



## HEADCORN PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Office, Headcorn Village Hall, Church Lane, Headcorn, TN27 9NR  
Tel: 01622 892496 Email: clerk@headcornpc.org.uk

### Minutes of the Meeting of Headcorn Parish Council held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 7:00pm in Long Meadow, Village Hall, Headcorn.

#### Those in attendance: -

Councillors: Thomas, Mather, Sexton, Pyman, Gearing, Thorogood and Glanfield.  
Clerk: Stefan Christodoulou.  
Assistant Clerks: Susie Barkess and Jo Mitchell.  
Public: Twenty one and Borough Councillor Round.

#### 1.

- a) **Apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Cllrs. Bates, Baars, Copen and Newman.
- b) **To seek notification on whether anyone intends to film, photograph, or record any items of this meeting:** There were none recorded.
- c) **Declaration of changes to the register of interests:** There were none recorded.
- d) **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest or other interests as defined by the Kent Code of Conduct and the Localism Act 2011 on any items on the agenda:** There were none recorded.
- e) **Requests for Dispensations:** There were none recorded.
- f) **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none recorded.

#### 2. Public session (minute book closed.)

3. **To resolve that the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.** The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

#### 4. Matters arising from previous meeting: -

**Roberts Land now known as Millbank Meadow** – Orbit has agreed in principle to a Deed of Variance. Walk around the land to be carried out late August or early September. Have received clarification from Brachers. Documents signed and sent to solicitor. Clerk's Office is checking with Solicitor if the deeds have been transferred yet, as well as informing Land registry.

**Headcorn Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)** – Clerk, Chair and Vicechair had meeting with KCC on 25<sup>th</sup> January. KCC representative agreed to forward our requests to the relevant KCC Officer for evaluation. Yellow lines in Sharps field etc. were deemed to not be a priority and wouldn't be carried out. KCC Highways planners gave us a template to do another consultation of residents for SYL in sharps field etc. Clerk's Office to carry out as soon as the format of the letter is agreed with KCC. It was decided to reject KCC changes to the Gibbs Hill SYL. Need to decide next steps.

**To discuss the Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) and agree the next steps** –The post consultation meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> sept was attended by the Clerk, Chair, Jane's Newsletter and Dr Driver. The clerk gave a verbal update of HNP to council. This presented the overwhelmingly positive reactions from the Parishioners who replied which was about 95%. As well as all comments left with the survey. This is ongoing with Dr Driver and the Clerk's Office.



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**Meeting with nearby Parishes to foster better bonds and communication with them for our mutual benefit** – Clerk's Office will organise another meeting with nearby Parishes and Helen Whately MP. Now the Coronation etc is done the Clerk will organise another meeting. This seems to have been taken on independently by MP H. Whately's Office. We will ask for a Headcorn focused meeting. We will be progressing this as soon as we are able. At the moment we do not have anything to bring up at a prospective meeting. Especially considering the coming Ward Change.

**To discuss the cost of new play equipment on Days Green.** The Council agreed with all the proposed play items. This has been given the go ahead, starting 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**Letter to Sainsbury's** - The Clerks Office sent a letter to Sainsbury's about the amount of shoplifting and how their lack of security enables a lot of antisocial behaviour in the Village. Reply received, very underwhelming. Clerk's Office is speaking to the KM and Cllr Round about this. Second letter sent. No reply. We have noticed the addition of a security guard in the shop. This does not seem to have had much if any effect yet.

**To discuss if a memorial item should be included at Millbank Meadow to commemorate this kind gift by Dr Roberts.** The Clerks Office are checking that they would actually wish for this and if so it was decided that we should put in place some sort of memorial item. Whilst The Roberts didn't want something for themselves a plaque in general thanking the donation would be appreciated.

### 5. Finance

#### (a) To review and agree the following: -

- i. **Schedule of online Payments for October and November 2023**  
Schedule of online payments was reviewed, approved, and signed by the Chair.
- ii. **Income for Month ended 30<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**  
There was an income for the two months of £30,423.81
- iii. **Bank Reconciliation for Month ended 30<sup>th</sup> September and October 2023**  
The bank reconciliation was reviewed, approved, and signed by the Chair.
- iv. **To review Budget Analysis for the year 2023/24**  
The budget was reviewed, approved, and signed by the Chair.

#### (b) Review and adopt the following Headcorn Parish Council policies, statements, or procedures.

- Risk Assessment – Finance
- Standing Orders

Councillors reviewed and agreed to adopt the above policies and statements.



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**(c) To acknowledge receipt of the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return from Mazars LLP and agree any actions required.**

The completed AGAR had been circulated to all Cllrs and the Clerk was pleased to report a clean bill of health, with the following minor scopes for improvement for 2023/24 identified by the External Auditor: -

“In undertaking the review of the 2022/23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return it came to our attention that in 2023 the Council has not met the requirements of the 2015 Accounts and Audit Regulations to start the period of 30 working days for the public to inspect the accounts the day after the AGAR was published and to do so as soon as possible after it was approved. The Council should ensure that in 2023/24 they comply with the Regulations.”

“The bank reconciliation was difficult to follow because it did not include cash book figures. In future the Council should use the standard proforma provided in our Guidance or in the Practitioner’s Guide when preparing the bank reconciliation.”

“The Council has ticked Box 11a in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) as ‘n/a’. The Council is not a sole trustee and so the box should have been ticked ‘no’. In future the Council should ensure the annual return is accurate and complete.”

“The Internal Control Objective (M) ‘In the year covered by the AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period of exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations’ was ticked yes by the Internal Auditor. Given that the Council has answered ‘no’ to assertion 4, the internal auditor should have answered ‘no’ to Internal Control Objective M. In future, the Council should ensure the annual return is accurate and complete.”

The result will be published in accordance with regulatory requirements.

- 6. To discuss the Planning Application 23/504471/OUT Land at Moat Road, Headcorn, Maidstone, TN27 9NT.** This was discussed after listening to the comments from the residents of Headcorn and considering their opinions of this development, we pointed out that only Planning reasons can be considered when it comes to refusing a Planning application and that as such we had to consider carefully the merits and demerits of the application before us, even though we understood the wide range of concerns that the Village as a whole had raised. After some discussion and running through the list of planning options available to us it was decided unanimously by all Councillors present that this Application should be refused for a variety of Plannings reasons. These were taken from both MBC’s evolving Local Plan and their



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current Local Plan as well as reasons from the emerging HPC Neighbourhood Plan, all of which should be given weight in the making this decision. (Further reasons from the NPPF were also pointed out. The full rationale will be on a separate paper available upon request as it is too lengthy to include here.) Therefore, should the Officer overseeing this Application be minded to approve, the HPC requests this be bought before MBC's Planning Committee.

7. **To authorise the quote for the works at Dawk's Meadow.** The initial quote was approved and a subsequent quote was approved for some extra works that need to doing to complete the area and help with drainage.
8. **To discuss the Artisan Market proposed plans for next year.** The Artisan Market organiser has decided that he would like to try fewer but longer markets concentrating on more designer items, as well as renaming it an Artisan Fair. Therefore after this Decembers Market It will be rebranded and rescheduled as three Fairs from late May to Late September of two days each, from Saturday to Sunday. The Council agreed that this was a reasonable idea.
9. **To discuss items for Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan for Council Approval.** There were two items to discuss, one of which was an acceptance of the information about Moat Road which has been discussed above. The other was confirmation that the Council were happy with our response to the latest MBC Planning Consultation. The Council approved the consultation answers and they will be passed on to MBC tomorrow.
10. **To receive the minutes of the following committees for information and to raise any queries arising from them: -**
  - Planning Committee – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023.** This was accepted by the Council.
  - Planning Committee – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023.** This was accepted by the Council.
  - Open Spaces Committee – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023.** This was accepted by the Council.
11. **Correspondence: -**
  - We have received three items of correspondence: -**
    - An email from Councillor Round about contacting MBC with options available to us in regard to the Toilets. We will need to contact MBC Corporate Property. The Clerk's Office will organise this.
    - An email from Community Protection Officer Bullen with regard to organising a Police Surgery which we haven't had in a while. This would incorporate when and where. The Clerk's Office will organise this.
    - An email from Dr Stuart Maxwell who is monitoring the diffusion tubes in the Village which measure air pollution. It was agreed that we would carry on investing in this information about our Village.



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**12. To receive inspection reports for Days Green and Hoggs Bridge Green**

The Days Green inspection was received, no action is required.

The Hoggs Bridge Green inspection report was received, no action is required.

**13. To receive reports from any External Meetings attended by Councillors and agree any action required: -**

KALC – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023, this was read and there were no comments.

**14. Any other business.**

There was the issue of parking in the Village when large events were on. Unfortunately during the winter there aren't many options available.

A suggestion of a Village Event diary was bought up to enable any mix ups in event planning to be caught at the earliest opportunity. The Clerks Office will look into this idea.

There being no other matters for discussion the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed.....

Date.....13/12/23