

CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of CAPEL PARISH COUNCIL held in Capel Village Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 27 November 2023

Present: Cllrs Patterson, (Chair), Mackonochie, Mackenzie, Malpas, Rich, Saunders and Sawyer.
In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Clerk, County Councillor Sarah Hamilton (arrived 8.25pm)
Harold Cleminson (Chair of the CCA Trustees), 8 members of the public.

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- | Minute No | Agenda No |
|-----------|--|
| | 1. Administration – Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. The Clerk has not received any requests from anyone intending to record or film the meeting. |
| 1117 | 2. APOLOGIES:
An apology for absence was received from Cllrs. Fenton and Young and the reasons for absence were accepted. |
| 1118 | 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:
None received. |
| 1119 | 4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:
There were none. |
| 1120 | 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 30 October 2023 be signed as a true and accurate record. |
| 1121 | 6. CLERKS REPORT/PAST MATTERS:
1] Defibrillators: The Clerk has arranged for replacement batteries and pads for the defibrillators in the village hall car park and in the BT Box in Tudeley. The defibrillators are both registered on The Circuit. |
| 1122 | 7. OPEN SESSION:
Many of the members of the public present expressed their concerns about a proposal for 140 new homes on land at Finches Farm, Five Oak Green. Concerns were expressed about the effect of the extra housing on local services and resources to include the doctors, schools and drainage and sewage along with the effect of extra vehicles on local roads.
<i>The Chair proposed and it was agreed to take agenda item 9 next:</i> |
| 1124 | 9. PROPOSAL FOR NEW HOMES ON LAND AT FINCHES FARM, FIVE OAK GREEN
Cllr. Patterson explained that this site was originally put forward by the developer as part of the Call for Sites exercise. However, the site was excluded from the TWBC Local Plan essentially due to inclusion, at the time, of the new Tudeley Garden village. Cllr. Patterson advised that the site is in the Metropolitan Green Belt where there is a presumption that, unless exceptional circumstances exist, a planning application cannot be approved. The developer will need to prove that they have provided betterment to the area. Cllr. Patterson advised that at this stage this is just a consultation exercise been undertaken on behalf of the developer and is not a formal planning application. It is likely than an outline planning application will be submitted next year. It was noted that the developer has offered to provide funding for enhancements to the school and local roads. Cllr. Patterson suggested that any future affordable housing in the village should be allocated to address local needs.
Resolved: To note the consultation.
<i>7.59pm 6 members of the public left the meeting</i> |
| 1123 | 8. EXTERNAL REPORT
a) Borough Councillors Report: Since our last meeting Tunbridge Wells BC have published their draft response to the Inspector's Initial Letter. https://democracy.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/documents/g5499/Public%20reports%20pack%2013th-Nov-2023%2018.30%20Planning%20and%20Transportation%20Cabinet%20Advisory%20Board.pdf?T=10 The paper is a recommendation to the Planning and Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board which met on the 13 November 2023. I spoke in support of the |

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amended recommendations at the CAB which were agreed unanimously. It is therefore expected that the changes will be signed off by Cabinet (7 December 2023) and Full Council (13 December 2023), as this is the realistic path towards the adoption of a plan within the next few months. A six-week public consultation on the changes is due to start in January.

Summary of the changes: The officer's preferred option in their recommendation to members is to follow the Inspector's option 3 and delete Tudeley from the plan. The housing numbers in East Capel will be reduced to around 1200 as building is restricted to Flood Zone 1 and climate change calculations have restricted the numbers too. The Plan will now be for 10 years with reduced housing numbers subject to almost immediate review. There are still causes for concern in East Capel, but the original plan which envisaged 4800 houses in the Parish during and beyond the plan period (2700 in Tudeley and 2060 in East Capel) should be consigned to History by the vote in December. After a long delay this can be seen as a major success for the campaign waged by Save Capel, Capel Parish Council, and many others over the last four and a half years since the proposals for Tudeley and East Capel were first made public in May 2019. The next full Council meeting is on 13 December 2023 starting at 6:30pm - open to the public and viewable online.

- b) County Councillor: No report

1125

10. CAPEL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION/VILLAGE HALL

Harold Cleminson, Chair of the Capel Community Association Trustees, attended the meeting to explain the progress that has been made since the new Trustees were appointed in February 2023. Mr. Cleminson explained that all the financial accounts and registered records are now up to date and that the Trustees are working on a strategy for the future which will be shared with parishioners at the AGM due to be held on the 19 February 2023. A key part of the strategy is to sustain the existing hall while working to replace it with a larger hall. The recent poor weather has led to several problems with the electrics, leaking roof, drainage, heating, and wastewater disposal. All these plus a lack of previous investment have increased the operational costs significantly. A Hall Manager has been appointed and will be examining cost reduction opportunities and areas to increase income. The Trustees will also be seeking grant funding for strategic projects to reduce the operating costs. Reserves are currently being used to fund any shortfall. Mr Cleminson asked if the Parish Council could positively support the request for a new lease, support the CCA in the community activities and assist, where possible, with a strategy to seek funding.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would like to support the work of the CCA and the suggestions above and would also like to be kept updated.

8.04pm Harold Cleminson left the meeting

1126

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

c) **Finance & Resources Committee:**

- i) A report on the accounts as at the 31 October 2023 was noted.
- ii) A bank reconciliation as at the 31 October 2023 was noted.
- iii) Risk Assessment:
Resolved: To approve the updated Risk Assessment document.
- iv) NALC Pay Award 2023-2024: A backdated pay award for the Clerk for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 October 2023 of £910.49, subject to PAYE, was noted.
- v) Budget 2024-2025: It was noted that the Finance and Resources Committee is due to meet on the 4 December 2023 to discuss a draft budget for 2024-2025.
- vi) Allotment Fencing: It was noted that the Recreation and Allotments Working Group had approved a quote of £249.00 (excluding VAT) from Capel Groundcare to repair the allotment fencing.
- vii) To receive a list of payments for approval:
Resolved: To adopt the list of payments overleaf and for Cllrs. Patterson and Mackonochie to authorise the payments set up online by the Clerk. Cllr. Mackonochie checked the invoices against the payment list in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

d) **Staff, Office & Administration Committee:**

There was no update.

e) **Planning Committee:**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 30 October 2023 were received and noted.

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- f) **Flooding Panel:**
The draft minutes of the Flooding Panel meeting held on the 6 November 2023 were noted.
- g) **Memorial Cottages & Housing Working Group:**
Cllr. Sawyer advised that the annual condition surveys on the cottages were carried out on the 16 November 2023. It was agreed to replace the front door to both cottages as the locking systems are failing and they are letting in cold air. Cllr. Sawyer has obtained a quote of £2,720.00 for both front doors which will be funded from the Memorial Cottage reserve fund.
- h) **Recreation Ground and Allotments Working Group:**
The project to replace the external doors to the public toilets is ongoing. The quote received from the contractor that carried out the refurbishment of the toilets is too high. However, the original contractor has advised that he should be able to carry out the works soon for an estimated cost of less than £2,500.00. The Clerk and Cllr. Sawyer are in the process of obtaining an alternative quote for refurbishing the internal cubicle doors and store cupboard door. The acceptance of any alternative quote will need to be discussed with TWBC who have provided the grant to partially cover these works. Members discussed a suggestion for the old under 5's area becoming an outdoor gym. The Clerk had circulated an example layout and cost. It was agreed that a consultation exercise would be needed to assess whether an outdoor gym would be used. It was noted that the Clerk is also investigating sources of funding. A further suggestion of an outdoor table tennis table to be installed in the under 11's play area was welcomed.
- i) **Neighbourhood Plan Working Party:**
Cllr. Patterson advised that a supplementary "Examination Arrangements Note" has been issued from the examiner, in light of TWBC's recently published Planning & Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board Report. Essentially, it looks as though the examiner will continue with the site visits but will hold fire on sending his Clarification Note until a decision has been reached by Full Council at the meeting due to be held on the 13 December 2023.

1127

12. PARISH MATTERS

- a. **Local Plan Examination Update:** See agenda item 9a.
- b. **Climate Change Initiatives:** UK Power Networks have apologised to the Clerk for not having confirmed an installation date for the power for the electric vehicle charging points and hope to commence the works soon.
- c. **Environmental & Health Concerns: Durnell Yard, Capel**
Cllr. Patterson advised that local residents are becoming increasingly concerned about the smell of sewage coming from Durnell Yard in Capel and would like the Parish Council to report these concerns to Environmental Health. The planning use of the yard is for open storage but there is evidence that sewage is being processed on the site as well as the storing of portable toilets. It was agreed that the Clerk should report these concerns to Environmental Health.
- d. **Mobile Coverage:** The Clerk reported that MP Greg Clark has agreed to lobby Ofcom to try and get an improved mobile phone service for the area.
- e. **Secondary School provision in Cranbrook:** It was noted that further meetings are planned to discuss the ongoing issues with secondary school provision in Cranbrook.
- f. **Christmas Carol Service:** It was noted that the Clerk has obtained permission for a partial road closure on Whetsted Road between the hours of 3pm and 4.30pm on Sunday 17 December 2023 for the carol service due to take place on the village green.
Christmas Tree and Lights: The Clerk was delighted to report that Capel Group will be supplying and installing the christmas tree on the village green next week. The Clerk has obtained an unmetered supply certificate from UK Power Networks and has tested the external socket to check that it is working.
- g. **Speed Camera Visits:** Cllr. Fenton has been in communication with the speed camera enforcement team at Kent Police who have agreed to recommence the camera van visits to Five Oak Green. Members were delighted to hear that the first visit took place last week.
- h. **Kent Police:** The Clerk and Cllr. Patterson attended the first virtual quarterly meeting with Kent Police which was held on the 17 November 2023. There is a recruitment drive

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to increase the current number of six Beat Officers to twelve. A task group has been set up to monitor the car racing and anti-social behaviour at Castle Farmhouse and Kent Police is also monitoring posts on known social media sites. Kent Police is also considering issuing a Public Spaces Protection Order to try and prevent these car racing meetings being held across the County. Kent Police have agreed to consider holding future meetings on an evening or weekend.

1128

13. HIGHWAYS

a) Highways Improvement Plan

j) Proposal to fund the installation of the SID Scheme on Five Oak Green Road

The Community Engagement Officer has advised that the Traffic Operations and Technology Team have considered the results of the consultation survey on the SID scheme carried out by the Parish Council and are happy to proceed with the scheme. The Traffic Operations and Technology Team has also agreed to provide a speed indicator device with data collection facilities which can be downloaded to a spreadsheet. KCC can offer two types of speed indicator devices. Members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of both in terms of battery life, ease of moving them about and the content of the display.

Resolved: The Clerk to place an order with KCC for the MINI SID scheme at a total cost of £9513.22. The Clerk to find out how much Capel Groundcare would charge to move the SID every 6-8 weeks (as per the scheme) and recharge the batteries when necessary and download the data.

k) Crossing point on Five Oak Green Road

The Community Engagement Officer has advised that, unfortunately, a proposal for a formal crossing point on Five Oak Green Road was not one of the four schemes chosen by KCC to proceed for Local Transport Plan funding on the basis that the engineers did not feel that they could support this type of physical traffic calming on a B road. However, KCC has agreed to proceed with a smaller scale scheme, which will be funded from the small works budget, and which could still offer more protection at the Primary School. KCC has agreed to upgrade the existing school wig wags to Smart pulsas which will improve the visibility of the school. Once upgraded these wig wags will be programmable by KCC and should reinforce the advisory 20mph speed limit past the school during peak times. KCC has also agreed to look at introducing an informal crossing in the next financial year to assist school children crossing the road. This crossing point will be highlighted by dropped kerbs with tactile paving near to the school and will be situated within the advisory 20mph zone.

l) Dangerous Driving on Castle Hill

See agenda item 12 (h).

1129

14. REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS

a) **KALC Meeting:** Cllr. Patterson advised that Neighbourhood Planning Consultant, Alison Eardley, attended the KALC Area Committee meeting held on the 23 November 2023 and discussed the importance of reviewing neighbourhood plans on a regular basis once implemented. There was a discussion about the how parishes can fund local bus services along with an update on the secondary education crisis in Cranbrook which is to be discussed further with all the Parish Chairs.

b) **Parish Chairmen's Group Meeting:** There has been no meeting. The next meeting is due to be held on the 12 December 2023.

c) **Joint Transportation Board:** There has been no meeting.

d) **Other external meetings:** It was noted that the Clerk is due to attend the virtual KCC Highways Parish Seminar due to be held on the 1 December 2023.

1130

15. CORRESPONDENCE/CONSULTATIONS:

a) TWBC: Safe Travels Survey: Noted.

1131

16. ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS: None.

1132

17. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

Full Council Meeting: Monday 18 December 2023 at 7.30pm.

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

Signed:

Dated:

Initialled:

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Payment List: November

Ref:	Payee	Description	Gross
BACS Payments for approval on 27 November 2023			
BACS 11-01	Louise Goldsmith	Expenses	204.20
BACS 11-02	HMRC	PAYE & NIC	941.79
BACS 11-03	F&C Cleaning	Cleaning public toilets	424.80
BACS 11-04	Heliocentrix Ltd	Monthly Microsoft 365 subscription	78.34
BACS 11-05	Ability Ltd	Plumbing to public toilets	3,708.00
BACS 11-06	CCA	Meeting room hire	60.00
BACS 11-07	KALC	AGM Lunch - Cllr Sawyer	6.00
BACS 11-08	Tonbridge & Tunbridge Wells CFR	Replacement batteries and pads for defibs	850.00
BACS 11-09	Capel Groundcare	Clearance of greenhouse on allotments	552.00
		TOTAL	6,825.13

Date	Payee	Description	Gross
Direct Debits and Standing Orders			
01/11/2023	EDF	Electricity - cricket pavilion	74.00
01/11/2023	EDF	Electricity - public toilets	78.00
03/11/2023	TalkTalk	Telephone & Broadband	40.87
02/11/2023	EE	Mobile Phone	18.00
16/11/2023	Sage	Payroll software	9.60
27/11/2023	B&CE Holdings	Pension - Clerk	261.13
25/11/2023	Louise Goldsmith	Payroll and backdated pay	2,504.99
25/11/2023	Capel Groundcare	Grounds maintenance contract	2,216.09
		TOTAL	5,202.68

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