

HORTON KIRBY AND SOUTH DARENTH PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Office, Village Hall, Horton Road, South Darenth DA4 9AZ

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL Meeting held on 3rd March 2025 in the Village Hall, South Darenth at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr D Mitchell Chair, H Rohard Vice, C Blackamore, N Gurr, D Hollands, C Page
T Moyle,

County Councillor Roger Gough
Sevenoaks District Cllr A White

Members of the public: nine including Mr M Dunn from DRiPS

In attendance: L Johnson, Parish Clerk

The meeting started at 7.30pm

163 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from District Cllr L Ball via Cllr White.

164 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

None received.

165 MINUTES

Resolved: The minutes of the last meeting held on the 3rd February 2024 were signed as a true record.

166 CLERKS REPORT

Appendix 1

All other items were completed, referred to the relevant committee or appear as an agenda item.

167 POLICE MATTERS

PC Caleb was not available and no report was received.

168 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC and CORRESPONDENCE

There were no questions from the public.

Cllr Mitchell read out a statement on behalf of the council regarding a recent incident in Westminster field:

Most importantly the Parish Council would like to extend their condolences to the owner of the dog that had a fatal accident at the Westminster Field.

The Parish Council has a duty to keep its public spaces maintained with health and safety a priority.

Westminster Field is owned by the Parish Council.

The riverbank from the road bridge on the Westminster Field side along to the fence is owned by the Parish Council.

The railings that are installed towards the right as you enter across the bridge into Westminster Field at the far end of the picnic area were installed about 40 years ago by the Ward family to stop trespassers onto their land and are owned by Court Lodge. Court Lodge own and maintain the riverbank under the railings and beyond into their land. Any landowner has a legal right to erect a boundary over a river so long as the flow of water is not impeded.

The picnic area usually has signs on the gate with 'No Fishing' and 'No Dogs' but this sign was vandalised recently and is on the Parish Council list of repairs to be replaced before the summer.

The River Darent had a flood warning alert on it at the time and this part of the river is deep.

The Parish Council Recreation and Open Spaces Committee has spent the last couple of years making the picnic area a pleasant space for families by instigating a dog friendly access to the river, planning new trees and hedges along the boundary, installing step access into the river and are currently discuss future measures to improve the bank that is owned by the Parish Council.

Correspondence:

Was received to request that the Parish Council reconsider the hire charge that the Halls committee had agreed upon for a regular quiz night held in the village hall to raise money for charity.

Action: the Chair directed back to Halls committee to reconsider.

Received from Residents living on the A225 /Franks Lane area who have been subject to constant bonfires being lit on the Traffic Island, Franks Lane causing much distress. Sevenoaks District Council Enforcement and Environment Health departments are working with residents and District Councillor Alan White on the situation.

Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley Parish Council are asking for support from neighbouring Parish Councils in having the A225 changed to a B road. This will enable more safety options to be considered along this busy route.

Action: Councillors unanimously agreed to give their support.

Cllr Gough arrived at 7.35pm

169 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cllr Roger Gough reported that he had met with The Environment Agency's Sally Hardy and KCC Environmental departments regarding the slow response to the flooding at Franks Lane last year and north of Westminster field along the public footpath. The EA does not have an online tracking system resulting in delays.

Franks Lane Bridge – a meeting has taken place to discuss repairs which will be covered by cctv and a physical presence.

Cllr Gough was disappointed to learn that Kent (including Medway) was the only Sout East county not to have won a bid for fast track devolution.

170 DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

Appendix 2

171 PLANNING

To consider the following planning application plus any received by the Clerk after the agenda had been served.

24/03471/OUT

1 Bexley Cottages
The Street

Horton Kirby
Kent DA4 9BU
Outline application for the erection of a
Two storey detached house with some
Matters reserved.

Action: Objection: Lack of available plans, adequacy of parking, overlooking properties to the rear, effect on listed building and Conservation area.

24/00488/HOUSE

4 Northfield Cottages
Lombard Street
Horton Kirby
Kent DA4 9DH

Replacement of existing conservatory structure with new roof, doors and windows.

Action: No Objection/comment

172 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS 2025 – 2028

To receive details of those awarded the 3 year contract, commencing 1st April 2025 from the Recreation and Open Spaces Committee (ROS).

Seventeen different companies were invited to tender as well as being advertised on the Parish Council website and Facebook page.

Three replied and completed the tender pack.

The Recreation and Open Spaces Committee awarded the following:

Contracts 1, 3,5,6,7,8,9 were awarded to Lothlorien Landscape Services.

Contracts 2 and 4 were awarded to Sports Ground Services Ltd.

The third applicant was unsuccessful due to pricing issues.

Resolved: That Lothlorien Landscape Services and Sports Ground Services Ltd. were awarded grounds maintenance contracts for three years commencing 1st April 2025

Clerk had confirmed with KALC and external auditor that all proper practices had been followed.

173 ENERGY SUPPLIER FOR STREETLIGHTS

Clerk explained that Npower were no longer offering contracts for supplying electricity to the streetlights that the Parish Council had a statutory duty to maintain. This had resulted in monthly electricity increasing from an average of £250 - £350 per month to anything between £600 - £800 per month. After seeking advice from KCC, Lumina Energy had found Valda Energy offered a one year option which would save approximately £2,000 against Npower estimate for the forthcoming financial year.

Cllr Nick Gurr proposed, Cllr Rohard seconded and all were in favour and it was

Resolved: that VALDA energy were to supply electricity to the 97 streetlights that the Parish Council are responsible for.

174 OFFICE IT

To receive information and quote for IT needs for Parish Office

Due to the councillors receiving the information later than planned, this item will appear on the April agenda.

175 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

The NALC's updated (September 2024) Equality and Diversity policy was adopted.

Action: Clerk

176 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Schedule of Accounts was formally received for February 2025. Payments totalling £19,328.67 were approved for authorisation. There were no questions

177 COMMITTEE MINUTES

The latest approved ROS Committee minutes for November 2024 were received for information.

178 WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA/NEWSLETTER ITEMS

Clerk confirmed that all but 1 box of Newsletters had been delivered to volunteers for distribution.

179 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 7th April 2025

The meeting finished at 8.10 pm

Chair _____ Date _____

DRAFT

Appendix 1

MATTERS ARISING – CLERKS REPORT	
COMMITTEE	Parish Council
DATE OF MEETING	3 rd March 2025
UPDATED	3 rd March 2025

64 Matters Arising

Minute 131: Strip of land at East Hill/Paddock Close.. **Solicitor will chase up 20 Feb.**

68 Correspondence

Clerk to complete new Highway Information Pack for extra bollards, The Street and dropped Kerb, Station Road. Nigel Rowe KCC to assist.

Clerk to arrange meeting with new Community Mobilisation Officer Megan Glen

90.GOV.UK Domain and Email Addresses

To go live March 25. www.hortonkirbysouthdarentparishcouncil.gov.uk is now available but needs further updating. Sign up to receive news and planning items.

119 Public Questions

Clerk to write to Laura Trott regarding petition for more services at FNR and to advertise on website. **To be actioned.**

134 Clerks Report

Cardboard Recycling Bins – Update 07 Feb: [Hi Lisa Johnson](#) the cardboard banks have now been removed and will not be returning this is due to the age of the bins and that they would not pass their annual Lolla test. All resident now have their recycling sack and this is what we would like everyone to use for their recycling including cardboard.

Part of **Horton Woods now covered by TPO** – PC confirmed they are happy to pursue getting the rest of the ancient woodland covered. **To be actioned.**

Tree cleared from R. Darent north of WF 3rd Feb and river drained back 4th Feb. Following NWKCP/EA/DRiPS meeting it was cfmd work would start on the bank 2025

KALC Community Award – KALC Awards – 1 nomination per PC, Malcolm Green and so Benjamin Dawes receive a PC Certificate

Heathside Toilet –Finished was discussed at ROS 24th Feb and will start with a trial of SDFC junior only using it at the weekend with full responsibility.

153 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

A resident has requested installing a defibrillator at the pavilion in Westminster Field. **To be actioned**

155 PROW SD151 River Darent Path

Clerk wrote to KCC to accept motorbike inhibitor and steel fencing but to be made more secure. **3rd March** update received from KCC regarding supplies.

Clerk to write to resident for Motability scooter measurements. **To be actioned**

CORRESPONDENCE: Tragic accident at Westminster field

Continuous bonfires and breach of planning enforcement, Traffic Island, Franks Lane – Cllr Alan White

All other items were completed, referred to the relevant Committee or appear as an agenda item

Appendix 2

Cllr Ball has been unwell and readmitted to hospital and unable to attend this evening's meeting, so please accept this notice as his apologies.

Community Litter Pick - 23 March An advert shortly appear in the community magazine regarding this event and I have also approached 60 residents alerting them to this activity in order that they can support. We currently have 5 volunteers including myself and one parish councillor.

Franks Lane Bridge Repair The repair of the bridge is anticipated in the coming weeks as the weather gets warmer.

South Darenth Fire Station. There has been no further update to report upon regarding the planning activity at this location.

Residents' Complaints

A resident has brought to my attention that teenagers were riding a small motorbike across the football pitch at Heathside, South Darenth. Video footage was captured and this has been reported to the neighbourhood police officer to action.

Complaints regarding the traffic island have been received and will be forwarded to Sevenoaks District Council and the Kent highways team for their attention.

A resident raised a matter of a drone being flown over South Darenth. There are rules and regulations regarding flight of drones as well as a common misconception that homeowners own the air above their property or land, which isn't correct. Whilst legally drones can be flown over people's property, they're still remains a grey area of privacy and endangerment that the pilot has to be mindful by doing so. There's also a flight level that needs to be observed and the pilot must be in sight of the drone at all times. If residents find drones are being an intrusion they should report it to the police as being antisocial behaviour.

Two residents have written to me to explain how unhappy they are with the service from River Darenth Medical Group, and that they are not receiving the service they expect. Whilst both surgeries are in this ward, I had to redirect a resident to their own District Councillor to assist them. I would encourage anyone to log a complaint via haveyoursay.g82218@nhs.net. I'm also alert to the recent social media posts regarding the withdrawal of E – consult in recent weeks which prompted comments.

I have engaged with Matthew Scott, Kent Police and crime commissioner regarding the recent ball bearing incident the other occurred across the ward. My request to the PCC was to have a greater police presence in the community due to the numerous antisocial behaviour incidents being reported. I've highlighted this matter will be brought to the district commander's attention.

Cllr Alan White

Sevenoaks District Councillor for Farningham, Horton Kirby and South Darenth (9th May 2023)

Committees:

Cleaner and Greener
Development and Conservation
Innovation and Improvement
Community Infrastructure Levy
People and Places

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