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WEST KINGSDOWN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 24th July 2024

Present: Members of the Parish Council: Cllr Mrs P Bosley (Chairman), Cllr D King (Vice Chairman), Cllr A Blackburn, Cllr I Bosley, Cllr Mrs M Richards, Cllr R Seal, Cllr M Stoneham, Cllr Mrs J Watchorn
Members of the Public: 6 Cllr D Brazier (KCC) Cllr E Bulford (SDC)

New Co-Opted Members to the Council

Martin Stoneham and Austin Blackburn, having been co-opted to the Parish Council signed and read their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and this was witnessed.

Chairman's Announcement

It is with great sadness that I report the death of Cllr Stephen Gray following his battle with cancer. The Parish Council places on record its thanks to him for his service on the Council and the local community.

Members of the Public & Councillors who wish to raise matters

Highways Issues:

- a) Knatts Valley : Brian Edwards reported overgrown verges and hedges causing issues for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrian in the Knatts Valley area. Cllr Brazier advised that areas relating to site lines should have been cut. He agreed to take this matter up with officers and spoke with Mr Edwards. Cllr King advised that Kent Highways had phoned the office to say that some areas had been cut., thought to be by local farmer.
- b) Mr Edwards raised concerns regarding the speed limit in the lanes and that this was greater Than along the A20. Cllr Brazier explained that overall speed limits are control by the Government but temporary arrangements can be made relating to specific events.
- c) A20 Vegetation: Mr Birley expressed concerns regarding the state of the vegetation on the central reservations causing issues for vehicles pulling onto the road. Matter will be reported to Kent Highways.
- d) SD130 : Mr Birley reported that this footpath is very overgrown. Matter would be reported to Kent Rights of Way.

Mercure Hotel location : large wooden frame placed at this busy junction. Agreed to check if this required planning permission. It is not thought to be connected to Brands Hatch.

London Road : Cars for Sale/ hard standing on verge : Cllr Brazier had advised the office that this matter was in hand with KCC officers.

Footpath SD278 School Lane : Cllr Stoneham reported that a sign indicating private land, no entry had been erected in the field. This matter had already been reported to KCC Rights of Way and after visiting the site they found the footpath free from obstruction apart from the log across the entrance which has been there for some time. They have overlooked this in the past in the interest of public safety as it may prevent unauthorised motorcycles riding along the footpath. The broken fingerpost has already been included in a package of future works.

The public footpath runs along the right side boundary from School Lane to the wooded area in the top right corner only. The landowner is within his rights to erect notices on his land to prevent the public straying from the public right of way and we have no power to act unless these are directly on the footpath.

Parking Issues: Mr Birley raised the issue of parking on the footway outside the Oasis Café. Cllr Bullford advised that this matter and also the parking at the junction of Hever Avenue/Hever Road and outside the school in Fawkham Road had been raised with officers and a response was awaited

Planning Agenda

Members of the Parish Council: Cllr Mrs J Watchorn (Chairman), Cllr I Bosley (Vice Chairman), Cllr Mrs P Bosley, Cllr D King, Cllr Mrs M Richards, Cllr R Seal, Cllr M Stoneham. Cllr A Blackburn
 Members of the Public: 6 Cllr D Brazier (KCC) Cllr E Bulford (SDC)

1. Apologies for Absence: None

2 Declarations of Interest: Cllr Watchorn for 72 Southfields Road

3. Plans:

SE/24/01431/HOUSE 68 Hever Avenue

Demolish existing conservatory, single storey rear extension, loft conversion, alternations to fenestration, Exterior insulation cladding, New brick slips with gate, rooflights, new fence, landscaping incl terrace and front boundary treatment. Objections. Members agreed to ratify this decision.

SE/24/ 01590 : 72 Southfield Road

Side/rear extension, loft extension, convert dormer windows, alterations to fenestration. Objections. Cllr Watchorn took no part in the discussion of voting.

SE/24/00727/HOUSE : 12 Vernon Close

Single storey rear extension, roof lantern and first floor extension. Objections.

SE/24/01827 : 73 Southfield Road

Oak tree – trim branches overhanging drive by up to 2m in height. No comment.

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 St. Edmunds Centre School Lane.**

1. Apologies for absence: None
2. Declaration of Interests relating to items on the agenda : None

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

The MINUTES of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 26th June 2024 were submitted. It was moved from the Chair that they be signed as a true record and any recommendations be implemented. ALL IN FAVOUR

The MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 26th June 2024 were submitted. It was moved from the Chair that they be signed as a true record ALL IN FAVOUR

The MINTES of the Co-Option Meeting held on Wednesday 17th July 2024 were submitted. It was moved from the Chair that they be signed as a true record ALL IN FAVOUR

4. Any Urgent Business

The Chairman ruled that any business received since the despatch of the agenda, by reason of special circumstances, be considered, to avoid any undue delay and have up to date information. One item relating to the shutters at the Pavilion would be tabled.

5. Diary Items No diary items.

6. Footpaths

Stacklands Wood : Local residents advise that fencing is being erected along the footpaths. Evidence of use forms and guidance to procedure has been obtained from KCC Rights of Way. Information to be passed to Mr Barry and advice which forms are need to be completed by local persons who have walked in the woods for many years.

7. Formal Complaint

To record that the Clerk, Mrs L Harrison, has made an official complaint against a resident, namely Miss Crump in respect of harassment whilst undertaking her job as Parish Clerk. NOTED

Cllr Seal raised the matter discussed at the last Parish Council Meeting that permission was to be sought from Mrs Harrison regarding her letter of resignation being put on the Council's website. He asked why this was not done. The Chairman advised that, although Mrs Harrison did give her permission after the meeting, no vote was taken at the last meeting. When the permission was received, all Councillors were emailed and asked to give their views. All Councillors responded and the majority were not in favour.

8. Locum Cover for Parish Council Clerk

It was agreed to explore the possibility of employing the services of a locum, Shaun Fishenden, PSLCC, to assist with the day to day running of the Council whilst seeking a new permanent Clerk. The hourly rate of £30 was noted. Meeting to be arranged to meet with Mr Fishenden. AGREED

9. Burial Ground : Fallen Oak Tree

The action taken to remove the branch fallen from an Oak tree in the Burial Ground at a cost of £400 was ratified. The Chairman thanked Members who took action to engage Omega Tree Care Limited, to remove the branch which was across a grave and blocking the access path and considered a matter of safety. Contact has been made with owners of the grave who said that there appears to be no problem and they were advised to make a detailed check and come back to us if there were any issues.

It was agreed that the Oak tree be looked at professionally to ensure that any further work required is scheduled.

10. Community Warden Survey

Consideration was given as to whether the Council joins with Ash, Fawkham and Hartley to fund our Community Warden to work in the four parishes following the reduction of the service by KCC. This would amount to a cost of £45,000 per year, shared between the parishes, and the cost to West Kingsdown residents would be in the region of £14,850 per year. Shared amongst the 2408 council tax payers this would be an increase of around £6.17 per annum calculated on the tax base system and not per dwelling/capita.

The Council agreed to ask residents their views, before taking any decision, and a request for views was published in the July issue of SEKAM, on noticeboards and website with a closing date of 23rd July 2024. To date six positive and two negative responses have been received.

Cllr Brazier gave an outline of the type of activities the community Warden carries out. Members expressed their views and it was noted that the Community Cupboard is possibly taking on some of the role by assisting with advice and signposting. It was proposed by Cllr I Bosley, seconded by Cllr Blackburn, that we do not support this local project, but if the KCC discontinues the service, then the Parish Council may reconsider.

6 IN FAVOUR

1 AGAINST

1 ABSTENTION

" The vote was taken on the understanding there were 6 wardens covering the Sevenoaks District Council area -"

M. Bosley

11. Correspondence

Affordable Housing, School Lane

English Rural advise that planning consent has been granted. They do have the S106 legal agreement to finalise but as previously mentioned this is reaching its conclusion. Thanks is expressed to the Parish Council Members for their continued support. It has been a long run but I'm sure all will agree these homes will make such a difference to the lives of residents and the wider community. RECEIVED

12. Co-Option Vacancies

Currently there are two further persons interested in being co-opted to the Council, who were unable to attend on the 17th July. Date is August to be arranged to meet with the persons. NOTED

13. The Pavilion, Gamecock Meadow

The roller shutter to the refreshment room failed and did not go up or down. Ives Shutters attended and

advised that the limiter was broken. Unfortunately a let using The Pavilion on Sunday managed to get the shutter up and in order to secure the building Ives Shutters attended on Monday 22nd and managed to get the shutter down. A call out charge of £146.40 is due for payment authorisation.

Quotes to repair and for service to all shutters

To repair the shutter - fitting one 160nm tube motor and supply and fit new top clips to Roller and barrel £551.00 plus VAT

To complete annual service of the 4 shutters on the Pavilion building and community cupboard £365.00 plus VAT

NB Community cupboard have agreed to reimburse for the service to the shutter on that.

Cllr Seal raised the issue of cracks in the brickwork over the side window of The Pavilion and any remedial work necessary should be carried out before the shutter is repaired. This was agreed. It was proposed from the Chair that subject to getting professional advice regarding the crack, the quotes from Ives Shutters be accepted. ALL IN FAVOUR

13. Finance

Details of income and expenditure were tabled noting income received £ 2537.65. It was proposed by Cllr Stoneham, seconded by Cllr King that payments totalling £9715.98 be paid. ALL IN FAVOUR.

14. Report from Old School Management Committee

The children's toilets in the Main buildings are due to be refurbished during the summer holidays. The Management committee has agreed to fund the cost of the project.

15. Matters Arising

Land east of Springhams Cottages (Hayes Farm)

SDC planned a visit by officers but when they attended there was no one there and left without gaining access. Residents arrived after they had left. It was intended that this visit would allow the Enforcement Team to assess the extent of the non-compliance with the requirements of the Enforcement Notice served in 2015 and any unlawful development that has taken place. Additionally allow Officers to assess current on-site conditions, informing next steps concerning the exploration of serving a further Enforcement Notice/prosecution proceedings. Parish Council to request update from SDC Planning Enforcement and SDC Councillors.

Fallen Tree from Florence Farm adjacent to 94 Millfield Road

District Councillors have enquired about this tree which has fallen from Florence Farm and it having an impact on the property and Parish Council land.

SDC advise that the land owner has ultimate responsibility to clean the fallen tree, however, under common law the Parish Council is permitted to do the work without consent if desired. As there has been no response from the land owner regarding clearing the tree, this becomes a civil matter and not something SDC would be able to assist with. Members had visited the site and could not see a problem. It was agreed No further action.

Trees : Millfield Road / Thornbank / Brial Ground: It was proposed by Cllr I Bosley, seconded by Cllr Watchorn that the trees be inspected professionally, using the services of Steve Launchbury. ALL IN FAVOUR

Cars Parked on central reservation (Portobello Pub): Request for a bollard at the Pub end to prevent Vehicle access onto the pedestrian crossover.

Footpath SD269: Mr Barry advised very overgrown and this has been reported to Kent Public Rights of Way.

Millfield Road – dumping of garden waste: Letters were distributed to residents asking that garden Waste not be dumped under trees on Council land. A resident has thanked the Council, as the person Concerned now has a SDC garden waste bin.

16. Newsletter/Website items

Affordable Housing, School Lane
Parking of cars on footpath
Advertisement for Clerk

It was proposed by Cllr Stoneham, seconded by Cllr Seal that the advert for the Parish Clerk/RFO Be put on Residents Facebook page, as this is now much better, and no one can post anonymously.

6 IN FAVOUR
2 AGAINST

17. August dates

- Planning & General Purpose Meeting : Monday 12th August 2024 at The Pavilion, 7.30pm
- Planning & Parish Council Meeting : Wednesday 28th August 2024 at St Edmund's Centre 7.30pm
- Co-Option Meeting: Wednesday 21st August 2024 at The Pavilion, 7.30pm
- Back up date Wednesday 4th September 2024

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

AK
28th/24

