

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, 15 November 2023 at 1930hrs

Shepherdswell Village Hall

### MINUTES

To receive reports from the County and District Councillors, Speed Watch, Neighbourhood Watch and Community Warden. Public questions and comments on non-agenda items (this section will be limited to 15 minutes or otherwise at the discretion of the Chair)

#### **The Clerk read out a report on behalf of Community Warden Juliet West**

*'The villages have experienced some significant adverse weather conditions of late coupled with multiple road closures that have made travelling around particularly difficult for road users.*

*Highways have been informed of multiple pot holes, disintegrating road surfaces and verges, blocked drains, flooding, fallen trees and debris on road surface.*

*Reports of any issues relating to the highway can be reported directly to Highways at [www.Kent.gov.uk](http://www.Kent.gov.uk) report a problem on a road or pavement or phone 03000 419191 for emergencies outside of office hours.*

*Power cuts have also caused problems for some villagers mostly relating to works being carried out on the power network and some relating to weather conditions.*

*Scams continue to be an issue, particularly with parcels. public protection services report that a recent and frequent scam doing the rounds. This involves criminals stealing bank details of one person and the address of another person to order items online. They order the items with the stolen bank details and track the parcel to the address of the other person they have stolen the address details from.*

***This is a SCAM*** - *Once the parcel has been delivered , they impersonate a DPD driver and knock on the door, explaining that its an incorrect delivery . As the person didn't make the order and it is only the address with different name on it, the person who has received the parcel doesn't usually suspect anything amiss and gives the parcel over to the scammer.*

*For advice and to report contact Citizens Advice on consumer helpline 0808 223 1133 or report to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.*

*Some of my workload focuses on individual welfare issues, positive wellbeing and safeguarding vulnerable people. Residents are welcome to contact me in confidence on 07969584174 should they have any of their own concerns arising or worries arising about friends or family.*

*I will be out and about during November supporting and promoting the national Safeguarding Adults Awareness campaign and the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls campaign. Details will be advertised near to the relevant dates.'*

End.

The Chair recorded his thanks to Juliet West – Community Warden.

**Speedwatch Report – none received**

**Neighbourhood Watch Report – nothing to report**

**KCC Cllr Beaney provided an update to the meeting on current issues....**

All of the Section 114 targets have been met by KCC this year.

There has been a consultation on tips in Kent and out of that a Policy for the closure of tips. Two included are Deal and Sandwich, which we are fighting.

Welfare Reform – there is funding available for any young families in your parish who may be struggling. This is provided in way of a card which can be used to purchase essentials like baby food and nappies, this can be up to £400 per year so could really benefit some families. I will send the clerk details of the funding.

The recent storm produced winds of up to 78mph. Within 24 hrs KCC had 598 calls reporting fallen trees, problems with roads so there is still a backlog as a result,

The meeting of local Clerks and Councillors will be going ahead on 02 December 2023. This will provide an opportunity for parishes to find ways to work together with regard to local issues.

In am currently holding one on one meetings with Thomas Williams – East Kent Highways. So if there's a particular road which is a real issue and it's not in included in the Highway Improvement Plan we can work on it together with the HIP team to bring a solution.

DDC are still rolling out the replacement of the green bags.

This will be your last year to apply for Combined Members Grants as there will be some changes to this particular grant.

Questions:

Cllr Hunt asked if the Dover Fast Track would be completed on time. Cllr Beaney replied that it has recently it has been announced that the opening has been delayed until next year and the use of electric buses is in doubt.

Cllr Taber asked how we should contact Thomas Williams, this should be done through the Clerk and Cllr Beaney.

## **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no comments/questions from the public.

**Before the meeting commenced Cllr Bulaitis proposed a change in the Agenda, the proposal was for item 11 – Communications Committee to be moved to the end of the Agenda and to be taken in a closed session. This was AGREED.**

## **1.0 IN ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**Present:** Cllrs John Bulaitis (PC Chair), Bradley Stauffer-Kruse (Vice-Chair), Marien Elgar, Barry Crush, Lyn Symes, Sue Taber, Terry Hunt, Sindy Denyer, Carole White, Keith Roberts, Mark Watson

KCC Cllr Beaney

5 Members of the public

Clerk: Jan Rousell

**Apologies:** DCC Cllr Maria Mamjan, Cllr Aidan Softley & Juliet West - Community Warden

## **2.0 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON THE 18 OCTOBER 2023**

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October were agreed to be a true and accurate record proposed by Cllr Hunt seconded Cllr Elgar, **All agreed.**

## **3.0 MATTERS ARISING**

Item 8.01 – has there been any agreement from Dell to reissue the invoice for the Clerk's laptop? It is very unlikely that Dell will reissue the invoice due to compliance, but the Clerk will investigate.

Item 8.03 – personal devices. Cllr Bulaitis suggested that this be added to the Agenda for the next meeting. There is a policy which is used by Parish Councils called a Bring Your Own Device Policy. The Chair and Clerk to draft policy and bring to January meeting. Freedom of Information and GDPR will be covered by the policy.

Item 3.0 – electric vehicle charging points. No update but the Clerk will continue to chase.

## **4.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no DPIs or OSIs.

## **5.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION LIMITED TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA – 15 minutes in total.**

Martyn Cobb reported that the large water tank situated in the roof space above the main hall, which has been causing worries regarding possible water leaks, feeds the radiators around the building. Modern systems don't have water tanks, they have pressure vessels. So doing away with that tank will not be a problem, it would be replaced by a pressure vessel which would be in the roof space above the Post Office.

Cllr Hunt commented that he's spoken with a plumber recently who expressed concern that if any additional pressure is put on the current piping, we could be in for some quite serious leaks. The piping has deteriorated over the years and if the pressure within the system is increased there is concern that there may be pinprick leaks all over the place.

Martyn Cobb replied that the pipework would be replaced in the boiler room and isolating the water tank in the main hall would prevent leaks from that pipework.

Cllr Crush stated that the pressure from the water tank already up there could be very high. It would be worth getting somebody to provide advice. With the old pipework, there is a product which can be put into stop leaks – it takes about 6 weeks to take action but it is successful.

It was AGREED to seek independent expert advice.

## **6.0 CLT Report**

Martyn Cobb reported that the CLT is viewed as a pioneer in Kent in relation to housing provision for the community.

There are 10 affordable homes for rent – 4 singles, 4 doubles and 2 three bedroom properties. The properties will be available from February. The contractors should have been finished in December but there is a delay in getting electricity to the site.

They should now be starting to set out the boundaries – putting fences in place, sowing grass seed etc.

There are 3 bungalows on the site which belong to WW Martin. These will most likely be sold. Local people will have first opportunity to buy them as the local people criteria will still be in place. If they are rented out, the local people criteria policy will also apply.

The site is a credit to CLT and English Rural Housing.

In relation to the allocation policy, English Rural are currently processing all of the applications, about 80 of them.

Cllr Roberts thanked the CLT for nearly 20 years worth of work to get the houses built. 80 odd applicants proves the need we've got, an excellent job. The Chair seconded this and offered his congratulations to everyone involved in the project.

The Chair went on to say that people were from around Kent and around the country and now getting in touch with the CLT as it's become a model for possible social housing at affordable rents. The fact is it's safeguarded for future generations is really important. It's here and it will stay here.

Cllr Crush asked if there was a time period in which the 3 properties will be held for local residents before they are sold to people outside the criteria? Martyn Cobb replied 6 weeks as far as he is aware. Cllr Taber asked if this was the same if they chose to rent out the properties. The response was yes.

Cllr Denyer commented that the residents on Coxhill had been very tolerant but there has been an immense amount of debris and water from the site which has caused significant problems with drainage. Cllr Taber reported that the drains are being worked on this week.

The Chair recorded his thanks to Martyn.

## **7.0 CHAIR'S REPORT**

Remembrance Sunday was well attended with the Chair laying a wreath on behalf of the Parish. The Chair recorded his thanks to Reverend Stewart and Cllr Watson. He also recorded his thanks to the Clerk and several Councillors for their work in sorting out the road closure in time for the service.

Cllr Elgar represented the Council by laying a wreath on behalf of the Parish at Coldred.

## **8.0 CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk reported that she has contacted KCC, Thomas Williams, regarding our supply of salt and is waiting for a response. A request has also been made to a local company for a quote to fill up the salt bins in the Parish, using the supply from KCC.

Cllr Elgar reported that as far as she understood KCC fill the salt bins at the beginning of the season and then what we hold is used to replenish the bins. Clerk to find out from KCC what the procedure is.

A request has been received from the VGA to fund the Christmas Tree on the village green. Cllr Hunt proposed that we agree to up to £300 donation, seconded by Cllr Crush. **All Agreed**

Following a meeting with the Small Works Contractor, the schedule has been updated and distributed to councillors for information. This is a working document, and things will be added to it as they arise and indeed things may be taken off. The SWC will itemise all invoices and provide receipts. The contract for the SWC will in future go out for tender, in line with other contracts.

Cllr Crush commented that time frames should be added to the SWC schedule, rather than as required/as requested/as needed.

Cllr White commented that the items on the schedule covering the cemetery need to be reviewed.

Clerk to look into both comments.

The Speed Indicator Device has had its data downloaded. This report will be worked on in conjunction with the HIP working group so it can be understood by all and published.

The cemetery path has now been completed and the gate is fixed.

The defib from Coldred is currently being fitted with a new battery and will be back in situ asap.

Unity Trust account is now open. We need to initialise the switch over and then the NatWest accounts can be closed.

Finally, we have had a request from a Parishioner to metal detect on Parish Council Land. Cllr Hunt proposed that permission be given for metal detecting at Meadow View, the Recreation Ground and the Plantation, seconded by Cllr Roberts. **All Agreed**

## 9.0 FINANCE

9.01 To approve payments.

<b>Balances as 05 October 2023</b>	<b>£</b>
Current A/C	9,746.22
Business A/C	76,077.67
<b>INCOME</b>	
Cemetery (01/09/23)	140.00
Wright (Rent 11/09/23)	260.00
Cemetery (21/09/23)	280.00
Cemetery (02/10/23)	465.00
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
SVHA – Oct bookings	92.50
Harmer & Sons (inv 22317)	753.28
NALC – Clerks Conference	84.00
Harmer & Sons (inv 22271)	240.00
Play Inspections (inv 64457)	89.94
DDC Elections 2023 (inv 1013264)	2296.27
Mazars (inv 2255301)	378.00
GDPR Fee	40.00
Zoom (inv 224204058)	143.88
All Clear (Inv 0090)	464.29
All Clear (inv 0091)	341.00
KALC – Lyn Symes Training	60.00
Cathy Skinner – Locum Clerk (inv 11-23)	205.00
Donation to Royal British Legion	100.00
KALC – Clerk in Action Training	60.00
Timpson – Carole keys cut	18.00
Clerk expenses	22.19
Clerk Wages	1016.02
Chaucer Paving & Fencing	6672.00
Defib Warehouse (inv 138402)	463.20

It was proposed to accept the schedule of payments by Cllr Hunt, seconded by Cllr Roberts. **All Agreed**

9.02 The report from Cllr Hunt had previously been circulated. Cllr Denyer commented that the Parishioners should be aware of the proposals contained within the report. The Chair explained to those present that the proposal is for an increase of approximately 50p per week per council tax payer. The reasons for this were clearly outlined in Cllr Hunt's report which would be adapted and published on the website, in minutes and in the village magazine. Cllr Denyer informed members of the public that a key component of the budget is to have some funding available for community projects should there be a need in the coming year.

It was also stated that the future aim is for the meeting pack to be made available to the public, as well as the agenda.

The Chair recorded his thanks the Cllr Hunt, Chair of the Finance Committee for his report.

Cllr Roberts proposed that the report should be approved, seconded by Cllr Elgar. **All agreed**

9.03 Cllr Elgar proposed that Shepherdsweil with Coldred Parish Council agree the proposed budget for 2024/25 from the Finance Committee and levy a precept to raise £75,750, seconded by Cllr Watson. **All Agreed with 2 Abstentions**

9.04 Cllr Roberts proposed to approve the Finance Risk Assessment, which had been previously circulated, seconded by Cllr Watson. **All Agreed**

## **10.0 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

To receive a report from the Chair of the Planning Committee.

Cllr Elgar reported that 2 applications had been received, comments as follows:

Ref: 23/01207

Location: 29 Siberts Close, Shepherdsweil, CT15 7LW

Proposal: Formation of vehicular access/hardstanding and erection of outbuilding

Resolved to raise no objections

Ref: 23/01003

Location: Woldsee Moorland Road Shepherdsweil CT15 7NS

Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension and insertion of roof light to rear (garage demolished) (re-advertised, amended plans)

Resolved to tell DDC to refer to our previous comments

The chair recorded his thanks to Cllr Elgar for her report.

## **12.0 COMMUNITY**

12.01 Village Green

A report has been circulated. Cllr Roberts proposed that option 2 is approved – oak rail on top of oak posts. Seconded by Cllr White. **All Agreed**

Cllr Crush and Cllr Softley to write a specification to be presented to the January meeting for approval.

The Chair recorded his thanks to both Cllr Crush and Cllr Softley.

12.02 Village Hall

The Clerk reported that a meeting had taken place between members of the Parish Council and representatives from the village hall committee. A report has been circulated.

Cllr Roberts commented that the village hall does have a long term plan to switch to electric and when that happens solar will be invaluable.

The Chair proposed that the meeting with the village hall committee is reconvened and the whole project is looked at again. In the meantime, the Clerk to get advice from an independent consultant regarding the removal of the water tank. Seconded by Cllr Watson. **All Agreed**

## **13.00 Highway Improvement Plan**

13.01 A report has been circulated.

## **14.00 Recreation Ground**

14.01 Cllr White reported that there are trees overhanging the scout hut and there are tree issues overhanging branches in Hill Avenue.

Approach Road will need to be repaired quite soon.

## **15.00 Reed Meadow**

15.01 Cllr Roberts reported that the meeting had taken place between the RM Working Group and WW Martin. The trees have been ordered.

Cllr Crush reported that Cllr Softley had suggested that some of the type 1 from the WW Martin compound could be used to repair the damaged area of the RM carpark. Cllrs Roberts and Elgar had concerns that this could breach our planning permission.

The Chair suggested a meeting be organised between the Clerk, the Chair and Martyn Cobb to discuss a way forward with WW Martin and RM green car park. **All Agreed**

15.02 The Chair reported that he'd had a telephone meeting with Jonathan Sloggett who thanked the Council for their support. He reported that at present they have 8 on their waiting list but there are some allotments which could be changing ownership so there is no change in the situation at present. A meeting was suggested between the parish council and the allotment association to discuss the longer term picture.

Cllr White reported that the bottom gates of RM are always left open – these should be shut.

Cllr Denyer reported that she has concerns regarding increased pedestrian traffic and the safety of such through the village hall car park due to the new residents in Carpenters Yard. The Chair agreed to add this to a future agenda once the houses are occupied.

**Cllr Elgar proposed to exclude the public from the following agenda item, seconded by Cllr Hunt. All Agreed**

## **11.0 COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

11.01 Cllr Symes reported and put forward two proposals:

- That the Parish Council's website host be changed from Besthost to Hugo Fox's Silver Package, at a cost of £19.99 a month.
- That the Parish Council's email host be changed from Besthost to Ionos Mail Basic 25 package at a cost of £3.50 plus £0.50 a month for extra storage.

Cllr Hunt raised some questions about how changes in IT provision and advice had been handled and a discussion ensued.

After a question from Cllr Hunt about the security of Ionos with regard to .gov.uk domains, the Chair suggested that a decision on this proposal be postponed until further investigation. It was AGREED that the Clerk would look into this.

Cllr Symes then proposed that we change our website host to Hugo Fox using the gold package at £29.99 a month. Seconded by Cllr Denyer. **6 in agreement, 1 against and 3 abstentions**

## **19.0 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 17 January 2024 in Shepherdsweil Village Hall at 1930hrs.