Held Thursday, 3rd February, 2011 at the Cliffsend Village Hall, commencing at 07.35 p.m..

Present:
Cllr B Harrison Vice Chairman, Cllrs M. Fiander, R. Fiander, V. Hovenden, M. Ord, R Ratnasingham and P Wynne.
In addition: 25 persons to include Cllr John Kirby, Mr Harvey Patterson, Debbie Barth from TDC and P Cs Kim Burgess and Darren Reed..

The Chairman for the evening, Vice Chairman Harrison, welcomed everyone and pointed out the fire exits asking everyone to leave in an orderly manner if there was an emergency.

1 There were no Apologies for Absence

2 The Chairman proposed the adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th January, 2011 as being a true record, which was unanimously agreed.

3 Cllr Hovenden asked that “proposed” in the last sentence of paragraph 5 of item 6 be replaced by “approved”. This was agreed and initialled by the Chairman.

4 The Declaration of Interest book was passed round and signed by Cllr M Fiander, Cllr Harrison. It was agreed to make a fuller description of the interest being signed for in future.

5 Cllr Kirby reported briefly on the announcement that Pfizer is to withdraw from Sandwich over the next 2 years. He reported that KCC had submitted a request for funding to Government on 21st January for “Parkway Station”. There will be an opportunity for public consultation later. This will provide a rail link for the airport and commuters, and will not affect Ramsgate station.

Cllr Hovenden asked about the Public Consultation and Planning Application and who is pushing the bid forward.
Cllr Harrison asked if the proposed location has been agreed yet. There was no further information available at this time.

PC Kim Burgess reported on the crime figures for the last month. 26 phone calls and 1 reported crime.
Community Warden Laura Peskett has been dealing with pot holes, particularly in Cottington Road. However KCC Highways have said they will repair the road surface, but not the holes in the farmer’s field. There have also been incidents of people retrieving items from the rubbish bins at the recycle area. The public should NOT do this as there is a serious health risk from doing so, if nothing else from needles in bins. TDC have the facility to do this safely, so ask TDC to help. She also reported the considerable number of beer
cans left by the road side, in a regular pattern between Cliffsend and Ramsgate and she is trying to resolve this.

Debbie Barth reported that there was an inspection by KCC Highways on 19th January of Walmer Gardens and it was reported that resurfacing will be put on their rota.

Brian White has been in touch with Cllr Hovenden and two colleagues concerning the Hoverlloyd Memorial to there is nothing further to add by her. Cllr Hovenden understands that there has been a new planning application, but this has not come up on the planning list yet and hopes that it does not get slipped through unnoticed.

6 Hoverlloyd Memorial Plinth planning application ref: 10/0956:
The clerk reported on the Public Meeting on Monday 31st January. A plan was submitted showing five possible locations for the plinth. A show of hands had been taken – 8 in favour of option 2; 1 in favour of option 3; nil in favour of option 4 and 7 in favour of option 5. At a later show of hands, it transpired that, of the 7 in favour of option 5, 5 of them would prefer it not to be on Hugin Green at all. One of the main concerns was the 2 metre perimeter fence being unsightly. There was considerable discussion, 21 people attended of which 4 were not resident in the Village and they did not vote.

Cllr Hovenden asked that it be minuted that a lot of people did not know about the meeting because, in her opinion, the Parish Council did not advertise it well enough.

The clerk was asked that he make a note of the comment, tell the meeting the planning reference number for anyone present wishing to write in to TDC, and then this meeting can move on. There then followed 5 minutes of further discussion substantially between Cllrs Harrison and Hovenden about the memorial plinth size and “tutting” between councillors which added nothing to the value of the meeting.

Reference the Marjorie Chapman Meadow:
The Clerk reported on the request for quotes for the maintenance of the meadow, as per the working party schedule presented to the last meeting. Goddards were approached and they commented that the specification would be very expensive in man hours (re. ½ mooned perimeters) and hedge cutting in May is not acceptable practice (31st March is the latest recommended). For the purpose of illustration, a figure of £2140 was arrived at. It was agreed that the working party review their specification and report back to a later meeting.

Members of the public were invited to comment at this point.

It was stated that a more suitable position for the car park extension be north of the Village Hall rather than extending east. There followed a heated debate between Cllr Hovenden and Mr and Mrs Wing lasting some 7 minutes. Mr Latham, resident of 35 years standing, wished to express his disgust that the proposed Village Hall extension should be proposed to encroach into the meadow. The noise from the heater was quite intrusive and it was very difficult to hear. Although asked, it was not turned off. Mr Berry reported his findings that the Home Office is the appropriate authority that can grant permissions under s.25 of the Burial Act 1857 to remove human remains, by granting a specific licence. Without such a licence, removal is a criminal
Mr. Snow commented that he has been caught in between those who are in favour of the Village Hall extension, which proposes an extension into the meadow, and those who don’t. Mr. Berry stated that he was in favour of a Village Hall extension, but does not support removal of remains to facilitate it. Cllr Harrison stated that she has never been against a Village Hall extension. After a further 30 minutes discussion, including raised voices between Councillors Harrison and Hovenden, including varied subjects from who would like to be chairman of the Village Hall Committee to whether Cllr Harrison was in the country when Mr. Snow’s tree was planted and concluding with Cllr Ord asking Mr. Snow what he would like to happen to his family tree, to which he answered “If it came down to it I would prefer it to be left, but at the same time I want some piece of paper that says it’s never going to be changed or confirm that if it is moved in the future it would be done professionally at the expense of this committee”.

Cllr Ord stated that the issue of extending the Hall should not be confused with the separate issue of moving Mr. Snow’s family tree. Once and for all he asked again “Do you want to leave the tree where it is or would you prefer to have it moved?” to which Mr. Snow answered “I’m in a cleft stick here because obviously, I want it to stay there in my heart, but at the same time if the village wants the hall extended it’s going to have to be moved and I would prefer it to be moved now when it’s young enough to be moved without trouble and my parent’s ashes would come out with a scoop, than in 10 year’s time when it is all going to be lost and possibly the tree as well.”

After more heated discussion between two councillors about who told the local paper that there were six trees involved and who knew what and when about the proposed extension to the Village Hall, and with some parishioners joining in, during which Cllr Ord questioned whether the meeting had confidence in Cllr Harrison being the fit and proper person to remain in the Chair, referring to a meeting of the Village Hall Management Committee dated 19th August 2006, after pointing out that the farmer may not realise that when the meadow is returned at the end of the lease it will have very limited use due to the memorial trees, (interrupted by a member of the parish saying that this meeting was a personal crusade between two councillors and nothing to do with the Parish) it was finally agreed that a motion was proposed. The Clerk suggested that this be brought forward to the next meeting’s agenda to write an appropriate letter to Mr. Snow, which was not taken up. Cllr Hovenden stated that Mr. Snow has stated to her that he feels that the tree was put there to upset her as he was seen speaking to her. A member of the public asked Cllr Harrison why the photograph in the paper was not taken by Mr. Snow’s tree. Mr. Snow asked why Cllr Harrison did not invite him to the meeting with the journalist from the papers at the Meadow. When asked for clarification, Cllr Harrison said that she did not say that a member of the Parish Council had notified the journalist from the Isle of Thanet Gazette. Cllr Hovenden stated that if the tree was moved in the next two weeks, it can be done at no charge, Mr. Snow would sleep better in his bed and she thought that it was not the right of anyone in the room to decide that he should not sleep well and that was what concerned her. There was a lot of hubbub from which the clerk could just decipher that the general consensus was that it has already been stated that Mr. Snow was reported as saying in the paper and did say tonight that he did not want the tree moved. There was more heated discussion about Mr. Snow having been misrepresented in the paper.
The Chairman asked the Clerk to read out letters on the matter of the Village Hall extension from Mrs Turner and from Mrs Parsons. When some order was restored and the Clerk could make himself heard, he read out the two letters. Mrs Turner’s principal concern was that an article in The Cliffsender raised the possibility of her family tree being moved and it would be very upsetting if the tree was moved. Mrs Parsons has concerns about the extension, which she agrees is needed, but why not move the playground over and have the car park there (background clapping!) as she would be very unhappy if the field was disturbed, as it is a field of remembrance. The Chairman directed the meeting to the letter from Mrs Knight to the Gazette for reference. The Clerk read out Mrs Knight’s letter to the Clerk as she was appalled that the Council was considering the desecration of the field. A member of the parish asked the clerk to read out Mr Snow’s letter stating that Cllr Harrison had instructed Mr Berry to plant his tree where it will be in the way if and when the plans go ahead, and that a meeting had been arranged to discuss the tree after the last Parish Council meeting in the meadow (the proposed meeting not the Parish Council meeting in the meadow that is) which Cllr Harrison cancelled as she did not want it to be a circus, but did nothing to get in touch with him since, although she made time to see the Gazette journalist in the meadow without telling him etc. Cllr Harrison asked if Mr Snow had brought her reply to him – to which he said the it was waffle and did not answer his letter. The Clerk then read out the letter of objection to the expansion of the Village Hall from and signed by the residents of Walmer Gardens.

Cllr Ord asked Mr Snow what his preference was to decide tonight. Cllr Hovenden said that he did not have to decide tonight. Cllr Ord explained that the moving of the tree was a separate issue to the Village Hall extension and the Parish Council should reply to his letter. After a succinct resumé about the “chain of authority” over what does or does not happen in the meadow from Mr Harvey Patterson, Cllr Ord suggested that an appropriate letter be drawn up. Cllr Hovenden asked that it include a statement that the position of the tree will not be used as an excuse to object to the proposed Village Hall extension. Mr Harvey Patterson said that would be a matter for the planning committee of TDC.

Cllr Harrison proposed and by Cllr Ord seconded:
“That the Clerk should send a letter to Mr Snow, with the authority of the proposal properly agreed by this Parish Council, confirming that, in the event that any of the trees in the Marjorie Chapman Meadow are required by the Cliffsend Parish Council to be moved, will be subject to obtaining all lawful consents and will be moved in a professional way at the expense of the Cliffsend Parish Council.”

The proposal was carried by a vote of 5 in favour and 2 abstaining. It was resolved that the Clerk write the letter as described in the proposal.

Reference Village Welcome Sign board:
The Chairman produced the final picture. Cllr Hovenden asked if there were three quotes yet, if not, can we carry it forward to the next meeting. The matter is carried forward to the next meeting.

Reference Mr Armstrong’s family tree:
The matter is carried forward to the next meeting.
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Reference Memorial Tree name plate:
Carried forward to a future meeting

Reference trees from the Kent Free Tree Scheme;
The clerk reported that he had heeled in the 8 small trees in the N W corner of
the meadow. The working party will report on positioning at the next
meeting.

7 Clerk’s report:
All dealt with above..

8 Correspondence Received was read out.
A letter from Tessa Holmes was read out offering suggestions to benefit the
village.
A letter was read out from Valerie Brewer representing the Thanet
Community Support Partnership and the Thanet Volunteer Bureau, complaining that
the appalling behaviour of some of the Councillors at the last meeting which
dissolved into a farce, prevented her from speaking at that meeting.
The Cliffsend Community Plan Group thanked the Parish Council for the
£1000 support and offered an account of their finances as agreed.

9 Planning Applications
Hugin Green is very topical and needs no further explanation.
20 Earlesmead Crescent application for erection for 2 story side extension.
There was no comment from the Councillors
Change of use of land at Ebbsfleet Farm to a solar panel farm. Cllr Hovenden
asked to take this away to consider this vast project. Any view from the Parish
Council would be put to the planning officer by the Clerk.

10 Finance:
The proposal is: “That the bills presented on the attached “payment schedule”
of even date be paid”.
It was unanimously approved.

11 Reports from Members.
Cllr Hovenden stated that the Standing Orders working party have made a
start. There is a web cam of the new Access road which might be of general
interest. See www.sitewearchive1.co.uk, login; aspx, project name:
sandwich, password: sand2010.
She also reported that there will be traffic lights on the Sandwich Road to
facilitate a wall repair; the mud has been cleared from the lay bye, and, finally,
a call had been taken to support the Job Seekers Scheme. She is in
communication with the scheme organisers and could any councillor let her
know if there are any ideas for work. She is on top of the pavement sweeping
problem, but it is not possible when it is wet.
Cllr Ord reported on a meeting with Mr Snow.
Cllr M Fiander reported that there is a security firm door knocking
volunteering to check security systems. Parishioners should be very cautious
and only work through a pre agreed password identity system.

The meeting closed at 21.55hrs