

BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st May 2019
in Boughton Monchelsea Village Hall, commencing at 7.00pm

Present:

Cllrs S. Munford (Chairman), I. Ellis, R. Martin, D. Smith, L. Date, J. Skinner,
D. Redfearn, R. Edmans, H. Stevens
Kent County Councillor, Eric Hotson
Maidstone Borough Council Operation Manager, John Edwards
Parish Clerk
Approximately 80 parishioners

1. Apologies: Apologies were received from Cllrs Whybrow, Humphryes, Gershon, Wilde and Brown, PCSO Pete Gardner, KCC Warden Liz Lovatt, Village hall committee Chair, Resident Mrs Cornelius
2. Presentations from local organisations :
 - Village fete committee. £500 grant awarded
 - Friends of St Peters – speech by Richard Martin
 - Community Choir - £300 grant awarded
 - Boughton Monchelsea primary school – speech by headteacher, Ruth Roberts
 - Bowls club. £250 grant awarded
 - Playgroup – speech by committee member
 - St Peters Church – speech by Rev Phil Goodey. £2500 grant towards churchyard grass cutting
 - Regency Dancers - speech by Phil Goodey. £250 grant awarded
 - WI. £300 grant awarded
 - Baby and toddler group - speech by Phil Goodey. £200 grant awarded
 - Brownies. £200 grant awarded
 - Scouts. £300 grant awarded
 - Friendship Circle - speech by Phil Goodey. £300 grant awarded
 - Helping Hands. £300 grant awarded
 - Village hall committee – clerk read out speech on behalf of Chair
 - Royal British Legion – £350 grant to be awarded, close to remembrance day
 - Salvation Army – £350 grant to be awarded, following Carols on the Green
3. Address by Parish Council Chairman, Cllr Steve Munford
4. Presentation by Cllr Doug Smith. Cllr Smith gave an update on the draft Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan and explained that the public consultation was open until 7th June.
5. Presentation by Cllr Rob Edmans. Cllr Edmans gave an update on the proposed 20mph zone for the village. He also spoke regarding the Parish Council's hopes for a speed limit reduction to 30mph on Heath Road and added that Cllr Hotson was supportive and had agreed to part fund the necessary speed surveys. Cllr Edmans spoke with concern regarding the Brishing Lane / Heath Road / Green Lane

junction and explained that this had been added to the Parish Council's Highways Improvement Plan but any improvements would be reliant on KCC funding.

Cllr Edmans went on to thank the Litter Quitters and Brownies for all their hard work keeping Boughton Monchelsea free of litter. He stated that the Parish Council were working with MBC on a litter strategy for the parish.

Cllr Edmans noted that an old finger post sign had been discovered in hedging at the junction of The Quarries and Bottlescrew Hill. He explained that the sign would be refurbished (funded by MBC).

Residents asked questions / expressed concerns as follows :

Q. Concern at speeding vehicles on Back Lane and Park Lane

A. The Parish Council will investigate the possibility of an additional Speedwatch site at this location

Q. Hedges covering road signs on Haste Hill Road

A. Clerk to investigate and report to KCC for action. Cllr Munford noted that, in future, residents should report issues directly to the relevant authority, ie MBC or KCC, as they occur

Q. How will the 20mph zone be enforced?

A. There is empirical evidence that drivers do slow down for 20mph zones indicated by signs and road markings

6. Presentation by MBC's Operations Manager, John Edwards. Mr Edwards noted that although there has been a 40% national increase in fly tipping, the increase in the borough of Maidstone was much lower. He added that large scale fly tipping was of most concern. MBC aim to remove fly tipping within 2 days of it being reported. Residents should report issues directly to MBC via their website rather than reporting to the Parish Council. Some instances of fly tipping take longer to remove, for example hazardous material or where plant is required. He noted that MBC have a six person strong waste crime team who look for evidence when waste crime has occurred. MBC can seize vehicles and fine offenders. MBC seize around 3 vehicles per month and use intelligence, eg Facebook, to monitor and identify offenders.

Mr Edwards stated that MBC's street cleansing department has an annual budget of £1.4M. Unfortunately a proportion of this has to be used to clear fly tipping. He reminded residents that when they engage a contractor to dispose of waste from their property they have a duty of care to ensure the waste is removed legally. Legitimate companies will have a waste carriers licence (check the 16 digit number). As a guide, it costs around £180 to commercially dispose of waste.

Mr Edwards noted that MBC can prosecute offenders as a civil crime for dropping litter from their vehicles. He added that, as a trial, cameras will soon be installed at major road junctions in the borough in order to catch and fine offenders. He added that MBC are fully supportive of the Litter Quitter initiative in Boughton Monchelsea, including plans to install litter signage at key points within the parish. He stated that this would be rolled out to other parishes, if successful.

7. Address by Kent County Councillor, Eric Hotson. Cllr Hotson noted that he was now a cabinet member with responsibility for Corporate and Democratic Services, also staffing matters and IT. He noted that KCC have had to make savings of £60M / yr from an overall budget of one billion pounds. With an ageing population, around 50% of this is spent on elderly care and 0-25 provision. He added that his member highway fund has now been reduced to £15,000 per year which has to support 7 parishes. Cllr Hotson confirmed his support for the proposal to reduce the speed limit on Heath Road to 30mph. He went on to speak about public transport, stating that KCC pay £7M / yr for 126 bus routes throughout the county. He explained that a new pilot bus service would begin soon whereby the number of buses serving Boughton Monchelsea would increase, with buses terminating at Morrisons for passengers to connect with the 82 service into Maidstone town centre.

Cllr Hotson stated that KCC had made no cuts to the KCC Warden service and there had been no library closures. He explained that residents would soon have to pay to dispose of builders waste at KCC's waste recycling facilities. He added that neighbouring counties have already introduced these charges and that half of all counties in the country are now charging.

8. Presentation of 'Parishioner of the Year' award. The award for 2019 was presented to Mrs Beryl Bush. Cllr Munford spoke regarding Mrs Bush's extensive voluntary work over the years and presented her with a framed photo of the village. Mrs Bush addressed the meeting and thanked the Parish Council for the award.
9. Open Forum

Residents spoke as follows :

- Residents asked for further details of the changes to the bus service. Cllr Munford explained that the information was available on the Parish Council's website but would also be sent round again on the e-mail circle. One resident felt that it would have been better to cancel an 82 bus to allow a 59 to go straight into Maidstone. Cllr Munford stated that the new service was a year long trial and any comments should be sent to KCC
- A resident asked whether any new development in Boughton Monchelsea would have street lighting and expressed a wish to remain a 'dark village'. Cllr Smith stated that the Parish Council share this view and that any street lighting would be discouraged
- Residents expressed concerns as follows regarding the new charging policy at the tip :
 - Will half bags will be charged at the same rate as full?
 - Payment by card only which could cause delays at the tip
 - Resulting increase in fly tipping

Mr Edwards noted that MBC will monitor fly tipping once the new charges commence and will report to KCC on a monthly basis. Officers will have discretion to charge for half bags of waste. Queueing on the road outside the tip will be monitored and the process will be as streamlined as possible. There will be a new waste recycling centre in Allington within the next 2 years.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm. Refreshments followed.