

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL held in Capel Village Hall At 7.30pm on Monday 25 July 2022

Present: Cllrs Patterson, (Chair), Fenton, Mackonochie, Malpas, Rich, Saunders and Sawyer
In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Clerk, 10 members of the public
Representatives from Low Carbon:
Aislinn Dunne (Development & Communications Analyst) Simon Dix (Planning Manager)

Minute No Agenda
No

- 1) Administration – Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones, Sanitisation measures, intention to record or film the meeting. – Noted.
- 915 2) **APOLOGIES:** An apology for absence was received from Cllrs. MacKenzie and Young and their reasons for absence were accepted. County Councillor Sarah Hamilton hoped to attend the meeting but sent an apology of absence.
- 916 3) **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None
- 917 4) **CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None
- 918 5) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 27 June 2022 be signed as a true and accurate record.
- 919 6) **CLERKS REPORT/PAST MATTERS (Information purposes only)**
- Public toilets – Ladies toilet is now open and hopefully the gentlemen’s toilet we re-open when the door lock is fixed.
 - Bus shelter grant – The Public Transport Officer has advised that KCC is still considering if funding can be made available this year.
 - CiLCA – the Clerk has now passed Unit 3 and has submitted papers for Unit 4.
- 920 7) **PRE-APPLICATION BRIEFING FROM LOW CARBON**
*The Chair proposed and it was **resolved** to suspend the meeting and allow representatives from Low Carbon to give a presentation.*

Aislinn Dunne and Simon Dix from Low Carbon gave a brief history of the company and introduced proposals for a new solar farm with battery storage to be known as Reed Solar Farm, located on land north of Alders Road and west of the A228, Maidstone Road. Low Carbon have recently submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and await feedback. The project will have the capacity to generate approximately 10MW to provide clean renewable energy to the local distribution network, UK Power Network (UKPN Eastern). Simon Dix explained that various reports to include ecological reports, bio-diversity, flooding risks and highway issues will be submitted with any formal planning proposal. Low Carbon are looking to commence a formal public consultation this summer and will hold an event in the village hall which will be made available as a webinar on their website along with a Freephone number and dedicated project email address for comments. Although not able to offer subsidised electricity to locals affected by the proposal Low Carbon is keen to support a community renewable educational project.

- 921 8) **OPEN SESSION:**
Several members of the public directed questions at Low Carbon. Concern was expressed about the fact that the proposed site is the last remaining working hop farm in the area and as such is a heritage site. It was suggested that the neighbouring orchard would be a better location. Simon Dix explained that Natural England has designated the orchard as a Priority Habitat and Species’ site and as such is protected. Although there was an acceptance that renewable energy sites

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are needed concern was expressed about the fact that the placing of solar panels in this location would spoil the views so enjoyed by walkers using the adjacent footpath network. Comments were made about the fact Low Carbon will be leasing the land for 40 years given the existing solar farms in the area are leased for a period of 20 years which the Secretary of State agreed was considerable. Comments were also made about the Local Plan and that if approved the proposed Five Oak Green bypass would cut through this area.

8.26pm 5 members of the public left the meeting

922 9) EXTERNAL REPORTS

- a) Borough Councillors Report: The hearings on the Local Plan finished on 15 July 2022. The Inspector is now expected to carry out a number of visits including to Capel. The Borough Council planners expect his indicative letter within 4-6 weeks which will summarise his findings on the soundness of the plan and any recommendations for major modifications. The Borough Partnership's recommendations for tackling the Inherited Financial Deficit have been discussed by Cabinet. This includes a review of car parking charges which would mean 50p for the first hour (rather than the present no charge) at Paddock Wood. This is subject to a month-long public consultation and a review at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 July 2022.
- b) County Councillors Report: County Councillor Sarah Hamilton hoped to make the meeting but in her absence the Clerk explained that there are plans to hold a workshop in the Autumn for all parishes to discuss the effectiveness of the Highway Improvement Plan process. A proposal to install double yellow lines in Tudeley Lane is now likely to take another 6 months as a safety audit and public consultation need to take place.

923 10) COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Finance & Resources Committee:
 - i) A report on the accounts as at the 30 June 2022 was noted
 - ii) The bank reconciliation as at the 30 June 2022 was noted.
 - iii) A statement of the reserves as at the 30 June 2022 was noted
 - iv) It was **resolved** to adopt the list of payments overleaf and for Cllrs. Fenton and Patterson to authorise the payments set up online by the Clerk.
 - v) It was **resolved** to adopt a revised Complaints Policy circulated by the Clerk.
- b) Staff, Office & Administration Working Committee:

There has been no meeting. Cllr. Rich asked Members to forward any agenda items for the next meeting. The Clerk will prepare a Staff Development and Training policy to be considered at the meeting due to be held on the 19 September 2022.
- c) Planning Committee:
 - i) The minutes of the meeting held on the 27 June 2022 were received and noted.
- d) Flooding Panel:

Cllrs. Patterson, Mackonochie and the Clerk attended a virtual meeting on the 20 July 2022 with Max Tant, Flood and Water Manager from KCC, Hannah Young from the Strategic Sites Delivery Team at TWBC and Oliver Medway from Upper Medway IDB. Nobody from Paddock Wood attended. Max Tant arranged the meeting to discuss the potential options for the proposed development around Paddock Wood and Five Oak Green and flood risk management. Hannah Young discussed the information contained within TWBC's statement for the Local Plan Hearing for the proposed Tudeley village. Hannah Young explained that there are three chief ways that the delivery of the strategic site at Tudeley will reduce the flood risk to Five Oak Green with the main opportunity to deliver substantial benefits through the use of the proposed Five Oak Green By-pass as a flood storage, attenuation and mitigation measure. It was agreed to delay any further discussion on mitigation measures until the Planning Inspector has made a decision on the Local Plan.

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- e) Memorial Cottages & Housing Working Group:
i) To receive an update on the remedial works to the cottages
Cllr. Sawyer advised Members that the contractor hopes to install the replacement windows to both cottages in August 2022 and will liaise directly with the tenants to arrange this. It has been agreed to delay the treatment of the woodworm in the flooring of No.9 until Spring 2023 by which time the new heating system in No. 10 will have been tested. If the tenant at No.10 gives favourable feedback the new heating system and replacement carpets will be installed in No.9 and the woodworm will be treated at the same time.
8.41pm 2 members of the public left the meeting
- f) Recreation Ground and Allotments Working Group:
i) The minutes of the meeting held on the 21 July 2022 were noted.
ii) The working group would like to consider proposals to increase the CCTV cover on the recreation ground and a project to plant hedging around the public toilets and improve the area. The working group has also received a report from Middlemarch following the inspection of trees on Parish Council land. It was agreed that each of the above have substantial financial implications and therefore need to be considered at the next Finance Committee due to be held on the 5 September 2022.
- g) Neighbourhood Plan Working Party
i) To receive an update on the development of the draft neighbourhood plan
Cllr. Patterson advised Members that members of the working party have been working on individual sections of the draft neighbourhood plan. A virtual meeting is due to be held on the 28 July 2022.
ii) To receive an update on the draft design codes
Cllr. Patterson advised Members that comments on the draft design codes report have been sent to AECOM. Once amended the report will be placed on the website for residents to comment on.
iii) To receive an update on funding
Cllr. Patterson was pleased to report that Locality has granted the maximum award of £10,000.00 towards the development of the neighbourhood plan which should cover the consultant's fees.

924

11) PARISH MATTERS

- a) Local Plan Examination Update: See item 922 9(a).
b) Update on Save Capel: As above
c) Climate Emergency:
KCC is still awaiting news on the outcome of their latest funding bid for electric vehicle charging points and cannot progress any of the 22 sites, which includes Capel, until this has been confirmed.
d) Update from the PCSO: Danny Ostridge has taken over the role of PCSO.

925

12) HIGHWAYS

- a) Highways Improvement Plan:
Four ATC surveys are to be carried out in September 2022. Three on Five Oak Green Road and one on Alders Road. It was agreed that the ATC surveys due to take place will provide some useful information on the speed of vehicles in this location. Cllr. Rich asked if the TWBC initiative for residents to report near misses is to continue and if the data could be provided at a parish level. Cllr. Patterson offered to find out.

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- 926 **13) REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS**
- i) KALC Meeting: Cllr. Sawyer advised that a meeting was held on the 28 June 2022 at which Cllr. Mackonochie was re-elected as the Chair.
 - ii) TWBC Ukrainian Workshop: Cllr. Mackonochie has circulated two posters; one to encourage people to sign up for the Ukrainian newsletter and another gives details about the summer activities being held in Tunbridge Wells for Ukrainian children.
 - iii) Parish Chairmen's Group Meeting: There has been no meeting
 - iv) Joint Transportation Board – Cllr. Mackonochie attended the meeting held on the 4 July 2022. It is proposed to hold a workshop with KCC and all the parishes on Monday 19 September 2022 to discuss the effectiveness of the Highways Improvement Plans.
 - v) Other external meetings: Nothing additional.

927 **14) CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS:**
TWBC is consulting on a proposal to change car parking fees which on a local basis affects parking charges in Paddock Wood. The consultation runs from the 25 July 2022 to the 5 September 2022. As well as consulting on car parking charges TWBC is actively seeking creative solutions to fix the financial shortfall.

928 **15) ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS:** None

929 **16) DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:**
Full Council Meeting: Monday 26 September 2022 at 7.30pm.

With no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 9.02pm

Signed:

Dated:

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Payment List – July

Ref:	Payee	Description	Gross
BACs Payments for approval on 27 June 2022			
BACS 07-01	CCA	Hall Hire	60.00
BACS 07-02	Louise Goldsmith	Mileage, business expenses	204.79
BACS 07-03	HMRC	PAYE & NIC May	365.59
BACS 07-04	F&C Cleaning	Cleaning public toilets x 2 months	660.00
BACS 07-05	Multiprint	Citizen of the year sign update lettering and signs for public toilets	64.80
BACS 07-06	DJY Construction Ltd	Remedial Works Memorial Cottages	3,753.60
BACS 07-07	Heliocentrix Ltd	Monthly Microsoft 365 subscription	71.88
BACS 07-08	Greenbarnes Ltd	Noticeboard for Allotments	1,246.29
BACS 07-09	Capel Groundcare	Installation of allotment noticeboard	177.60
BACS 07-10	Viking	Printer ink x 4 cartridges	253.19
BACS 07-11	Knights	Preparation, attendance Stage 2 Hearings	9,000.00
TOTAL			15,857.74

Date	Payee	Description	Gross
Direct Debits and Standing Orders made in July 2022			
03/07/2022	EDF	Electricity - cricket pavilion	25.00
03/07/2022	EDF	Electricity - public toilets	23.00
03/07/2022	EE	Clerks Mobile Phone	35.41
04/07/2022	TalkTalk	Telephone & Broadband	54.54
12/07/2022	Sage	Payroll software	8.40
25/07/2022	Louise Goldsmith	Payroll April	1,619.16
25/07/2022	Capel Groundcare	Grounds maintenance contract June	2,191.60
TOTAL			3,957.11