



Medstead Parish Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting Wednesday 13th April 2022.

Present: Cllrs. Charles Clark (Chair), Graham Bennell, Charles Clark, Ken Kercher, Phil Quinlan, Mike (Jo) Smith & Mike (Ja) Smith.

Also in attendance: Peter Baston (Parish Clerk).

ACTION

22.038 OPEN SESSION

- i. Cllr Mike (Ja) Smith asked for an update on the fencing at Five Ash Pond. The Clerk explained that further chestnut fencing is on order from the contractor hence the reason for the continuance of Heras style fencing.
- ii. Cllr Mike (Jo) Smith asked for an update on whether funds could be made available for the local foodbank. The Clerk advised that the COGS in Four Marks might like to consider applying for a Parish Council grant for funding towards the project and Cllr Smith would take this forward with the organisation.

**Cllr Mike
(Jo) Smith**

22.039 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs. Andrew Jackson, Deborah Jackson and Georgy Fuzzard & EHDC District Jonathan May. Approved.

22.040 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None

22.041 COUNCIL MINUTES

- i. The minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on **9th March 2022** and the extraordinary meeting held on **15th March 2022** were proposed as a true record by Councillor Ken Kercher seconded by Councillor Mike (Ja) Smith and was signed by the Chairman.

ii. Matters Arising:

Minute #	Full Council Meeting Date	Action	Assigned to	Status	Comments
20.098(iii)	Sep-20	Signage at wildflower meadow.	Maintenance Committee	On Hold	To be considered further once Wildflower Meadow restoration work has been undertaken
21.082(iii) c	Jul-21	Clerk to set up a Facebook account as an information tool	Clerk	On Hold	
21.089(ii)		Cllr Mike (Ja) Smith to source local plumber to address water supply issues to allotment tap	Cllr Mike (Ja) Smith	On Hold	On agenda for Full Council.
21.142 (iii)	Nov-21	All councillors to consider being a Trustee for the Mulcock Charity	All councillors	On Hold	
21.168(i)	Dec-21	M'tce Committee to consider future Green maintenance requirements	M'tce Committee	Outstanding	Mr N Cooper (Medstead CC) to provide thoughts for April Full Council meeting
21.168(iii)		Cllr Mike(Jo) Smith to contact HCC about flashing speed sign	Cllr Mike (Jo) Smith	Outstanding	Cllrs M (Jo) & (Ja) Smith to follow up with school pta for supporting statements of need to assist with justification to HCC.
22.001(i)	Feb-22	F&GP to further review the hiring regulations iro MCC use	F&GP Committee	Outstanding	Cllr Kercher to review the existing lease and report back at next meeting
22.027 (v)	Mar-22	Cllr Mike (Ja) Smith to seek views on speed reduction	Cllr Mike (Ja) Smith	Outstanding	
22.031 (i)		Maintenance Committee to consider options for reducing the sediment at Five Ash Pond	Maintenance Committee	Outstanding	To be reviewed at 25th May meeting

22.042 COMMITTEE MINUTES AND REPORTS

a. Planning Committee

Chairman's Report

Following the last Planning Committee meeting on 9th March, it was agreed that Medstead PC would strongly object to 23291/029 (Lymington Barns) and 58788 (land to the west of Longbourn Way). The wording of these objections was agreed and the Clerk has sent them on to the EHDC. Reference to 59143 (construction of 4 new houses on the land to the rear of Willowfield, Medstead) has been made in the NPSG report. As always we await the determination of the Planning Officer.

He further mentioned that he had been made aware of a property in South Town Rd which is in the process of being redeveloped and could possibly be in breach of planning regulations and the Clerk was asked to check the details with EHDC.

b. Maintenance Committee

- i. **Chairman's Report.** Maintenance Committee met on 23rd March and the minutes of that meeting have been circulated.
Minute ref 22.14: The specification and invitation to tender for undertaking a tree survey have been sent to four arboriculture consultants and the return date for quotations is 27th April.
Minute ref 22.16: The first quarterly report has been received from Sawscape Play on the play and exercise equipment on the Green. It recommends the cleaning of algae from many of the items, for which arrangements have already been made. Much of the other recommended work can, it is considered, be carried out by the Council's Daywork Contractor. This involves securing to the ground the picnic table in the enclosed area, sanding a fence post, replacing one sleeper bench entirely and renewing the legs of another bench, re-concreting one loose log in the "log steppers", replacing one timber "stilt", removing graffiti from two items of equipment, and replacing soil and turf to restore ground levels at the gateway. Replacing the gate spring and realigning the gate post is likely to require professional attention. The Clerk was asked to take this forward.
Minute ref 22.17: This review appears to raise the possibility of a change in legislation as to the permitted use of BOATS. However, the Committee's discussion centred round the problem in the change of levels between the surfaced and unsurfaced lengths of Stancomb Broad Lane. The Council's Footpaths Officer has been unable to secure any remedial work from either the County Council's Countryside Department or Highways Department, and the situation appears to have been complicated by the apparent presence of dormice in the area. The Parish Council may feel that it could initiate some direct action to resolve the matter.
Minute ref 22.18: The contractor who is currently working at Five Ash Pond quoted £830.00 + VAT to purchase and install the additional fencing. With the agreement of members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee the Clerk has authorised the work to be undertaken.
Minute ref 22.19: The rodent prevention wire has been ordered and delivered at a cost of £333.00 plus vat.

Clerk

c. **Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee**

Chairman's report.

- i. F&GP met on 23rd March and the draft minutes have been circulated.

Over the past couple of years, the Council has installed and replaced a large number of dragon teeth to protect the Village Green and the Committee agreed that it would be prudent to start building a reserve for repairs. This will be considered as part of the 2022/23 budget review.

Following from discussions at the March Full Council meeting, Cllr Kercher has agreed to draft a more relevant Green hire document to reflect the agreement of use by the Cricket Club.

The Committee reviewed the Clerk's annual performance, together with some miscalculation in leave allowance, recommendations from which will be presented for approval by Full Council. In addition, it was noted that the Clerk's contract is out of date and requires revision.

The Clerk provided an update on the Village Hall lease. Once feedback from the Charities Commission has been received by MPC work can start on the latest re-draft. Five Council Policies were reviewed and forwarded to Full Council for approval.

- ii. **Clerk Pay & Conditions Review.** Following the review by F&GP Committee it was confirmed that as previously agreed by Full Council that with effect from 1st April 2022, the Clerk should move to Pay Spine Point SCP27 becoming more in line with neighbouring parish councils.
- iii. A further iteration of the lease had been drafted following the agreement that the Parish Council, would become responsible for the car park area around the Village Hall and circulated and was reviewed by Council. It was agreed that the Clerk would send this on to the Medstead Village Hall Committee to consider and for them to send on to the Charity Commission for any further comment and approval

Clerk

20.043 MEDSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN REPORT

Spring is now underway and with the first grass cuts having been completed there is that brief moment to appreciate some of the works that have been completed over the last year (before everything starts growing again!) – the new trees that have been planted to replace those sadly lost to storms and ash die-back, the new Jubilee bench and the improvements to road drainage into the ponds.

Whilst no official Parish spring litter pick has been organised, I would like to remind councillors that equipment is available to loan to groups who may wish to undertake a clean-up of any specific area.

Activities relating to the proposed large site and other applications in the south of the Parish are ongoing and it seems that this will be discussed at the next meeting of the EHDC Planning Committee. If this is the case, then MPC will be using their allocated 3 minutes to

address the Committee, as will other representatives on behalf of Medstead. I am particularly grateful to our District Councillor for her support with this. Council have sought legal advice regarding the ongoing trespass. Such action, whilst regrettable was seen as the most efficient way to resolve the matter to the benefit of the Parish as a whole.

Activities are underway in preparation for the Annual Parish Assembly (20th April), the first since 2019, where reports of the Council's activities and Finances will be presented. I am also preparing a short one-page summary for posting on notice boards after the event. On a personal note, I would like to thank Councillors and the Clerk for their ongoing support at this challenging time whilst my partner is undergoing medical treatment.

22.044 MEDSTEAD PARISH CLERK REPORT

Fencing still to be completed at Five Ash Pond. Contractor chased.

"Solicitor's letter" sent to neighbour of Five Ash Pond asking that her items be removed and not to trespass on Parish Council land.

Defibrillator for MVH on order once donation paid to London Hearts.

Further work on Annual Parish Assembly agenda.

First cuts undertaken on the new contracts for the Medstead Green mowing, Cemetery / Churchyard and Wildflower Meadow. One complaint from St Andrew's PCC due to grass clippings in church porch. Contractor advised.

Fallen trees during the recent storms have been removed and fence line reinstated at school.

Preparatory work undertaken on the 2021/22 audit.

Have liaised with the Church of England regarding the ongoing saga of attempting to get three parcels of land registered at Land Registry which were transferred from the Church Commissioners back in July 1955 to Medstead Parish Council.

Contacted neighbouring parish councils regarding weight limit signage in Medstead parish. Confirmation of support received from Four Marks and Beech.

Waiting for a response from Bentworth and Ropley PC's.

Mesh wire ordered for allotment shed.

Platinum Jubilee bench now installed.

Contacted four tree surveyors for quotes for forthcoming tree survey.

Cemetery Activity

One Grant of Burial Rights.

One burial of ashes planned for May 2022

Village Green Booking(s)

Under 12 Football - Wednesday evenings 6 pm to 8 pm (March 30, April 6, 13, 20 & 27).

Medstead Cricket Club. Between 23rd April and 11th September inclusive.

Under 12 Football - Saturday Morning (May 7, 14, 21, 28 & June 4, 11, 18 & 25)

Medstead Gardeners Club – 7th May

Medstead Summer Ball 18th June.

Medstead Village Fete 9th July.

22.045 EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

Veolia Incinerator application: I was very relieved to hear that this proposal by Veolia has been refused by HCC. I made two objections against building a massive incinerator with no proven, local need, and that it would be inappropriate to build it in the Wey Valley, etc. We thank Cllr. Mark Kemp-Gee, Cllr. Andrew Joy and Cllr.

Robert Mocatta for speaking at the hearing on 23 February. There is in my view already sufficient incinerator capacity in the Southeast to meet our needs.

Climate Change Committee EHDC: This year our sub-group, 'natural environment' is also covering 'land', including farmland, both grazing land and agricultural land, as part of our remit. We have been dealing with trees (planting and maintenance), green open spaces and verges, nature reserves, etc., since early 2021. Farmland is important because we can expect more extreme weather events, e.g. storms and high winds due to Climate Change. Recent extreme weather cannot be viewed as a 'once in a lifetime' event, unfortunately and will become more common. Pictures of flooded areas in Lymington Bottom Road and Chawton Park Road have been forwarded to planning officers with a report, and we understand that this information is being retained on file.

Tree Wardens and tree planting: Training continues and we covered 'Trees and the Law' in February. Stewart Garside, arboriculture officer for East Hampshire, participated and provided some valuable input, as well as answering questions. Interestingly we discovered that fines are now unlimited for felling, or harming a protected tree. The amount of the fine was previously set at £20,000, so in some cases a developer might feel it was a small price to pay compared with the profit if planning permission were granted. Our parish councils have done particularly well with tree planting during 2020/21 and a total of 164 trees have been planted, as well as several new hedges incorporating native species. District councillors contributed towards tree planting with EHDC community grants.

Land at south Medstead: This remains as a possible site although planners are presently considering other large sites. District and parish councillors were invited to a briefing, described as a 'workshop' in February. Parish Councillors were able to comment, but District Councillors were only able to observe. We understand that the information put forward and discussed remains confidential, and not in the public domain, so I am unable to comment or reveal any information whatsoever to our residents. Apart from issues relating to flooding, access via the narrow Victorian railway bridge is concerning, and I still hold the view that amount of traffic using the A31 could block local roads and narrow lanes, and cause gridlock at peak times.

East Hants new green corporate strategy: This has been launched for the next financial year. The Council is dedicated to wellbeing and welfare, as well as 'stepping up its game in relation to the green agenda and doing everything it can to tackle climate change'. The Council is determined to ensure that it can reach net zero carbon by 2050. It is also 'challenging central government thinking about the planning system and pushing to ensure the highest environmental standards can be achieved through the planning process'. The new Local Plan is expected to challenge the boundaries set by government to 'deliver a far reaching, innovative plan that delivers zero-carbon homes in the right places. The following priorities are being focused on over the next three years:- 'A fit for purpose council, a safer, healthier and more active East Hampshire, a thriving community with infrastructure to support its ambitions, and an environmentally aware and cleaner East Hampshire'. The Council claims its green plans have always been bold, and a Green Team will shortly be launched to examine the Council's work and see where improvements can be made. A total of £250,000 has been put aside for Planning

Services to help deliver the greenest ever Local Plan, so that developers build zero carbon homes for the future. Additionally, an extra £150,000 is being invested to ensure that planning enforcement can make sure developers comply with the rules.

Charity Walk for Peace: This year the walk commences and ends at the Hogmoor Nature Reserve on 21st May. Over the years it has raised over tens of thousands of pounds for local charities. I went along to the presentation of cheques to charities in 2019 before the pandemic struck, and last year the event was slightly smaller to comply with coronavirus restrictions. Any organisation or charity wishing to be a beneficiary, or anyone requiring further information should contact Lisa Clements on Tel: 01730-234384.

Dementia Festival: This will take place again on 8th April at the Festival Hall, Petersfield, see www.easthants.gov.uk/dementia-festival for further information.

Councillor Community Grants: Applications by charities and non-profit making concerns are again able to apply for funding from EHDC from 1st April. Please check the EHDC website where you will find an application form and information on how to apply.

War in Ukraine: Lastly and most importantly, residents are telling me they have delivered much-needed items for refugees in the Ukraine, to be transported from Romsey and delivered to centres in Poland. The humanitarian crisis is expected to deepen and a Disaster Emergency Appeal has been launched. It is important to note that the best way of helping is to donate online. The charities to check online are:- UNICEF, The International Rescue Committee (to assist people whose lives have been affected by conflict and disaster), Vostok SOS, Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders (MSF), Sunflower of Peace, Save the Children UK, to mention but a few.

22.046 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

This will take place at 8pm on 20th April in Medstead Village Hall.

22.047 MEDSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL POLICY

The following policies were re-adopted by Council, being proposed by Cllr Clark and seconded by Cllr Kercher.

- a. **Gifts & Hospitality**
- b. **Cemetery Fees**
- c. **Press & Media**
- d. **Safeguarding**
- e. **Training**
- f. **Cemetery Grave Diggers**
- g. **Drone**

22.048 CORRESPONDENCE. The following items were noted by Council.

- i. **EHDC Communities Fund.**
- ii. **Hampshire's new Local Transport Plan**

22.049 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- i. The **income and expenditure account** for March 2022 was reviewed by Council and were approved.
- ii. The **bank reconciliation(s)** as at 31st March 2022 having been signed off by Cllr Fuzzard was reviewed by Council, proposed by Cllr Kercher and seconded by Cllr Clark and approved.
- iii. **Annual Governance Statement (AGAR)**. Section 1 of the AGAR was considered and approved by Council.
- iv. **Parish Council Grant**. The Grant application for £300 from Citizens Advice East Hampshire was considered. It was agreed that at this early stage of the year, a grant of £200 could be awarded and this was proposed by Cllr Kercher and seconded by Cllr Mike(Jo) Smith. The Clerk was asked to raise the payment.

Clerk

22.050 MEDSTEAD ALLOTMENTS MAINTENANCE

Cllr Mike(Ja) Smith reported the following:

Allotment Shed:

External skirting on shed removed to allow installation of wire netting

Trench for French drain excavated

Trench around shed for installing rodent proof wire excavated

Water/Tap Problem.

Water turned on after winter drain-down period on 1 April, tested and found to be running at all taps.

Water pressure low at two of four taps

Water slow leak at the same two taps - possibly need re-washing?

Water turned off again to minimise wastage and water charges.

Cllr Smith further reported that the taps which had been installed by the developer were now judged to be the source of the issue with water flow and it was agreed that new taps for all the water points be purchased by Medstead Parish Council. Cllr Smith to source and advise the Clerk accordingly.

Cllr Mike
(Ja) Smith

22.051 S106/CIL FUNDED PROJECTS

- i. **Medstead Village Green**. Nick Cooper was unable to attend the Maintenance Committee meeting. He has been asked to set out his recommendations for ongoing work on the Green, which will be reported at the Council meeting.
- ii. **Medstead Parish Office / Pavilion Expansion**. The planning application has been submitted to EHDC and is now being considered by EHDC as part of the due process.
- iii. **Footpath Link to Medstead School**. No further update at present.

22.052 MEDSTEAD VILLAGE PONDS

- i. **Five Ash Pond**. The remaining chestnut fencing to encircle the Pond is on order which the contractor will be installing once received.
- ii. **Medstead Village Pond**.
The Village Pond Working Party met on 13th March to review the current appearance and condition of the pond area. There were two main points of discussion – immediate actions required and potential long-term options within

the remit of a maintaining an open area/ seasonal pond. Following negative comments from parishioners, there needs to be a better balance between nettles, thistles, docks and invasive rushes and visual appearance and access to this village amenity. The working group considered short (immediate), medium (this year) and some longer-term proposals (to be presented to Council later in the year). It was strongly felt that, whilst minor activities (e.g. plant pruning) could be completed by volunteers, any more significant works should be undertaken by the Council where H&S assurances and guarantees of work could be properly established.

Immediate actions required:

- Pruning bushes to enable access to footpath
- Weedkilling of path
- Cutting back weeds as they grow (very regular strimming)
- Improved mowing

Medium-term actions (during 2022):

- Setting specification for maintenance of the pond area
- Removal of rushes
- Removal of pond life boards
- Additional planting of low maintenance shrubs (wooded side of pond)
- Bulb planting (for all year-round interest)
Extension of path/ alternative surface.

22.053 COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

EHAPTC Report

The meeting was well attended by use of Teams. It was decided in future only one meeting will take place in a village hall per year and the others will be conducted using Teams.

The village speed limit proposal concluded village Parish Councils should be allowed to consider their own requirements.

Byways open to all traffic (BOAT's) were still causing great frustration. There was no support for motorised use of a BOAT. Representations were to be escalated to encourage legal change.

Medstead Sports Club.

The Annual General Meeting of the Club had been scheduled for 6th April but had to be cancelled because a number of committee members had registered positive for covid. It is now planned to hold it on 4th May.

Medstead Village Hall.

A Medstead Village Hall committee meeting was held on 15 March 22 with an almost full attendance. The meeting began at 7.00pm and concluded at 9.30pm with 9 pages of minutes produced.

The Chairman updated the members on minor operational matters progressing as anticipated. Quotes are in hand for major items of expenditure to be decided upon at the next meeting inc Hall/air /heating conditioning, cricket ball defence, window improvements, light tube replacement (expensive due to scaffolding required). All other repairs and maintenance are progressing, as is the rear fire exit doorway. The Treasurers report showed the current account standing at £11,000, with the anticipated increase in

energy costs being protected by a fixed energy tariff until April 23. However, the principal cause of wasted energy was through certain users leaving windows and doors open. The Business Continuity insurance claim is ongoing.

A lengthy debate on the financial structure and Charity Objectives concluded with the decision to ensure an adequate working capital of £12k is held, being sufficient for 6 months operational costs, and to retain the £25k held in reserve for major works. Alongside this, the potential high expenditure list would be reviewed and prioritised. A revised Data Protection Policy was adopted as a working document to be signed by all committee members.

An Events Framework Guidance for all to use was approved. As many kitchen items have become seriously depleted funding for the following was agreed - replacement crockery, cutlery, wine cooler, and an ice maker – all of which are required by hall hirers.

The meeting concluded with the surprise resignation of the Secretary, Treasurer, and Chairman each providing a variety of personal reasons. This unexpected action has left the village hall needing to replace 3 Trustees and the above officers over the next 2 months.

The next village hall committee meeting will be on 17 May 2022.

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG)

There has recently been a great deal of email traffic concerning planning application 59143 (construction of 4 new houses on the land to the rear of Willowfield, Medstead).

Whilst no update has been received concerning this application from the EHDC, a printed notice dated 21st March was pinned to a post near the site. This was a “Notice of Application for Departure from the Development Plan”. Comments are required no later than 21 days from the date of the notice. However Statutory Consultation has now moved to 28th April. This does not align with the 21 day period. Not sure at the time of writing what further action MPC can take.

Speedwatch

Getting out twice a week most weeks but are short of volunteer's as 4 members have been lost over the past few months.

There were no further matters to discuss and the meeting was closed at 9.00pm.

Signed Chairman **Date.....**