleased to be establishing a better working relationship with Sanctuary to deal with some of the problems residents there have contacted us about.

Budgets

On Monday KCC passed its Budget and on Tuesday TMBC passed its Budget.

From a TMBC perspective the headline figure is that Council Tax for a Band D property in East Peckham will be £216.39 for the 2024/25 financial year. This represents an increase of 3%, or £6.93 on the current financial year. On average just 10.5% of the overall council tax bill goes to TMBC with much more going to Kent County Council (71.1%) and Kent Police (11.3%).

Litter and Fly-Tipping

Fines for each of these will rise later this year. All fly-tipping will see a £1,000 fine given while littering will have a fine of £500, reduced to £250 if it is the first offence or just a small amount.

Matt Boughton

Leader, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Councillor for East Peckham, West Peckham, Mereworth and Wateringbury