

HORTON KIRBY AND SOUTH DARENTH PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the MEETING of the RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES (ROS)  
COMMITTEE held on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023 in the Parish Room, at 7.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllr D Mitchell – Chair, Cllr D Pedley – Vice Chair,  
Cllrs I Blackamore, C Page and P Rushbrook

**IN ATTENDANCE:** L Johnson Parish Clerk  
SDFC Utd: M Burroughs  
Allotments: D Hawkins plus 1 member of the public.

The meeting began at 7.25pm

**101 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received

**102 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received

**103 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 were approved and signed as a true record.

**104 MATTERS ARISING**

**105 Avenue of Cherry Trees:** Certificates were available from the parish office.

**83 Green Spaces:** £1000 to spend on replacement palisade fence Heathside /Playground borders IB – completed

£500 to spend on returning entrance to WF overflow car park to return to original state IB

**92 Questions and correspondence:** Clerk contact KCC Highways re debris bottom of Holmesdale hill and signage. Sent photo's to KCC Highways. N Rowe to contact office and arrange site visit 28 Jul

**93 Allotments:** Smaller lock fitted. Purchase more robust lock.

**94 Football:** SDFC to check keys in brick store.

All contracts sent out for signing 26 Jul.

**95 Large Green Spaces:** that in the interim, the box and shoot bolt on the gate should be repaired & reinforced plus all present signs removed and new, concise signs be designed and situated in the most visible positions. Clerk had been unable to locate Weder to date.

Clerk – place temporary signs on railings. Completed.

**96 Small Green Spaces:** Clerk to source suitable fly-tipping tape – arrived 24th July. Completed

**97 Burial Ground:** burial ground fees would have the returnable deposit removed. Completed

**99 Planning:**23/01461/FUL Gills Farm, South Darenth, DA4 9LE. Object. Completed.

All other matters were completed or appear as an agenda item.

**105 QUESTIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions. Clerk had received correspondence:

Ballbusters Flyball Club asked permission to erect a 6'x4' shed on the allotment field to house some equipment. Cllr Mitchell proposed, Cllr Page seconded and all were in agreement.

**Resolved:** Ballbuster Flyball Club could erect a 6'x4' shed subject to the same terms & conditions as allotment tenants and it was at their own risk. **Action:** Clerk

Eynsford F.C. asked if they could book the Pavilion and football pitch for Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> August from 5.30pm.

**Action:** It was unanimously agreed that Eynsford F.C. could book the facilities as requested.

Millen Court resident enquired about ownership and responsibility of trees to the right of their car park as the street light and power lines were being interfered with and branches were overhanging the cars.

**Action:** Clerk advise resident if trees are in the substation to contact UK Power Network

Cllr Pedley had explained to East Hill resident that postponement of resurfacing work had been due to the weather causing delays. With reference to small holes appearing in the path, the company responsible should have a sign displayed in the locality and were to be contacted to fill the holes in.

## 106 ALLOTMENTS

Allotment representative D Hawkins requested confirmation that the Allotment Society could continue to cultivate the wild area behind the playground, including the pond and raised beds.

**Action:** The ROS Committee were unanimous in their agreement to this.

The Committee were asked if they would consider keeping the nettles near the car park as they acted as a natural deterrent to trespassers. Cllr Blackamore pointed out that if they weren't managed, rubbish and old carpet would end up in the patch which the Parish Council would have to pay to be removed.

**Action:** a strip of nettles will be left to deter trespassers.

The Allotment Society enquired if the Committee would prefer to establish written rules and responsibilities between the two bodies.

Councillors agreed that the current informal relationship should continue for the foreseeable future.

Each individual tenant had already signed t&c's with the Parish Council which were sufficient.

Clerk informed all that only 1 plot was available at present.

Clerk would email D Hawkins with possible funding streams.

## 107 FOOTBALL

SDFC representative Mick Burroughs attended on behalf of Lyndon Tow.

The Committee were asked if they would reconsider their decision to withhold the full £300 damage deposit following two functions held at the Village hall.

Cllr Rushbrook pointed out that after the first event, in which the Heathside had been used without prior permission, he was assured that the second event would pass without any difficulties.

Clerk added that the pre-school garden had been vandalised, broken glass and bottles were strewn across the grounds, windows were open and the interior was left in poor condition. Checklists for both evenings were not completed which was an additional breach of the t&c's of hiring the hall.

**Action:** the ROS Committee would not reconsider the request..

Clerk reminded M Burroughs that the Committee had not been informed as to the number of keys held by the football club.

## 108 MAINTENANCE

Councillors had received a copy of the current Maintenance list for ROS, Pavilion and Public toilets.

*(Appendix 1)*

Cllr Mitchell suggested that an additional column headed 'Date to be Completed By' needs to be added.

It was agreed that Lothlorien were to investigate older jobs and to prioritise them

Clerk presented a report to show difficulties in sourcing tradesmen and had little success with people not returning calls/making appointments for maintenance issues which was causing a backlog with some coming to a stop.

Cllr Pedley offered to contact tarmac companies to quote for entrance up to chicane gate and would forward any contact details for electricians to the Clerk.

Cllr Blackamore informed Committee that a qualified draughtsperson was working on (previous) Cllr. House design for new Heathside sign.

Committee were asked why there had been no progress since April. It was explained that due to the last meeting overrunning, maintenance had not been discussed at the last meeting held in June.

**ACTION:** Lothlorien to forward schedule of works to Clerk.

Clerk to continue searching for qualified & insured tradespeople.

Cllr Pedley to research improved accessibility to Heathside entrance.

Cllr Blackamore had summarised the annual playgrounds inspection reports for the committee. The 'Rope Traverse' had been dismantled following a member of the public contacting the office to say it was potentially dangerous. Cllr Blackamore had received quotes of £207 per upright, £77 for the rope and £220 delivery (3 pallets length). As there were items in all three playgrounds requiring attention, it was decided that:

**ACTION:** Clerk to book interim inspection for October time.

Cllr Blackamore to obtain quotes on results of the inspection. Quotes can then be included in budgeting for the next financial year. Recommendations can be made good over winter.

Clerk confirmed annual playground budget was £1000 to Cllr Mitchell, plus playground reserves.

Clerk to check Minutes regarding the life lifespan of the trim trail

Other than the goal mouths at Westminster field football pitches having dressing applied, there were no more updates.

## 109 ANNUAL TREE SURVEY

Cllr Blackamore explained that the items marked in blue on Treestyle UK Ltd. Recommendations following the annual tree survey, were on Parish Council owned land and yellow items were on other land owners property but affected PC owned land.

Cllr Blackamore advised that as Ross was a fully qualified tree surgeon, the Pc should accept all of the recommendations. Cllr Rushbrook proposed, Cllr Pedley seconded, all were in favour and so it was

**Resolved:** that Treestyle UK Ltd should carry out the following works:

**Action:** Clerk to advise Ross of Tree Style UK Ltd of the following

### Westminster Field

|                               |                                  |      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|
| T1 Sorbus                     | sever Ivy                        | £10  |
| T2 Poplar                     | sever Ivy                        | £30  |
| T3 Alder,                     | sever Ivy and remove dead branch | £20  |
| G1 Group of approx.. 10 Elms, | fell to near ground level        | £200 |
| T4 Cherry                     | fell to near ground              | £260 |
| T5 Dead Elder                 | fell to near ground level        | £20  |
| T6 Dead tree                  | fell to near ground level        | £80  |
| T7 Dead Elder fell to near    | fell to near ground level        | £40  |

### Parish Council Burial Ground

|          |                                  |      |
|----------|----------------------------------|------|
| T1 Beech | lift to approx. 3m over entrance | £100 |
|----------|----------------------------------|------|

### Village Hall

|        |                     |     |
|--------|---------------------|-----|
| T1 Oak | lift lower branches | £40 |
|--------|---------------------|-----|

### Heathside

|         |                      |     |
|---------|----------------------|-----|
| T1 Lime | remove dead branches | £20 |
|---------|----------------------|-----|

### Papermill Green

|            |                       |      |
|------------|-----------------------|------|
| T1 Conifer | reduce overall by 20% | £120 |
|------------|-----------------------|------|

### Lower Paddock

|                |                           |     |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----|
| T1 Leaning Elm | fell to near ground level | £40 |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----|

### Upper Paddock

|                                      |                           |       |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| T1 Dead Elm                          | fell to near ground level | £20   |
| T2 Dead Elm                          | fell to near ground level | £10   |
| T3 Dead Elm                          | fell to near ground level | £10   |
| G1 Group of trees on upper boundary, | fell to near ground level | £1200 |

Resulting debris to be removed from site

VAT will apply

Cllr Pedley spoke to the Councillors regarding the future of the Top Paddock in South Darenth. He was aware that wild flowers had been planted in the Lower Paddock and had been worked on by the previous ROS Chair, James Stewart, but the top Paddock was neglected and used as an area for dumping waste and dog mess. The Committee agreed with this and advised questionnaires had been sent to the immediate neighbourhood in the past.

It was agreed that removing the trees at the 'top' end (Montgomery Road) will make the area more open and hopefully less inviting to fly-tip.

Cllr Rushbrook asked the SDFC rep if the Top Paddock was big enough for juniors to train at. This would help free up the Heathside, would encourage local residents, especially the younger generation, to maintain the paddock if the grass was cut shorter and a pitch lined out.

**ACTION:** Cllr Pedley to survey immediate neighbours regarding using the Top Paddock to train junior footballers.

M Burroughs to make enquiries to size of the field/training requirements.

Clerk bought the Fawkham Parish Council's email to the Trees department and planning enforcement at Sevenoaks District Council to complain that the recent granted application for mixed use war games, caravan and camp site, mobile home paid no attention to the ancient woodland status of the site and despite many planning refusals in the past, trees had been removed and there was ample evidence of tree felling.

As the p.a. straddles both parish boundaries, plus with the successful application to install a Solar Farm which will cover the entire area up to the ancient Horton Woods, the Clerk suggested that the Councillors should consider requesting Tree Preservation Orders to the whole woodland as Fawkham PC were. This would legally protect the trees and the diverse habitat from any illegal works to this piece of important countryside. The Clerk would also seek advice from the Woodland Trust who were keen to hear about any threatened woodland. Cllr Rushbrook proposed, Cllr Blackamore seconded and all were in favour and so it was

**RESOLVED:** that the Clerk should contact stakeholders to establish whether a blanket TPO can be applied to the whole of Horton Woods.

## **110 FINANCE**

### Schedule of Accounts

The schedule of accounts and payments were approved for payments to be made electronically

### Budget Monitoring

The committee reviewed the Financial report for the ROS Budget for Budget monitoring Purposes.

## **111 TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Clerk advised that the number of voting members on the Committee must be fewer than full council, which is nine

**RESOLVED:.** that the maximum number of voting members should be 5 with no more than 3 non-voting members.

Following the full council's resolution to adopt version two of Model Standard Orders 2018 (England) May 2023 Minute16, it was also

**RESOLVED:** that the above updated Standing Orders apply to the ROS Committee Terms of Reference.

## **112 LARGE GREEN SPACES**

Westminster field – Cllr Rushbrook voiced concerns about the invasive weeds growing around some of the Cherry trees and in the wildflower beds particularly towards 100 year wood. It was pointed out that Landscape Services were not following the grounds contract which included keeping a 1m weed free circle around each Cherry tree. Weeds in the wildflower beds should be removed immediately before they caused more damage to a successful project. After discussion, Cllr Mitchell proposed, Cllr Page seconded and all were in favour to

**RESOLVED:** Lothlorien clear wildflower beds and base of Cherry trees that have been affected by weeds whilst at the same time, Clerk to arrange a meeting with Landscape Services Management to discuss specific tasks within the Maintenance contract that are not being carried out.

LS to be given opportunity to correct this prior to reconsidering the agreement with them.

Cllr Blackamore did not vote.

Cllr Rushbrook had presented Councillors with a proposal from Creative Car Park prior to the meeting. To improve security and bring revenue in to help maintain Westminster field and its facilities and pay for ASB damage, Cllr Rushbrook would like the Committee to consider installing an ANPR system.

Residents living within the parish would be able to register their details so that parking remained free. The gate would still be used and closing & opening times would remain.

There would be no cost to the Parish Council and clear signage would be provided.

Councillors discussed the advantages and disadvantages and possible effect on The Street.

Cllr Mitchell requested that it be noted that **they/she** disliked private car park companies and how they conducted their business and was wholly against the idea. It would stop visitors coming to the area to enjoy the open countryside and would displace cars onto neighbouring roads, upsetting Horton Kirby residents.

Cllr Rushbrook proposed, Cllr Blackamore seconded, Cllr Page was in favour, Cllr Mitchell against and Cllr Pedley abstained. The motion was therefore carried and it was

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Rushbrook requested that the motion be taken to the next full Parish Council meeting, with all Councillors attending, that the ROS Committee had voted in favour to install an ANPR car parking system at Westminster field car park.

### 113 PITCHPOWER

Cllr Blackamore had attended a presentation for Councils with grass football pitches and how to obtain funding to improve the quality and maintenance of them. It is funded by the Premier league, FA and the Football Foundation and is not match funded. The grant is tapered across 6 years.

Site inspection and soil samples had been sent for analysis. The result is to make the pitch improve to Good from basic, pitch 1 and poor, pitch 2.

Cllr Mitchell queried if the standard was not met or if all the work was not carried out, would the Parish Council have to repay monies awarded. The presentation stated that applicant will start investing their own funding into the pitches from year 3 onwards. This is not compulsory and evidence will be required to show that the previous year's grant had been spent correctly.

Cllr Blackamore proposed, Cllr Pedley seconded and all were in favour and so it was

**RESOLVED:** to proceed with application to obtain grant towards the improvement of pitches at Westminster field.

The goal posts showed as being non-complaint.

**ACTION:** Look at funding projects that may be able to help finance new goal posts.

### 114 SMALL GREEN SPACES

Discussion regarding the Paddocks had been taken under item 9 which included felling the group of trees at the upper boundary.

Clerk had sent information on West Kent Rural Grants Scheme prior to the meeting. The deadline for submitting potential projects was the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2023 and must be match funded.

This could be used to purchase more robust signs that were initially placed to identify small green spaces owned by the Parish council in the parish.

No proposals were made.

### 115 PLANNING

#### SE/23/01811/HOUSE

Mulcroft

Holmesdale Hill

South Darenth

Dartford

Kent

DA4 9DN

Removal of part garage and replace with single storey extension linked to main dwelling, with alterations to fenestration and rooflight. New Porch

**ACTION:** No objection/no comment

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the Chair passed a procedural motion to exclude the public from the following agenda item because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**117      CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

Information was received from the Clerk and measures were agreed to mitigate the subject

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023

The meeting ended at 9.35pm

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pavilion Maintenance

| DATE                           | DESCRIPTION  | CONTRACTOR | FUNDING<br>CODE/MINUTE | DATE<br>COMPLETED |
|--------------------------------|--|------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 20/07/21                       | Essential for Pc take over and to be carried out 1 - 4 <sup>th</sup> Sept:<br>Front door locks, changing room locks, affix coat hooks, light in corridor, paint floor, hand sanitisers, soap dispensers, broom etc cleaning equipment. |            |                        |                   |
| From Halls Committee<br>May 21 | Beading above toilet window<br>Pointing of eaves<br>Repair broken gutter<br>Access hatch on wall needs replacing   |            |                        |                   |
| 21/07/21                       | Noticeboard - To display Cars locked in overnight warning?<br>Cars parked at owners risk/HKSD PC accept no responsibility?   |            |                        |                   |
|                                |  |            |                        |                   |
|                                |  |            |                        |                   |