

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL held in Capel Village Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 25 September 2023

Present: Cllrs Patterson, (Chair), Fenton, Mackonochie, Mackenzie, Rich (arrived 7.34pm), Saunders, Sawyer and Young.

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Clerk,

County Councillor Sarah Hamilton (arrived 8.06pm), 2 members of the public.

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- | Minute No | Agenda No |
|-----------|---|
| | 1. Administration – Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. The Clerk has not received any requests from anyone intending to record or film the meeting. |
| 1089 | 2. APOLOGIES:
An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Malpas and the reason for absence was accepted. |
| 1090 | 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:
Cllr. Young declared an interest in agenda item 9 (a) (ix) |
| 1091 | 4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:
There were none. |
| 1092 | 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 31 July 2023 be signed as a true and accurate record. |
| 1093 | 6. CLERKS REPORT/PAST MATTERS:
1] Clerk advised that Pure Padel have not responded to a suggestion that they attended a Parish Council meeting to discuss their requirements for a Padel court.
2] PC Connor Geelan is the new local Beat Officer for Capel/Five Oak Green. PC Geelan will also cover Paddock Wood, Horsmonden, Matfield, Brenchley, Lamberhurst and Goudhurst.
3] The Clerk is to be the new Secretary for the KALC Area Committee Ashford. |
| 1094 | 7. OPEN SESSION:
No comments. |
| 1095 | 8. EXTERNAL REPORTS
a) Borough Councillors Report:
The TWBC planning officers are still considering the evidence provided by their consultants on the Inspector's Initial Letter on the TW Plan. The date for making recommendation to members has slipped further into the autumn. The best guess is that the draft recommendations will first see the light of day in a recommendation to members of the Planning and Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board that meets on the 9 October. The agenda for which should be on the Council's website a week earlier. A full Council decision is likely in December.
As suggested last month, the expectation is that the proposed Tudeley development will be dropped, and the number of houses proposed for East Capel will be reduced from the SLP because of the flooding concerns highlighted by the Inspector. However, there will be no confirmation or detail until the recommendations are published. If the recommendations are approved by councillors there will be another round of consultation on these 'Significant Changes' before they go back to the Inspector for another round of hearings. It is likely to be well into 2024 before a final local plan is approved.
The next meeting of the Borough Council will be on Wednesday October 4 October at 6:30pm. It is open to the public in person or online.
b) County Councillor: Neil Baker is the new Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport. |
| 1096 | 9. COMMITTEE REPORTS
a) Finance & Resources Committee:
i) A report on the accounts as at the 19 September 2023 was noted.
ii) A bank reconciliation as at the 19 September 2023 was noted. |

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- iii) The minutes of the meeting held on the 5 September 2023 were noted.
 - iv) **Resolved:** To approve a recommendation to increase the allotment rental fee for 2024-2025 to £26.00 for a full plot and £13.00 for a half plot.
 - v) **Resolved:** To approve a recommendation to increase the football fees for both football clubs for 2023-2024 to £375.00 and £40.00 for a single use of the pitch.
 - vi) To approve a quote to install a new water pump in the allotments.
Resolved: To purchase a North Ridge Excelsior-G Cast Iron Semi Rotary Hand Pump and hoses now and arrange for it to be installed by BN Pumps in the Spring.
 - vii) To approve and sign the UKSPF Grant Agreement
Cllrs. Patterson, Saunders and the Clerk met with the plumber to discuss installing touchless, hands-free fixtures in the public toilets. The plumber has since advised that this would increase the cost by at £300-500 per toilet and that the mechanism would still not operate with a high flush cistern. It was agreed that the extra cost was prohibitive and to continue with flush panel toilets and a low-level cistern. The Clerk will arrange for works to be carried out and then claim back the cost from TWBC.
Resolved: To approve and sign the UKSPF Grant Agreement with the agreed specification.
 - viii) Completion of limited assurance review for year ending 31 March 2023
It was noted that the Clerk reported to the Finance and Resources Committee that the External Auditor has completed the review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) and have concluded that the information is in accordance with Proper Practices and that no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. The Clerk has arranged for the Notice of Conclusion of Audit to be displayed on the website and noticeboards along with the relevant sections of the AGAR.
 - ix) Request for a donation from Capel Grange:
Capel Grange is seeking funds to purchase an interactive activity computer table at a total cost of £4000.00. The Clerk will ask for a grant application form to be completed.
 - x) To receive a list of payments for approval:
It was **resolved** to adopt the list of payments overleaf and for Cllrs. Patterson and Macknochie to authorise the payments set up online by the Clerk. Cllr. Fenton checked the invoices against the payment list in accordance with the Financial Regulations.
- b) **Staff, Office & Administration Committee:**
The Clerk advised that it would be beneficial to replace the current website. It is difficult to find items on the current website and the visuals and search features are outdated. It was agreed that the Clerk should seek some quotes for both a new website and for the site to be administered externally to ensure all the information conforms with the website accessibility guidelines. The Clerk also reported that the office printer is not working properly. The Clerk is in the process of obtaining quotes for a replacement or repair.
- c) **Planning Committee:**
The minutes of the meeting held on the 5 September 2023 were received and noted.
- d) **Flooding Panel:**
The Environment Agency carried out practice Property Flood Resilience exercise at resident's properties on the 8 and 9 September 2023. The Environment Agency continues to work through the remaining snagging issues. At the suggestion of Cllr. Rich it was agreed that the Clerk places a post on Facebook and the website about the Kent Resilience Forum training due to take place in November 2023 on how to become a flood warden.
- e) **Memorial Cottages & Housing Working Group:**
Cllr. Sawyer is investigating the cost of making the cottages more eco-friendly by possibly installing rainwater harvesting, air source pumps or solar panels. However, it was noted that last week that the Government announced that the new EPC proposals would be abandoned with the minimum energy rating remaining unchanged for the foreseeable future.

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- f) **Recreation Ground and Allotments Working Group:**
The Clerk reported that the contractor is hoping to commence works to replace the external doors to the public toilets at the end of October.
- g) **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party:**
Cllr. Patterson reported that the Parish Council submitted the Capel Neighbourhood Development Plan to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council on 8 August 2023 in accordance with Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). In accordance with Regulation 16 the Borough Council is inviting representations on the Capel Neighbourhood Development Plan for a six-week period from 9am on 5 September to 5pm on 17 October 2023. The submitted Plan and supporting documents can be viewed on the Borough Council's website at <https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans/capel> or on the [Capel Consultation Page](#). A paper copy of the Plan and supporting documents is also available for viewing by appointment at the Parish Office. TWBC has also now made an application to Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service. Cllr. Patterson reported that the Locality Grant application process finally opened and that the Parish Council has been awarded a final payment of £1,468.00.

10. PARISH MATTERS

1097

- a) **Local Plan Examination Update:** In addition to the update in agenda item 8a, Cllr. Patterson advised that he will be attending a virtual meeting with the Clerk on Wednesday 27 September 2023 with the Strategic Sites and Delivery Team and Head of Planning at TWBC for a further update on progress with the Local Plan.
- b) **Climate Change Initiatives:** It was noted that the Clerk has signed the corrected landowner consents for UKPN to carry out the connection works for the EV Charging Points. UKPN have not yet confirmed an installation date. The Clerk was asked to find out if KCC intend to hardcore and/or tarmac the proposed parking spaces.
- c) **Mobile Coverage:** It was noted that residents are concerned about the fact BT is due to withdraw the copper wires to all houses by the end of 2025. The implication of this is that all calls can only be made over the internet which is fine unless there is a power failure which could mean it will not be possible to make calls in an emergency. Although it has been suggested that any vulnerable residents can apply to their service provider for a battery backup this group of residents would like pressure to be applied to the mobile phone service providers to improve the cover in the parish. It was suggested and agreed that the Clerk contacts both County Councillor Sarah Hamilton and MP Greg Clark to lobby for an improved mobile phone service.
- d) **Kent Police:** The Clerk has been advised that Kent Police will be arranging online meetings with the parishes giving Councillors an opportunity to share concerns that they have.

11. HIGHWAYS

1098

a) Highways Improvement Plan

i) SID Scheme

Members were delighted to hear that KCC has now approved the three proposed locations for a moveable speed indicator device on Five Oak Green Road and Badsell Road. The Clerk advised that the next stage is for the Parish Council to undertake an informal consultation with residents regarding the signs and locations. The Traffic Operations & Technology Team will need to be provided with a copy of the consultation plus any feedback received once the consultation has concluded. Essentially, as long as residents have had a fair chance to voice an opinion on the scheme KCC will be satisfied. It was noted that the Parish Council will need to find funds of £9,500,00 to implement the scheme.

The three proposed locations are as follows:

1. Badsell Road near Falmouth Place (footway opposite the previous VAS - suitable for one direction of use westbound).
2. Five Oak Green Road near Larkfield (grass verge near to the junction - suitable for one direction of use eastbound).
3. Five Oak Green Road near Church Lane (grass verge near to the junction, opposite the Primary School).

The Clerk has prepared and circulated a draft questionnaire.

Resolved: The Clerk to consult residents on the scheme.

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ii) Crossing point on Five Oak Green Road

The Planning and Advice Team at KCC has analysed the results of the speed and CCTV surveys to assess the suitability of the road for a zebra crossing and they have unfortunately found that the location identified on Five Oak Green Road is not suitable for a zebra crossing. However, KCC has since advised that they would be happy to consider installing a system of traffic calming (minimum of two) in the form of chicanes/kerb buildouts which would not only assist with crossing the road, as they could be built out to the centre line with a dropped kerb and tactile paving but would also reduce traffic speeds. KCC have suggested installing one by Sychem Lane, and one closer to the school. KCC has advised the scheme would cost between £50,000 and £100,000 so it would either need developer contributions or LTP (Local Transport Plan) funding. Members were in agreement that it would be beneficial to have the chicanes/kerb buildouts and that the Clerk should ask if KCC would agree to installing one at each end of the village.

Resolved: The Clerk to request that KCC applies for LTP funding for this scheme.

iii) Proposal Speed Reduction Alders Road

It was agreed to obtain feedback to the proposal for a speed indication device scheme before consulting residents about which highways projects the Parish Council should prioritise financially. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to deliver both schemes.

iv) Dangerous Driving on Castle Hill and a proposal for traffic calming

Kent Police has advised that the Community Safety Unit Sergeant is fully aware of the issues of vehicles driving in an ASB manor in the Castle Hill area. Both the CSU Officers and the night duty Kent Police Officers are trying to attend the area as much as possible and will continue to do so. Cllr. Patterson offered to contact the CSU as they had agreed to install temporary CCTV cameras. The Clerk was asked to contact Matthew Scott, The Kent Police Commissioner, about the concerns of the Parish Council. It was also agreed to discuss these instances of ASB driving at the proposed virtual meetings with Kent Police.

12. REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS

1099

- i) **KALC Meeting:** Cllr. Sawyer reported on the meeting held in Cranbrook on the 6 September 2023 and advised that a public meeting is being held in the Vestry Hall, Cranbrook on the 4 October 2023 at 2pm and 7pm to discuss the education crisis in the area. This crisis is likely to have a snowball effect as school aged children in Cranbrook are being taken to Mascalls School which is putting pressure on places in that area. Cranbrook want KCC to sponsor a new school. Nick Abrahams, the Assistant Education Director at KCC will be addressing the public meetings.
- ii) **Parish Chairmen's Group Meeting:** It was noted that the next meeting is due to be held tomorrow evening.
- iii) **Joint Transportation Board:** It was noted that the next meeting is due to be held virtually on the 2 October 2023. Cllr. Mackonochie reported that improvement works to the A228 roundabout cannot proceed at the moment. Any meaningful improvement of this roundabout can only be achieved by making it bigger and that in turn would require land acquisition and higher cost. It is considered that such a scheme is only likely to be achievable as a standalone scheme or more likely as part of a Colts Hill Bypass that may be identified as a requirement within the Borough Council evolving Local Plan.
- iv) **CCA:** Cllr. Patterson reported that volunteers decorated the meeting room and a wall in the main hall over the summer. New chairs have been installed in the meeting room. There has been another leak in the roof and the electrics in the main hall completely failed last week. The Trustees have therefore agreed to carry out a Condition Survey to hopefully provide information on what works are required and the budget requirements for these and for a possible replacement building which would assist any grant funding application. The hall has a new cleaner and role of a hall manager is soon to be advertised. A quote for a new website has also been approved.
- v) **Other external meetings:**
Cllr. Fenton attended the Parish News AGM on the 1 September 2023 and advised that there was nothing of significance to report.
Cllr. Fenton attended the Speedwatch Co-ordinators virtual meeting organised by Kent Police and held on the 20 September 2023. Kent Police advised that it is

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important that all the speed signs in the village are clean and not obscured by vegetation as this could invalidate the results of a speedwatch session. Members discussed the 20mph advisory speed limit sign by the school which was installed by a group of individuals and agreed that this should probably be removed as it not an approved sign.

- 1100 **13. CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS:**
The following were noted:
Consultation on the draft TWBC Hackney Carriage and Private Licensing Policy 2023-2028.
Annual Survey on the performance of Kent Police.
KCC Budget Consultation 2024-2025
Kent Community Warden Service Review

- 1101 **14. ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS:** None.

- 1102 **15. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:**
Full Council Meeting: Monday 30 October 2023 at 7.30pm.

With no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 8.56pm

Signed:

Dated:

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Payment List: August

Ref:	Payee	Description	Gross
BACs Payments for approval on 4 September 2023			
BACS 08-01	Louise Goldsmith	Expenses	155.60
BACS 08-02	HMRC	PAYE & NIC August	420.96
BACS 08-03	F&C Cleaning	Cleaning public toilets	406.80
BACS 08-04	Heliocentrix Ltd	Monthly Microsoft 365 subscription	78.34
BACS 08-05	CCA	Hall Hire CPC 001	60.00
BACS 08-06	Alison Eardley	Neighbourhood Plan consultants fee	2,970.00
BACS 08-07	Louise Goldsmith	Reimbursement plaque and engraving	95.00
BACS 08-08	Capel Groundcare	Playground repairs	846.00
BACS 08-09	Louise Goldsmith	Reimbursement 1/3 Jotform annual fee	108.63
TOTAL			5,141.33

Date	Payee	Description	Gross
Direct Debits and Standing Orders			
01/08/2023	EDF	Electricity - cricket pavilion	74.00
01/08/2023	EDF	Electricity - public toilets	78.00
03/08/2023	TalkTalk	Telephone & Broadband	35.94
31/07/2023	EE	Mobile Phone	18.00
17/08/2023	Sage	Payroll software	9.60
04/09/2023	B&CE Holdings	Pension - Clerk	167.10
25/08/2023	Louise Goldsmith	Payroll	1,760.83
25/08/2023	Capel Groundcare	Grounds maintenance contract	2,216.09
TOTAL			4,359.56

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Payment List: September

Ref:	Payee	Description	Gross
BACs Payments for approval on 25 September 2023			
BACS 09-01	Louise Goldsmith	Expenses	192.05
BACS 09-02	HMRC	PAYE & NIC September	420.76
BACS 09-03	F&C Cleaning	Cleaning public toilets	400.80
BACS 09-04	Heliocentrix Ltd	Monthly Microsoft 365 subscription	78.34
BACS 09-05	Playsafety Ltd	RoSPA inspection	209.40
BACS 09-06	CCA	Annual Office hire, half hire fee of wheelie bin. Electricity for office	1,870.72
BACS 09-07	Clear Insurance	Annual Insurance	1,818.64
BACS 09-08	JRB Enterprise	Dog waste bags	159.90
BACS 09-09	Wrotham Computer Care	Antivirus protection	77.42
		TOTAL	5,228.03
Date	Payee	Description	Gross
Direct Debits and Standing Orders			
01/09/2023	EDF	Electricity - cricket pavilion	74.00
01/09/2023	EDF	Electricity - public toilets	78.00
03/09/2023	TalkTalk	Telephone & Broadband	35.94
31/08/2023	EE	Mobile Phone	18.00
17/09/2023	Sage	Payroll software	9.60
21/09/2023	B&CE Holdings	Pension - Clerk	168.10
25/09/2023	Louise Goldsmith	Payroll	1,760.83
25/09/2023	Capel Groundcare	Grounds maintenance contract	2,216.09
		TOTAL	4,360.56

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