

CHART SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13TH NOVEMBER 2023 AT CHART SUTTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: - Cllr P Forknall (Chair), Cllrs S Waring, V Underdown, R Sagrott,
M FitzGerald MBE, P. Ward, C. Webb, Mrs Lesley Windless (Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: - Borough Councillor, Steve Munford
2 members of the public

PUBLIC OPEN SESSION – nothing was discussed

1. APOLOGIES

None

2. FILMING OF MEETINGS

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

3. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9TH OCTOBER 2023

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 / KCC WARDEN MATTERS

There were no reported crimes for October on the e-watch.co website. A report had been received from Police beat officer, Becca Burns which is summarised below :

- Multiple reports of poachers. Vehicle stopped and poaching equipment seized. Investigations are ongoing with a view to prosecuting the offenders
- Work done in the Maidstone area regarding the use of e-scooters which are not allowed on roads and footpaths. 3 weeks of education has taken place whereby riders have been stopped and given leaflets with advice not to ride scooters in public. Enforcement will now follow and riders stopped will have their scooters immediately seized if being ridden illegally

It was noted that the recent attempted burglary in the village was not yet showing on the e-watch.co website.

Cllr Webb queried why fly tipping was not shown on the crime report. The clerk advised that MBC deal with fly tipping, including enforcement; not the Police.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE & BIODIVERSITY

Cllr Sagrott stated that the next Parish Council Environment Network meeting would be taking place on 22nd November.

8. THREE YEAR STRATEGY

The clerk advised that an initial response had been received from the Salmon Trust regarding the Parish Council's enquiry about acquiring a piece of land to provide a car park for the recreation ground. The land is owned by several family members so each are being consulted before responding in full. The clerk stated that she would chase this up, if required, highlighting residents' desire for a car park and recognising the past kindness of the Trust in donating land for the recreation ground and for the village hall car park. **CLERK**

9. HIGHWAYS

Cllr Forknall advised of recent flooding on Plough Wents Road.

Cllr Waring asked the clerk to report overgrown hedging on Norton Road, between Norton Lea Farm and the cattery. **CLERK**

The clerk advised that KCC had rejected a recent online fault report from the Parish Council due to various fault locations being noted on the same report. One of the residents at the meeting had also reported these faults and kindly agreed to log each one separately, for KCC action.

10. **EV CHARGING POINTS**

Cllr Ward had obtained a quote for EV charger point installation which had been forwarded to members in advance of the meeting. He added that he was waiting for two further quotes. Lengthy discussion followed, with the following points discussed and noted :

- Concerns regarding loss of parking spaces for general use. Only two parking spaces would be taken
- Broadband not be a necessity but ideally required
- No ongoing maintenance costs
- Users would pay for charging via an app. Generated income would be paid to the village hall committee
- Unknown what the likely income would be but Cllr Waring to speak to the clerk at Sutton Valence about their experience
- Charging points intended for residents with no off street parking
- KCC funding may be available but unlikely we will fit the criteria. Awaiting confirmation once officer has visited site

Cllrs proposed, seconded and **Agreed** that, in principle, the Parish Council should fund the installation of 2 no. EV charging points in the village hall car park. It was noted that the village hall committee would be responsible for making the final decision on whether they should be installed at this location, to be discussed at their next meeting.

11. **BUS SERVICES PROVISION**

Cllr Fitzgerald noted that the new number 14 bus service was now running, with one, Monday to Friday bus per day into Maidstone town centre. It was agreed that this new service should be advertised in the next edition of the Village News, with a request to 'use it or lose it'. It was noted that the current once a week 59 bus would be funded until April 2024, with the possibility of further funding beyond this date. **CLLR UNDERDOWN**

Cllr Fitzgerald suggested that the Parish Council consider maintenance of the village bus shelters. Cllr Waring kindly offered to clean them. **CLLR WARING**

12. **KENT CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE CONSULTATION**

Following discussion, Cllr Ward agreed to review the consultation documents and produce a draft response, for consideration at the next Parish Council meeting. It was noted that the consultation deadline was 10th January 2024. **CLLR WARD**

13. **MATTERS OF REPORT**

13.1 **County and Borough Councillors Reports**

Cllr Munford advised that he had taken some time out recently for medical reasons and had now resigned as leader of the independent group as well as leaving the planning and advisory committees. He stated that he would not be standing for election in 2024.

Cllr Munford noted that ward boundaries would be changing in May 2024 with the number of members reducing from 55 to 48. He added that parish boundary changes would also come into effect next year.

Cllr Munford stated that Parish Council election cycles would be falling in line with MBC, with elections for all in 2024 and a 4 yearly cycle thereafter.

Cllr Munford spoke in detail about the MBC Local Plan review.

13.2 **Chairman's Report**

Cllr Forknall advised of recent fly tipping in Boughton Monchelsea, on Lower Farm Road and Long Lane.

13.3 **Individual Councillors Reports**

It was noted that the October litter pick had been postponed due to bad weather but another date would be arranged in the Spring.

Cllr Underdown reported as follows :

- One of the CCTV cameras at the shop is misting up. Clerk to arrange call out with Brook Security **CLERK**

- Police have now resumed speed checks in the village
- Recent fly tipping in Church Road - reported to KCC

Cllr Waring reported as follows :

- Salt bin in the village centre has been moved, as requested by Cllr Fitzgerald
- A number of football matches have been cancelled over the last few weeks, due to the rain. This had been done to protect the ground from damage

Cllr Fitzgerald reported as follows :

- Homelessness in rural communities is increasing
- Chart Sutton appears to have a high proportion of single person households, with loneliness a concern, especially for elderly people living on their own
- Nu-Venture are now running a once a day, Monday to Friday number 14 bus service between Chart Sutton, Boughton Monchelsea and Maidstone town centre
- Sutton Valence Parish Council have agreed to a joint 80th D-Day anniversary event. It was agreed that Cllrs Fitzgerald and Sagrott would take this forward, in conjunction with Sutton Valence

CLLR FITZGERALD / CLLR SAGROTT

Cllr Webb reported as follows :

- Recent fly tipping in Green Lane, with 2 fridges still on the side of the road
- Village carol singing will be raising funds for Demelza

Cllrs Sagrott and Ward had nothing further to report.

Cllr Munford expressed concern at the number of recent fly tipping incidents and stated that he would try to arrange deployment of MBC's mobile CCTV. It was agreed that the current worst hotspot was Forge Lane. Cllr Munford added that if fly tipping was completely blocking a road it should be reported to KCC, as well as MBC. The clerk stated that she would forward the emergency KCC Highways contact number to members.

CLERK

Cllr Munford and 1 of the residents in attendance left the meeting at this point.

13.4

Clerk's Report

The clerk had provided a written report which was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. She expanded on this as follows :

- Location of new village gateway will be next to the orchard entrance on Warmlake Road
- Meeting with Helen Whately will be taking place on 8th December. Cllrs Forknall and Fitzgerald will be attending, together with representatives from other Parish Councils
- Residents only parking sign now removed from layby in Amber Lane
- Following issue of donations to local organisations, thank you notes received from Citizens Advice Maidstone, Poppy Appeal and Heart of Kent Hospice

14. FINANCE

14.1 **Budget Monitoring to 31st October 2023**

The Budget Monitoring Report to 31st October 2023 was **Noted**

14.2 **To note Income received since last meeting**

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

HSBC Interest October 23	£0.04
Kingswood Christmas trees – Village News advert	£50.00

14.3 **To approve payments already made**

Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved **“that the following payments should be ratified”**. This was **Agreed**.
 Clerk's salary and office allowance – October £805.45

14.4 **To resolve to make payments as presented for authorisation**

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

Online payments :

017 – HMRC – PAYE and Employer’s NI Oct 23	£216.78
018 – L. Windless – Oct expenses	£6.00
019 - S. Whitehead – litter picking Oct 23	£60.00
020 – MBC – sweep / litter pick Oct 23	£84.02
021 – Commercial Services Trading Ltd – landscape maintenance work Jul/Aug/Sep	£418.81
022 – V. Underdown – plants for flower planters	£20.00

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members **Noted** the next Meeting will be held on Monday 11th December 2023 at Chart Sutton Village Hall.

There being no further matters to be discussed, the meeting closed at 9.08pm.