

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LEEDS PARISH COUNCIL
Held in the Leeds Playing Field Pavillion on Tuesday 13th March 2012 at 7.30pm.

Present: Mr Govett
Mr Martin
Mrs Young
Mr Wallace

In attendance: Mrs Sherrie Babington – Clerk, Borough Councillor Peter Parvin and members of the public.

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Govett.

1. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Councillors Fort, Cutler and KCC Councillor Gary Cooke.

2. Declaration of Interests.

No interests were declared.

3. Public Comments.

A resident that attended the meeting expressed his disappointment regarding the village gates and the speed signs and the lack of build-outs.

Councillor Govett summarised the problems that had occurred with the village gates and the build-outs and that work had been stopped with the KCC until the outcome could be cleared up with the KCC.

He stated that KCC Councillor Cooke had already expressed his embarrassment at the gates not being undertaken by KCC at the previous PC meeting (when the gates had not yet been built when the KCC said they thought they had been), however since then, there had been further confusion regarding both the gates and the build-outs with the gates being erected but no build-out's and the gates in the wrong place (gates should have been erected upon the build outs).

As a result, a site meeting had been organised between the KCC and the PC representatives. He reported that at a site meeting with Councillor Cooke of the KCC, Ben Hilden of the KCC and the Parish Council Chairman, Councillor Fort that had recently taken place and there had been an agreement reached but as yet, no formal confirmation from the KCC of that meeting and what had been agreed. He reported however that he had been informed by the PC Chairman that during the site meeting it was agreed that that which had been previously agreed with the PC would now take place. The KCC would complete the project at the Castle end of the village but there was some confusion over the gates and build-out for the other end of the village due to the width of the road (according to the KCC) and would be confirmed to the PC.

The resident stated that he would like to know who was paying for the gates and build-outs, where the money was and who was going to pay for it as this error was a waste of tax payers monies and wanted this raised with the KCC.

The resident stated that he understood after speaking to the KCC direct that by Friday of last week the Parish Council was supposed to have been informed of the time table for the work, however this appear not to have been the case.

Councillor Martin spoke regarding the problems and stated that other parishes had build-outs on similar "B" roads.

Councillor Govett tried to reassure the resident and the PC and reported that the Chairman, Councillor Fort had been reassured by Councillor Cooke from the KCC that the funding for the project was still in place and the build-outs would take 6 to 8 weeks, as planned.

Councillor Govett referred to the Parish Councils minutes of Sept 2011 regarding the gates and the build-outs where both were confirmed by Councillor Cooke, i.e. not just the gates, but build outs had been agreed too by the KCC and the PC for both ends of the village.

The resident reported that Councillor Cooke had e-mailed him and stated that the build-outs would be replaced by rumble strips; however he had initially understood that the build-outs would be planters.

Councillor Govett said this could be a mis-understanding and he would clarify after the PC with the KCC.

Councillor Govett stated that the PC had never received the final drawings and plans of the build-outs from what was agreed at the PC with Councillor Cooke at the Sept PC, despite asking for them. Councillor Martin stated that he had spoken to various KCC officers and confirmed that he too had been told that drawings for these did not exist.

He asked that the PC needed to formally agree what action it wished to take regarding this matter.

He stated that would write to Cllr Gary Cooke to ask for the designs and confirmation of the site meeting with the Chair of the PC re details and timings, before they proceeded with any work.

He asked members what action they wished him to take should the PC not be happy with the designs.

As there was not a clear debrief from the KCC of the recent site meeting, Councillor Govett stated that should the drawings not be available or clarity of what is required, then what style of build-outs would the PC wish to see. This was discussed by members and the preferred conclusion was the same as discussed at the Sept PC with Councillor Cooke with the gates on the build-outs.

Councillor Govett suggested that with members' permission he writes to Cllr Cooke to establish the design, measurements and timings of the project in order to allow the PC to consider these and to get written confirmation of what the outcome of the site meeting was.

This was agreed by all present.

Action: Councillor Govett to write to Cllr Cooke as agreed.

Further discussion took place regarding the new 30MPH sign which had been installed behind a tree at Penfold Hill.

The resident in attendance asked then asked the Parish Clerk for a copy of the annual accounts of the Parish Council, and for these to be placed on the website.

Action: Clerk to progress.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

The minutes from the previous meeting were circulated to all present. These were then proposed by Councillor Martin seconded by Councillor Young and agreed by all present, subject to an agreed alteration.

5. Matters Arising.

The Clerk reported that the missing salt bin at the Church Car Park had been reported to Kent Highways, and this was due to be replaced.

6. Parish Councillor Vacancy.

The Clerk informed members that to date one application had been received for the parish councillor vacancy.

Councillor Govett introduced Mr Duncan China to the meeting and he invited Mr China to address the PC before it considered his application.

Mr China gave members details of his application and the reasons for this.

This was considered by members and it was proposed by Councillor Young and seconded by Councillor Wallace to Co-opt Mr China onto the PC.

Action: Mr China to sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the next meeting.

7. Police Report.

The police were not present at the meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that she had invited the police to attend the Annual meeting of the Parish.

8. Parish Council Website.

Alan James gave his apologies to the meeting and sent a written report in his absence. This was noted by members.

Councillor Govett informed members that the PC had allocated £500 to the enhancement of the website and there this should be investigated at some point in the future so that the web site could now be developed as planned.

9. MBC Borough Councillor Report.

Borough Councillor Peter Parvin gave his report to the meeting.

He reported on the revised Concurrent Functions Scheme and the recent decision taken by MBC to maintain the current level of grant for the forthcoming financial year rather than substantially reduce it as initially planned.

Councillor Govett spoke regarding this and expressed his grave concern and that it was unacceptable for MBC to leave it so late to inform Parish Councils of its decision to maintain the Concurrent Functions Grant. Particularly when Leeds PC had already set its precept and it was now in no position to change this decision and as a result the Parish was charging a higher level precept than necessary. Had the PC been informed of this change by MBC before setting its precept Councillor Govett stated that in his view the PC would not have increased the precept and that MBC should be aware that it was unacceptable re the timing of their decision.

Councillor Parvin informed members of the planned Jubilee and Olympic celebrations and events taking place in Maidstone during the course of the year.

He reported on the Standards Board and the new arrangements for complaints.

10. KCC Councillors Report.

KCC Councillor Gary Cooke was not in attendance at the meeting.

11. Correspondence & Clerks Report.

The Clerk reported on the correspondence received during the course of the month.

Members approved the quotation for the grass cutting at the Playing Field for the forthcoming financial year.

12. Planning Matters.**New Applications Received**

MA/12/0217 The Barn, Fulling Mill Farm, Caring Lane, Leeds.
New external door and window.

MA/12/0218 The Barn, Fulling Mill Farm, Caring Lane, Leeds.
An application for listed building consent for new external door and window, internal alterations including removal of staircase, new services and associated works.

MA/12/0352 Leeds Abbey Farm House, Lower Street, Leeds.
An application for listed building consent for repairs to chimney and fire place.

MBC Decisions**11/2159 BATTEL HALL, BURBERRY LANE, LEEDS, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME17 1RH**

Listed building consent for the removal of conservatory.

Approved/Granted with Conditions.

13. Financial Matters.**a. Financial Statement.**

The financial statements for the Parish Council and Playing Field Accounts was presented to Councillors and approved. (Young/Martin).

Councillor Govett again stated as he had before in the meeting, the unacceptable delay by MBC in informing the PC of its change in policy to not apply the substantial reduction in concurrent functions for the coming year that has impacted on the level of precept charged by the PC for this coming year.

The Budget Monitoring Statement was discussed and agreed by all present.

Members discussed the tools required for the Parish Warden and approved a budget of £400 to purchase a strimmer.

Councillor Martin informed members that he had spoken with the Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee regarding the possibility of the Parish Council returning to the hall for its meetings and helping with the hire for village organisations. He stated that this would need to be discussed by the Hall Management Committee at its forthcoming meeting and therefore the Parish Council should put their proposals in writing to the meeting.

Councillor Govett stated that he would be happy to attend their meeting to discuss this further and he asked the Clerk to write to the Chairman to seek permission for him to attend.

Action: Clerk to write to Chairman of VHMC.

It was agreed to place an item in the village magazine to establish whether there was any interest from village organisations in using the village hall with assistance from the PC.

Action: Councillor Young to progress.

14. Parish Maintenance.

The Clerk circulated a draft maintenance schedule to all present identifying the work to be carried out within the parish on a monthly basis.

This was discussed and it was agreed that the Clerk should invite the new Warden to attend the next meeting to discuss the maintenance schedule and how this was working.

Action: Clerk to progress.

15. Leeds Playing Field & Pavillion.

Members raised concerns regarding the overgrown bushes to the rear of the pavillion. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask Paul Waring to cut this back.

Action: Clerk to action.

Councillor Martin spoke regarding the height barrier and stated that he would remind the contractor to action this.

Action: Councillor Martin to progress.

16. Queens Diamond Jubilee.

Councillor Young reported on the arrangements for the village Jubilee event.

17. Highway Matters.

a) Village Gates.

No further matters were raised.

b) Road Safety Improvements at School.

No matters were raised.

c) General Matters.

Councillor Wallace asked whether speed bumps had been considered for the village. Councillor Govett explained the history of the negotiations from traffic calming within Leeds and the reasons why bumps could not be considered.

Councillor Martin reported on the Public Transportation meeting he had attended.

18. Joint Parish Group & LDF.

No matters were reported.

19. Further questions from public.

No further matters were raised.

20. Urgent Matters.

Street Lighting – Councillor Govett asked if the PC had considered whether savings could be made to its street lighting costs and energy.

The Clerk reminded members that the street lighting contractor had offered to attend a meeting to discuss the options open to the PC.

It was agreed that the Clerk should invite him to attend the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to action.

Councillor Govett asked members whether the PC should initiate the process of drawing up plans for the enhancement of the playing field.

It was agreed that in the first instance the Clerk would liaise with MBC to see whether they could give advice regarding this matter.

Action: Clerk to progress.

21. Date of next Parish Council Meeting.

Tuesday 10th April 2012 at Leeds Pavillion.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.20pm.

Signed _____

Dated _____