

## CHART SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 7.30PM ON 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 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**

Cllr Fitzgerald declared an interest in item 16.3 (Village News printing)

**4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

**5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY AND 26<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024**

Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the draft Minutes of both meetings be approved as a correct record**”. This was **Agreed** and the Chairman was authorised to sign off the official copies.

**6. POLICE / KCC WARDEN MATTERS**

There were three reported crimes for January and February on the e-watch.co website :

- Various items stolen from a shed in Brishing Road
- Residential break in at Laxton Drive
- Flower planter stolen from outside village shop

It was noted that the Police had not visited the shop to view the CCTV footage of the person and vehicle involved in the theft of the flower planter. Clerk to send further e-mail to beat officer, PC Harry Greenfield. **CLERK**

Cllr Fitzgerald expressed concern at the apparent planned reduction in Police staff. Clerk to find out which staff are to be cut. It was agreed that PC Harry Greenfield should be invited to the Annual Parish Meeting. **CLERK**

**7. CLIMATE CHANGE & BIODIVERSITY**

Cllr Sagrott provided an update as follows :

- Next Parish Council Environment Network meeting to take place during week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> March
- MBC carbon literacy training will take place on 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March in Boughton Monchelsea village hall. Cllrs Sagrott, Webb, Ward, Underdown and Waring will be attending
- The Great Big Green Week runs from 8<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> June. Planning to hold a swapping event on the green on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June, encouraging residents to swap seeds, materials, skills etc. This will be advertised in the Village News

**8. THREE YEAR STRATEGY**

Cllr Fitzgerald had produced a final report on the 3 year strategy which was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. The contents of the report were noted which included updates on speed limits, EV chargers, playing field car park, tree preservation orders, jubilee event, bus service, public footpaths, pavilion and communication with residents

**9. HIGHWAYS**

The clerk read out correspondence from KCC regarding recent speed survey data and Department for Transport criteria for speed limit reductions. A resident expressed concern at this criteria. Lengthy discussion followed. The resident was advised to express his concerns directly to KCC member Cllr Lottie Parfitt-Reid.

It was noted that the hedge at the junction of Norton Road / Plough Wents Road needs to be cut to improve highway visibility. Cllr Waring to discuss with homeowner in the first instance. **CLLR WARING**

**10. VILLAGE HALL UPGRADE WORKS**

The clerk updated members on anticipated project costs. Most quotes had now been received except for minor items including installation of new hot water heater, removal of existing gas boiler and radiators and internal decoration work. Following an initial request for a 3 phase electric supply, UK Power Networks had advised that a connection to the existing overhead supply would not be possible and the supply would need to be brought in underground from Mercer Way. This could be costly but no further information will be available until UK Power Networks have visited site. An additional £1,500 in grant monies has been allocated to the project by MBC bringing the total grant to £66,198.

**11. THREE SUTTONS D-DAY ANNIVERSARY EVENT**

Cllr Webb noted that an initial event planning meeting had taken place on 26<sup>th</sup> February. Further details as follows:

- Both Sutton Valence and East Sutton had now agreed to be involved in planning and running the event
- Beacon has been found and needs some adaptations from a previous event. A lamp light of peace will be purchased
- Various organisations will be getting involved including the church, schools, scouts and cadets
- Event to be advertised in Chart Sutton Village News as well as Sutton Valence and East Sutton newsletters
- Will hopefully have VIPs attending, Deputy Lieutenant and perhaps the Mayor of Maidstone
- Next event planning meeting will take place on 25<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm in the village hall

**12. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL**

It was noted that Gemma Bailey from MBC would be attending the APM to talk about climate change issues. It was agreed that the Police should also be invited. Clerk to send invites to Borough and County Councillors and parish organisations. It was agreed to advertise the meeting in the Village News, Facebook, website, e-mail group and the clerk stated that she would produce a flyer for delivery in the heart of the village, a few days before the event. **CLERK / CLLR UNDERDOWN**

**Post meeting note** : Gemma Bailey has now left MBC therefore an alternative speaker will need to be found

**13. LITTER / DOG WASTE BINS**

Cllr Underdown advised that a resident had requested a dog waste bin and waste bag dispenser on the track adjacent to Marshalls Place. Following discussion it was proposed, seconded and agreed to purchase and install a dog waste bag dispenser at this location, with a notice telling dog owners to put their waste in a bin. Cllr Waring agreed to action. **CLLR WARING**

**14. PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2024**

The clerk explained the election process and handed out nomination forms for members to complete, if they wished to stand again. She added that she would be returning completed forms to MBC on 28<sup>th</sup> March.

**15. MATTERS OF REPORT**

**15.1 County and Borough Councillors Reports**

Cllr Lottie Parfitt-Reid was not present at the meeting.

Cllr Munford updated members on the Local Plan review and MBC's Council tax increase for 24/25.

**15.2 Chairman's Report**

Cllr Forknall stated that he had reported fly tipping to MBC. He suggested that the location of the defibrillator be advertised in the Village News.

**15.3 Individual Councillors Reports**

Cllr Sagrott reported as follows :

- Attended zoom meeting regarding emergency plans. Looking into whether the Parish Council should produce its own plan
- Maidstone repair café takes place on the first Saturday of each month, at Lockmeadow
- Weald of Kent Rotary club is collecting tools etc to send to Africa
- Suggest holding an 'opening ceremony' once the village hall upgrade work is complete

Cllr Waring reported as follows :

- Another accident has occurred at the junction of Norton Road / Warmlake Road
- Football will take place this weekend. A number of recent matches have been cancelled due to the wet weather
- New highway mirror now in place opposite the village hall
- Agreed to position new salt bin near Chart Mill
- The shop is struggling and made a loss last year although this was less than the previous year. The rise in utility bills is a contributory factor. It was noted that, if possible, the shop will be nominated to receive any excess energy produced by the solar panels on the village hall, once operational

Cllr Underdown reported as follows :

- The church group using the village hall on Sundays are using a plastic chain to block off the car park to non-hall users which seems to be working well

Cllrs Webb reported as follows :

- KCC appear to be investigating the flooding problem at the bottom of Chart Hill
- Noted issues discussed at recent KALC meeting, including maintenance of public rights of way, gritting of bus routes, provision of gypsy and traveller pitches and resilience plans

Cllrs Fitzgerald and Ward and 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 :

- Golding Homes will be sowing wildflower seed in the area around the bus stop and have agreed to fund a new flower planter for the village green to replace the one that was recently stolen. Cllr Fitzgerald expressed his thanks to Golding Homes for this kind gesture
- KCC advise that the following drainage work will be carried out on Plough Wents Road in March – replacement of manhole cover with new deep chamber with gully grate, replacement of 2 gullies including pipework between and installation of kerbing to assist with surface water drainage
- Reported overgrown hedge to KCC on public right of way KH521 (path to church from Chart Road)

## 16. FINANCE

### 16.1 Budget Monitoring to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

The Budget Monitoring Report to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 was **Noted**

### 16.2 To note Income received since the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

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

Village News advertising – Warford Computers	£180.00
Village News advertising – Aquarius	£90.00
KCC member grant – new CCTV	£700.00
Village News advertising – Sutton Valence prep school	£300.00
KCC member grant – D-day anniversary event	£500.00
HSBC Bank interest	£0.03

### 16.3 To approve payments already made

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

SO - Clerk's salary and office allowance – January	£805.45	
SO - Clerk's salary and office allowance – February	£805.45	£10
039 – HMRC – Tax and NI – Jan	£216.78	
040 – N Power – electric supply – street lighting	£24.92	
041 – Castle Water – water bill – pavilion	£79.38	
042 – M. Fitzgerald – printing Village News	£460.00	
043 – MBC – sweeping / litter picking	£84.02	
044 – Commercial Services Trading Ltd – grounds maintenance Oct, Nov, Dec	£3,120.96	

### 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 :

045 – L. Windless – Google e-mail storage – annual fee	£15.99
046 - HMRC – Tax and NI – Feb	£216.78
047 – Brook Security (now Spy Alarms) – new CCTV camera	£845.79
048 – Maidstone Borough Council – sweep / litter pick – February	£84.02
049 – S. Whitehead – litter picking – Jan / Feb + black sacks	£76.20

**17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted the next meeting will be held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Chart Sutton Village Hall.

**There being no further matters to be discussed, the meeting closed at 9.42pm.**