

CHART SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22ND JANUARY 2024 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

There were no declarations of interest.

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11TH DECEMBER 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 two reported crimes for December on the e-watch.co website :

- Front number plate stolen from a vehicle in Chart Hill Road
- Theft of tools and a lawn mower from an outhouse at a residential property in Brishing Road

7. CLIMATE CHANGE & BIODIVERSITY

Cllr Sagrott provided an update as follows :

- MBC carbon literacy training will take place on 19th and 26th March in Boughton Monchelsea village hall. Cllrs Sagrott, Webb, Ward, Underdown and Waring will be attending
- MBC may put on further Eco Hub events
- MBC’s biodiversity and climate change officer has kindly agreed to attend and speak at our Annual Parish Meeting in April

8. THREE YEAR STRATEGY

Cllr Fitzgerald stated that the 3 year time period was nearly up and that he would be producing a final report for members’ consideration. **CLLR FITZGERALD**

9. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR 2024/25

A quotation had been received from Landscape Services for all planned landscape maintenance work in the parish for the year ahead. Cllrs proposed, seconded and **Agreed** that this quote be accepted.

10. HIGHWAYS

10.1 Salts bins

It was noted that the salt bin on Chart Hill Road outside the gates of Chart Mill is broken and needs replacing. This bin is not owned or serviced by KCC. Following discussion, Cllrs proposed, seconded and **Agreed** to purchase a new salt bin at a cost of up to £150. It was also **Agreed** that the bin would be kept stocked with salt by the Parish Council. Cllr Waring agreed to organise this. **CLLR WARING**

10.2 Highway flooding

It was noted that a resident had reported flooding on Plough Wents Road. KCC had placed cones in the road but the flooding problem remains. Flooding at Lambs Cross was also noted. Cllr Forknall advised that the owner of the adjacent field would look into resolving this once the weather improves.

10.3 Highway mirror to aid visibility from village hall car park

Following discussion, Cllrs proposed, seconded and **Agreed** that the Parish should purchase and install a highway mirror to improve visibility for drivers emerging on to Chart Hill Road from the village hall car park. The agreed maximum cost for mirror and pole was £250. Cllr Waring agreed to organise this. **CLLR WARING**

11. RURAL ENGLAND PROSPERITY FUND

The clerk advised that an application for a £50,000 grant had been submitted to MBC on 19th January. The total cost of the proposed upgrade work to the village hall was £77,641. It was noted that the result of the grant application should be known by mid February.

12. 80TH ANNIVERSARY D-DAY CELEBRATIONS

Cllr Fitzgerald stated that he would be stepping down from organising this event. On behalf of the Parish Council, Cllr Forknall thanked Cllr Fitzgerald for all his hard work over the years, organising numerous village events.

Cllr Fitzgerald stated that Sutton Valence Parish Council had agreed to put in £500 and had some Councillor volunteers willing to help organise the joint D-Day anniversary event. Cllr Webb spoke about the beacon and ‘ringing out’ elements of the event and stated that he had spoken to the bell ringers from Chart Sutton church who would be willing to help. Cllrs Webb and Underdown agreed to help organise the event and Cllr Ward stated that he would be willing to help out on the day. It was agreed that an initial sub-group meeting should be organised and the clerk agreed to find out the names of the Sutton Valence volunteers and arrange a date. **CLERK**

13. EMERGENCY PLAN

It was noted that correspondence had been received from MBC regarding parish emergency plans, with further guidance and support materials available on the Kent Prepared website. Cllr Sagrott agreed to look into this on behalf of the Parish Council and report back at the next meeting. **CLLR SAGROTT**

14. CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUND – ANNUAL INSPECTION REPORT

The clerk noted that the Play Inspection Company had recently carried out the annual inspection of the play area and a copy of the inspection report had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. All items on the report were deemed low risk or very low risk. Following discussion, Councillors agreed that the only item requiring attention was the erection of a sign including an age rating, next to the ball games unit. Cllr Waring agreed to look into this. **CLLR WARING**

15. MATTERS OF REPORT

15.1 County and Borough Councillors Reports

Cllr Lottie Parfitt-Reid was not present at the meeting but had submitted a written report which was circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

Cllr Munford updated members on the MBC Local Plan review. He also advised that borough and parish elections would be taking place on 2nd May and this would also be the date when any changes to parish boundaries would come into effect.

15.2 Chairman’s Report

Cllr Forknall expressed concern at dog walkers parking at field entrances and trespassing on farmers’ fields.

15.3 Individual Councillors Reports

Cllr Waring reported as follows :

- Complaint received regarding inconsiderate parking by footballers. Following discussion it was agreed that clubs would be asked to put out cones next to the driveway that had been blocked each time they are playing. Cones to be provided by the Parish Council and stored in the pavilion. In addition, it was agreed that the clerk should write to the resident explaining this action and advising that the Parish Council is trying to acquire land for a recreation ground car park
- The village shop is struggling due to lack of footfall. This would be highlighted to residents in the next edition of Village News with a plea to ‘use it or lose it’. It was noted there was now a minimum spend of £5 for all card transactions. This would be reviewed by the shop committee in the next few months

Cllr Underdown reported as follows :

- Next village litter pick will take place on 16th March
- A further complaint had been received from the church group using the village hall regarding dog walkers and ramblers using the village hall car park, creating a lack of parking for church goers. A vehicle had apparently been damaged recently in the car park. It was agreed that the village hall committee would get a permanent sign installed stating that the car park is for hall users.

Cllrs Sagrott, Webb, Ward and Fitzgerald had nothing further to report.

15.4 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 :

- KCC Member grant applications submitted and approved as follows : £700 towards new CCTV camera for the village green, £500 towards 80th Anniversary D-Day event
- MBC Parish Services Scheme grant for 24/25is £2,129, an increase of 5% from last year
- Heart of Kent Hospice run will be taking place on 3rd March, with associated road closures in the parish
- KCC will be placing speed strips on Plough Wents Road and through the village on 27th January. Survey data should be available by the end of February
- KCC have refreshed give way markings at Chart Corner

16. FINANCE

16.1 Budget Monitoring to 31st December 2023

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

16.2 To note Income received since the meeting held on 11th December 2023

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

UKPN Wayleaves payment	£20.09
Clothing bank donation	£86.20
Village News advert	£40.00
Unity Trust Bank interest	£430.83
HSBC Bank interest	£0.04

16.3 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 – December	£805.45
Unity Trust Bank charges 4/9/23 to 4/12/23	£18.00

£10

16.4 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 :

032 – The Play Inspection Company – annual play area inspection	£135.60
033 - S. Whitehead – litter picking Dec 23	£64.00
034 – MBC – sweep / litter pick Dec 23	£84.02
035 – HMRC – tax and NI Dec 23	£216.58
036 – N Power – electric supply – street lighting	£55.34
037 – JRB Enterprise Ltd – dog waste bags	£144.66
038 – Village hall committee – hall hire Sept to Dec 23	£56.00

16.5 2024/25 Budget

The clerk had prepared a draft budget which was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Following discussion it was proposed, seconded and **Agreed** that the draft budget be approved.

16.6 2024/25 Parish Precept

The clerk had prepared a precept setting report which was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Following lengthy discussion it was proposed to increase the precept by 5%, from £54.58 to £57.31 per year for a band D property. This would generate a total precept sum of £25,525.87. The proposal was seconded and a vote taken with 6 for and 1 against. The proposal was therefore **Agreed**. Clerk to inform MBC. **CLERK**

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted the next meeting will be held on Monday 11th March 2024 at Chart Sutton Village Hall.

There being no further matters to be discussed, the meeting closed at 9.45pm.