

**MINUTES of the CHART SUTTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at Chart Sutton Village Hall.**

**PRESENT:** Cllr P Forknall as Chairman and Parish Councillors S Waring, V Underdown, M FitzGerald MBE, C Webb, R Sagrott, P Ward and Miss T Jenkins, Clerk to the Parish Council. They were joined by County Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid, Borough Councillor Steve Munford, two additional speakers and three parishioners.

**1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed all those present.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from PCSO Pete Gardner, Peter Underdown and Sutton Scouts.

**3. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR – STEVE MUNFORD**

Cllr Munford reported on Full Council elections (single member wards), reduction in ward members from 55 to 48, the review of ward boundaries by the Boundary Commission and review of Parish boundaries by MBC, all to be adopted by MBC in May 2024. Cllr Munford gave an overview of the recommendation by MBC for Chart Sutton to form a single member ward with East Sutton, Sutton Valence and Hawkenbury. Both Chart Sutton and Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council had responded to the public consultation for the ward to remain as Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton. Cllr Munford also gave an overview of the Local Plan Review (LPR), which is seeking (amongst other things) to increase the housing allocation by 5,800 homes. The Leeds/Langley corridor has been safeguarded for the future, Chart Sutton is now classed as a smaller village, which could have an extra 25 houses (as long as it has community agreement) up to 2037. Regulation 19 has been completed and the LPR was submitted for inspection at the end of March. Public examination will begin during the summer, and, if found to be sound then it will be adopted in 2023. From May 2022, Maidstone Borough Council will be run under a cabinet system of governance and will no longer be under a committee system. Cllr Munford invited questions from the floor.

**4. COUNTY COUNCILLOR – LOTTIE PARFITT-REID**

Cllr Parfitt-Reid gave an overview of the situation in Ukraine. KCC are undertaking DBS and other checks to ensure those who have been matched as sponsors, are able to offer a place in their home to Ukrainians who will be joining them. Early days welfare checks will be carried out and KCC will be helping families with school aged children to find school places. Cllr Parfitt-Reid gave an overview of Highways issues/budgets and gave a specific update on the flooding issues west of Pleasant View on the B2163. The final works are due to be undertaken on 23<sup>rd</sup> May. Cllr Parfitt Reid gave a report on Public Transport, including the recent KCC Bus Funding Reduction consultation and the government backed Bus Service Improvement Plan. Cllr Parfitt-Reid gave brief highlights of the delivery of Public Rights of Way programmes county wide. There is a programme of £600k of repairs to the network following the extremely high levels of use of the PRoW's during the Covid lockdowns. Cllr Parfitt-Reid gave a brief overview of spending from her Covid Local Recovery Fund and Member Grant, of which Chart Sutton Parish Council received a grant of £1,430 towards the Queen's Jubilee Big Lunch in June. Cllr Parfitt-Reid then took questions from the floor regarding the PRoW and bus service cuts.

**5. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2021**

It was discussed and resolved “**that the Minutes be agreed as an accurate record**”. This was **Agreed** and the Chairman was authorised to sign off the official copy.

**6. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

The Parish Council Report was read out by the Chairman. Copies of the Report including draft receipts and payments figures for 2021/22 will be produced with the June edition of the Village News.

**7. REPORTS OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS**

- (a) **Mr Mike FitzGerald, MBE for The Royal British Legion Sutton Valence and District**  
First and foremost, our prayers and thoughts are with the people of Ukraine. It has been a challenging two years for the Branch whilst in & out of lockdown, however, there have been some activities/fundraising/forthcoming events such as a coffee morning, a springtime quiz, the annual RBL dinner and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Next year is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sutton Valence and District Branch and it is hoped that 100 people will be at the annual dinner. The annual flypast service for the unknown airman (now known) will be on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September at 1.30pm (subject to change).
- (b) **Miss Heather Knowler for St. Michael's Church**  
Like many organisations, 2021 saw a partial return to normality for the church following the Covid restrictions of 2020 – with services, bell ringing, churchyard maintenance and some fundraising activities going ahead. Our fundraising efforts were focused on outdoor events, including a new and well attended “Tea on the Lawn” and a “Sale on the Green” – another sale is planned for Sat 30th April. Unfortunately, the heating broke down just before Christmas 2021 and is beyond repair, so we will, no doubt, need to do some further serious fund raising in due course. Thank you to everyone who contributes to the life of the church, although we are a small congregation, there are supporters to help keep the churchyard looking good, help with the cleaning, provide and arrange flowers and support fund raising events, amongst other things
- (c) **Mr Peter Forknall for Mrs Joan Johnson Trust**  
Last year there was no face to face meeting of the trustees due to Covid, however, the Trust Fund had an income of £503 with £400 distributed to 5 people in the village at Christmas. Applications to the Trust are always welcomed.
- (d) **Mr Steven Waring for the Chart Sutton Community Shop (Shop on the Green)**  
Having been open for half days during the pandemic, we have carried on with this and are open until lunchtime every day except Wednesdays when the Post Office attends and the shop remains open until 4pm. The wooden ramp into the shop has been replaced with a metal one. A portaloo has been placed on the village green for use by the staff and Post Office workers, but is available for use at any events held on the green. One of the freezers failed recently and it was replaced with a small freezer and a small chiller to enable us to extend our popular range of chilled products. We continue to look for new volunteers to do a shift – especially to stand in for when people are ill or on holiday as these occurrences can be difficult to cover.
- (e) **Mrs Valerie Underdown for Speedwatch**  
There has been very little on Speedwatch for the last two years as it was suspended during Covid. Even when things were starting to improve, the vulnerable age groups were not allowed to go out. We managed a few sessions last Autumn but none since then, mainly due to the weather (we are not allowed to go out in the wet) but also to ill health of one of the volunteers. Warmlake Road is in the top two for the worst roads in Kent for speeding, according to the KM. The police speed van makes frequent visits and is very successful in catching people.
- (f) **Mrs Valerie Underdown as Kent Messenger Village Correspondent**  
The village section in the KM closed down due to Covid and has not resumed.
- (g) **Mrs Valerie Underdown for Neighbourhood Watch**  
I have not heard anything from Neighbourhood Watch for at least two years, though I do get reports from the PCSO.
- (h) **Mrs Valerie Underdown for the Chart Sutton Book Club**  
The book club is still going strong though there are only 5 of us now. When the libraries reopened and I was able to get books, we continued to read and shared our thoughts via email. We are now back to meeting on the third Wednesday of the month, 2.30pm in the café at Millbrook Garden Centre.
- (i) **Chart Sutton Village Hall (report read by Valerie Underdown on behalf of Peter Underdown)**  
The hall is a very popular venue and we have a varied amount of lettings from yoga, dog training, flower arranging, art classes, short mat bowls and children's dance classes. There is also a tea dance on Tuesday afternoons and parties at weekends. To maintain the hall to its high standard, on 1<sup>st</sup> June the floor is to be sanded back to the wood and re-varnished with four layers of varnish.

- (j) **Chart Sutton Short Mat Bowls (report read by Valerie Underdown on behalf of Peter Underdown)**  
We have 12 members and it has been running since 2000. Valerie, myself and Mary Underdown are the only founder members left. It is a bowls and social club so there is quite a bit of banter. So, if you would like to come along and have some fun on a Friday night, you are more than welcome.
- (k) **Mrs Christine Parkes for the Three Suttons Helpline**  
Although far from being as active as it used to be pre-pandemic, the Helpline is now up and running again, mainly taking people to hospital and other medical appointments and doing essential shopping. As hospitals and surgeries seem to be opening up more, of course there are more requests for lifts. It is good to hear though, that during the pandemic, communities do seem to have grown closer in some ways and some people do seem to know their neighbours better and help each other more. A few of our drivers have had to retire, sadly because of their own or family health concerns, so we would very much welcome new volunteers. We should also be very grateful if someone could take over one of the answering the telephone and co-ordinating jobs. We are extremely grateful to Chart Sutton Parish Council for their continuing support over many years, both in inviting us to speak at the Annual Meetings and in giving generous donations to help with our work.
- (l) **Mr C Webb for the Sutton Strollers**  
We resumed Spring 2021 our monthly 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday walks which were lead mainly by Graham Huckstepp or myself. Occasionally we go out of the immediate area to places such as Thurnham, but most walks are local footpaths to the Three Suttons. Our members vary from 5 or 6 to 12, but the email circulation remains at around 43 addresses. Our next walk will be on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May. Anyone interested in joining Strollers should let me have their email address. No subscription is required.
- (m) **Sutton Scouts (report read by Peter Forknall on behalf of Linda Waring)**  
We currently have 50 young people in the group with ages ranging from 6-14 years. The current leadership team continues to provide a varied, interesting and challenging programme which is greatly enjoyed by the participants. The Beavers will soon be doing their first camp under canvas at Hamlet Wood, Coxheath and they recently went on a visit to Wildwood. The Cubs also have a camp in the near future and they will be attending the Adventure Day at Lower Grange Farm, the Kent Scouts HQ at Sandling. The Scouts are catching up with basic scouting skills that were forgotten during the pandemic and they have already held a hike and sleepover event. We are constantly looking for more leaders in all sections and also executive members at both group and district level. If anyone is interested in joining us, please contact Linda Waring for more details.

The Clerk to the Parish Council holds copies of the full reports made to the meeting by some of the Local Organisations.

## 8. OTHER BUSINESS

**There being no other business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.41pm.**