

**ADDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Addington Village Hall, Park Road**  
**held on Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 19:00hrs**

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

**In Attendance: Louise Goldsmith (Clerk), County Councillor Sarah Hohler  
Agent for planning application 23/03374/FLMIN, 1 member of the public**

**120/23] APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

An apology for absence was received from Borough Councillors Robin Betts and Martin Coffin and the reasons for absence were accepted. An apology for absence was also received from Councillor Patricia Garrett and the reason for absence was accepted.

**121/23] DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:**

None.

**122/23] MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:**

It was proposed and **resolved** that the Chairman signs the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 10 January 2024 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**123/23] OPEN SESSION:**

The agent for planning application 23/03374/FLMIN, Westbank, London Road, Addington gave some background information on the site and explained the current plans and aspirations.

**124/23] REPORTS:**

**a) County Councillor:**

KCC continues to work hard to present a balanced budget for the next financial year which remains a challenge. The bus industry in Kent, (as in most parts of the UK), remains privatised. Since the start of 2022 Government and other support has enabled KCC to protect around 50 school services that were at risk of withdrawal. These services continue to be funded using Government funding. The cost of these services is estimated at around £3m a year which includes the contribution made towards them from passenger revenue. Unfortunately, KCC is starting to see bus service cancellations presented again and KCC is not in a position to protect them and if other possible operators do not view them as commercially sustainable then they will stop. These cancellations will include school buses. There has, during 2022, been a recovery of Kent's tourism and the hospitality sector which has meant more jobs which is good news for Kent. The University of Kent, with a group of staff and student volunteers, have collected 5,500kgs of surplus fruit and vegetables from local farms and distributed them via FARESHARE UK to charities, food banks and community initiatives. The Business Investment Team has been processing over 100 pre-applications from small and medium sized businesses in Kent and Medway for grants from £26,000 to £600,000 to grow and innovate. Hundreds of patients across Kent are now receiving care at home when they would normally have had to stay in hospitals thanks to Home First, the long-awaited integration of health and social care. Childrens Services in Kent have recently been awarded an outstanding rating. The Port of Dover and the surrounding area could be hit by major disruption later this year when the EU Entry-Exit system launches. KCC has made the Government aware of their concerns that it is likely to cause long traffic queues. Dog owners in Kent are being urged to keep control of their pets in the countryside, following a rise in attacks on sheep. KCC trading standards officers have been working very hard to stop the huge imports of illegal vapes. KCC had asked the Government to ban them, which they have now done. However, they remain a problem as teenagers are attracted by their bright designs and different sweet and fruity, flavours. As a result of KCC's concerns about sand blowing on to local roads, and even in to houses, the Ferns quarry has been very active in working on dust suppression. There is now a methodology agreed as part of planning and KCC have had no complaints in

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the past six weeks. KCC is using the traditional method of saw cut dig out and inlay for potholes. County Councillor Sarah Hohler advised Members that she fully supports the decision of the Parish Council to complain about the actions of T&MBC regarding Big Motoring World.

b) Borough Councillor: Borough Councillors Robin Betts and Martin Coffin sent the following report.

**Local Plan.** The Regulation 18 consultation has now been largely analysed and results are being drawn from that excellent response. It is quite clear that there needs to be a distributed approach to housing needs. Further consultation will follow soon.

**Car Parking:** The results of this consultation are being analysed and will be presented to Cabinet in the next two months in two tranches (on street and off-street parking).

**Enforcement** Borough Councillors Robin Betts and Marting Coffin are keeping a close eye on the actions by both KCC and T&MBC regarding Ferns quarry. Further concerns have been raised with the site operator about possible breaches of planning permissions. A site meeting took place in December 2023 and illegal hard surfaces were identified. The agent has since confirmed that a planning application will be forthcoming. Concerns have also been raised regarding the current use and this is being investigated by Enforcement. The Borough Councillors have also noted the proposed actions of the Parish Council in respect of Big Motoring World and agree that a full statement on the case should be provided by the senior Planning Officer involved.

**Planning Staff:** T&MBC have had serious issues with the level and quality of staffing within the planning department. The team has been running on very few members of staff as pay and conditions were falling short of the private employer opportunities. T&MBC took the decision to enhance pay by using ‘market supplement’. This has had the effect of filling most of the vacant posts and it is hoped that there will be an improvement in performance in the next month or two. The planning team include enforcement. The issues have been further compounded by the somewhat difficult introduction of new software required to run the service. This situation is also now largely resolved.

**2023/24:** Since the election the conservatives have formed a minority administration with the support of the independents in Borough Green. This has made decision making more political as the opposition groups seek to establish their authority. It means in practical terms that some of the decisions needed to run the Council take longer to achieve. The balance of power can sometimes rest with the casting vote of the Mayor.

**Chief Executive.** Julie Beilby announced her retirement from the council after many years of dedicated service. She will be greatly missed, but in the interim the deputy CEO, Adrian Stanfield, has been promoted to acting CEO. Borough Councillor Martin Coffin and Matt Boughton and Anita Oakley are the small initial selection team to choose the new Head of Service. After the initial shortlisting the candidates will be asked to present to several internal and external groups to secure their final selection. T&MBC have over ten applicants for the role.

**Carbon Neutral Leisure Centres:** It has been decided to replace the ageing Angel Centre in Tonbridge with a new state of the art, carbon neutral leisure centre. This will be built in a different position and once that has been built the existing centre will be demolished. T&MBC also has a plan to decarbonise all existing leisure centres to provide a carbon neutral status by 2027. Significant grants have been applied for both Larkfield and Tonbridge swimming pools and the notification on whether T&MBC have been successful with these applications is imminent.

**Grants:** West Kent Rural grant is open for applications with match funding available up to £25,000. This is a very wide scheme for rural businesses and Parish Council projects that support the community or reduce carbon emissions. Green Business Grants, tailored at reducing carbon emissions and helping business be more efficient with energy, are also available..

**Tonbridge Town Centre:** A report is due to be published in the next few weeks on the options of exciting redevelopment plans in the area surrounding the Angel Centre.

c) Kent Police: There was no reported crime in Addington in January 2024.

**125/23] 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.

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2] Ford Lane: South East Water have been carrying out emergency works for over two weeks. The Clerk has received a number of complaints about the number of Ferns lorries travelling through the village. The Clerk has advised each complainant of the issue. Hopefully the works will be completed this week.

3] D-Day: The Church may be interested in holding an event in the village hall to celebrate this event to include a display, videos and songs.

4] ReferKent: The Clerk has signed the Parish Council up to ReferKent which is a new online referral system that aims to strengthen referrals across Kent by creating an online directory of organisations and services.

5] The Clerk will be attending a First Aid Course on the 14 March 2024.

6] The 58 shopper bus service continues to be well used. Most of the fares are concessionary. Borough Councillor Mike Taylor is looking into grant funding options to retain the service for the next financial year.

7.37pm County Councillor Sarah Hohler left the meeting.

## 126/23] PLANNING

### a) Applications:

#### 1] 23/03374/FLMIN: Westbank, London Road, Addington

Replacement dwelling with new external works and landscaped garden.

*Resolved: No objection. There has been a number of confusing applications for this site and the applicant has been carrying out unauthorised works which have caused a number of issues for the neighbouring properties. That said, the current condition of the site is such that something needs to happen. We would like a condition set that the applicant withdraws all the previous applications for this site. We would like the Planning Officer to ensure minimum disruption to the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties. We would also like the current fencing around the plot to be replaced with something that is more in keeping with the area. We request that, if permitted, working hours are put in place to minimise the effects of any noise or disruption to the neighbouring properties that have been suffering for many months.*

#### 2] 23/03216/HH: The Warren, Trottiscliffe Road, Addington

Erection of single storey rear and side extensions; insertion of replacement first floor window; groundworks to provide new patio.

*Resolved: No objection.*

b) Approvals: None to consider.

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 Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health has advised that there has been a site meeting with the Forestry Commission. Enforcement awaits their feedback and confirmation of their position before they proceed with any action, as they require some information from them to support their case.

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] Food van on the A20: The Clerk had reported to KCC, enquiry 772949, that a burger van has taken over a layby on the A20 near to the junction with Trottiscliffe Road. KCC has confirmed that permission has not been granted and that the layby is public land. KCC will be serving an official Notice for the van to be removed within 28 days.

## 127/23] RESOLUTIONS

1. **To make a formal complaint to T&MBC regarding the failure to take enforcement action to ensure that Condition 4 of planning permission reference 10/00938/FL was complied with which led to the approval of a proposal for a Lawful Development Certificate, 23/01270/LDE, to remove the condition.**

The Clerk has commenced the process 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. However, to satisfy the criteria the Parish Council need to demonstrate that T&MBC has had an opportunity to respond in full to a formal complaint about their actions. The Clerk had prepared and circulated a draft letter of complaint.

**Resolved: To make a formal complaint to T&MBC regarding the failure to take enforcement action to ensure that Condition 4 of planning permission reference 10/00938/FL was complied with which led to the approval of a proposal for a Lawful Development Certificate, 23/01270/LDE, to remove the condition.**

2. **Financial:**

- a) Bank Accounts

It was noted that Unity Trust have questioned the signatures of Cllr. Garrett and Robinson.

The Clerk has spoken to the bank and they have suggested that a letter is submitted confirming that the signatures are correct and giving details and copies of the minute references to the resolution to open a savings account and to remove Ann Adams and Stephen Macdonald-Gay from the Unity Trust account.

**Resolved: To ratify a decision between meetings to submit a letter and copies of relevant minutes to Unity Trust.**

- b) To approve the Financial Statement for February 2024 and make arrangements for authorisation.

**RESOLVED:** To approve the Financial Statement for February 2024 and for Cllrs. Short and Chalk to authorise the payments online.

### Balances as at 7 February 2024:

Unity Trust Account: £63,461.11

### Payments in February:

<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)	£217.96
Gel Creative	(Monthly website maintenance)	£150.00
The Great Outdoor Company	(Provision of outdoor gym and table tennis)	£36,501.60
Day Tree Fellers Ltd	(Crown raising on 3 trees)	£758.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£38,532.56</b>

## 128/23] 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] Enquiry 772597: London Road: 50mph repeater sign west of Mayhill on the A20 is faded. KCC has attended and risk assessed and concluded no action required.

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- 3] Enquiry 772608: Posts on the verge outside the car dealership have been completed
- 4] Enquiry 771860: Sandy Lane: Small tree fallen has been reported. Works now completed.
- 5] Enquiry 772594: St Vincents Lane: Large pothole reported. Works now completed.
- 6] Enquiry 773888: Flooding, junction with Trottiscliffe Road and the A20. KCC has advised that since April 2022 KCC's Highways Drainage Team have been working hard to develop and implement a cyclical maintenance regime for all roads in the county. This allows KCC to attend more of their assets in a proactive and cost-effective manner each year. The gullies at this junction are on the schedule for an annual clean and will be cleansed as part of this programme of work and are due to be attended within the next couple of months. Members remain concerned about flooding at this site which was not an issue in the past and requested that the Clerk raises these concerns with Andy Watson, Highway Manager for Tonbridge and Malling.
- 7] Enquiry 773891: Flooding Seven Mile Lane under railway bridge. As above.
- 8] Enquiry 774476: Entrance to Endeavour Park: Large pothole. Works now completed.
- 9] Enquiry 775077: Damaged fence on A20. Works now completed.

b) **New requiring attention:** None.

2] **Highways Improvement Plan:**

There was no update on the new road markings and signage for the A20 which will be funded by KCC.

3] **Ownership and management of the pavilion**

Members noted the following advice sent by the solicitor working on the new lease for the pavilion. The Parish Council is the registered owner of the recreation ground and both the village hall and sports pavilion that sit on it. The solicitor has confirmed that the deed of trust does not affect the current lease. The current lease states that the property is hereby conveyed as a Recreation and Sports Ground at all times and that the cricket table shall be used only for the purpose of cricket so long as there is a cricket club in the village of Addington. The conveyed land must be used for recreational purposes at all times and on any day of the week and the Committee must keep the same in good order and condition. Clause 2b of the lease states that the Committee must keep the grounds and property in good order and are also responsible for the insurance. Cllr. Robinson raised the issue of ownership and questioned whether invoices for the recreation ground and pavilion could be funded by the Recreation Ground Committee but actually paid by the Parish Council so that the VAT could be reclaimed. At the request of Cllr. Robinson the Clerk agreed to investigate the issues of paying for services and reclaiming VAT.

4] **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 met virtually with Cllrs. Garrett, Short, Robinson and the Clerk on Monday 22 January 2024 discuss the new lease and their status. The Village Hall Committee have agreed to discuss the options available and to advise the Clerk what status they would like to adopt.

5] **Outdoor Gym Project**

The Great Outdoor Gym Company completed the installation of the outdoor gym at the recreation ground last week. Members thanked Cllr. Robinson for assisting the Clerk on overseeing the project and for planting a number of saplings around the site. The Great Outdoor Company need to supply the safety sign and the wording has now been agreed. A final inspection has been carried out and the invoice has been received. It was agreed to hold an official opening ceremony for the outdoor gym and that it should be opened by Cllr. Garrett as chairman of the Parish Council. The Clerk will circulate some possible dates and prepare an invitation list.

6] **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.

7] **Open Spaces**

- a) Dying trees on East Street: National Highways have completed the planting of the replacement trees but concern was expressed that some of the trees are already starting to die through a lack of watering.

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The watering programmes is not due to start until April 2024. The Clerk was asked to advise National Highways.

**129/23| REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS:**

- a) **Village Hall Committee:** Cllr. Chalk advised that a meeting is due to be held on the 15 February 2024.
- b) **Recreation Ground Committee:** Cllr. Robinson advised that the Recreation Ground Committee has been awarded a West Kent Rural Grant Fund of £7,850. The requested grant was based on a quotation from Solar Together, the T&MBC group buying contract bid winners, of £15,700. However, Solar Together has now increased their quote to over £19,000 following a site survey which led to the addition of special tile fittings and scaffold access costs. It has also come to light that VAT is also due as the project is viewed as a business. None of the quotes received in the bid and grant applications phase indicated that VAT was due on business projects. The Cricket Club has applied to the England & Wales Cricket Board for a £10,000 grant and are optimistic that this will be awarded given the matched funding contributions which they requested last year. The Cricket Club have already received a £5,000 grant from Active Kent. Another contractor, based in Maidstone, has suggested that scaffolding is not required and have subsequently submitted a lower quote. Further quotes are now being sought for the solar panel project. Cllr. Robinson has submitted a planning application to T&MBC for the solar panels. Unfortunately, the rainwater harvesting pump has broken and a replacement will cost in the region of £900.00. On a positive note, a pre-school nursery is considering hiring the pavilion which would be an excellent source of income.
- c) **Parish Partnership Panel:** There has been no meeting.
- d) **Standards Committee:** There has been no meeting.
- e) **KALC Area Committee:** There has been no meeting.

**130/23| CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS**

- a) For information:
  - 1] Area 2 Planning Committee: 21 February 2024
  - 2] Joint Transportation Board: 4 March 2024
  - 3] Parish Partnership Panel: 8 February 2023 CANCELLED
  - 4] Standards Committee: 5 June 2024
  - 5] KALC Area Meeting: 18 April 2024
- b) **New requiring attention:**
  - 1] Presentation on Agile: 8 February 2024: Cllr. Short to attend.
  - 2] Pre-Submission Draft of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2024-2039 Regulation 19 Public Consultation. Cllr. Robinson to respond.

**131/23| ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING:**

Annual review of Financial Regulations and internal control and Standing Orders.

**132/23| DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:**

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 6 March 2024 at 19:00hrs in the village hall.

**133/23| ANY CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS:**

There were none to consider.

With no further business to transact the meeting was closed at 20:35hrs

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman Date \_\_\_\_\_

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