

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL held in Capel Village Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 29 January 2024

Present: Cllrs Patterson, (Chair), Fenton, Mackonochie, Mackenzie, Malpas, Rich, Saunders, and Young
In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Clerk,
Steve Baughan and Danielle Drake from Fernham Homes and 10 members of the public.
County Councillor Sarah Hamilton (arrived 8.10pm)

- | 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. |
| 1147 | 2. APOLOGIES:
An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Sawyer and the reason for absence was accepted. |
| 1148 | 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:
Cllr. Patterson declared an interest in agenda item 10 (a) (iv). |
| 1149 | 4. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:
There were none. |
| 1150 | 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 18 December 2023 be signed as a true and accurate record. |
| 1151 | 6. CLERKS REPORT/PAST MATTERS:
The Clerk has checked both defibrillators and has updated their status on The Circuit. The Trustees of Capel Community Association will be holding the Annual General Meeting on Monday 19 February 2024 at 7.30pm in the village hall. There will be an opportunity to comment on the future proposals for the hall and to also find out how to volunteer and support their work. |
| 1152 | 7. FERNHAM HOMES PROPOSALS FOR TOLHURST ROAD, FIVE OAK GREEN
Steve Baughen from Fernham Homes gave some historical information about both the company and previous sites and explained that they were seeking the views of the Parish Council and residents on the type of housing for the proposed site in Tolhurst Road. Steve Baughen explained that Fernham Homes aim to use materials in keeping with the area. Fernham Homes have analysed the housing needs survey carried out by AECOM in 2022 which summarised that the parish would benefit from more affordable homes and a mix of smaller housing. However, Steve Baughen explained that Fernham Homes is keen to carry out qualitative research with the parish and will then analyse this feedback along with the quantitative results and use these results to decide the mix of proposed housing. Steve Baughen advised that the plan is to build 20-25 new homes and that they will be carrying out various assessments of the site including topography and drainage surveys. |
| 1153 | 8. OPEN SESSION:
Members of the public raised the following issues/concerns about the possible new homes development on Tolhurst Road which were addressed by Steve Baughen. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request that neighbouring properties on the western side of the proposed site are screened to ensure privacy but not to be overshadowed. Steve Baughen advised that a landscaping plan would be submitted with the planning application and that they would be mindful of a request to provide screening for the neighbouring properties.• Concerns about flooding and surface water present on the site, particularly in the north east corner of the site and this been diverted to the neighbouring properties. Steve Baughen advised that attenuation tanks and/or swales will be installed if required.• Concern was expressed about the number and type of housing to be offered. Steve Baughen explained that public exhibitions will be held and that they are keen to hear the views of local residents on the housing mix required.• Concern was expressed about overdeveloping/cramming on the site with a large number of |

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units and small gardens.

- Concern was expressed about the additional traffic the development would create on both Sychem Lane and Five Oak Green Road.
- Concern was expressed about further pressure on an already stretched infrastructure.
- Concern was expressed about the loss of another open space in the parish particularly given the possibility of a development at Finches Farm.
- Concern was expressed about the potential loss of wildlife. Steve Baughen explained that they would be aiming to demonstrate a net bio-diversity gain.
- Request for assurances that any social housing goes to local people as a priority. Steve Baughen offered to discuss this with TWBC and request that this is stipulated in any S106 agreement.

A member of the public mentioned the recent tragic car accident on the A228 and questioned whether the potential draft changes to the infrastructure in the Local Plan would alleviate the issues on the A228.

Steve Baughen and Danielle Drake from Fernham Homes and 3 members of the public left the meeting.

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9. EXTERNAL REPORT

- a) Borough Councillors Report: The Consultation on the revised Tunbridge Wells Local Plan (specifically the deletion of Tudeley 'Garden Village' and reduced housing allocation in East Capel) began on the 15 January 2024 and will run for six weeks until the 26 February 2024 at midnight. This should allow us to put in our final response just after next month's meeting. There is a hard copy of the revised proposals available in the parish office. Although TWBC would prefer comments online (via a link to their website), paper copies will be acceptable. The parliamentary orders providing for new Borough Council ward boundaries have now come into force. So, we are now officially part of Pembury and Capel Ward as of the 2 May 2024. The next Borough Council meeting will be on Wednesday 28 February 2024 at 6:30pm. All members of the public welcome in person or online.
- b) County Councillor: There was no report.

1155

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Finance & Resources Committee

- i) A report on the accounts as at the 31 December 2023 was noted.
- ii) A bank reconciliation as at the 31 December 2023 was noted.
- iii) Capel Village Hall new lease: The Parish Council has arranged to meet with the Trustees of the Capel Community Association on the 15 February 2024 to discuss the new lease.

County Councillor Sarah Hamilton joined the meeting.

- iv) Public toilets: Members considered the quotes for the replacement of the external public toilets and refurbishment of the internal doors and addition of privacy locks. Concern was expressed about the total cost of the project and a discussion was held about seeking some financial support. County Councillor Sarah Hamilton suggested that some funding may be available in the Member Grant and that the Clerk should contact KCC for an application form.

Resolved: To accept a quote of £7,250 from Ability Ltd for the replacement of the external public doors and new electric locks and for the refurbishment of the internal doors and privacy locks. The Clerk to try and obtain funding of up to £2,000, subject to qualification, from the KCC Member Grant Scheme.

Cllr. Patterson declared an interest and Cllr. Fenton took over as Chairman.

- v) Members considered a request for funding for urgent remedial works to the porch of All Saints Church. It was agreed that the Clerk should check that S137 can be used as a power to fund this project and then request that a grant application form is completed.

Cllr. Patterson returned to the meeting as Chairman.

- vi) Payments:

Resolved: To adopt the list of payments overleaf and for Cllrs. Patterson and Cllr. 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:

Cllr. Rich advised that the First Aid Certificate for the Clerk expires at the end of March 2024. It was suggested and agreed that the Clerk attends a British Red Cross First Aid at Work course at a cost of £165.00 (excluding VAT).

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- c) **Planning Committee:**
The minutes of the meeting held on the 18 December 2023 were received and noted.
- d) **Flooding Panel:**
Cllr. Mackonochie advised that the culvert had to be cleared on the 2 January 2024 following the storm. The culvert was cleared by the flood wardens but the Environment Agency also attended. Cllr. Mackonochie reported that worryingly there has been 10 storms in the last 6 months which is the most there has been for the same time period in the last 7 years. Cllr. Saunders reported that on the 4 January 2024 he and another flood warden uncovered 3 drains that had completely disappeared under the verge on Five Oak Green Road near to the Tumeric Gold restaurant. Cllr. Rich reported that the drainage works undertaken in the fields behind Alders Road seem to have helped prevent any further flooding issues in the area.
Cllr. Patterson reported that TWBC have responded to the KCC Consultation on their Local Flood Risk Strategy. TWBC have disagreed with the concept of standalone community flood plans. Cllr. Patterson had asked TWBC to ask KCC to take note of Neighbourhood Plans when they consider Objective 4 which is on on Resilient Communities. However, TWBC have advised that the Parish Council should send in a response to this effect. It was agreed that the Clerk should respond to the consultation stating that the Parish Council also disagrees with standalone community flood plans for the same reasons given by TWBC but also suggest that it would be valuable if they were linked to Neighbourhood Plans which would allow them to reflect local needs and expertise. The Clerk was asked to forward details about the consultation to Cllr. Mackonochie to consider and suggest any further comments.
- e) **Memorial Cottages & Housing Working Group:**
The Clerk reported that the replacement front doors for the memorial cottages will be installed on the 6 February 2024.
- f) **Recreation Ground and Allotments Working Group:**
Cllr. Saunders explained that site meetings have been held with five contractors who will hopefully provide some alternative designs and quotes to be considered as part of a proposal to install an outdoor gym in the old under 5's play area. The Clerk had circulated a link to an online survey to consult residents about the proposal. It was noted that the Clerk will collate the results of the survey and the quotes and that both these will be reviewed and discussed at the next Recreation Ground and Allotments Working Group meeting due to be held on the 21 February 2024. It was noted that Cllr. Saunders and the Clerk have assessed possible storm damage to the trees on the recreation ground and the Grounds Maintenance company have carried out some remedial works.
- g) **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party:**
It was noted that the external examiner has issued the expected Clarification Note and a response is required by midnight on the 26 February 2024. Cllr. Patterson had prepared a draft response which was discussed at a virtual meeting held on the 26 January 2024 which was attended by Cllr. Fenton the Clerk and the Planning Consultant Alison Eardley. Alison Eardley has agreed to make some changes to the draft response and this will then be reviewed and hopefully approved by the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party at a meeting due to be held in February. Cllr. Patterson advised that a referendum is expected to take place in late Spring.

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11. PARISH MATTERS

- a) **Local Plan Examination Update:**
i) Public Consultation on TWBC response to the Inspector's Initial Findings Letter on the Examination of the New Local Plan:
See agenda item 9 (a). Cllr. Patterson had prepared a draft response to the consultation which had been circulated. Members agreed that the revised proposals for East Capel remain unsound and expressed concern about the fact that the number of proposed dwellings will more than double the size of the parish. It was also agreed that Five Oak Green will be more affected than Paddock Wood.

8.52pm *Standing orders were lowered to allow a member of the public to speak.*

Stewart Gledhill from Save Capel advised Members that Motion Consultants will provide a technical note to assist with both the representations of the Parish Council and Save

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Capel on the Transport and Infrastructure and on the risk of flooding as well as attend the next examination hearings. Motion Consultants have quoted £6,000 for the Transport and Infrastructure work and £2,250 for the work on flood risk.

The meeting resumed.

Resolved: The Clerk to arrange an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council to consider and approve a response to the public consultation on TWBC response to the Inspector's Initial Findings Letter on the Examination of the New Local Plan

- ii) Proposal to pay Motion Consultants a fee up to £6,000.00 for the Transportation and Infrastructure work.

Resolved: To pay up to £6,000 to Motion Consultants for the Transportation and Infrastructure work.

- b) **Climate Change Initiatives:** Connected Kerb, the contractor working for KCC to install the EVCP points in the village hall car park has advised that a connection date has been booked for the 15 February. A meter will then be installed and the site should be operational by the first week of March 2024.
- c) **Mobile Coverage:** There was no update.
- d) **Emergency Plan:** It was noted that the Clerk has recently attended a forum on emergency planning organised by Communities Prepared. The Clerk reported that the current Emergency Plan needs to be updated. It was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr. Mackonochie would work together to update the Emergency Plan.
- e) **Local Elections 2024.** It was noted that both Borough and Parish Council elections for Capel will be taking place on Thursday 2 May 2024. The Notice of Election will be published on Monday 11 March 2024 and nominations will open at midday on Monday 11 March 2024 and close at 4pm on Friday 5 April 2024. It was noted that the Clerk is due to attend a briefing session on the 27 February 2024.
- f) **Kent Police:** There was no update.

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12. HIGHWAYS

- a) **Highways Improvement Plan**

Proposal to fund the installation of the SID Scheme on Five Oak Green Road

It was noted that works to install the poles for the SID scheme will commence this week.

- b) **Hedgehogs:** Cllr. Patterson reported that a number of residents have been concerned about the number of hedgehogs that have been killed on roads throughout the parish. The Clerk advised that warning signs of a certain size can be placed, without the need for planning permission, on fences or planters belonging to the Parish Council or on a privately owned structures with the owner's permission. It was agreed that the Clerk should advertise this information on social media and suggest that anyone interested in installing a warning sign makes contact.

1158

13. REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS

- a) **KALC Meeting:** There has been no meeting.
- b) **Parish Chairmen's Group Meeting:** There has been no meeting.
- c) **Joint Transportation Board:** Cllr, Mackonochie reported that a meeting was held on the 15 January 2024 but that there was nothing specific to report back on for the parish. County Councillor Sarah Hamilton advised that the Highways Improvement Plan process is due to be discussed at the next meeting.
- d) **Other external meetings:**
Cllr. Patterson advised that he is unable to make the next meeting for the Parish Magazine due to be held on the 9 February 2024. Cllrs. Fenton or Rich may attend.
CCA Trustees: Cllr. Patterson attended the meeting held on the 8 January 2024. The architect appointed by the Trustees is developing four proposals for the future of the village hall which will be discussed with the Parish Council at the meeting due to held on the 15 February and will also be shared with residents at the AGM.

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14. CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS:

Pre-submission draft of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2024-2039, Regulation 19 Public Consultation. Noted.

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15. ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS: None.

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16. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

Full Council Meeting: Monday 26 February 2024 at 7.30pm.

With no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 9.18pm

Signed:

Dated:

Initialled:

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Payments: January 2024

Ref:	Payee	Description	Gross
BACS Payments for approval on 29 January 2024			
BACS 01-01	Louise Goldsmith	Expenses	204.20
BACS 01-02	HMRC	PAYE & NIC	507.76
BACS 01-03	F&C Cleaning	Cleaning public toilets	382.80
BACS 01-04	Heliocentrix Ltd	Monthly Microsoft 365 subscription	78.34
BACS 01-05	Surrey Hills Solicitors	Perusal of documents and drafting of lease	1,584.00
BACS 01-06	CCA	Meeting room hire	32.00
BACS 01-07	Heliocentrix Ltd	Techician Support	25.50
BACS 01-08	Castle Water	Water public toilets	15.11
		TOTAL	2,829.71

Date	Payee	Description	Gross
Direct Debits and Standing Orders			
02/01/2024	EDF	Electricity - cricket pavilion	74.00
02/01/2024	EDF	Electricity - public toilets	78.00
03/01/2024	TalkTalk	Telephone & Broadband	46.28
02/01/2024	EE	Mobile Phone	18.00
17/01/2024	Sage	Payroll software	9.60
26/01/2024	B&CE Holdings	Pension - Clerk	188.29
25/01/2024	Louise Goldsmith	Payroll and backdated pay	1,922.29
25/01/2024	Capel Groundcare	Grounds maintenance contract	2,216.09
		TOTAL	4,552.55

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