

CHART SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13TH MAY 2024 AT CHART SUTTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: - Cllr S. Waring in the Chair, together with Cllrs V. Underdown, R. Sagrott, P. Ward, J. Killick and W. Gatward; Mrs Lesley Windless, Parish Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: - Borough Cllr A. Dawes, 2 members of the public.

PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were noted.

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

2.1 Chairman

Cllrs nominated and seconded Cllr Waring as Chairman. There being no other nominations and all members being in agreement, Cllr Waring was duly elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year and completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2.2 Vice Chairman

Cllrs nominated and seconded Cllr Sagrott as Vice-Chairman. There being no other nominations and all members being in agreement, Cllr Sagrott was duly elected as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year and completed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

As newly elected members, all Councillors completed Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms.

3. FILMING OF MEETINGS

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

4. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following interests were declared :

Cllr Underdown – item 14

Cllr Waring – items 14 and 17.4

5. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

As members of the village hall committee, Cllrs Underdown and Waring requested dispensation to vote on matters relating to the village hall.

All members were reminded of the need to complete new declaration of pecuniary interest forms, following the recent uncontested election. Forms to be returned to MBC within 28 days of taking office.

6. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8TH APRIL 2024

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.

7. POLICE MATTERS

The clerk noted that no recent crimes had been reported on the e-watch.co website. Cllr Killick asked whether the Police normally attend Parish Council meetings. The clerk advised that the Police do not attend but stated that beat officer, PC Harry Greenfield was generally quick to respond to issues of concern. Members noted that a skip had recently been stolen from a driveway and there had also been several break-ins.

A resident expressed concerns relating to a recent plant sale on the village green. This was not a Parish Council matter and would be discussed further by the village hall and shop committees. The resident left the meeting at this point.

8. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

8.1 Structure of Committees

The following Committee arrangements were agreed for the forthcoming year:-

Planning and Highways – Cllr Waring as Chairman, together with Cllrs Underdown, Sagrott, Ward, Killick and Gatward.

Resources and Environment – Cllr Waring as Chairman, together with Cllrs Underdown, Sagrott, Ward, Killick and Gatward

8.2 Appointment of Representatives

The following appointments were made:-

Village Hall Management Committee	Cllr Waring
Parish/Police Liaison/Ward Cluster	Cllr Waring / Cllr Underdown
KALC Area Committee	Cllr Sagrott
Shop Liaison	Cllr Waring / Cllr Underdown / Cllr Sagrott
Parish Council Environment Network	Cllr Sagrott

9. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS & POLICY DOCUMENTS

Members reviewed the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment Policy, Grant Awarding Policy, Public Participation Policy, Freedom of Information Act – Publication Scheme, Complaints Procedure, Kent Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure, Media Policy, Surveillance Camera Code of Practice and CSPC Reserves Policy and agreed there were no changes to be made at the present time.

Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved that the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment Policy, Grant Awarding Policy, Public Participation Policy, Freedom of Information Act – Publication Scheme, Complaints Procedure, Kent Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure, Media Policy, Surveillance Camera Code of Practice and CSPC Reserves Policy be adopted. This was agreed.

Members reviewed the banking policy and it was proposed, seconded and agreed that the policy should be amended to allow the clerk to ask via e-mail for any members to authorize payments and for the two members doing the authorizing to ‘reply all’ when done. **CLERK**

Cllr Sagrott stated that he would review the Parish Council’s Climate Change & Biodiversity strategy.

CLLR SAGROTT

10. CLIMATE CHANGE & BIODIVERSITY

Cllr Sagrott noted that the Parish Council Environment Network meets every other month with the next meeting taking place in June. He added that any Parish Councillors can attend. The ‘Big Green Week’ will be taking place in June. An article regarding this would be placed in the next edition of Village News. **CLLR SAGROTT**

11. THREE YEAR STRATEGY

Members reviewed the 3 year strategy final report produced by previous member, Mike Fitzgerald. The following actions were agreed :

- Cllrs Killick and Sagrott to review public footpaths, including accessibility and mobility
- Remove the idea of a new pavilion from the strategy
- Clerk to produce new 3 year strategy document
- Include bus timetable in next edition of Village News

CLLR KILLICK / CLLR SAGROTT / CLLR UNDERDOWN / CLERK

12. D-DAY 80 EVENT

Cllr Underdown advised that the event will take place on Sutton Valence recreation ground on the evening of 6th June. VIPs will be attending and there will be singing throughout, with a singalong at the end, finishing at 9.30pm. The scouts will be manning the BBQ which will be free of charge for attendees. Set up on the day will start at 12pm with Cllrs Ward, Sagrott and Killick agreeing to help. Cllr Waring also offered help, if required.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed to purchase an Unknown Tommy statue for the village green from the Royal British Legion online shop at a cost of £175 + £25 delivery. **CLERK**

13. HIGHWAYS

Cllr Killick expressed disappointment that many of the worn road markings around the parish have not been refreshed although it was noted that the junction of Plough Wents Road / Chart Corner has been done. It was noted that the potholes in Green Lane have now been repaired.

14. VILLAGE HALL UPGRADE WORKS

Latest costing information was included in members' agenda papers. The total cost of the project was anticipated to be £117,491. This would be paid for using £66,198 grant funding from MBC, a £13,404 contribution from the Parish Council (for EV chargers and associated civils work) and a maximum £37,889 contribution from the village hall committee, subject to the committee's final approval. The overall price includes additional solar panels to make use of all the available south facing roof space (except the area shaded by the oak tree).

The clerk advised that the gas meter would be removed on 20th May and the following work would be carried out during May half term week when the hall is not in use :

- Installation of new electrical distribution board
- Installation of new 3 phase electric supply
- Fitting of new 3 phase electric meter
- Excavation of trench in the car park and installation of cable ducts for EV chargers

Cllr Killick raised a number of queries regarding the overall project, including warranty periods, maintenance costs for air source heating and security of external equipment. These points were addressed by Cllrs Waring and Ward.

15. PLAYING FIELD DRAINAGE

A quote had been received for pitch drainage work to the playing field - total cost approximately £28,000. The quote was noted with no agreed action.

16. MATTERS OF REPORT

16.1 County and Borough Councillors Report

County Councillor, Lottie Parfitt-Reid was not in attendance.
New Borough Councillor, Anne Dawes had nothing to report.

16.2 Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that the shop was still struggling financially but things were slowly improving.

16.3 Individual Councillor's Reports

Cllr Sagrott asked whether any members had applied for accreditation following the recent carbon literacy training. It was noted that Cllr Ward had passed the accreditation.

Cllr Killick stated that he had reported a number of vehicles around the village with no tax or MOT. He asked how to report distressed dog barking. Other members suggested this should be reported to the RSPCA. Cllr Killick asked about street sweeping and suggested the road edges around the village green need to be swept. It was agreed to speak to Samuel Whitehead to see if he would be prepared to sweep this area by hand. **CLERK**

Cllrs Underdown, Ward and Gatward had nothing further to report.

16.4 Clerk's Report

The clerk had produced a written report which was included in members' agenda papers. Further update as follows:

- . Awaiting response from Salmon Trust regarding possible gifting of piece of land for playing field car park. Cllr Waring to speak to farmer who leases the land
- . MBC grant money for village hall upgrade work has now been received and transferred to the Parish Council's reserve account until needed
- . Members agreed there was no need to continue with regular Golding Homes meetings. Clerk to contact Golding Homes directly if and when issues arise

17. FINANCE

17.1 Annual Report and Audit 2023/24

17.1.1 Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved that the Council's Statement of Accounts should be approved. This was agreed and the document was signed by the clerk and Chairman.

17.1.2 Members considered the Annual Governance Statement contained on page 4 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, determined that the statements numbered 1 to 8 should all be answered "Yes", and statement number 9 should be answered "N/A". Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved that the Statement should

be approved. This was agreed.

- 17.1.3** Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved that the Accounting Statements contained on Page 5 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return should be approved, subject to satisfactory internal audit. This was agreed. It was noted that the internal audit would be taking place on 28th May. Submission deadline for external audit is 30th June.

17.2 Budget Monitoring to 30th April 2024 & Budget Setting for 2024/25

Members noted the preliminary 24/25 budget that had been agreed in January 2024. The clerk had since produced a revised budget based on actual year end figures with budget monitoring figures provided to 30th April 2024. Recommended changes to the preliminary budget are detailed below. Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved that the revised budget be approved. This was agreed.

- New income budget heads included for MBC Rural England Prosperity Fund grant, CIL monies and D-day 80 grant monies
- New expenditure budget heads included for D-day 80 event, village hall upgrade works and shop toilet maintenance

17.3 To note Income received since the meeting held on 8th April 2024

Members noted payments received during the period as follows:

Royal British Legion – Donation towards D-Day 80 event	£100.00
Helen Whately – Village News advertising fee	£30.00
Tfr from Unity Trust reserve account to current account	£1,000.00
Maidstone Borough Council - Precept	£25,525.87
VAT refund 1/2/24 to 31/3/24	£690.31
1 st Sutton Scouts – textile bank income	£88.20
Tfr from HSBC account to Unity Trust current account (HSBC account closure)	£22.62
Maidstone Borough Council – CIL monies	£5,281.29
Tfr from Unity Trust current account to reserve account	£20,000.00

17.4 To approve payments already made

Cllrs proposed, seconded and resolved that the following payments should be ratified. This was agreed.

SO – L. Windless – Net Salary & Office Allowance – April	£805.45
010 – Paul Waring – supply of various items and mowing football pitch	£492.14
011 – Chart Sutton Community Association Ltd – donation for shop toilet maintenance	£650.00
012 – UK Power Networks – new 3 phase electric supply to village hall	£3,315.60
013 – British Gas – installation of 3 phase electric meter to village hall	£196.93

17.5 Annual Review of Insurance

It was noted that the Council is now in year 2 of a 3 year agreement with Zurich, with this year's premium being £730.72 compared to £717.12 last year.

17.6 To resolve to make payments as presented for signature

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

014 – Iden Signs – banner for D-day 80 event	£234.00
015 – Maidstone Borough Council – street sweep / litter pick March	£84.02
016 – Maidstone Borough Council – street sweep / litter pick April	£84.02
017 – Samuel Whitehead – litter pick - April	£40.10
018 – Zurich – annual insurance premium	£730.72
019 – KALC – annual subscription	£462.98
020 – Parish Clerk – Clerk's additional April salary to suit recent pay increase	£48.66
021 – HMRC – tax and NI - April	£237.16

17.7 Annual review of Memberships and Contracts

In line with the Standing Orders, Members reviewed and agreed the Council's Memberships and contracts for Services for the forthcoming year.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted the next meeting will be held on Monday 10th June 2023 at Chart Sutton village hall.

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