

ST MARY HOO PARISH COUNCIL**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 30 MAY 2017 IN THE MEMORIAL HALL,
THE STREET, HIGH HALSTOW AT 7.30 PM****PRESENT:**

Cllr Bill Budd, Chairman; Cllrs, Paul Hassell and Mrs Carol Heyburn; Mrs Roxana Brammer, Parish Clerk.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1 APOLOGIES

Cllrs Terry Ballard and Mrs Pat Kelly, St Mary Hoo Parish Council; Cllrs Phil Filmer, Roy Freshwater and Mick Pendergast, Medway Council; Mr Clive Stanley, Webmaster.

2 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 17 MAY 2017

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 17th May 2017 having been circulated, it was proposed by Cllr Hassell, seconded by Cllr Mrs Heyburn and agreed they were a true record of that meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

3 ACCOUNTS

The Financial Statement of the Parish Council's Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 was received. No questions were asked.

4 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Budd read his report, which would be published in Village Voices:

The 2017 Annual Parish Assembly will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 30th May in the High Halstow Memorial Hall. Any group wishing to give a short report on their achievements during the past year may attend. All residents are welcome. A Parish Council meeting will follow.

Probably the most significant issue this year was the publication of Medway Council's Local Plan Issues and Options document and the opportunity for public consultation which commenced on January 16th. Medway Council is obliged by Central Government to prepare a new plan for future growth by identifying what infrastructure, commercial and retail development, employment, community services and housing requirements are needed to meet demand from now until 2035 and their first task is to find suitable sites for up to 30,000 homes (government assessment figure). Inevitably the Hoo Peninsula will be affected to some degree whilst development of land at Lodge Hill is included but still subject to the outcome of a Public Inquiry scheduled for Spring 2018.

Another issue was a proposal by Highways England for a Lower Thames Crossing which was rolled out for Public consultation. Following this and other considerations the preferred route has recently been announced which involves a link from the end of the M2 at Shorne, passing Chalk and entering a bored tunnel under the Thames. This route will probably be registered now with local planning authorities to protect specific zones from conflicting development.

St Mary Hoo Councillors have taken part in meetings and committee membership of other

relevant consultation groups such as Medway Council Rural Liaison Committee, Kent Association of Parish Councils Medway area and the Police Liaison Committee. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss or raise issues affecting our communities such as policing, highways, transport, social services, planning, local business groups and recreation. We were pleased to announce that the St Mary Hoo Council Tax precept for 2017 will not increase as, despite the completion and planning of several projects, we have managed this year to keep expenditure within the umbrella of existing budgets, grants and funds.

Our campaign against speeding traffic and for road safety improvements throughout the village has continued. Following another accident at Fenn Corner and several near misses along Ratcliffe Highway we met in October with Medway Highways, Safety Dept, and Peninsula Ward Councillor Filmer who holds the portfolio for Front line Services. Some positives came from this such as the fitting of verge markers and a planned design assessment for additional barrier at Fenn Corner, repair of the Vehicle Activated Light at Sharnal Street, and further provision of on road 'SLOW' markings, but it is clear that camera provision through the Safety Camera Partnership has been ruled out as no demonstrable casualty reduction rate can be shown. Unfortunately, such action is retrospective and applied only where existing casualty figures are of concern. It was also reported that the clearance of weed and shrub growth between the block paving in the hard landscaped roundabout at Fenn corner is not covered by the Council's contractor. Some small trees are already taking root and growing tall.

The Council's Amenity areas have been further maintained and improved this year and Wayne of 'Grassroots' has been employed to keep things tidy. Project work at the Nature Reserve has seen the provision of new safety fencing at the entrance and to the south side, successful growth of spring flowers (and the daffodils at Fenn corner), and the attraction of many more species of birds to our trees and nest boxes. A planning consent has been lodged with Medway Environment to remove a cracked branch from one of the Village Pond willows and to reduce the canopy to 6.5 metres. It is hoped to complete this soon as this will allow more light onto the pond surface and hopefully encourage ducks and moorhens to nest. The Rowan tree planted by Douglas Packman has now established at the Pond Green and the pond overflow has proven successful.

We regret that Martin Botley, our footpaths officer, resigned recently due to additional work pressures and his experience of poor response to safety issues in his reports by Medway Council. We are trying to resolve the issues raised before re advertising the position. Meanwhile a big Thank You goes to Martin for his work

Our communications have been professionally handled by Clive Stanley our webmaster and Michael Pearce, editor of Village Voices magazine. My sincere thanks to both for their invaluable help and guidance.

We wish all local business ventures success and encourage residents to try them and thereby keep their services alive in the community. Our particular best wishes are for Andy and Kelly at the Fenn Bell Inn who have struggled with planning and licensing procedures to provide a unique experience train ride and small animal zoo for the enjoyment of customers, and for Cliff of Cliff Auto Repairs who is trying to complete his new approved facility but has been hindered by restrictions and lately by the close proximity of an electricity supply transformer which will need to be repositioned before work can resume. Good luck to both projects.

Thanks are also due for excellent service, either to the Council or personally, to the following:-

Wayne of Grassroots, Simon of Halstow Fencing and Gates, Gerry Smith - Digger Hire, The Laverock brothers of Laverock Tree Care, Richard of Peninsular Plumbing and Steve of SRS Windows.

Also to Martin and Lynne and to Darren and Julie for help with magazine distribution.

Finally I must thank my team of Councillors and Clerk for their support and who have made all these good things happen over the past year. We are a small Parish with limited resources but we hope that our work makes a difference.

Thank you Paul (Vice Chairman), Terry, Carol and Pat (Councillors) and Roxana (Clerk).

5 MEDWAY COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Cllr Filmer's written report was read:

Kerbside collections, customer satisfaction & contract monitoring

- Over 17 million kerbside refuse, recycling and organic collections last year (333,000 collections weekly)
- 91% satisfaction with refuse collection & 85% satisfaction with recycling facilities
- 10760 inspections carried out (street cleansing and litter bins; refuse, recycling and organic collections)
- Street cleansing – operated 364 days a year
- Three Parishes have opted to undertake their own street cleansing – Cuxton and Halling, All Hallows and High Halstow
- Veolia cleansed 566 miles of streets last year (over 3000 streets) and sweep 12 miles of shopping areas continuously
- Over 2,000 litter and dog bins emptied on average 3 times/week
- Household Waste Recycling Centres - operating 363 days a year
- Almost half a million visitors to the 3 HRWC networks (est. 498,000 visitors)
- Cuxton HWRC improvements: to address A228 congestion works to expand the access road and provide additional parking were completed in March

Recycling performance

- Recycling rate for 2016 -17 is an improvement on 2015-16
- Only 11% of waste collected was landfilled
- 16,400 rolls of caddy liners sold at libraries and community hubs (estimated to divert around 640 tonnes of food waste)

Flats recycling

- Delivered 8,000 recycling leaflets increasing recycling in flats on average 20%
- Installed bulk recycling bins to 1,000 flats
- Standardised clear sack deliveries for 12,000 flats that recycle at kerbside (leaflet delivery later this year)

Graffiti removal and street washing

- 214 graffiti incidents removed and intelligence shared with the Community Safety Partnership (gang tagging)
- Attended 39 street washing incidents, some of which are to assist the police where there has been serious injury or fatality

Highway Maintenance

- Resurfaced 3940 linear metres of footway and completed 13 smaller sites of footway patching
- 24,892 gullies were cleaned across all 22 wards
- Completed 33 drainage schemes
- This winter we had 61 primary salting runs and 20 secondary salting runs
- Over 2016/17 financial year, an average of 99.34% of street lights were in illumination at any one time
- 189 enquiries answered from members of the public, in relation to our Public Right of Way (PROW) network

- Our PROW volunteers worked 2 days per week in the summer months and 1 day per week in the winter months, maintaining our rights of way
- Researching a programme to convert street lights to LED which is more efficient and requires less maintenance
- Granted £191k from the Department for Transport for the Asset Management Self-Assessment and £201k from the pothole fund.

Integrated Transport

- Bus patronage for Medway, supported by a number of bus improvement schemes, increased in 2016/17 by approximately 185,000 journeys
- Medway now has a Streetworks Permit Scheme which reduces the number of days of highway occupation by roadworks across the year. It also makes utility companies pay up front for the road space they need.
- Over £1.5 million of Local Transport Plan funding spent on a range of public accessibility, bus stop facility, road safety, cycling, and traffic management improvement schemes
- Local Growth Fund £24 million programme of improvements have progressed in 2016-17:
 - Strood Town Centre – successful public consultation carried out to agree a package of improvements including changes to the car park / market area, road network changes to help with traffic flow, an improved railway station, changes to Rochester Bridge and improvements to the street scene e.g. removing street clutter, making the passage easier for pedestrians etc. An investment of £9million into Strood Town Centre
 - A289 Wainscott Bypass – changes proposed to improve traffic flow by increasing size of roundabouts, adding slip lanes, adding pedestrian footbridges. This scheme is progressing well and will see an investment of £11million
 - A new signal scheme was implemented on the westbound entrance to Medway Tunnel, reducing journey times for workers leaving Medway City Estate during the evening peak. Safety was improved in the tunnel by adding speed cameras
 - Cycle Safety – a Cycling Action Plan was agreed which has seen a number of cycle paths and other improvements being implemented across Medway
- A range of road safety and sustainable travel initiatives were delivered across the year, including Walking Bus (school journey) scheme and the WOW Walk on Wednesday initiative. This achieved a reduction in car journeys in Medway across the year of 48,166.

6 OTHER REPORTS

No other reports were given.

7 OTHER BUSINESS AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

No matters were raised.

The Chairman thanked everybody for attending and closed the meeting at 7.45 pm

SignedChairman

On theday of2018