

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL held in Capel Village Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 30 October 2023

Present: Cllrs Fenton, (Chair for this meeting), Mackonochie, Mackenzie, Malpas, Rich, Saunders, Sawyer and Young.

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Clerk, 2 members of the public.

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- | Minute No | Agenda No |
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| | 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. |
| 1103 | 2. APOLOGIES:
An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Patterson and the reason for absence was accepted. |
| 1104 | 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:
None received. |
| 1105 | 4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:
There were none. |
| 1106 | 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 25 September 2023 be signed as a true and accurate record. |
| 1107 | 6. CLERKS REPORT/PAST MATTERS:
1] Capel Grange: The Clerk has sent a grant application form and a copy of the Grant Policy and a copy of the application form for the manager to complete to formally apply to the Parish Council for funding.
2] 20mph advisory sign at the school: The Clerk has asked KCC Highways to remove the sign as this is not an approved sign and could invalidate the results of speedwatch.
3] UKSPF: The TWBC legal team has now signed the agreement for the £3500.00 loan granted for the refurbishment of the public toilets.
4] Public Toilets: The refurbishment of the public toilets commenced today.
5] Pothole at the entrance to the car park: The Clerk advised that the Highways Steward has kindly filled the large pothole at the entrance to the village hall car park.
6] Catts Corner bollards: The Clerk has reported to KCC Highways hat some of the bollards on Catts Corner need either straightening or replacing.
7] Allotment pump: The Clerk has provisionally booked the pump contractor to replace the pump at the allotments on the 28 February 2024.
8] Football Fees: The Clerk has received full payment for the year from Simla. |
| 1108 | 7. OPEN SESSION:
A member of the public complained about cars parked on the corner of Falmouth Place and blocking sight lines. A member of the public asked when the damaged allotment fencing will be repaired. |
| 1109 | 8. EXTERNAL REPORT
a) Borough Councillors Report:
The Significant Changes to the TW Local Plan are almost with us. Capel and Paddock Wood Borough councillors are being updated on Wednesday and the revised proposals are to be published on the 6 November. Council will be asked to approve the changes in December before they go out to consultation in the New Year. In early October TWBC purchased the long leasehold of Royal Victoria Place shopping centre from its previous owners British Land, giving it complete control of the asset. For further details and FAQ's please access the link on the council's website: https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/news/2023/october/Royal-Victoria-Place-lease-acquired-by-Council . TWBC have appointed retail market specialists Rivington Hark, to manage the centre. Their expert view is there is potential to fill vacant units, drive-up occupancy and footfall, and rebalance the centre away from solely retail |

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towards leisure and restaurant uses. It is hoped this will be a first step towards revitalising the top end of Tunbridge Wells town centre as the RVP is such a large part of this. The next Borough Council meeting will be on Wednesday 13 December at 6:30pm.

- b) County Councillor: No report

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9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) **Finance & Resources Committee:**

- i) A report on the accounts as at the 30 September 2023 was noted.
- ii) A bank reconciliation as at the 30 September 2023 was noted.
- iii) The minutes of the meeting held on the 23 October 2023 were noted.
- iv) Financial Regulations/Asset Register and Risk Assessment:

Resolved: To approve the Financial Regulations and Asset Register. A decision to approve the Risk Assessment document was delayed to the next meeting.

- v) Clerk's Salary: In line with the Financial Regulations the Clerk's salary was reviewed.

Resolved: To increase the Clerk's salary to scale SCP 26.

- vi) To receive a list of payments for approval:

Resolved: To adopt the list of payments overleaf and for Cllrs. Fenton and Mackonochie 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 minutes of the meeting held on the 20 October 2023 were noted. The Clerk reported that the new printer/photocopier is to be installed in the Parish Office this week. The Parish Council will only pay for printing at a cost of 0.005p for a mono copy and 4p for a colour. It was agreed that the resource could be used for photocopying for other bodies at slightly increased prices. The Committee also considered the cost of a replacement website. It was noted that the current provider offered to make some enhancements to the current website. The Clerk has worked with the current provider and some welcome changes have been implemented.

c) **Planning Committee:**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 25 September 2023 were received and noted.

d) **Flooding Panel:**

It was noted that the next Flooding Panel meeting is due to take place on the 6 November 2023. Cllr. Mackonochie advised that the high winds and heavy winds forecasted this week could create some issues with flooding. The Flood Wardens are watching the culvert and ditches. Cllr. Rich advised that the some of the gullies in Alders Road remain blocked.

e) **Memorial Cottages & Housing Working Group:**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 20 October 2023 were noted. Cllr. Sawyer advised that the annual condition surveys on the cottages will be carried out on the 16 November 2023. The Clerk and Cllr. Sawyer will carry out the surveys. The tenant at 10 Brampton Bank has reported that the front door lock is failing. Cllr. Sawyer is investigating the cost of a replacement front door for both cottages.

f) **Recreation Ground and Allotments Working Group:**

The Clerk reported that a contractor is hoping to provide a quote to commence works to replace the external doors to the public toilets very soon. The Clerk has also asked the contractor carrying out the refurbishment works to the toilets to provide a quote. It was noted that the allotments were broken into overnight on the 13 October 2023. Several sheds were broken into. The Clerk is obtaining quotes to repair the two sections of damaged fencing.

g) **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party:**

The Clerk advised that the Regulation 16 consultation closed on the 17 October 2023. TWBC will be collating the responses and will forward a copy of the report. The Clerk, Cllr. Patterson and Alison Eardley, Planning Consultant, met virtually with the TWBC Officers on the 18 October 2023 to discuss the appointment of the examiner. It was

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agreed at this meeting to appoint Andrew Ashcroft, who was the examiner for Paddock Wood. The examination stage can take 4-6 months and TWBC are hopeful that Mr Ashcroft will commence work immediately. It is likely that the examiner will undertake one or two days of site visits in November. Hopefully by Christmas he will have raised any queries and then his report will follow in due course. Cllr. Patterson has asked TWBC if the referendum can be held on the same day as local elections next year which will be Thursday 2 May 2024. Officers have agreed to discuss with the elections team. If this is not possible a referendum will not take place until mid-June 2024.

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10. PARISH MATTERS

- a) **Local Plan Examination Update:** It was noted that the Clerk and Cllr. Patterson attended a virtual meeting 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. The Significant Changes to the Local Plan are due to be published on Monday 6 November 2023. These will include the preferred option Officers are putting before Members due to go through the Committee cycle before Full Council on 13 December 2023.
- b) **Climate Change Initiatives:** UPKN have not yet confirmed an installation date. The Clerk has asked KCC if they intend to hardcore and/or tarmac the proposed parking spaces.
- c) **Mobile Coverage:** The Clerk reported that MP Greg Clark has agreed to lobby the network mobile phone providers for an improved mobile phone service.
- d) **Secondary School provision in Cranbrook:** Cllr. Sawyer reported that the public meeting held on the 4 October 2023 in Cranbrook to discuss the education crisis was well attended. 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 and Sissinghurst Parish Council is lobbying KCC to sponsor a new school.
- e) **Christmas Carol Service:** It was noted that the Clerk has applied for a partial road closure on Whetsted Road between the hours of 3pm and 4.30pm on Sunday 17 December 2023 for the carol service which is due to take place on the village green. The event has also been registered with TWBC.
Christmas Tree and Lights: The Clerk reported that Capel Groundcare have kindly offered to provide a tree for the village green free of charge but would prefer to use their Christmas lights that require electricity which they have spent a lot of money on. Members remain concerned about the cost of the temporary electricity supply.
Resolved: The Clerk to apply for temporary use of electricity and to investigate the cost of battery or solar lights for future years. The Clerk will also test the external plug to check that it is still working.
- f) **Request to sell pizzas in the village hall car park:**
Resolved: To permit 'contact the baker' to sell pizzas in the village hall car park on Friday evenings subject to the rubbish all been removed and sight of their insurance documents.
- g) **Meeting Dates 2024:** Subject to a correction the date of one of the meetings for the Finance and Resources Committee the meetings dates for 2024 were approved.
- h) **Kent Police:** The Clerk and Cllr. Patterson met PC Conor Geelan, the new beat officer, on Thursday 12 October 2023. PC Geelan advised that a task group has been set up to monitor the car racing and anti-social behaviour at Castle Farmhouse. The first quarterly online meeting with Kent Police and neighbouring parishes has been arranged for Friday 17 November at 1pm. It was agreed that Cllr. Patterson should attend with the Clerk. The Clerk agreed to find out if Kent Police would consider holding future meetings on an evening or weekend.

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11. HIGHWAYS

a) Highways Improvement Plan

i) SID Scheme

The Clerk reported that the results of the informal consultation with residents regarding the signs and locations has been positive. 93% of respondents support the scheme. It was noted that the Parish Council will need to find funds of £9,500,00 to implement the scheme. Members discussed whether the speed indicator devices could also capture data such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition. It is understood that the equipment in a neighbouring parish allows for the collection of data. It was agreed to postpone a decision about the type of SID until the next

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meeting and for the Clerk to find out if data collection is possible.

- ii) Crossing point on Five Oak Green Road
The Planning and Advice Team at KCC has previously 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 and have since advised that they would consider installing a chicane at the other end of the village. Members discussed whether siting a chicane by Lukes Cottages on Five Oak Green would be beneficial. The Community Engagement Officer has advised that this scheme is being considered as a bid for Local Transport Plan funding. A meeting is being held on the 8 November 2023 to discuss the bids. If the scheme is taken forward the Planning & Advice/Design & Delivery Team will then spend November looking into the feasibility of the schemes put forward, with a view to these then being presented formally to bid for funding in December/ January.
It was suggested and agreed that the Clerk posts some information on the website giving further details about the current highway improvement schemes the Parish Council are working on with KCC. It was agreed that this information should also be included in the next edition of Parish News.
- iii) Proposal Speed Reduction Alders Road
It was agreed that the SID scheme would be a priority, in terms of funding, over a proposal for a speed reduction in Alders Road. Financing of these scheme will be considered as part of the setting of the budget for the next financial year.
- iv) Dangerous Driving on Castle Hill
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. The instances of ASB driving will be discussed further at the virtual meetings due to be held with Kent Police on the 17 November 2023.

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12. REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS

- i) **KALC Meeting:** There has been no meeting.
- ii) **Parish Chairmen's Group Meeting:** The meetings of the meeting held on the 26 September 2023 have been circulated.
- iii) **Joint Transportation Board:** It was noted that at the meeting held virtually on the 2 October 2023 it was confirmed that improvement works to the A228 roundabout cannot proceed at the moment.
- iv) **CCA:** The Clerk reported that there has been another major leak in the roof and that the heating in the hall is not working. A new part for the pump has been ordered. The Trustees have instructed a surveyor/architect and a condition survey is due to be carried out this week which will inform the decision making about the potential for a refurbishment of the current building. The Trustees are meeting again on the 13 November 2023 to brainstorm ideas for both a new and refurbished village hall. A Hall Manager has been appointed and a new website is being developed. The Trustees are keen to expand in number and will be placing adverts on social media for volunteers to come forward.
- v) **Other external meetings:**
It was noted that Cllr. Rich attended the PWCAC Annual General Meeting.

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13. CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS: None to consider.

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14. ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS: None.

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15. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

Full Council Meeting: Monday 27 November 2023 at 7.30pm.

With no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 8.39pm

Signed:

Dated:

Initialed:

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Payment List: October

Ref:	Payee	Description	Gross
BACs Payments for approval on 30 October 2023			
BACS 10-01	Louise Goldsmith	Expenses	252.80
BACS 10-02	HMRC	PAYE & NIC October	420.96
BACS 10-03	F&C Cleaning	Cleaning public toilets	406.80
BACS 10-04	Heliocentrix Ltd	Monthly Microsoft 365 subscription	78.34
BACS 10-05	Louise Goldsmith	Postage and lettering for Citizens Award board reimbursement	65.90
BACS 10-06	CCA	Meeting room hire	60.00
BACS 10-07	Mazars	Limited Assurance Review	504.00
BACS 10-08	Royal British Legion	Donation and wreath	200.00
BACS 10-09	Castle Water	Water supply public toilets for 6 months	496.40
BACS 10-10	Heliocentrix Ltd	IT support for Clerk	25.50
BACS 10-11	Kent County Playing Fields Association	Annual subscription	20.00
BACS 10-12	Capel Groundcare	Jubilee Stand/tree stakes/ seeding/hedge cutting	1,375.59
BACS 10-13	Business Stream	Waste water public toilets	157.74
BACS 10-14	Five Oak Green Community Gardening Group	Donation - Citizen award	500.00
TOTAL			4,564.03

Date	Payee	Description	Gross
Direct Debits and Standing Orders			
02/10/2023	EDF	Electricity - cricket pavilion	74.00
02/10/2023	EDF	Electricity - public toilets	78.00
29/09/2023	ICO	Annual subscription	35.00
04/10/2023	TalkTalk	Telephone & Broadband	40.87
02/10/2023	EE	Mobile Phone	36.00
17/10/2023	Sage	Payroll software	9.60
25/10/2023	B&CE Holdings	Pension - Clerk	168.10
30/10/23	Unity Trust	Quarterly Charge	18.00
25/10/2023	Louise Goldsmith	Payroll	1,760.83
25/10/2023	Capel Groundcare	Grounds maintenance contract	2,216.09
TOTAL			4,436.49

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