

CHART SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2022
AT CHART SUTTON VILLAGE HALL

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chairman, Cllr Forknall asked all those present to stand and a one-minute silence was observed in memory of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

PRESENT: - Cllr Forknall in the Chair, together with Cllrs S Waring, V Underdown, M FitzGerald MBE, C Webb, R Sagrott and Miss T Jenkins, Clerk.

IN ATTENDANCE: - Mark Scholey, Head of Sutton Valence Preparatory School was present throughout. One parishioner was present until item 12.

PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A parishioner requested signs in the village to deter vehicles travelling in excess of the speed limit. Members felt that there were already too many signs cluttering rural villages and didn't think more signs would make a difference. The village currently benefits from the mobile speed camera being deployed by the police, Speedwatch is carried out regularly and parked cars help to slow vehicles. The parishioner was advised that the Parish Council had previously looked at traffic calming measures such as speed humps/Speed Indicator Devices, but these had not been deemed suitable by Highways. Members agreed to monitor the situation.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Ward and Borough Cllr Munford.

2. FILMING OF MEETINGS

There were no requests for notification of whether anyone intends to film, photograph or record any items.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs FitzGerald, Waring & Underdown declared an interest for item 18.4 (being recipients of cheques).

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensation.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11TH JULY 2022

Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved "**that the draft Minutes be approved as a correct record**". This was **Agreed** and the Chairman was authorised to sign off the official copy.

6. POLICE MATTERS

PCSO Gardner was unable to be present, but provided the following reports:-

July – 1 crime – attempted criminal damage – Chart Hill Road (substance thrown over vehicle)

August – 1 crime – burglary – Chart Hill Road (farm equipment)

September – 1 crime – criminal damage – Church Road (plants)

7. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members considered the Terms of Reference presented by the Clerk for the Planning and the Resources and Environment Committees and it was proposed, seconded and resolved "**that the Terms of Reference are adopted by the Council**". This was **Agreed**.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE & BIODIVERSITY

Cllr Sagrott provided an update on the “Parish Council Environment Network” which is a group set up with 10 member councils including Chart Sutton. Boughton Monchelsea PC have drawn up a paragraph to be included in planning application responses for all new build properties/developments and all major extension that addresses green issues and Members were asked to consider adopting this:

‘If MBC are minded to approve the application, the Parish Council would ask that conditions are included to cover:

- o Provision of renewable energy sources such as air / ground source heat pumps or photo voltaics
- o Provision of EV charging points
- o Exclusively native planting within any landscape plan
- o Provision of swift and bee bricks, bat and bird boxes
- o Wildlife friendly boundaries
- o Encourage high levels of thermal insulation and airtightness
- o Permeable parking and footway surfaces
- o Avoidance of light pollution as much as possible in external lighting design’

It was proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the climate change and biodiversity conditions are included in future relevant planning application responses**”. This was **Agreed**.

9. THREE YEAR STRATEGY

Cllr FitzGerald spoke regarding the Rural England Prosperity Fund, under which Maidstone Borough Council have been allocated funds to spend in 2023/4 & 2024/5. They are considering providing a grant scheme for Parishes and Community Organisations to apply for grants for their village halls and community assets to improve facilities with a view to creating a greener and more sustainable community infrastructure, for example introducing solar panels to reduce electricity bills. The Clerk was asked to write to both MBC & Maidstone KALC to say that the Parish Council would support funding for Electric Vehicle charging points in Chart Sutton as part of this plan, and that the PC would also like to see it go ahead for the whole of Maidstone.

Cllr Webb has approached Helen Whately MP regarding the issue of permitting double glazing in listed properties, as it is very efficient and has little difference in appearance. This will be considered later in the Autumn as part of the new planning policies.

10. GOLDING HOMES

Members **Noted** that the Clerk and Cllr FitzGerald are due to meet with Golding Homes on 12th October.

11. HIGHWAYS

Members **Noted** that the Clerk and Cllr Forknall met with County Cllr Lottie Parfitt-Reid on 4th August. The following items were discussed:-

- Possible speed reduction on the B2163. LPR advised that a speed survey would cost around £300. The Police must support the speed reduction. Reducing the speed limit to 30mph would mean land within the 30 mph speed limit could be put forward for development. LPR suggested that SatNav data be requested in the first instance, and for it to be put on the Highways Improvement Plan. LPR advised that the Police/MBC Task Force may be able to arrange for the speed gun to be used for a day on the B2163. *The Clerk has requested the SatNav data from the Highways Community and Engagement Team and it is now on the HIP. However, they are short staffed & in the process of recruiting, so a response may take some time.*
- A complaint re the suitability for HGV’s on the B2163. It was felt that the B2163 was suitable for HGV’s.
- Roadworks/Road Closures - problems encountered during the A274 closure (gas main explosion). Suggested contractors to work 24 hours/longer hours on main roads to reduce disruption/emissions etc. LPR to raise this with Highways.
- Chart Hill Road – previous request to Highways to move kerbs in order to widen the road was not viable. LPR to enquire as to whether the kerbs can be removed, or sloping kerbs put in at each end.
- Update on flooding issues (west of pleasant View Garden Centre). All works are now complete.

Cllr Webb advised that Maidstone KALC had discussed the issues surrounding the A274 closure/diversions and that they have written to the leader of Maidstone Borough Council in this regard.

12. EXTERNAL AUDITOR

Members considered whether to remain part of the central scheme or to opt-out of the central procurement regime managed by SAAA and appoint their own external auditor for the next 5-year period. All Members **Agreed** to remain part of the central scheme.

- 13. SCARECROW FESTIVAL**
Due to the cancellation of the September meeting, it was now too late to properly advertise/organise this event.
- 14. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**
Members considered the review of the parish boundary & **Noted** that that boundary does not follow the road along Chart Hill Road after the Lord Raglan Public House. If the boundary was moved to follow the road, it would take in 3 or 4 houses into the parish of Chart Sutton. Cllr Sagrott agreed to obtain the views of the residents who would be affected with regard to moving the boundary.
- 15. AUTHORITY OWNED GENERIC EMAIL ADDRESS**
Members **Noted** that the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments (SAAA) has requested that "all authorities with properly owned domains (usually owned for their website and ending in.org.uk etc.) to create relevant email addresses for their clerk and not to just point them to a personal Gmail (or other) email address. Members further **Noted** that this could be provided with no extra charge by NetWise (the website provider). It was proposed, seconded and resolved "**that a new 'org' domain email address be created for the clerk**". This was **Agreed**.
- 16. MBC PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS**
This item was deferred to the next meeting, pending further information.
- 17. MATTERS OF REPORT**
- 17.1 County and Borough Councillors Report**
Borough Cllr Munford and County Cllr Parfitt-Reid were unable to be present.
- 17.2 Chairman's Report**
Cllr Forknall asked the clerk to report Luck's Lane to Highways, as the road is breaking up. It was also **Noted** that there are several potholes on Chart Hill Road that need repairing. Cllr Forknall also reported that he had been asked to prove due diligence with regard to the Joan Johnson Trust. However, Cllr Forknall wrote back explaining the nature and how the charity is run, and he received a response confirming that no further action is required.
- 17.3 Individual Councillors Reports**
RS showed the meeting a guide to password security & how long it takes a hacker to 'Brute Force' passwords. SW advised that the village hall now has an outdoor sensor light. SW advised that the Clerk had reported the installation of a mobile home on Chart Hill Road, and whilst the clerk was on annual leave had provided the enforcement team with an exact location using what3words. It was felt that what3words would be a useful addition on the sign at the Memorial Playing field. VU reported that the village litterpick was carried out on 8th October, and although there were fewer volunteers, they still managed to collect around 15 sacks of rubbish. Mark Scholey said the Prep School would be happy to advertise future litterpicks. VU reported two lots of flytipping on Church Road, which were quickly cleared. CW reported on various points from the last two Maidstone KALC minutes and that the Church should have a new heating system in by October 2023, which will include under pew heating. MF advised that he had attended the Battle of Britain memorial service; the Mayor's garden party; the Proclamation of King Charles III delivered by the High Sheriff of Maidstone and the Maidstone Mela. The CAB meeting has been postponed until November. MF has written to the Boundaries Commission regarding the adoption of the Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton Ward, which was put forward by the two parishes.
- 17.4 Clerk's Report**
- 17.4.1 Clerk's Annual Leave**
Members **Noted** the Clerk's annual leave dates.
- 18. FINANCE**
- 18.1 Budget Monitoring**
The Budget Monitoring Report to 30th September 2022 was **Noted**.

18.2 To note Income received since last meeting

Members **Noted** payments received during the period as follows:

HSBC Interest July 22	£3.99
HSBC Interest August 22	£7.70
Tfr fm BMM to C/A 05/07/22	£3000.00
Golding Homes – reimbursement for planters (re Jubilee)	£190.00
VN Ad – MWF Electrical Services	£50.00
VN Ad – PlayEd	£15.00
VN Ad – Staplehurst Community Chiropractic	£120.00
E-on Refund	£5.89
Staplehurst Monarchs Youth Pitch Hire 20/08/22	£47.50
Maidstone Inter – 1 st half pitch hire fees	£275.00

18.3 To approve payments already made

Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the following payments should be ratified**”. This was **Agreed**.

D/D – NEST – employer/employee pension payment for July	£177.31
D/D – NEST – employer/employee pension payment for August	£177.31
D/D – NEST – employer/employee pension payment for September	£177.31
SO – T Jenkins – Net Salary & Office Allowance – July	£743.76
SO – T Jenkins – Net Salary & Office Allowance – August	£743.76
SO – T Jenkins – Net Salary & Office Allowance – September	£743.76
Bank Charges to 29/06/22	£14.60
Bank Charges to 30/07/22	£9.40
Bank Charges to 30/08/22	£5.00
Tfr fm BMM to C/A 220822	£5000.00

Following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II on 8th September and the cancellation of the September Full Council Meeting, Members further proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the following payments should be ratified**”. This was **Agreed**.

101828 – Miss T Jenkins – expenses July/August	£34.40
101829 – HMRC (National Insurance – period ending 05/10/22)	£16.48
101830 – S Whitehead - litterpick July	£48.00
101831 – Mr M FitzGerald – August Village News production	£450.00
101832 – PKF Littlejohn – external audit fee	£240.00
101833 – Commercial Services Trading – grounds maintenance April, May, June	£2337.86
101834 – Npower – streetlighting	£31.63
101835 – EDF	£44.57
101836 – Kent County Council - KCS (stationery)	£108.24
101837 – S Whitehead - litterpick August	£48.00
101838 – Maidstone Borough Council – street sweeping	£168.04

18.4 To resolve to make payments as presented for signature

Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the Council approve the following payments**”. This was **Agreed**.

101839 – Miss T Jenkins – expenses Sept	£11.63
101840 – HMRC (National Insurance – period ending 05/11/22)	£16.48
101841 – Samuel Whitehead – Litterpick Sept	£24.00
101842 – Mrs V Underdown – purchase of plants for village planters	£35.00
101843 – CPRE – annual membership renewal	£36.00
101844 – Brook Security – Annual CCTV System Maintenance	£204.00
101845 – Mr M FitzGerald – Oct Village News Production	£375.00
101846 – Maidstone Borough Council – street sweep/litterpick	£84.02
101847 – KCPFA – annual membership renewal	£20.00
101848 – Npower – streetlight electricity	£29.48
101849 – Castle Water	£39.36
101850 – P Waring – shot blasting goal posts, new net hooks & crown lift on oak tree on village green	£529.80

18.5 Consideration of Donations to be made

After careful consideration, it was proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the Council make the voluntary donations set out below in 2022/23 from the S137 budget**”. This was **Agreed**.

Citizens Advice Bureau	£100.00
Kenward Trust	£100.00
Breast Cancer Kent	£100.00
Royal British Legion (Poppy Appeal) (to include cost of wreath)	£150.00
Age UK Maidstone	£100.00
Three Suttons Help Line	£100.00
The Heart of Kent Hospice	£100.00
Demelza	£100.00

18.6 Annual Governance & Accountability Return – Year Ended 31 March 2022

Members **Noted** that following their perusal of our Return, the external auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP, have given us a “clean” certificate. The statutory notice saying that the Audit has been completed is currently displayed on the noticeboards around the Parish.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members **Noted** the next Meeting will be held on Monday 14th November 2022 at Chart Sutton Village Hall.

There being no further matters to be discussed, the meeting closed at 9.18pm.