

ADDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Addington Village Hall, Park Road
held on Wednesday 8 November 2023 at 19:00hrs

Present: Cllr. Mrs. P. Garrett – Chairman, Cllrs: Mrs. A. Adams, Mrs. L. Chalk, Mr. M. Cole, Mr. P. Robinson, Mrs. C. Short
In Attendance: Louise Goldsmith (Clerk)

79/23] APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

An apology for absence was received from County Councillor Sarah Hohler and Borough Councillors Robin Betts and Martin Coffin and the reasons for absence were accepted.

80/23] DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:

None.

81/23] MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

It was proposed and **resolved** that the Chairman signs the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 4 October 2023 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

82/23] OPEN SESSION:

No members of the public present.

83/23] REPORTS:

a) County Councillor:

County Councillor Sarah Hohler sent the following report:

Kent County Council is still facing financial pressures but the budget gap is reducing. Funding demands have been partly caused by the increase in the number of migrants requiring assistance, in particular from unaccompanied children. This is forcing budgets for social services, highways, bus services, libraries, and community wardens. Household waste sites are to be reduced further.

KCC is still seeking more foster carers, as reported previously. You can sign up to the new Kent Fostering events in November 2023, to find out if you can foster.

KCC supports the NHS Healthy Start Scheme, assisting low-income parents in purchasing healthy essentials. You may be eligible if you are pregnant or have a child under four. To learn more go to the www.kent.gov.uk/healthystart.

KCC gritting teams are preparing for winter.

All pre-school children aged two and three can get a painless nasal spray vaccination booked.

Amey continues to deliver the current Pothole Blitz programme with five subcontractors as well as two pothole pros working across Kent. £3.9m of works on the ground have been completed and a further £1.5m of works are programmed for November. Patching has been completed over an area of 87,755m².

b) Borough Councillor: There was no report. The Clerk was asked to request that the Borough Councillors attend the next meeting to report on progress with the enforcement case at the ancient woodland and to provide feedback on what can be done to solve the problem of vehicles been offloaded directly on to the A20 at Big Motoring World. If both Borough Councillors are unable to attend it was suggested that a written report is provided.

c) Kent Police: The Clerk has circulated a copy of the current Kent Police report and advised that there were no reported crimes in Addington in October 2023. PC Dylan McElligott is now covering Wrotham, Borough Green, Ightham, Stansted, Ryarsh, Birling, Platt, Offham, Trottisciffe and Addington.

Initials:

84/23] CLERKS REPORT/PAST MATTERS (Information purposes only)

- 1] Monthly check of the defibrillator: The Clerk advised Members that both of the defibrillators in the village have been checked and cleaned this month and an update provided on WebNos. Sadly, one of the panes of glass in the BT Box in Trottiscliffe Road has been vandalised. The general handyman has tidied up the area and ordered the replacement glass.
- 2] 58 Bus Service: Borough Councillor Mike Taylor has advised that the KCC grant of £10,000 seems to be covering the cost of the service this year. KCC has just announced that the application process will reopen for the next financial year which is positive news.
- 3] Agile: T&MBC has advised that the new planning system, Agile, will provide the Council with the latest technology to ensure services are delivered reliably and efficiently. It also offers significant annual savings to TMBC. T&MBC has apologised for the period of time when planning applications were unavailable on the portal. T&MBC has explained that the transfer of data from the old to the new system was a complex process and problems during the transition were to be expected. T&MBC has advised that applications could not be validated during this period so there was no issue with Parish Councils not been able to respond within the 21 day deadline. T&MBC has confirmed that all stakeholders are now able to access documents for all applications.

85/23] PLANNING

- a) Applications:
 - 1] 23/02012/TPOC: Addington Green, Addington
Removal of English Oak (Quercus Robur) located on the village green.
Noted that this application has been submitted by the Parish Council.
- b) Approvals: None to consider.
- c) Refusals: None to consider
- d) Application Withdrawn: None to consider.
- e) Appeals:
 - Appeal in progress
 - 2] 22/00628/FL – Westbank, London Road, Addington.
Two storey side extension, alterations to roof including dormer window and alterations to porch roof – failure of T&MBC to give a decision within the appropriate time period. A decision is awaited.
- f) Other Planning Issues:
 - 1] 20/00030/USEH – Mayhill House, London Road, Addington – alleged unauthorised hardstanding and caravan: There was no update on whether a site inspection has been arranged.
 - 2] 22/00222/TPOT - Land to the side of the Jet Garage, London Road: A Replanting Notice has been served on the owner. The Clerk has requested again that Enforcement ensures that the hardcore is removed.
 - 3] 23/00063/COM – Humphries and Parks, London Road: The light shielding has been reinstated on the external lighting columns.
 - 4] 23/00200/USEM Aldon Lane: The Clerk has advised Enforcement that the remaining caravan is still being stored on the site and has requested its removal.
 - 5] Big Motoring World: Cllr. Garrett and the Clerk asked the Community Engagement Officer on the recent walkabout if yellow lines could be installed on the A20 outside Big Motoring World. KCC Highways have explained that yellow lines could be installed but that these would not prohibit or prevent vehicles being offloaded on to the A20.
 - 6] Ferns Lorries: The Clerk has been advised that Ferns have installed an electric barrier at the front entrance on Trottiscliffe Road which can only be operated by key staff to minimise any unauthorised movements. Ferns have stated that they are continuously looking for ways to reduce any impact on the neighbouring properties and have apologised for the recent sightings of lorries in the village.

86/23] RESOLUTIONS

1. Financial:

- a) Annual Review of the Risk Assessment
Resolved: To adopt the Risk Assessment
- b) Review of the Banking Arrangements
Members discussed a report prepared and circulated by the Clerk giving suggestions for some medium and long term investments for the reserves. The Clerk has also suggested opening a savings account with Unity Trust given the interest rates are now higher. It was noted that funds can be easily transferred from the savings account to the current account when required.
Resolved: The Clerk to open a Unity Trust Savings account with the current signatories and to apply to close the National Savings Account and transfer the funds to the Unity Trust Account. To then consider the options in the report for investing the reserves.
- c) Heart of Kent Hospice: Request for a donation.
Resolved: To make a donation of £250.00 to the Heart of Kent Hospice.
- d) Proposal for printing/photocopying
It was noted that the Clerk has access to a photocopier and printer in another parish office in Capel which will offer a cheaper printing solution. The cost per mono copy will be 0.05p and 4p for colour.
Resolved: The Clerk to print/photocopy, when possible, in Capel Parish Office.
- e) To ratify a decision to carry out emergency repairs to a BT Box
Resolved: To ratify a decision between meetings to instruct the Small Works Building Company to carry out emergency repairs at a cost of £232.68. The Clerk to obtain a quote from the handyman to repair the brick wall adjacent to this BT Box.
- f) Climate Change Conference
Resolved: To approve the attendance of Cllr. Robinson at a Climate Change Conference due to be held on the 4 December 2023 at a cost of £95.00.
- g) Budget 2024/2025
Resolved: Cllrs. Garrett, Short and the Clerk to meet on the 14 December 2023 at 2.30pm to review the budget for 2024/2025.
- h) To approve the Financial Statement for November 2023 and make arrangements for authorisation.
RESOLVED: To approve the Financial Statement for November and for Cllrs. Short and Garrett to authorise the payments online.

Balances as at 8 November 2023:

Unity Trust Account:	£13,629.72
National Savings Account:	£25,573.33

Receipts: None

Payments November:

Mrs L S Goldsmith	(Salary)	£684.00
HMRC	(Tax)	£171.00
Mrs L S Goldsmith	(Expenses & email account reimbursement)	£197.26
Gel Creative	(Monthly website maintenance)	£150.00
Four Seasons Gardens	(Grounds Maintenance)	£188.56
Mazars	(Limited Assurance Review)	£ 252.00
Mrs L S Goldsmith	(Reimbursement Climate Conference)	£ 95.00
Small Works Building	(Posts and BT Box repairs)	£566.68
Total		£2,304.5

Initials:

87/23] PARISH MATTERS:

1] Highways:

a) Highways & PROW enquiries Outstanding:

- 1] Enquiry 720896: Bus stop layby junction of Trottiscliffe Road/A20. Reported to KCC the poor quality of the road surface in the layby and works are now programmed for the 10 November 2023.
- 2] Enquiry 737267: Bus Layby, overhanging vegetation blocking the access to the postbox. As above.
- 3] Footpath bridge to the Angel Inn: A damaged gate and at least one railway sleeper bridge on the footpath have been reported. PROW has advised that the gate, which does not close, does not need a replacement post and that the damaged sleepers on the bridge have been replaced. The Clerk was asked to remind PROW that the gate was installed so that it could be closed to prevent the path being used as a bridleway and that it is not acceptable that it is not possible to secure the gate now.
- 4] Advertising Van on motorway bridge: It was noted that the van has now been removed.
- 5] Enquiry 751032: Trottiscliffe Road. Vegetation hanging over the bus stop. Works completed.
- 6] Enquiry 751031: Mill House Lane: Shrubs/vegetation causing obstruction. Works completed.
- 7] Enquiry 751039: East Street North Trackway: Shrubs/vegetation causing obstruction. Enquiry attended. More work required.
- 8] Enquiry: 756556 A20 near Aldon Lane: Tree hanging over footpath reported.
- 9] PROW: 231035978 Gate on MR167. PROW have inspected and no works required.
- 10] PROW: 231032524: Fingerpost on MR170. The fingerpost is leaning and out of the ground. Work has been added to the Forward Maintenance Plan.
- 11] PROW: 231030684: Fingerpost on MR167 is damaged. Work has been the added to Forward Maintenance Plan.
- 12] Pothole on the A20 outside Merrythought: The Clerk has reported.

b) New requiring attention:

- 1] Wrotham Heath Bus Stop: Water leak and encroaching on road.

2] Highways Improvement Plan:

Cllr. Garrett and the Clerk met with Emma Tilbury, the Community Engagement Officer at KCC, Ryan Shiel from KCC Highways and County Councillor Sarah Hohler on the 3 November 2023 for a walkabout along the A20. Emma Tilbury has advised that KCC do not believe that a reduction in speed limit would be appropriate for this strategic route. The cost would be prohibitive and there would be no guarantee that the speed limit would be adhered too. KCC did agree that the signage both East and West of Aldon Lane on the A20 is poor. KCC has offered to redesign the signage and road markings will forward some suggestions. KCC Highway is unable to assist with the ongoing issue of vehicles been offloaded directly on to the A20 and agreed that an onsite turning circle was essential.

3] Renewal of Leases:

- a) Recreation Ground: A decision is awaited from the land registry regarding the recently submitted application which needed to be submitted before the lease for the recreation ground can be renewed.
- b) Village Hall: The Clerk has contacted the Village Hall Committee and suggested that they consider incorporating the charity as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO). The Village Hall Committee considered this suggestion at a recent meeting and have advised the Clerk that the Committee is reviewing the options and will be in touch.

5] Outdoor Gym Project

Cllrs. Garrett, Robinson and the Clerk met with The Great Outdoor Company on the 11 October 2023 to consider an alternative location for the equipment. However, it was agreed to continue with the original site as the ground levels near to the pavilion are not suitable. An order has now been placed.

7] Open Spaces

a) Grounds Maintenance Contract:

The Clerk reported that Four Seasons have advised they are ceasing all operations and will not be able to honour the three year long term agreement. The Clerk is in the process of meeting with alternative suppliers and hopes to present three quotes at the next meeting.

Initials:

b) Parking on the village green and bollard damage:

Two bollards that were removed from around the village green have been replaced. The Clerk has reminded the Management Company that parking on village greens is a criminal offence.

c) Annual tree inspection with the Tree Warden:

Cllrs. Garrett, Robinson the Clerk and the Tree Warden carried out the annual inspection of trees on public land on the 11 October 2023. The Clerk has since reported a number of defects to Public Rights of Way and Highways and will monitor these. The Clerk has obtained quotes for two oak trees on the village green to be tidied up. The preferred contractor has applied to T&MBC for permission to carry out these works. A small dead tree is also to be removed from East Street.

d) Dying trees on East Street:

National Highways have advised the Clerk that they have obtained a draft design from their environmental team and are waiting for a response to a couple of queries. Alternative planting has been recommended. National Highways is proposing to plant *Prunus laurocerasus* as a replacement species for the majority of the 'screening line'. It is hoped that this species will be more robust. These trees will form a good solid boundary over the coming years while the existing and establishing native tree stock to the south has more time to grow. An arrangement of *Fagus sylvatica* Dawyck trees is also proposed. These trees are fastigate and are to be planted near to the curve of the footbridge to screen the neighbouring rear gardens. The proposed re-planting / additional planting strategy also allows for the remaining tall *Cupressocyparis leylandii* to remain in place to provide further screening.

88/23] REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS:

- a) **Village Hall Committee:** Cllr. Chalk advised that the Village Hall Committee met on the 18 October 2023. Due to an issue with incorrect paperwork the Committee has not benefitted from revenue which could have been obtained by selling excess electricity from the solar panels to the grid. An engineer is due to attend on the 13 November 2023 to sort the problem out. Sadly, at least 6 months revenue has been lost. The Committee is still seeking a new secretary. The Committee is looking to revarnish the hall floor and bookings/hire rates are good. Fifty seven caravans recently attended an event held by the Caravan Club.
- b) **Recreation Ground Committee:** Cllr. Robinson advised a new and lower tariff for the electricity has been negotiated from December 2023 which will hopefully save the Committee a lot of money. The Committee continues to seek funding for solar panels and has submitted applications for funding from the T&MBC Shared Prosperity Fund and Active Kent (formerly Kent Sport) and the England and Wales Cricket Board. Unfortunately, the rainwater harvesting pump has broken and a replacement will cost in the region of £900.00. The recent Open Day was very well attended. The Committee is hiring a hedge trimmer to complete the hedge cutting around the recreation ground.
- c) **Parish Partnership Panel:** The next meeting is due to be held on the 9 November 2023.
- d) **Standards Committee:** There has been no meeting.
- e) **KALC Area Committee:** The KALC AGM will be held in person on the 18 November 2023 in Ditton. Cllr. Short explained that the format of future Area Committee meetings will change to ensure that matters from the parishes were raised and discussed rather than the meeting being dominated by those attending who are both Borough and Parish Councillors. The County Councillors will take it in turns to attend and the Borough Councillors will be given a slot on the agenda. The Area Committee is due to review the Parish Charter.

89/23] CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS

- a) For information:
 - 1] Area 2 Planning Committee: 6 December 2023
 - 2] Joint Transportation Board: 4 December 2023
 - 3] Parish Partnership Panel: 9 November 2023
 - 4] Standards Committee: 22 January 2024
 - 5] KALC Area Meeting: AGM 18 November, Area Committee Meeting: 14 December 2023

- b) New requiring attention:
None to consider.

90/23] ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING:
Parish Plan.

91/23] DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:
The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 6 December 2023 at 7pm in the village hall.

92/23] ANY CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS:
There were none to consider.

With no further business to transact the meeting was closed at 20:29hrs

Signed _____ Chairman Date _____

Initials: