



CLIFFE AND CLIFFE WOODS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Extra Ordinary Meeting held at
Small Memorial Hall, Church Street, Cliffe
On Thursday 26th May 2016

PRESENT

Cllrs. Mrs Sue McDermid-Chair(SM), Mrs Joan Darwell (JD), Jerry Doyle (JDO), Mrs Faith Evers (FE), Mrs Sandra Fenney (SF), Derek Graves (DG), Fred Harper (FH), Mrs Gill Moore (GM), Ron Naughton-Dean (RND), Phillip Stanley (PS), Mrs Vivienne Walton (VW).

29 members of the public.

The meeting opened at 7.30 pm.

NO		ITEM	ACTION BY
		Welcome and Introduction	
		<p>The Chair (Cllr. Sue McDermid) thanked members of public for coming to this Extraordinary Meeting of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council.</p> <p>As you know this meeting has been called to further discuss the issues surrounding car parking on the Buttway in Cliffe.</p> <p>All Councillors have been sent the agenda for this meeting along with a report from the Clerk (Proper Officer) outlining the problem and the possible options going forward.</p> <p>Various representations have been received from members of the public and it is good to see a number of residents here this evening.</p> <p>Later in the proceedings you will have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments pertinent to this issue, if you so wish.</p> <p>All Parish Council meetings are open to the public and we welcome your contributions.</p>	
1.0		Apologies for Absence	
		<p>Cllr P Clements, Cllr, I Petrie, Cllr Jim Wenban, Cllr L Bush (but hopes to arrive later)</p> <p>Absent: Cllr Ray Letheren</p>	
2.0		Declarations of Interest	
		None	
3.0		BUTTWAY CAR PARKING ISSUES	
	3.1	<p>CALL FOR EXTRAORDINARY MEETING</p> <p>Following the 9th May meeting of the parish council discussion and resolution (minute 6.3 12/5/2016 refers):</p> <p><i>Problems continue in the Buttway regarding the parking and littering. Rev Jill Wright has raised concern on behalf of St Helen's Church. After a lengthy discussion, it was proposed to return the Buttway to its original use as a recreation ground and lift the barriers. The church would have a key to drop the barriers as required, as would St Helen's House hirers. Prior notification and reason as to why this decision has been made will be circulated in all types of media. Two weeks' notice will be given and the barriers will be lifted from 1st June 2016. Proposed LB, seconded VW – MAJORITY AGREED</i></p>	

		<p>Under powers granted by the Local Government Act 1972, schedule 12 para 9(1):</p> <p>a) The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time. (Local Government Act 1972, schedule 12 para 9(1))</p> <p>b) If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors. (Local Government Act 1972, schedule 12 para 9(2))</p> <p>Cllrs Darwell (JD), Stanley (PS) and Moore (GM), called for an extraordinary meeting to reconsider the decision before implementation on the 1st June (as the council were not due to meet until 9th June). The Chair and Clerk (PO) discussed a date for the meeting and a summons to councillors issued within the required timescales through email.</p> <p>Due notice was given of the meeting to members of the public through social media and on all five parish noticeboards.</p>	
	3.2	<p>RESCINDING OF PREVIOUS MINUTES</p> <p>There is an item in Model Standing Orders to limit power to change previous recommendations after they are made, within a defined timescale. This also explains the process to be used if it councillors do want to re-visit a decision. This is a procedural item and not defined in law or regulation, the intention being to avoid the flip-flopping of a decision:</p> <p><i>A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least (2), councillors to be given to the Proper Officer...</i></p> <p>This item was not carried forward to the council's standing orders and it is possible for decisions to be changed without these constraints.</p> <p>In this case the Clerk (PO) advised Cllr Darwell (JD) to adopt the process to formalise her request to revisit the resolution passed at the council meeting on the 12th May and the need for a special meeting if it was to be reconsidered by the council before the implementation date of 1st June. The request to rescind the resolution was received from Cllrs Darwell (JD) and Stanley (PS).</p> <p>A report on the background and issues regarding options considered has been circulated.</p>	
4.0		<p>ADJOURNMENT</p> <p>The Chair explained that the decision hadn't been taken lightly; it had been a topic of discussion over many meetings and a range of options had been considered. The Buttway had been bequeathed into the care of the Parish Council for the "good of the Parish". It was not a car park but in recent years had been used for resident and visitor's car parking and special events.</p> <p>Members of the public expressed their views on the decision made by</p>	

	<p>the council and other car parking issues in the parish.</p> <p>Dave Simmons explained he has been involved with events in the past. He feels that this decision will drive a wedge between the church, parish council and the village as a whole. He is very involved in the church and knows that they do not want any involvement with opening and shutting of the bollards on the Buttway. He suggested a barrier is put along the back of the Buttway so that this could be used by the church for weddings and funerals and leave the tarmac area for the residents.</p> <p>Maureen Pearson explained that she is involved in leading local walks within the area and asks the parish council to consider the visitors that come to the area.</p> <p>Robert Filmer asked the parish council to consider where the displaced cars will park as other areas are already crowded. He suggested consideration be given to introduce car parking charges which could be beneficial to the parish council. He also stated that the Courtsale development shouldn't have had an impact on the parking as there are 41 parking spaces for 14 houses. He suggested that the parish council write to the companies with the commercial vans that are causing the overcrowding of parking within the village.</p> <p>Alan Gong, Cliffe Classic Wheels explained he lives across the road from the Buttway and monitors what goes on daily. He asked the council why the Parish Council were alienating people who want to visit their loved one's graves.</p> <p>Ted Carter expressed his concerns over local roads being overrun with parking. He believes that it is the parish council's fault as they have allowed all the extra houses to be built and that the parish council should deal with the problems rather than just push it to one side.</p> <p>Linda Twitchett suggested installing width restriction barriers at the Buttway to prevent access for commercial vehicles.</p> <p>Neil Watkins asked where all the cars will go if the Buttway is closed. He believes it will alienate the people of the village.</p> <p>The Chair stated that it was obvious there were misunderstandings as to the role of the Parish Council and what it could and couldn't do. She encouraged those present to consider attending PC meetings or become involved in other ways and to share their concerns. All PC meetings are advertised on the PC websites and on the PC noticeboards. Councillors could be contacted by email, letter or phone.</p> <p>Pat Leviston explained that people are parking on the Buttway for long periods of time and carrying out car repairs.</p> <p>Cllr Jerry Doyle (JDo) reiterated the Chair's point that this topic had been discussed at many meetings. The parish council are passionate about the village and have a responsibility for the upkeep of the Buttway and maybe a section of the Buttway should be passed over to the village for parking. He believes taking it away will be detrimental.</p> <p>Cllr Vivienne Walton (VW) explained that the parish council does not have any power over planning applications for housing within the village, that is Medway Council's responsibility. Too many vans and cars are being left on the Buttway which is making it difficult for visitors to use it.</p> <p>Jonathan Peachy from the local fire service raised his concern over the amount of congestion within the village and trying to manoeuvre a fire engine is very difficult and could be life threatening.</p> <p>Cllr Joan Darwell (JD) explained that she had not agreed with the decision to close the Buttway. When there has been a need to clear the Buttway for village fairs, they have given people, up to two weeks, notice to clear the parking area from the night before until the completion of the event. There is limited parking within the village due to the type of houses and the village also needs visitors to come because of its</p>	
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		<p>heritage.</p> <p>(Cllr Lynne Bush (LB) joined meeting at 8.30pm)</p> <p>Pamela Kinsaby explained that she understands that Medway Council has the decision about the roads but why have the parish council closed all the car parks – particularly the large Memorial Hall car park which if open would make it a lot easier when the school run operates?</p> <p>Clerk PO reiterated ownership of the car parks and that the Large Car Park is in the ownership of the Memorial Hall. They have been asked to consider opening the car park on various occasions, but they remain concerned about being held responsible for injuries if children were injured crossing the road. Clerk PO also re-iterated the issues that the parish council face with highways and Medway Council. Our requests have been considered by their officers and remain low priority. He encouraged residents to take this up with Medway Council and local Medway councillors, if issues are to be addressed.</p> <p>Cllr JD handed over a petition of 35 signatures, on behalf of local residents, saying “no to closing the Buttway” to the Chair.</p> <p>Pat Leviston expressed her concern over the lack of volunteers willing to help in the parish and the general apathy overall. She offered her apologies for how some residents had been so rude to the parish councillors, who are volunteers, and do their best for the area.</p> <p>Rev Jill Wright had raised the ‘car parking’ issues on various occasions with the parish council, there have been problems at weddings, funerals and visitors to the church yard, however the church does not want to see closure of the Buttway, but management with the bollards and hoped a resolution could be found.</p> <p>Cllr Derek Graves (DG) explained that when the white lines were marked out at Cliffe Woods car park this made encouraged more considerate parking and increased capacity and perhaps the parish council could consider this in the Buttway.</p> <p>Dave Simmons thanked all the Parish Councillors for all that they do.</p> <p>The Chair SM thanked all the public for attending.</p>	
5.0		<p>CAR PARKING ISSUES</p> <p>For the purpose of decision making the Chair moved to uphold the original decision as per the minute 6.3 (12th May) – For 3, Against 5 with 4 abstentions – the recommendation was lost, therefore the recommendation would be rescinded and the Buttway would remain open to vehicles. The parish will discuss future management options for the Buttway and consider representations that have been made by residents, the church, the fire brigade and councillors at a future meeting.</p>	

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

10/06/16/lmf/cf