



HERNHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 31st July 2019 from 8:00pm to 9:30pm.

Present: Cllr J. Geliot (Chairman of meeting) Cllr B. Heller Cllr S. Castle
Cllr P. Couzens Cllr A. Rumble Cllr S. Edgington

Also Present: Mrs R. Parr (Clerk) and 6 members of the public

40 APOLOGIES

Cllr C. Page, Cllr A. Gould

41 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None declared.

42 MINUTES

The minutes of the following meetings, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman;

1. Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 26th June 2019 (minutes 21-32).
2. Parish Council meeting held on 16th July 2019 (minutes 33-39)

43 MATTERS ARISING

A. Local Needs Housing. The Chairman had received an email from Cllr Rumble regarding their views on the Local Needs Housing. The contents of the email were read out and minuted in the interests of transparency.

‘ My personal feeling is that this development was started with the best of intentions by the village but has become a juggernaut driven by English Rural with no care to the extent of opposition from the village and no possibility of calling things to a halt and looking for a more suitable site and if necessary, an alternative builder. Many of the dissenters will have approved affordable housing in principle but object to the choice of site and scale of the project.’

Also on the same topic and email from Mr. D. Miles of the hernhill Conservation Group was also read out.

‘Quite clearly the results of the 2019 Housing Needs Survey are no longer aligned with the current plans being developed by English Rural. It was also very apparent from the meeting that the dynamics within the Parish Council and the views of the individual Councillors has changed regarding the proposed development. Disappointingly, very little time was allowed for English Rural to address the various challenges put forward by the Councillors. It is now clear that English Rural plan to proceed on the basis of their experience, rather than the results of the recent survey. I asked a question during the meeting, which I would like to get a formal answer to at the next full meeting due to be held on Wednesday, 31st July. "Considering the results of the recent 2019 Housing Needs Survey, and the

continued opposition to the development by local residents, does the Hernhill Parish Council remain firmly in support of the development, or will the council now withdraw its support before the plans are submitted for planning approval?"

The formal response by the Chairman was read as follows:

‘The 2019 survey confirmed that there was still a need for a Local Needs Housing Development. The development must address not only the immediate needs but future housing needs. English Rural have considerable experience in building and operating these developments and in their opinion there is the appropriate mix of accommodation in the plan. The Parish Council have asked them to slightly amend the accommodation by changing one of the 2 bedroomed houses into a bungalow and they are considering the feasibility of this. English Rural will make a planning application in due course and the Parish Council has no power to stop them doing so as with anyone else who wishes to make a planning application. It seems sensible for the Parish Council to work with English Rural to ensure that the proposed development is of a high standard and in keeping with the surroundings. Once the planning application has been made the Parish Council will have the opportunity to consider the plans and at this stage can support or not support the application as with any other planning application.’

Cllr Rumble queried whether we consider not supporting English Rural and stop working with them. The Chairman responded that English Rural are listening to the council and have confirmed the use of timber for windows and cladding and are also looking into the feasibility of the suggested changes by the council to the configuration of the houses. The Chairman also suggested a useful guide that had been produced by Ashford Borough Council on Local Needs Housing that covers the powers, rules and responsibilities.

Cllr Rumble queried whether there would be a Planning Policy Exemption. Cllr Heller, mentioned that the site concerned would be classed as one of High Sensitivity for future developments. That the green space between Hernhill and Faversham should be retained given that it was landscape classified as North Kent Fruit Belt and regarded as an exemption site. Mr Brenchley asked whether the Council would be the proposer of the project. The Chairman responded by confirming the Council are not the proposer. The council started the process by asking for a survey, which showed that there was a need for Local Needs Housing. The council then took the process further and invite English Rural to the process. That is the end of the councils involvement as the planning Application now rests entirely with English Rural who will put in a detailed application. The council would then comment as with any other planning application. The Chairman suggested that the council continued to work with English Rural, for which Cllr Couzens seconded and the remaining Cllrs present supported.

Cllr Heller, commented that she was uncomfortable that there were houses in the development for the private market but understood this was an accepted way to subsidise the project. It was remarked that the private houses within the development externally should not be out of keeping with the remainder of the development.

- B. Annual Allotment Inspection. It was agreed that the annual allotment inspection would take place at 3pm on the 17th August with a visit by the Councillors. It was also mentioned that Cllr Castle had now taken the remaining plot.
- C. Update on the salt bin at Staplestreet. The council are waiting to hear from SBC whether we are successful.

- D. Noticeboard at Waterham. The board has been made. We are waiting on the owner to undertake site clearance and preparation for a new hedge before installing. The clerk is to visit the owner of the site on Tuesday 6th of August to discuss.
- E. Neighbourhood Watch. Peter Wilson had made contact with Jason Hedges the PCSO representative. Suspicious activity have been noted regarding a van and this will be circulated via the Hernhill News. Cllr Castle had made contact with the Kent Police NW representative and was waiting on confirmation of ensuring that he was now on their mailing list.
- F. Risk Assessment The Risk Assessment had been completely revised by Cllr Page. It was agreed to review the revised version when Cllr Page could be present at the next Parish Council Meeting in August.
- G. Autumn Litter Pick Cllr Rumble had been in contact with SBC and agreed the loan of the equipment for the litter pic. The date has been agreed for Saturday 28th September. Cllr Edgington is to prepare suitable road safety signs. The Clerk is to contact the insurance company to ensure that we are covered so such an event and whether there were any restrictions, with the results obtained in writing. The Clerk also confirm that following the previous litter pick, SBC are still looking to donate some equipment to the parish, which should be with us shortly.
- H. Fostall Turn-off - No HGVs. The Parish Clerk has contacted KCC Highways requesting for No HGV signs at the Thanet Way turn-off. A response had been received and Kent Highways are waiting to find a suitable sign.
- I. Thirwell Farm. An update was provided by the Parish Clerk confirming that one of the daughters involved, Billie Mete had been sentenced. A warrant is still outstanding for James and Lucy Mete. A parishioner raised that burning had been taking place at Thirwell Farm on the 18th July. Given the smoke and smell it was suspected that this was toxic rubber/plastics. A second parishioner, who lives $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the site confirmed that he had also noticed this recently and to the extent that windows and doors had to be closed. A parishioner remarked that despite having photo and video evidence and having previously reported it to SBC, no response from SBC was received. Concerns were also raised regarding the potential toxic nature of the waste being burnt in relation to their being a fruit farm immediately next door. The Chairman strongly encouraged that all instances should be reported. The Chairman requested that the Clerk to prepare a letter to be sent to the Environment Agency concerning the site containing the site and for the parishioner to provide the Clerk with their evidence.
- J. Dale Farm Oast The clerk had reposted the case to the Conservation Team at SBC and was waiting on a response.
- K. Footpaths. Cllr Edgington had reported the Hernhill to Boughton Footpath online at SBC. Attempts had been made to register the footpath by the telephone box but this was rejected. Peter Wilson raised that the footpath from Fostal to the Thanet Way also needed vegetation cleared and that Cllr Edgington would register this as well.
- L. Neighbourhood Plan The Chairman and Cllr Heller recently attended a meeting with other councils regarding planning. It was highlighted at the meeting that SBC were not particularly active in their support for the NP process. However, the Chairman highlighted that Ashford Borough Council were very supportive in providing guidance and that online there were a number of finished examples that were useful to review, especially that of Pluckley. The Chairman mentioned that the first stage is to define the NP area to apply, which is then applied to SBC. A six week consultation period would then commence. The council then discussed whether the NP area should be that of the whole parish. Cllr Couzens queries as to whether there were cost implications. The Chairman responded other than time there should not be if the work for the plan was undertaken by within the parish using local knowledge and that outside consultants were not used. Jeff Tuff, Cllr at Dunkirk had agreed to

attend the September council meeting with a colleague to provide their experiences of the NP process. The Chairman proposed a formal motion that the whole of the parish should apply under the NP. This was seconded by Cllr Heller with all other councillors in favour. The Chairman would write to SBC to commence the process and that the NP area had been formally identified.

44 COUNCILLORS REPORTS

- A. Cllr. Heller and the Chairman had attended on the 30th July a meeting involving Graveney, Boughton, Sheldwich, Selling, Dunkirk and Henrhill to discuss planning and development in and around Faversham. Especially in relation to ensuring that green spaces between the villages and Faversham were retained. The meeting confirmed that NP carried considerable planning force with SBC in relation to planning applications.
- B. Cllr B. Heller was due to meet with the Kent Men of The Trees in the 1st August for a village inspection. Discussing were had concerning the which trees had previously been donated to the village and that who was responsible for those on the Village Hall playing field. The clerk is to provide Cllr Heller with the contact details for Peter Rawlins who is the Chair of the Village Hall committee and the DCA.
- C. Cllr Edgington had visited George Bell Farm to investigate the site in view of parishioner comments regarding possible suspicious activity and a mobile home being towed onto the site. The Clerk is to contact SBC with the Council's concerns.

45 PLANNING

- A. Planning Application. **19/503604/FULL** - Demolition of existing garage/store building and erection of new garage/gym and laundry room with holiday letting accommodation above and creation of 2 parking spaces within existing paddock. *Elm Tree Cottage Butlers Hill Dargate Faversham Kent ME13 9HG*. The Parish Council object on the grounds that this is a new building rather than converting an existing structure with a significant increase in build form. The provision of the balcony may also result in the loss of privacy for the owners of Sunnyside. The Parish Council also questions the need for further holiday letting within the village given that there have been quite a few recent applications for holiday lets.
- B. Planning Decisions: None received.

46 FINANCE

- A. The Clerk showed the bank reconciliation report dated 19th July 2019 which was approved and signed.
- B. The following payments were approved by those present:
 - Chq-1439 Hernhill Bookings (Village Hall - June Hire) £23.00
 - Chq-1440 Countrywide Grounds Maintenance (Mowing) £133.16
 - Chq-1441 John Barnes (Waterham Noticeboard) £255.00
 - Chq-1442 Hernhill Bookings (Village Hall - July Hire) £30.00
 - Chq-1443 A. Chapman (Paper - Newsletter) £10.00
 - S/O- R Parr (Advice Only - Clerks Salary and expenses) £240.13
- C. Now that the signing of the new bank mandate had been formally minuted, the Clerk would visit the bank to arrange the changes to the signatories.

47 ADMINISTRATION

- A. None.

48 CORRESPONDENCE

- A. NALC ICO draft response. The Clerk had received correspondence from NALC asking for comments on the draft response. The Clerk is to forward this to the Cllrs for review.

- B. Road Closure - Between Church Hill and Kemsdale Lane. A few residents had received notification of resurfacing works due to take place on the 12th August for two days which would require the road to be shut. Aside from the incorrect spelling of Hernhill, the notification was not clear exactly where the works would take place. The Clerk is to contact Highways at SBC for clarification.

49 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public were invited to address the Chairman with their comments on Parish matters.

- A. A parishioner raised whether the proposed industrial site on the Thanet Way next to the Shell garage had been approved. The Clerk confirmed that no formal notification had been received that the final decision on the planning application had been taken following the public meeting. Due to concerns regarding the low number of parking spaces included at the site, would the council consider yellow lines. The chairman confirmed that there would be a cost implication for this and that we should wait on the final decision.
- B. Mr Brenchley raised that following the extraordinary meeting on the 16th July, that he felt let down in that he had not been correctly represented in the minutes, despite them having been signed off as a true record. Mr Brenchley would like his comments recorded as 'Mr Brenchley raised concerns that as the local needs housing project was started by the Parish Council for young people & families in the village, the survey did not show there was that need' and also that 'the Parish Council must ensure any development should be a positive legacy for the village & not be substandard to the surrounding just because it's social needs housing'.

50 CHAIRMAN & CLERK'S SUNDRY REPORTS

- A. None.

51 ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON AUGUST AGENDA

- A. Local Needs Housing
- B. Annual Allotment Inspection
- C. Salt Bin
- D. Noticeboard at Waterham
- E. Neighbourhood Watch
- F. Risk Assessment
- G. Autumn Litter Pick
- H. Update of Fostal No HGVs
- I. Update on Thirwell Farm
- J. Update on Dale Farm Oast
- K. Update on Footpaths
- L. Neighbourhood Plan

The next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council is to be on Wednesday 28th August 2019. There being no further business, the Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 9.30pm.

CHAIRMAN