

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2016**

PRESENT: Cllr. Rook (in the Chair), Cllrs. Fermor, and Swann.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Goodchild, Holmes, Smith and Veitch.

Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying:

Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.

11/16: Visit by Jeremy Boxhall – Cycleways and footpath development:

Cllr. Rook welcomed Mr. Boxhall to the meeting. Mr. Boxhall informed the Committee that he was a Member of the Kent Countryside Access Forum (KCAF), which is a statutory body that each county has, to advise on footpath strategy.

He went on explain the importance of cycle ways, PROWs and bridleways and how they can be incorporated in future Parish or Neighbourhood Development Plans. With the anticipated additional growth in the parish he felt it was an excellent opportunity to improve the transport links and infrastructure.

Following a full discussion on Mr. Boxhall's aspirations, **Cllr. Rook proposed that this Committee support Mr Boxhall's efforts to secure the creation of the path from Common Road to Bull Wood to link the footpath WC76 to be adopted as a PROW ideally a public bridleway and that the permissive right of way from WC76 through Bull Wood and Birches Wood be adopted as a bridleway to link with existing public bridleway WC153, this was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.**

It was also agreed that Cllr. Swann and Mr. Boxhall would arrange a meeting to discuss a possible cycle way from Sissinghurst to Bedgebury and to further discuss a cycle strategy.

12/16: Play Equipment:

Cllr. Rook advised Members that we had received the RoSPA reports and that there were no issues raised which needed urgent attention. The Parish Warden had a copy of the reports and was working through the list of required repairs.

13/16: Issues from Inspection of Grounds:-

a) Allotments:

The Deputy Clerk read out an email from Cllr. Holmes in which he stated his intention to place a message on the noticeboard to give advice on deterring rats after a tenant had complained of seeing evidence of them at the site. Cllr. Rook confirmed he had spoken to a tenant regarding the inappropriate disposal of grass cutting in the stream and would speak to another regarding the lack of activity on their plot.

b) Ball Field:

Cllr. Rook informed Members that he had attended a property next to the Ball Field in Waterloo Road which borders our land. The owner of the property wanted to remove a line of leylandii trees that were in poor condition on the boundary, however it was unclear from land registry exactly where the boundary lay and to whom the trees belonged. During discussions taking into account other identical trees in a less ambiguous position, it was agreed by both parties that on the balance of probability the trees did not belong to the Parish Council. As such Cllr. Rook could not give permission for them to be removed; however did offer to allow the owner permission to use the Ball Field as access to fell them on the condition that their tree surgeon produce a satisfactory health and safety assessment and adequate insurance. In response to Cllr. Swann, Cllr. Rook confirmed that the intention of the owner was to replace the trees with a hedge. The agreement reached had been confirmed in a letter from the Parish Office, Cllr. Rook was seeking endorsement of his actions from this Committee, the Members all supported him.

c) Crane Valley:

Cllr. Swann was concerned that although the drainage had been completed, there remains a small area in a corner of the skate park that suffers from excess surface water and sludge. He suggested that the contractors be reminded of their obligation to regularly sweep the area to see if this would improve the situation.

Cllr. Swann requested that we seek advice from the High Weald Partnership on how best to maintain the laid hedge they planted last year.

d) Jubilee Field:

Cllr. Fermor reported that the Jubilee Field was in excellent condition after recently having the grass and hedges cut. She was also happy to report no evidence of dog fouling in the field.

14/16: Issues from Inspection of Car Parks:

a) Winter Strategy:

Cllr. Rook reminded Members that our winter strategy has to be published on our website and in the December newsletter. **After a full discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Rook, seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed that the winter strategy for 2016 - 2017 remain as it did for the previous year and would state that we have no contract for spreading salt and grit within the three car parks this winter.**

b) Regal:

The Deputy Clerk read out an email from Cllr. Veitch detailing her inspection of the Regal and Jockey Lane car parks; with the exception of a great deal of litter there were no major issues to report.

c) Jockey Lane:

Cllr. Swann reported that the works on the Church Tower were nearing completion and the spaces allocated to the contractors would be vacated soon.

d) Tanyard:

Cllr. Rook reported there were no issues in the Tanyard.

15/16: Highways Issues:

Cllr. Rook reported that we had received a copy of a letter to KCC Cllr. Sean Holden pointing out the misplacement of the town centre signage. He had also received a comment that the line of the kerb does not follow the projected path of vehicles, although in his opinion the white lines were sufficient indication as to the direction you should follow. Cllr. Swann expressed surprise that the give way lines at the j/w Angleley Road were not replaced when the work on the junction was completed as they had all but disappeared. The Deputy Clerk advised that the issue could be reported on the KCC Highways Portal.

The Clerk had received an email from KCC Cllr. Holden advising us that the pothole blitz would be coming to an end shortly, he was happy to relay any suggestions from Members for repairs. Cllr. Fermor considered the southbound carriageway outside Camden Villa on the A229 to be particularly bad. Cllr. Swann identified the top of Swattenden Lane, where the edges of the road surface have broken away. The Deputy Clerk agreed to forward the suggestions to Cllr. Holden.

Cllr. Fermor raised a concern regarding trees with large overhanging branches, which if came down would cause damage to the Pound area, they are also hanging over the footpath which runs alongside the A299 at the roundabout. The trees are thought to be growing from a section of privately owned ground. As there could be a danger of them coming down on the footpath the Deputy Clerk suggested this could also be reported on the KCC Highways Portal

16/16: Any Other Environmental Management Issues:

a) Litter and litter bins:

Cllr. Rook stated that we had received comments that the litter bins in the Parish had insufficient capacity. Members agreed that as the unattractive concrete bins had recently been replaced with a heritage design, replacing them again with a larger alternative could not be considered at this time.

It had previously been agreed to increase the schedule of litterpicks during the year. With this in mind Cllr. Rook proposed that a litter pick be scheduled for Sunday 2nd October at 10.00am. He agreed to organise and coordinate the Cranbrook event and asked Cllr. Fermor to do the same in Sissinghurst. She was happy to do so providing she had the approval of Cllr. Fairweather who normally organised the litter picks in Sissinghurst. Cllr. Rook also agreed to investigate the cost of producing some small customized “take your litter home” signs.

b) Street Lighting:

There were no issues raised.

c) Public Rights of Way:

This had been covered under a previous agenda item.

17/16: Items for Information:

There were items raised.