

ADDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Addington Village Hall, Park Road
held on Wednesday 10 January 2024 at 19:00hrs

Present: Cllr. Mrs. C. Short – Chairman for this meeting, Cllrs: Mrs. A. Adams, Mrs. L. Chalk, Mr. P. Robinson

In Attendance: Louise Goldsmith (Clerk)

107/23] APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

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

108/23] DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:

None.

109/23] MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

It was proposed and **resolved** that the Chairman signs the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 6 December 2023 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

110/23] OPEN SESSION:

No members of the public present.

111/23] REPORTS:

a) County Councillor:

You will not be surprised to know that between the 1 October and the 19 December 2021 there were 1,959 potholes on Kent Roads which increased to 5,510 in the same period in 2023. Kent and Medway's nature recovery strategy: 'Making Space for Nature' has been launched. It aims to draw on widespread partner and public participation to help tackle habitat loss, protect ecosystems and to ensure diversity and strength in the county's natural environment. Following a discussion about the poor quality of pothole repairs the Clerk was asked to request an update on the repair techniques being used.

b) Borough Councillor:

There was no report.

c) Kent Police:

There were no reported crimes in Addington in December 2023. On Thursday 7 December the outbuildings of six properties in Pinesfield Lane, Trottiscliffe were broken into and items stolen.

112/23] 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 this month and an update provided on WebNos.

2] KALC are revamping their website and hope to road test the new website later this month.

113/23] PLANNING

a) Applications:

23/03364/HH: Regents Court, London Road, Addington

Creation of new vehicular access to dwelling house with associated engineering works and crossover to highway.

RESOLVED: Object. We are concerned about the siting of the proposed new access given its proximity to a busy petrol station. We have concerns about the sight lines on this busy stretch of the A20.

23/03394/HH: The Sycamores, London Road, Addington

Loft conversion, front fenestration amendments, rear double extension, rear flat roof extension with skylights and amendments to roof to include roof lights and PV panels.

RESOLVED: Object. We are concerned about the scale and mass of the proposals and the overall increase of the footprint.

b) Approvals:

23/03393: Addington Green

T1 oak. 10% internal thinning, removal of crossed/rubbing branches.

T2 oak. Crown raise to 3m & removal of epicormic growth.

T3 oak. Crown raise to 3m.

c) Refusals: None to consider

d) Application Withdrawn: None to consider.

e) 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: See item 98 (b). The Clerk has asked the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health, in the interests of transparency, that enforcement provide a full explanation as to why the trees were permitted to be removed in the first place. The Clerk has also asked when the replanting Notice will be served as the Parish Council understood that this had already been issued. A response is awaited.

3] 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.

4] Big Motoring World: KCC has suggested that the Parish Council might want to try raising a complaint with the LGSCO (Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman) regarding T&MBC's decision to remove the condition for the turning provision of car transporters within the site.

RESOLVED: The Clerk to submit a complaint to the LGSCO regarding T&MBC's decision to remove the condition for the turning provision of car transporters within the site and to copy MP Tom Tugendhat in on any correspondence.

114/23] RESOLUTIONS

1. **Newsletter**

RESOLVED: To print and distribute the January 2024 edition of the newsletter.

2. **Financial:**

a) **Website Management**

Members noted correspondence from the current website provider which included an estimate of time spend on updating the website.

RESOLVED: To remain with the current website provider but to review in six months.

b) **Bank Accounts**

It was noted that to process the application for a savings account Unity Trust have suggested that Cllr. Adams and previous Councillor Stephen Macdonald Gay details are removed from the current account. It was also noted that the National Savings Account is now closed. The closing balance of £25,762.08, which included an interest payment of £188.75 for the year, has been paid into the Unity Trust current account.

RESOLVED: To submit an application to remove Ann Adams and Stephen Macdonald-Gay from the Unity Trust account.

- c) Clerks Salary
RESOLVED: The Clerk to receive an increment rise to scale 27 from the 1 April 2024.
- d) To approve the Budget 2024-2025
Cllrs. Garrett, Short, Robinson and the Clerk met on the 14 December 2023 and had prepared a budget document for circulation. A total estimated expenditure of £41,898.00 for 2024/25 which includes £5,000.00 for community projects and £5,000.00 for tree works was agreed. Expenditure has also been forecasted for year 2025/26 and 2026/27. Cllr. Robinson stated that the current deficit financing strategy was not sustainable and it was agreed that this would be addressed in the setting of the next budget.
RESOLVED: To adopt the Budget Statement and monitor and review the reserves.
- e) To approve the Precept for 2024-2025
RESOLVED: That the precept upon T&MBC for the financial year 2024/25 should be £25,000.00. Any shortfall will be met from reserves. This will mean that a Band D property will face an increase of 8.10% to an annual payment of £57.63.
- f) To approve the Financial Statement for January 2024 and make arrangements for authorisation.
RESOLVED: To approve the Financial Statement for January 2024 and for Cllrs. Short and Chalk to authorise the payments online.

Balances as at 10 January 2024:

Unity Trust Account:	£65,076.68
National Savings Account:	£0.00

Receipts: National Savings Account Closure interest: £188.75
T&MBC: S106 Grant for the Outdoor Gym Project: £30,418.00

Payments January:

<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Mrs L S Goldsmith	(Salary)	£724.00
HMRC	(Tax)	£181.00
Mrs L S Goldsmith	(Expenses & email account reimbursement)	£176.56
Mrs L S Goldsmith	(Land Registry reimbursement)	£ 39.90
Gel Creative	(Monthly website maintenance)	£150.00
Recreation Ground Committee	(Cherry picker reimbursement)	£344.11
Total		£1,615.57

115/23] PARISH MATTERS:

1] **Highways:**

a) **Highways & PROW enquiries Outstanding:**

- 1] Enquiry 751039: East Street North Trackway: Shrubs/vegetation causing obstruction. Enquiry attended. More work required.
- 2] Wrotham Heath Bus Stop: Water leak and encroaching on road: Drainage works completed and more works due to take place.
- 3] Enquiry 772597: London Road: 50mph repeater sign west of Mayhill on the A20 is faded.
- 4] Trottscliffe Road sign at the junction with the A20 is damaged: reported to T&MBC who have agreed to replace the sign in the new financial year.
- 5] Enquiry 772608: Posts on the verge outside the car dealership are damaged.
- 6] Enquiry 771860: Sandy Lane: Small tree fallen has been reported.
- 7] Enquiry 765285: Sandy Lane: Pothole in road. Works now completed.

b) New requiring attention:

Enquiry 772594: St Vincents Lane: Large pothole reported.

Flooding, junction with Trottiscliffe Road and the A20.

Flooding Seven Mile Lane under railway bridge.

Entrance to Endeavour Park: Large pothole.

Food outlet on the A20: The Clerk has reported to KCC, enquiry 772949, that a food van has started selling takeaway refreshments from a layby on the A20. Part of the area has been dug up and hardcore laid. The Clerk has also advised County Councillor Sarah Hohler and the Borough Councillors.

2) Highways Improvement Plan:

Emma Tilbury, Community Engagement Officer, has shared the design of the new road markings and signage for the A20 which will be funded by KCC. It is anticipated that the works will be completed by the end of February 2024.

3) National Emergency Area retrofit: Last April, the Prime Minister announced the cancellation of new smart motorway schemes and confirmed that the Government and National Highways would continue to invest £900 million in further safety improvements on existing smart motorways. National Highways have been developing a £390 million programme to roll out more emergency areas on ALR motorways. The programme will see around 50% more emergency areas across the ALR network, giving drivers added reassurance. The M20 junctions 3 to 5 will be one of the next locations to have new emergency areas added and works are expected to commence this month.

4) Ownership and management of the village hall and pavilion

Members noted the following advice sent by the solicitor working on the new lease for the village hall:

1. Addington Parish Council is the registered proprietor of the freehold land at Addington Recreation Ground registered at the Land Registry under title number K974951. The extent of the freehold title is shown in red on the Title Plan. Part of the freehold land is subject to the village hall lease dated 20 July 1977 made between (1) The Parish Council of Addington and (2) William Frederick Rawson and Gordon Henry Smith as trustees of the village hall. The lease is granted for a term of 89 years from 31 December 1976, and therefore expires 30 December 2065. The tenant has the right to exclusive possession and use of the village hall during the term of the lease. When the lease expires, the land and buildings would revert to the Parish Council as freehold owner.
2. The lease sets out the tenant covenants in clause 4 and includes an obligation to keep the premises in good and substantial repair and condition (clause 4(iii)). The tenant must also insure the property, and the Parish Council can step in if the tenant fails to do so. The only obligation on the Parish Council appears to be the covenant at clause 5 which requires the landlord to allow the tenant to peaceably hold and enjoy the premises. i.e. the tenant has exclusive possession of the property (and is effectively the 'owner' of the property) during the term. The right to exclusive possession is subject to the tenant complying with the lease. If the tenant fails to do so, then the landlord can forfeit the lease (re-enter the property) in the circumstances set out in clause 5.
3. The insurance obligation appears to sit with the tenant (clause 4(iv)) and requires the building to be insured in a sum at least equivalent to the full market value of the property. This clause also requires the tenant to produce to the landlord on demand the policy of insurance and evidence of payment of the premium. This could be requested from the tenant to ensure satisfactory insurance is in place.
4. The Village Hall Committee is responsible for the maintenance of the building and grounds during the period of the tenancy. The demise includes the area shown on the lease plan which includes the village hall and some of the surrounding grounds. The repair obligation in clause 4(iii) does not distinguish between the land and buildings and so it would certainly appear that the repair obligation extends to everything within the tenant's demise.
5. The Parish Council could look to forfeit the lease if the committee are in breach of the lease covenants by walking away. For example, if the hall fell into disrepair or insurance lapsed, then the Parish Council could look to exercise the right to forfeit. The parish council could accept a surrender of the lease if the committee no longer require it. The parish council would then be free

to retain the hall or re-let it to a new tenant. If the building is not in a good state of repair and condition as required by the lease, then this would be dealt with via a dilapidations claim.

It was agreed that the Clerk should share this information with the Village Hall Committee. It was noted that a response has not yet been received from the solicitor working on the new lease for the pavilion/Recreation Ground Committee.

5] Renewal of Leases:

- a) Recreation Ground: A decision is awaited from the Land Registry regarding the recently submitted application which needed to be issued before the lease for the recreation ground can be renewed.
- b) Village Hall: Representatives from the Village Hall Committee would like to meet with the Parish Council to discuss the new lease and their status. The Clerk has suggested some dates to meet either virtually or in person.

6] Outdoor Gym Project

It was noted that unfortunately the ground is still too wet for The Great Outdoor Gym Company to commence the installation of the outdoor gym at the recreation ground. The Great Outdoor Gym Company will be inspecting the ground conditions later in the week. It was noted that the Clerk has received a payment of £30,418.00 of S106 funding for the project from T&MBC.

7] Vacancy on the Parish Council

It was noted that the Clerk has advertised the vacancy on the Parish Council in the newsletter and on the website. A discussion was held about how to engage with the community and encourage participation with both the Parish Council and village events and in particular young people and families. It was agreed to discuss the issue of recruiting and attracting new people at the meeting to be held with the Village Hall Committee.

8] Open Spaces

- a) Dying trees on East Street:

National Highways has advised that the replacement trees will be planted this month, Cllr. Chalk advised that that dead trees have been removed.

- b) Moles on the village green

It was agreed to not lay any more traps and to discuss the problem with moles and molehills on the village green with the grounds maintenance contractor

- c) Tree works on the village green

The Clerk is meeting with the contractor on the 17 January 2024 who will undertake the works to raise the crown on two trees on the village green and to carry out works to thin out another. The contractor has advised that T&MBC has approved these works.

116/23] REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS:

- a) **Village Hall Committee:** There has been no meeting. Cllr, Robinson reported that the village hall is financially stable and that the ongoing issue with the solar panels has been resolved. The damaged solar panel has been replaced free of charge and the agent is working through what is due to the Village Hall Committee from the exportation of power to the grid.
- b) **Recreation Ground Committee:** Cllr. Robinson advised that the Recreation Ground Committee has been awarded a £5000.00 grant from Active Kent, (KCC's Kent Sport), towards a project to install solar panels. The Committee has now applied for a £5,000.00 grant from the West Kent Rural England Prosperity Fund. The assessments for the first tranche will be carried out later this month. Cllr. Robinson explained that if successful this grant and the £5000.00 grant from Active Kent can be used to form an application to The England and Wales Cricket Board for match funding who can award grants up to £10,000. The accumulation of all these grants would be sufficient to fund the solar panel project.
- c) **Parish Partnership Panel:** There has been no meeting.
- d) **Standards Committee:** There has been no meeting.
- e) **KALC Area Committee:** Cllrs. Short and Garrett attended the virtual meeting held on the 14 December 2023. Cllr. Garrett circulated a written report advising Members that there was a presentation by Sacha Taylor on behalf of Kent Resilience Team, along with Andrea Allegra,

Senior Resilience Officer. The Resilience team is based at Kent Fire and Rescue HQ and are the delivery arm for emergencies, supporting and co-ordinating. For Parishes without a plan, there is a CEP template and new guidance online for Parishes, who do not have a plan. It was advocated that all plans should be tested regularly. Nick Atkinson, Beat Seargent, said there was a 79% increase in shoplifting in West Malling. East Malling has a major planning problem with the proposed new development on Bradbourne Research grounds. At Larkfield, there is another problem with the developer at The Pippin development. Some of the development that should have taken place has not occurred and other areas which have developed have been misrepresented in execution. It was reported that KCC are £30M short in funding.

117/23] CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS

- a) For information:
 - 1] Area 2 Planning Committee: 17 January 2024
 - 2] Joint Transportation Board: 4 March 2024
 - 3] Parish Partnership Panel: 8 February 2023
 - 4] Standards Committee: 22 January 2024 CANCELLED
 - 5] KALC Area Meeting: TBC
- b) New requiring attention: Nothing to consider.

118/23] ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

Nothing additional.

119/23] DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 19:00hrs in the village hall.

120/23] ANY CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS:

There were none to consider.

With no further business to transact the meeting was closed at 20:30hrs

Signed _____ Chairman Date _____

Initials: