

## CHART SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022 AT CHART SUTTON VILLAGE HALL

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** - Borough Councillor S Munford was present from item 7.

#### PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Webb.

**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**

Cllr FitzGerald declared an interest for item 21.4, being the recipient of a cheque.

**4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

There were no requests for dispensation.

**5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 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 and Community Warden Lovatt were unable to be present but provided the following reports:- 1 crime in January - Theft from motor vehicle – Orchard bank (number plates) & 3 Crimes in February - 2 x Burglary – Chart Hill Rd (nothing stolen) – Amber Lane (vehicle stolen) & 1 x Theft – Chart Road (number plates). Community Warden Lovatt provided a report on cold callers; The Green Doctors (re cost of heating/electricity costs); Kent Together and the KCC Bus Cuts Consultation (see item 18).

**7. CLIMATE CHANGE & BIODIVERSITY**

No action required.

**8. THREE YEAR STRATEGY**

The following updates were **Noted**:-

**Highways** – to be taken forward.

**Electrical Charging Points** – KCC have closed the application due to an overwhelming response.

**Car Park at Memorial Playing Field** – Awaiting a contact name for further discussion.

**TPO's** – Complete.

**Purchase of Garage Site** – Shop Committee to set up a group to discuss further.

**Village Hall Purchase of Freehold** – Complete.

**Review of Public Footpaths** – Ongoing.

**9. QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE/QUEEN'S CANOPY PROJECT**

Members considered the grants available for the Queen's Jubilee Big Lunch and Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the Parish Council should apply for £3,000 - Lottery Fund and £1430 - KCC Members Grant**”. This was **Agreed**.

Preparations for the Big Lunch are going well, with 17 people attending the first meeting and 19 attending the second meeting, with others showing an interest. There will be a launch event on 9<sup>th</sup> April and the event will be advertised in the next village news. The Mayor has been invited. Members considered how to pay for the goods/services leading up to the event and Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the Clerk be given powers to issue cheques (to be signed in accordance with the mandate), to be ratified at the next Full Council Meeting**”. This was **Agreed**.

10. **MEMORIAL FOR JOHN ASHWELL**  
Cllr Waring has ordered the plaque.
11. **CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND – ANNUAL INSPECTION**  
Members were reminded that a budget of £500 was set in January 2021 to repair the sports wall; the repairs have now been carried out by Hop Engineering, however, due to further erosion/increased cost of materials etc, the costs were in excess of the budget. Cllrs therefore proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the budget be increased and the Hop Engineering invoice of £818.79 plus VAT be paid**”. This was **Agreed**. Members considered the quotes for replacing the fencing at the back of the play area (like for like) and repainting of all play area equipment (except the new item). Cllrs therefore proposed, seconded and resolved “**that the quotes for £2100 to repaint the play area equipment (including materials) and £540 for the replacement fencing be accepted**”. This was **Agreed**. Cllrs further proposed, seconded and resolved “**that replacement chains for the four swings be purchased at a cost of approximately £70 for each swing**”. This was **Agreed**. Cllr Waring agreed to look again at the swing seats to see if replacement seats are required.
12. **HEATING IN THE CHURCH**  
Cllr Webb was unable to be present but provided the following report:-  
The gas boiler is ancient and is now beyond repair because replacement parts not available. The Diocese will not allow us to replace boiler with a Gas fired system and we are therefore looking into the electricity powered alternatives. Whatever we go for will cost and we will have to source funds from elsewhere given our financial plight. The local community, parish council and shop, as well as other external sources will obviously need to be approached in due course, but not until the Church PCC have researched fully the options available. We are looking at electrical systems that have already been installed elsewhere in villages like Egerton.
13. **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
All Members **Agreed** not to invite a main speaker, due to the lack of attendees.
14. **HSBC DUAL AUTHORISATION**  
Members **Noted** that HSBC do not allow online dual authorisation on their accounts, and that no further action was required.
15. **OVERHANGING VEGETATION/FLOWERBEDS**  
Members discussed the overhanging vegetation/flowerbeds and asked the Clerk to set up a meeting with Golding Homes to discuss a potential partnership/annual plan for dealing with the issues.
16. **PLANTERS**  
Members considered purchasing planters for the village. It was **Agreed** that an advert would be placed in the Village Newsletter looking for volunteers to tend to them before a decision could be made.
17. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW – NEW WARD BOUNDARIES PRINCIPLES**  
Several Members had attended the recent joint meeting with Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council, and subsequent to that Cllr FitzGerald had drafted a response in order to propose retaining Chart Sutton and Boughton Monchelsea as a single member ward. The wording was agreed by all Members and the Clerk was asked to respond to the Boundary Commission. Cllr Underdown was also asked to put the Boundary Review in the April village newsletter for parishioners to respond directly to the Boundary Commission.
18. **SUPPORTED BUS CUTS/BUS FUNDING REDUCTION CONSULTATION**  
Members considered the impact of the supported bus cuts and Cllr FitzGerald was asked to prepare a response for Members to agree and in order for the Clerk to respond to the consultation and to lobby Cllr Parfitt-Reid. Consultation deadline 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Cllr Underdown agreed to advertise the consultation in the April Village Newsletter.
19. **PAVILION – SMART METER**  
Members considered the request for a smart meter, but **Agreed** not to have one installed in the pavilion.

## 20. MATTERS OF REPORT

### 20.1 County and Borough Councillors Report

Borough Councillor Munford reported on Full Council elections in 2024, and thereafter every four years, new ward boundaries in 2024, MBC review of parish boundaries in 2023 and an update regarding Regulation 19 of the MBC Local Plan.

### 20.2 Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that Highways are currently carrying out drainage works on Warmlake Road. The works will be carried out 14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> March.

### 20.3 Individual Councillors Reports

Cllr Sagrott reported that bin collections were being missed. Borough Councillor Munford advised that this may be because of staff shortages due to high rates of Covid-19. If a whole road is missed the bins should be left out for collection in the coming day(s). Individual missed collections should be reported asap. Black bins will take priority over garden waste bins. Cllr Waring advised further monies were due from the Clothes Bank income which is split with the Scouts. Cllr Ward reported that although marked some time ago, the potholes on Green Lane had still not been repaired and are deteriorating, the Clerk was asked to chase Highways.

### 20.4 Clerk's Report

#### 20.4.1 Clerk's Annual Leave

Members **Noted** the Clerk's annual leave dates and Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved "**that the Clerk be allowed to transfer an extra 5 days of annual leave from her 2021/22 entitlement to 2022/23.**". This was **Agreed**.

#### 20.4.2 PSS Grant

Members **Noted** the PSS Grant for 2022/23 will be £1,977.00 (an increase of £46.00 from 2021/22).

## 21. FINANCE

### 21.1 Budget Monitoring

The Budget Monitoring Report to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 was **Noted**.

### 21.2 To note Income received since last meeting

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

HSBC Interest Jan 22	£0.49
HSBC Interest Feb 22	£0.44
Village News Advert – Aquarius	£90.00
Village News Advert – Helen Whately MP	£90.00
Textile Bank Income	£103.20
Tfr fm BMM to C/A 17/01/22	£2000.00
Bearsted FC remainder of football fees	£43.75
Maidstone Inter 2 <sup>nd</sup> half football fees	£262.50
Coxheath 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> half football fees	£525.00
VAT refund 011022 – 310122	£608.53

### 21.3 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 Jan	£167.48
D/D – NEST – employer/employee pension payment for Feb	£167.48
SO – T Jenkins – Net Salary & Office Allowance – Jan	£715.81
Bank Charges to 30/12/21	£8.60
Bank Charges to 30/01/22	£8.60

**21.4 To resolve to make payments as presented for signature**  
Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved **“that the Council approve the following payments”**. This was **Agreed**.

101754 – Miss T Jenkins – expenses Jan/Feb	£73.57
101755 – HMRC (National Insurance – period ending 05/04/22)	£18.34
101756 – Samuel Whitehead – Litterpick – Jan/Feb	£72.00
101757 – Maidstone Borough Council – street sweep/litterpick x 2	£168.04
101758 – Mr M FitzGerald – Feb VN production	£360.00
101759 – ACRK Membership Renewal	£60.00
101760 – Brook Security – replacement CCTV camera	£715.92
101761 – BG Electrical Contractors repair/replacement of pavilion fan heaters	£528.00
101762 – EDF	£33.14
101763 – Hop Engineering (Kent) Ltd – playground equipment repairs	£982.55
101764 – Miss T Jenkins – backdated salary 2021 per NJC (see item 21.8)	£174.72

**21.5 Interim Internal Audit**

Members **Noted** the Internal Auditor, Lionel Robbins carried out an Interim Audit on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022, with no major findings to report, and that Mr Robbins advised that it is considered ‘best practice’ for a Councillor other than the Chair to review and ‘sign’ bank reconciliations.

**21.6 Statement of Internal Control**

Members reviewed the Statement of Internal Control produced by the Clerk. Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved **“that the Statement of Internal Control is signed and included with the year-end accounts”**. This was **Agreed** and it was further **Agreed** that Cllr Forknall and the Clerk should sign the Statement.

**21.7 Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit**

In carrying out its Annual Review, Members confirmed that the internal auditor is independent of the Council and has no involvement in the financial decision making and is competent to carry out an effective audit of the Council’s system of internal control; that the review and scope of the internal audit adequately assesses the Council’s internal controls and management of risk; that Members understand the importance of the relationship between the internal audit and the Council and that adequate preparations are made for the audit procedure and reports received from the Internal and External Auditor are actioned when necessary.

**21.8 Annual Review of Clerk’s Salary & Office Allowance and Employers Pension Contributions**

Members **Noted** that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services have issued new pay scales for employees for 2021-22 to be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

Cllrs therefore proposed, seconded and resolved **“that the Clerk should be paid a backdated salary amount of £174.72 (from 04/04/21 to 31/03/22).”** This was **Agreed** and cheque number 101764 was signed.

Cllrs further proposed, seconded and resolved **“that the Clerk’s salary should increase from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 in line with the one point rise to Spinal Column Point 22, an increase to £14.30 per hour, together with an increase in the Clerk’s office allowance to £522 per annum, and an increase in the employer’s pension contribution to £10.04 per month.”** This was **Agreed**.

**21.9 Annual Grounds Maintenance Contract**

Members considered the 4% uplift in the 2022 quote. Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved **“to accept the Landscape Services quotation for 2022”**. This was **Agreed**. However, as in previous years the Clerk was asked to write to Landscape Services to confirm the tasks that should only be carried out upon specific request by the Parish Council. Cllrs further proposed, seconded and resolved **“that additional items for 2022 to be included were:- top up the football goal mouth; overseed the whole pitch; fertilise in spring and autumn; selective weed killing”**. This was **Agreed**.

**22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members **Noted** the next Meeting will be held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at Chart Sutton Village Hall.

**There being no further matters to be discussed, the meeting closed at 8.50pm.**