

A Meeting of the Parish Council was held at The Memorial Hall, The Street, Frittenden on Tuesday 3rd January 2023 at 7.30pm.

Present were: Cllr A Staples (Chairman)
Cllr S Murray
Cllr J Tuke
Cllr L Gosbee
Cllr H Cullingworth
Cllr R Vernon

In attendance: Mrs E Nightingale (Clerk), Cllr A Fairweather (Borough)

PUBLIC FORUM:

None.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr R Riley, Cllr S Holden (County)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct Part 2)

None.

3. BOROUGH & COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE

Cllr Fairweather reported that, whilst a majority voted to move to all out elections at the full Council meeting held in December, the vote was not won by a sufficient majority for the motion to be passed and TWBC will therefore continue to implement its previous decision to retain voting by thirds and the electoral boundary changes associated with that. Cllr Fairweather found this a particularly disappointing result given that the public consultation had shown that a clear majority (65%) wanted all out elections. Cllr Fairweather felt that the views expressed by rural parishes, who would be most affected by the boundary changes, and the public in general had been ignored for political reasons. Cllr Staples commented that rural communities made up (by a narrow margin) the majority of the Borough and this decision would only serve to make the divide between Town and Country even wider.

Cllr Fairweather was also disappointed to report that he had been unable to secure funding for the cost of installing a hearing loop at the Memorial Hall. TWBC had received substantial funds from Central Government as part of its levelling up programme. Those funds were to be applied for the benefit of rural capital projects, but TWBC had decided to apply the entire fund to the decarbonisation of the Weald Leisure Centre, notwithstanding the fact that a cross party advisory committee had determined that this was not an appropriate use of the funds. Cllr Fairweather felt that this was another example of TWBC being out of touch with rural communities and ignoring the results of consultation.

Cllr Staples asked what TWBC's views were on the closure of Action With Communities in Rural Kent, which was an organisation that had provided a great deal of valuable assistance to Frittenden in the past. The closure was due to a funding gap and Cllr Staples asked whether TWBC might be able to assist with bridging that gap. Cllr Fairweather will investigate.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON THE 14TH DECEMBER 2022

It was proposed by Cllr Gosbee, seconded by Cllr Murray, and **RESOLVED** (1 abstention) that the Minutes from the Council meeting on 14th December 2022 are a true and accurate record of that meeting. That being so, the Chairman signed the said Minutes.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Questions to Cllr Holden

The Clerk was yet to receive a response.

Stones on the verge outside Ferrers, Sand Lane

Cllr Gosbee had written to the new owners of Ferrers.

Dog Fouling

Cllr Cullingworth will report to the next meeting of the Council.

King's Coronation Celebrations Open Meeting

This would take place at the Memorial Hall at 8pm on 11th January 2023.

Weald Business Park

The Clerk will be writing to the business located at the Weald Business Park asking them to ensure that lorries do not attend when the site is closed given that there is nowhere for them to safely park up and wait for the site to open.

ACRK

Cllr Staples had written to his fellow Parish Chairmen and the Head of the Parish Chairmen Group is going to look into the situation. Cllr Staples believes that the closure of this organisation will be a loss to the County.

6. AMENDMENT TO BUDGET

The Clerk had circulated a revised budget for 2023/24 in advance of the meeting which included a provision of £1,500 for the cost of the election to take place in May 2023. This change led to there being a shortfall of £744. Cllr Staples suggested that this shortfall could be met from reserves and the members agreed that it would not be appropriate to add to resident's Council Tax burden at this time. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Vernon, seconded by Cllr Cullingworth, and **RESOLVED** by all members present to accept the revised budget and request a precept of £17,000 for 2023/24.

7. SPEEDWATCH

No sessions had taken place over the Christmas period. Cllr Staples noted that the equipment will need to be recalibrated once it is returned by Sandhurst Speedwatch. The cost of doing so will be shared equally between the Council and Sandhurst Parish Council.

8. PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS

Cllr Murray is undertaking the regular inspections. She reported that there were no issues with the equipment save that the backboard to the basketball hoop is in poor condition. It is delaminating and, of the four bolts that attach it to the frame, one is missing and one is loose. It does not appear

to be at imminent risk of becoming detached but Cllr Murray recommended that it be replaced if possible. It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain quotes for this work.

Cllr Cullingworth is yet to put sand on the slide steps because the wet weather would have simply washed it away. She will do this once we have a period of dry weather.

9. ROAD REPORT

Cllr Gosbee reported the large pot holes by Little Brookwood and Brookwood Cottages and put cones on them. He has also reported a large pot hole on Waller Hill. The hole in the road by Dig Dog Lane had been filled but was sinking again and the manhole cover outside Park Cottage is still loose. Cllr Gosbee is also trying to get something done about the potholes on Sand Lane.

Cllr Gosbee has reported the large builders bag dumped on London Lane. It is full of clay and right on the edge of the roadway so he hoped it would be swiftly dealt with.

Cllr Gosbee has inspected the salt bins and will ask for them to be refilled. The salt bin by London Lane is full of water and so he will ask that this be addressed. It is unlikely that the stolen bin that had been located by the Noticeboard would be replaced because the Council did not have a record of it in situ.

Cllr Gosbee had asked Cllr Holden of KCC why Frittenden did not get any assistance with snow clearance or road gritting during the recent cold weather. He has received a response from David Brazier, the member for Sevenoaks Rural North East and Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport. He stated that:

“In Kent we have, miles of public highway and for many years we have gritted A roads, B roads, those unclassified roads of strategic importance and some that are particularly dangerous in winter conditions. We do not grit other rural roads, residential roads in towns or pavements. Sometimes District/Borough, town or parish councils will undertake some local gritting and we can provide bags of materials for their use. We have arrangements with farmers to use snow ploughs when there is a significant depth of snow.

There is a map of gritting routes on www.kent.gov.uk. You will see that we do not grit rural villages; we have gritters and when there is snow and ice to contend with, these are treating the network three times a day. We just do not have the capacity to grit every road. The A229 is kept clear however, so that your residents can reach Maidstone without too much difficulty during a snow event”.

Cllr Gosbee commented that it was of little use to residents that the A229 was clear if they could not get to it due to the snow and ice on all roads leading to it.

Cllr Cullingworth raised the dangerous state of the crossroads at Bounds Cross. The road layout had been changed, ostensibly to make it safer, but the number of accidents that had occurred since, to include one which led to a fatality on Christmas Eve, demonstrate that it remains unsafe and, if anything, is now more dangerous, particularly for those turning into Bell Lane from the A274 or Frittenden Road. Cllr Staples suggested that this be raised with Cllr Holden and instructed the Clerk to write to him.

10. PLANNING

New Applications

22/03574/FULL	Redundant Agricultural Building, Ayleswade Lane, Biddenden Change of use and extension to agricultural building to create 1No. dwelling Proposed by Cllr Vernon, Seconded by Cllr Murray RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL
---------------	---

Outcome of Previous applications

- None

Planning appeals

- None.

11. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

- KALC Community Awards Scheme 2023 – The Clerk noted that nominations were now being invited and should be received by KALC by 28th February 2023. A resident was proposed and it was agreed that Cllr Staples would draft an appropriate citation for approval at the next meeting of the Council.
- Cllr Riley, in her capacity as Chair of the Memorial Hall Committee had asked whether the Parish Council might contribute to the cost of purchasing a protective cover for the Parish Map. Cllr Staples had made enquiries of the previous Chair of the Parish Council and Mr Phil Betts, who headed up the Committee which organised the creation of the map. Their initial views were that the map was owned by the Parish Council, but Mr Betts will check his records to confirm. It was agreed that Cllr Staples would indicate to Cllr Riley that the Parish Council was willing, in principle, to contribute to this cost pending a formal resolution being made at the next meeting.

12. FINANCE

- It was proposed by Cllr Vernon, seconded by Cllr Murray, and **RESOLVED** by all members present to pay the accounts as follows:

FRITTENDEN PAYMENTS –January 2023					
Cheque Number	GROSS	VAT	NET	SUPPLIER	DETAILS
BACS	£17.00	Nil	£17.00	Memorial Hall	Room Hire – Meeting Room (1 x session + winter surcharge)
BACS	£50.40	£8.40	£42.00	Urbaser Ltd	Rubbish Collection – Litter Bins – December
BACS	£53.60	nil	£53.60	Mrs Emma Nightingale	Clerk’s Expenses – January
BACS	£74.81	nil	£74.81	Mrs Emma Nightingale	Clerk’s Salary – January
BACS	£49.60	nil	£49.60	HMRC	PAYE

BACS	£244.50	nil	£244.50	Frittenden Primary School	s137 Donation – Santa Dash Proceeds
BACS	£244.50	nil	£244.50	Sissinghurst Primary School	s137 Donation – Santa Dash Proceeds
DD	tbc	tbc	tbc	Npower	Streetlighting Energy - December
Total	£734.41	£8.40	£726.01		

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:25 pm.

Chairman's Signature: _____

Date: _____