

PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 15th March 2021, 7pm remote meeting via Zoom

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| Present | Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Driver, Grant, Lewis, Skeet and Thomas | |
| In Attendance | Cllrs Dawlings. Holden and Warne; C Levett, Clerk. Simon Humphreys, PCSO. | |
| Item | | Action Responsibility |
| 1. APOLOGIES | Apologies were received from Cllr Cruse. | |
| 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS | No declarations of interest. | |
| 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING | The Parish Council minutes from the meeting held on 15th February 2021 were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting. | |
| 4. MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ITEMS | <p><u>a. Parish Wells</u> : Cllr Thomas visited the wells with Tim Duncan who gave initial advice. Photos of the areas that need repair were circulated and discussed. The Parish Council unanimously agreed that the village heritage assets should be protected and 3 quotes obtained to undertake specialist repair. The advantage of using an expert is that they look after everything, make the LBC application and use specialist contractors for the roofing etc. Grant funding may be available through Historic England.</p> <p><u>b. Public Toilets</u> : It has been reported by the toilet cleaning contractor that there are regular issues in the gents toilets with someone defecating on the toilet seats, floor and walls. This has become more regular (weekly) over recent months. The Clerk contacted the PCSO to ask what action can be taken. He advised the use of CCTV and signage. CCTV must not cover any urinal or toilet cubicle but could be utilised by a door entrance. He will endeavour to pay attention as part of his patrol and he has asked the KCC Community Warden to do the same. The toilets have also been blocked with whole toilet rolls, so dispensers have been installed; hand soap bottles were either stolen or thrown in the urinal, so replaced with bars of soap. The Clerk to produce a notice and highlight on social media.</p> <p><u>c. Rural Broadband</u> : Cllr Driver raised the issue of poor broadband in Dingledden and that additional funding for fibre broadband from KCC has run out. Some villages have a choice of fibre provider whilst similar communities have none. Cllr Holden spoke to the cabinet member responsible, with some assurance that places like Dingledden are not forgotten. The pandemic has shown starkly the importance of this infrastructure. KCC's broadband team has been working for several years with the Building Digital UK agency to connect rural and hard to reach areas. The work has been administered by BDUK rather than KCC. KCC has written to the Secretary of State to build on success and will work to ensure that the funding process is tightened up. Cllr Thomas advised that rural broadband was discussed at the KALC Area Meeting and will be taken forward at the Parish Chairs' Meeting which Cllr Thomas is attending on 16th March. The issue is high on all parishes' agendas.</p> <p><u>d. Protocol for the Death of the Sovereign or Senior National Figure</u> : David Commander has asked if the Parish Council has made any plans in the event of "Operation London Bridge" or "Operation Forth Bridge" (the death of the monarch and Duke of Edinburgh respectively). There are certain protocols which should be followed and the Church will have a book of condolence and will fly the flag from the church tower as directed by these two operations. No other plans would be made.</p> <p><u>e. Village Sign</u> : The village sign on The Green was blown down and would appear to be rotten. Cllr Thomas to retrieve. The Parish Council paid for and erected the sign in 2000. The sign and the post will need some repair.</p> | <p>NT/CL</p> <p>CL</p> <p>NT</p> |

Chairman..... Date.....

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These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting, but a summary of discussion and decisions taken at the meeting.

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| <p>5. REPORTS BY COUNTY/ BOROUGH COUNCILLORS</p> | <p>Cllrs Warne, Dawlings and Holden reported the following :</p> <p>TWBC :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Waste collection</u> – Numerous reports of missed collections and lack of action when reported online. Cllr Dawlings to follow up with the relevant Officers. Pressure continues on North Farm depot, as it is being used by Sevenoaks teams as their depot still out of action following fire last May. Reports of refuse vehicles queuing to enter the site. • <u>Local Recycling Centre</u> – The need has been highlighted further with the civic amenity vehicle not in operation for a year. Cllrs Dawlings and Holden to discuss and suggest a formal request from TWBC to KCC. • <u>Planning</u> – The local planning authority is required to have a 5-year Housing Land Supply and TWBC is due to review its figure on 1st April. The deliverable supply of homes to meet the planned housing requirement for TWBC is around 690 per year. The Local Plan will identify the number of houses required until 2038 and identify the sites and conditions for development. Cllr Warne had been asked to call in planning application 20/03267 Cleveland Farm, Green Lane by local residents but was advised by the Case Officer that the deadline for doing so had been missed. • <u>Climate Emergency Action Panel</u> – Report from cross-party working group working with officers to progress pledge of July 2019 submitted to Cabinet, to be considered on 15th April. • <u>Business support grants</u> - TWBC still administering government’s Discretionary Grants scheme. 41% of available funds have been allocated. • <u>Amelia Scott Cultural Hub</u> - 11-week delay on construction. <p>Cranbrook :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>COVID-19</u> - Vestry Hall testing facility continues with appointments available daily up until 2pm. Vaccinations are being undertaken at a number of centres. • <u>Planning</u> - Persimmon Homes withdrew their Reserved Matters Planning application at Brick Kiln Farm, which was approved on 27.1.21. The site has now been sold to Hill Residential Ltd and they will need to submit a new RM application by February 2023; An application for 35 houses and a new nursery building for Woodpeckers has been submitted for land known as “Long Field”, off Angley Road, which is owned by KCC; C&SPC NDP steering group progressing review of Reg 14 Consultation comments. • <u>Crime & anti-social behaviour</u> - Dog thefts on the increase; Vandalism is a problem with bus shelters and street lighting targeted; increase in fly-tipping and littering. • <u>Community</u> - The CO-OP store in Cranbrook has completed its re-fit; Community/Medical Centre steering group is making progress on their business and fundraising plans for a new centre on Wilkes Field; Cranbrook Engineering site has been sold, with planning permission for 28 residential dwellings and one retail unit; Cranbrook Business Association is working with TWBC to ensure safe opening of shops on 12th April; A number of community groups are planning events in the town for August. <p>KCC :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Manston Lorry Park</u> – This is to be closed as there have been no significant traffic issues on Kent’s roads since the end of the EU transition period. Import and export figures are likely to be down due to the pandemic. • <u>Lorry Clamping</u> – over 1,300 vehicles have been clamped since Brexit. KCC has asked government if these powers can be extended across the whole county. | |
| <p>6. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS</p> | <p>Bi-weekly KALC Area Committee meetings continue, which the Clerk is attending. Cllr Thomas attended KALC Area Committee meeting on 9th March. Issues discussed included : flytipping; broadband and meeting arrangements. At the moment the Parish Council and others have the ability to hold remote meetings until 7th May. Further legislation will be required to extend this.</p> | |

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| 7. NDP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses and comments to the Regulation 16 representations have been sent to the Examiner. • Cllr Skeet queried a description of Benenden Hospital as a “vibrant commercial area”. • The Examiner has made one visit to Benenden whilst he was in the area and will be making another. | |
| 8. PLANNING | <p>a. <u>Applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21/00239/FULL Weavers, Mill Street, Iden Green. Removal of Condition 5 (access); Condition 3 (Landscaping) of 15 503322 FULL <p>This relates to the consent granted for new build in dog-leg garden of Weavers. Access to new dwelling is from Mill Street. Dwelling has long been completed. Request for removal of Conditions 5 (access) & 3 (landscaping) is due to the fact that the conditions are imposed on land that is not in the ownership of the new build house.</p> <p>The Parish Council decided to make no comment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21/00202/FULL 1 Corner Cottages, Cranbrook Road Replace decomposed wooden roof over front door on like-for-like basis; repair render on some damaged first floor side façade panels; replace existing wooden fence to front; re-pave front parking with pebbles • 21/00203/LBC 1 Corner Cottages, Cranbrook Road Listed Building Consent: Internal and external repairs and renovations to include; updating electric wiring and new distribution board (including smart meter), install dedicated water supply and replace metal piping with copper piping; install gas line (including smart meter) for new central heating combination boiler and oven in kitchen; replace all radiators and some piping; removal of partition stud wall in kitchen; construction of new stud wall in kitchen to create new utility room and toilet; underfloor heating; new flagstone floor in kitchen; alterations to bathroom; lay tiles in bathroom; repair plaster on walls and ceilings throughout the cottage; repaint walls and ceilings; clean existing brick and wood floors; wax wooden floors; replace decomposed wooden window on second floor, rear façade; replace decomposed wooden roof over front door on like-for-like basis; repair render on some damaged first floor side façade panels; replace existing wooden fence to front; repave front parking with pebbles. <p>Subject property and its 3 joined cottages are Listed Grade II. South Lodge, Benenden School on opposite side of road is Listed Grade II. No impact or harm to Listed properties in vicinity.</p> <p>Property is in poor state and requires updating, repair and renovations. 3 storeys. Forms first cottage in row with front door located on side elevation. Full survey carried out at purchase which is available to view. LBC application running for detail of works to the interior and exterior repairs and renovations.</p> <p>Conservation Officer has commented in detail as to which works require LBC and has requested conditions for further detail on some matters.</p> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support these applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21/00465/FULL Benenden Girls School, Cranbrook Road. Variation of Conditions 2 (Approved Plans) and 17 (Level Details) of Planning Permission 18/01131/FULL - Music Hall - Reduction to external ramp to basement level, Extent of plant screen, Removal of high level glazing and brickwork wall extended to parapet level, Courtyard/Amphitheatre Area - Removal of step in curved wall, School Hall - Geometry of metal fins, Removal of rooflight in link building, Removal of high level glazing. | |

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| | <p>The covering statement within the application details the variation of conditions 2 and 17 and the reasons for them.</p> <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21/00370/FULL Stable Cottage, The Green. Demolish and rebuild porch and rear conservatory; Reorganise internally to provide 3 bedrooms on ground floor and open plan kitchen, dining and living space on first floor; New windows to existing cottage and new extension to provide garden room and balcony <p>The Parish Council unanimously agreed to object to this application.</p> <p>Stable Cottage is located within the Benenden Conservation Area, just off the Green, and is surrounded by Listed Buildings; namely: the Memorial Hall and Ashlawn to the north, the former Benenden Primary School (in front of the subject property), Church Cottages to the SSE, St Georges Church (Grade II*), the Lychgate, the walls to the churchyard, the monument and tombstones in the graveyard, and The Grange (KCC Historic Park and Garden proposal).</p> <p>The buildings surrounding the Green form one of the most historic parts of the parish, with the buildings being of consistent traditional style.</p> <p>While we would like to encourage innovative design, we are concerned that the style and colour of the proposed timber cladding to the structure forming the garden room and deck/terrace, together with the height and structure of the sauna room at first floor level, will be highly visible in this traditional landscape and historic built form of the location.</p> <p>The proposed glazed roof to the corridor space at the rear boundary of the former school will cause additional light pollution in an otherwise dark skies location.</p> <p>b. <u>Other Planning Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TPO request Woodcock Inn Car Park/Moor Wood : In July 2020 concerns were raised about possible work in ancient woodland and the Parish Council made a request to TWBC to protect the trees. The Tree Officer has advised that the trees are mostly birch coppice and the area's primary value as ancient woodland is likely due to the soil seed bank and related ecology rather than individual trees, as well as acting between a buffer between the car park and wider woodland. He is not concerned about pruning, thinning or coppicing works, but would object to clearance to accommodate camping pitches, and therefore will not be requesting a TPO at present but will reconsider if the situation changes. The owner of the land has been made aware that installing shepherds huts on this land would require planning permission, and that permission is unlikely. • Agricultural Building, Hinksden Road : Cllr Cochrane advised that some residents have raised concerns about the size of the agricultural building on Hinksden Road, now called Hilltop Farm; the number of vehicles still on site; the garish property name sign; the amount of signage; the installation of a letterbox. Cllr Thomas will contact the Planning Compliance Officer again and encouraged local residents to do the same. | <p style="text-align: right;">NT</p> |
| <p>9. HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Driver expressed concerns raised by a resident about traffic direction and rights of way at the end of Coldharbour Lane. Traffic can enter or leave the lane from either side and the Parish Council does not want to install any signage. • Cllr Driver expressed concerns raised by a resident about trees along Chapel Lane footpath. This should be reported through KCC's online reporting of a problem on a road or pavement. | |

a. Monthly Finance

Transactions From 1st February 2021

Brought forward balance 90021.75

Income

| Payee | Reference | Amount |
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| | | |

TOTAL 0.00

Expenditure

| | Supplier | Reference | Amount |
|------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------|
| DD | John Lewis | Broadband | 9.92 |
| DD | Information Commissioner's Office | Annual Data Protection Fee | 35.00 |
| DD | CF Corporate Finance | Copier Lease Rental | 180.00 |
| BACS | C Levett | Clerk's Salary | 935.12 |
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| BACS | Microsoft | Annual Renewal | 59.99 |
| BACS | Krystal Hosting Ltd | Annual Domain Renewal | 14.39 |
| BACS | Zoom Video Communications | Remote Meetings | 14.39 |
| BACS | Tenterden Twilight | Public Toilets | 410.00 |
| BACS | EDF | Public Toilets | 42.30 |
| BACS | BT | Office Telephone | 121.05 |
| BACS | G Beveridge/BT | NDP | 150.57 |
| BACS | TW Samaritans | Donation | 200.00 |
| BACS | Business Stream | Public Toilets | 3.38 |
| BACS | 123-reg | NDP | 115.06 |

TOTAL 3226.29

Reconciled with bank statement 043 28th February 2021 **86795.46**

March 2021 Payments were approved :

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| DD | John Lewis | Broadband | 9.92 |
| BACS | C Levett | Clerk's Salary | 935.12 |
| BACS | Edf | Public Toilets | 50.52 |
| BACS | Zoom Video Communications | Remote Meetings | 14.39 |
| BACS | Tenterden Twilight | Public Toilets | 483.60 |
| BACS | Sovereign/Alexanders Finance | Iden Green Playground | 12000.00 |
| BACS | Parish Online/Geosphere Ltd | NDP | 162.00 |

TOTAL 13655.55

b. Footpath - Primary School to St George's Church

David Commander has advised that some progress has been made with the project connecting the school and the church, for an all-weather footpath from the north door of St. George's Church eastwards through the churchyard to the kissing-gate and along the southern and eastern boundaries of the Glebe Field to the back entrance of the Primary School - and on to the 5-bar gate at the north-east corner of the Glebe Field. A proposal and specification will be put to the PCC for approval on 22nd March. Once approved the Faculty Application procedure will start in the hope that the path is ready for autumn/winter.

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| | <p>Part of the Faculty Application is to confirm the finances for the project are in place, likely to be around £16,000.</p> <p>The Church has asked for the Parish Council support for the project to proceed, and if the Parish Council would make a contribution to the cost. TWBC, KCC and the School will also be asked for support. The Parish Council unanimously agreed that it would not financially support this project.</p> | |
| 11. CORRESPONDENCE/ PARISHIONERS' QUESTIONS | <p>a. Village Tidy : An email had been received from a parishioner asking if a Village Spring Clean is taking place. The pandemic has prevented the organisation of the usual Village Tidy Events. Keep Britain Tidy's advice has been that no organised litter picking events should take place whilst in lockdown, although individuals can choose to pick up litter as part of their daily exercise, but must ensure they do so safely and in line with the latest government guidance, and the Parish Council will encourage individuals to do this. It is hoped that the "Great British Spring Clean", which TWBC normally ties in with, will take place between 28th May and 13th June, and the Parish Council will aim to organise an event at this time.</p> <p>Cllr Lewis advised that she had cleaned the telephone box at Iden Green, but it is in need of a coat of paint.</p> <p>Parish Councillors reported a number of issues with litter, debris, trees and hedges, road verges, damaged signs. Where appropriate contact should be made with the landowner or reported to the relevant authority.</p> <p>Cllr Driver advised that he had reported a dead badger 3 times to TWBC and no action had been taken. Cllr Dawlings offered to follow this up.</p> <p>b. Damage to The Green : The Cricket Club has asked if there was any budget to repair The Green where it meets the road outside of Coach House . The last few years has seen a significant wastage in the edge of the green. The Parish Council currently meets the cost of the maintenance of the Green and does not have a budget set aside for this repair. The road is wide enough for vehicles but if any repair was made it is likely vehicles would continue to cause damage. The Parish Council has no objection to the Cricket Club carrying out any repair works if it feels this would be beneficial.</p> | CL |
| 12. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION | | |
| DATE OF NEXT MEETING | Monday 19 th April 2021 7pm, remote details to be confirmed. | |
| | The meeting closed at 9.40pm | |

Clerk to the Parish Council, 15th March 2021