

A Meeting of the Parish Council was held at The Memorial Hall, The Street, Frittenden on Tuesday 1st April 2025 at 7.30pm.

Present were: Cllr G Lawrence
Cllr A Staples
Cllr L Gosbee
Cllr J Tuke
Cllr M Viviers

In attendance: Mrs E Nightingale (Clerk), Cllr A Fairweather (Borough), Cllr N Warne (Borough), Cllr Ellen Neville & Claudine Russell (both candidates for Cranbrook Division in the upcoming KCC elections)

PUBLIC FORUM:

None.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr R Vernon, Cllr S Murray

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

None

3. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR UPDATE

Cllr Fairweather reported that interim submissions have been lodged by the 14 local authorities in Kent setting out their proposals for devolution. The key questions at this stage are whether there should be 3 or 4 unitary councils, how those unitary councils should be comprised and the costs of the various models proposed. The 14 councils are not agreed on the size or boundaries of the unitary councils, save that 4, which includes Tunbridge Wells, agree that they should together form a single unitary council for West Kent.

Cllr Fairweather has also been liaising with Cllr Lawrence around the pavement works on Cranbrook Road and was pleased to hear that some progress was being made to resolve the problems these works had caused.

Cllr Warne noted that there had been a meeting of the Policy Group on the morning of 1st April 2025. As a result of the changes introduced by Central Government, the new housing need figure for TWBC had gone up from 678 per annum to 1,100 per annum, with a 5% buffer being added to that figure. The Group had discussed proposed Planning Committee reforms, for example what decision making should be delegated to planning officers and what should remain the remit of the Committee. The aim of the reforms was to move back to more regional based planning but how this would be achieved remained up in the air.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 4TH MARCH 2025

It was proposed by Cllr Gosbee, seconded by Cllr Staples, and **RESOLVED** (1 abstention) that the Minutes from the Council meeting on 4th March 2025 are a true and accurate record of that meeting.

That being so, the Chairman will sign the said Minutes.

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

Sand Lane verges

The Clerk had asked Canham Homes to consider remediating damage to the verges along Sand Lane. They had indicated that they would take a look at the verges and so the Clerk will follow up

Annual Parish Assembly

Cllr Fletcher, Chair of Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council, had kindly agreed to speak at the Annual Parish Assembly. Cllr Lawrence will liaise with him so an agenda could be produced and published in advance of the meeting, which would take place on 14th May 2025.

VE Day Celebrations

The Parish Council is organising the beacon lighting and Cllr Staples is liaising with the beacon lighter.

Easter Fun Run

It was proposed by Cllr Viviers, seconded by Cllr Staples, and **RESOLVED** by all members present that the net proceeds of the Fun Run be divided between Frittenden Preschool and Frittenden Memorial Hall.

6. UPDATING FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Recent legislation changes mean that the Financial Regulations adopted in 2019 need to be reviewed and updated. The Clerk will complete this process and circulate draft amended Financial Regulations for approval and adoption at the next meeting of the Council.

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS TO TWBC LOCAL PLAN

Cllr Staples had reviewed the documents and did not consider that the proposed modifications required commenting on, but it was agreed that Cllr Vernon, who leads on planning issues, would be asked for his views so that relevant comments can be agreed before the end of the consultation on 30 April 2025 if necessary. In the meantime, hard copies of the consultation documents would be available to view at the Church for those who were unable to easily access them via TWBC's website.

8. NEW PAVEMENT ALONG CRANBROOK ROAD/THE STREET

Cllr Lawrence had got agreement from Canham Homes and KCC that permanent signage was needed warning that the road narrowed where the new pavement had been constructed. He was pressing to get the signs in place as a matter of urgency. Cllr Lawrence has also asked for sight of the Stage 2 Safety Audit that was carried out before that work took place to see whether the road narrowing was specifically approved and, if so, by whom. Cllr Lawrence would be putting pressure on Canham Homes to complete the Stage 3 Safety Audit as soon as possible. Thereafter, he would look to get the road narrowing incorporated into a proper traffic calming scheme and would involve the Highway Improvement Working Group in this.

9. DAMAGED BENCH

The bench has been removed and the commemorative plaque retained. The Council is grateful to Cllr Gosbee for arranging this.

The Clerk reported that the person who had caused the damage had offered to contribute £300 towards the cost of replacing the bench, which was estimated at between £400 and £500. This would mean that the Council would have to fund the balance, being £100 to £200 or the purchase of an appropriate replacement bench plus the costs of installation. The Council questioned whether this was an appropriate use of taxpayers' money, when the cost of replacement ought to be met wholly by the person who caused the damage. The Clerk was therefore directed to liaise with that person and request that they cover the whole cost.

10. HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN & WORKING GROUP

Cllr Lawrence reported that the Group had now been formed and comprised Cllr Lawrence (Chair), Cllr Gosbee and 4 residents.

11. SPEEDWATCH

Cllr Staples reported that there had been 6 sessions during which 21 offenders had been recorded out of 221 vehicles. During the session held on the morning of 1st April 2025, a vehicle was recorded at 45mph coming from the direction of Cranbrook Road despite the road narrowing caused by the new pavement. The highest speed recorded in the last month was 53mph on Biddenden Road. Another volunteer was joining Speedwatch, which was welcome as two current volunteers will be leaving as they are moving away from the village.

12. PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS / EQUIPMENT

Cllr Gosbee reported that there were no maintenance issues with the play equipment.

He noted that the Parish Field had been mowed by the new Grounds Maintenance Contractor, who had done a very good job.

Cllr Gosbee asked whether the Council would consider prohibiting dogs from being off lead on the Parish Field. He had seen a dog walker with a number of loose dogs and questioned whether they could be said to have been under control. This was a concern as children had to go through the area where dogs were loose in order to access the playground. It was agreed that this would be put on the agenda for further consideration at the next meeting of the Council.

13. ROAD REPORT

Cllr Gosbee reported that the 'Frittenden' sign had now been installed on the Biddenden Road gateway but the 30mph roundel on the road was yet to be painted. A number of potholes had been filled down to Long Meadows and a strip of tarmac had been laid where the road had been eroded by water. Paul Catt had suggested that the road would need to be closed on 9th April 2025 to allow the waterboard to investigate the source of the water.

A washing machine had been fly tipped into the ditch along Biddenden Road and this had been reported.

Surface repairs would be carried out to Mill Lane on 3rd April 2025 and further works would be carried out on Staplehurst Road sometime after that.

The Clerk confirmed that she had submitted a formal complaint to KCC about the state of Biddenden Road between Buckhurst Bridge and the junction with Hareplain Road/Frittenden Road. The complaint had been acknowledged, but it was likely to be some time before a formal response was received.

14. PLANNING

New Applications

25/00529/FULL	South View Lodge, Cranbrook Road, Frittenden Front & rear elevation dormers Proposed by Cllr Viviers, Seconded by Tuke RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL
25/00681/FULL	Land North of East Barn, Headcorn Road, Frittenden Conversion & extension of barn to a dwelling with associated garden land, parking, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements Proposed by Cllr Tuke, Seconded by Cllr Staples RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL

Outcome of Previous applications

25/00101/FULL	1 Sunnyside Cottages, Biddenden Road, Frittenden Two storey side extension; second floor extension & 3 dormer windows; single storey extension & landscape alterations PERMISSION GRANTED
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Planning appeals

- None

15. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

- The Clerk had received notice of the establishment of the Knoxbridge Resident's Association.

16. FINANCE

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

FRITTENDEN PAYMENTS – APRIL 2025					
Cheque Number	GROSS	VAT	NET	SUPPLIER	DETAILS
BACS	£15.00	Nil	£17.00	Frittenden Memorial Hall	Hall Hire (1 x session)
BACS	£50.40	£8.40	£42.00	FCC Waste Management Ltd (formerly Urbaser Ltd)	Litterbin Collection (March)
BACS	£234.53	£39.09	£195.44	Landscape Services	Grounds Maintenance (March)
BACS	£300.00	£50.00	£250.00	Groundscare & General Services Ltd	Grass cutting – Parish Field (Grounds Maintenance – April)
BACS	£477.91	£79.65	£398.26	KALC	KALC Subscription 2025/26
BACS	£53.60	Nil	£53.60	Mrs E Nightingale	Clerk's Expenses - April
BACS	£208.21	Nil	£208.21	Mrs E Nightingale	Clerk's Salary – April

BACS	£52.00	Nil	£52.00	HMRC	PAYE
DD	£11.99	£2.00	£9.99	Hugo Fox	Website Hosting fee
DD	tbc	tbc	tbc	Npower	Streetlighting Energy – March
Total	£1,403.64	£179.14	£1,224.50		

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Cllr Gosbee reported on the last meeting of the Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee.

Jamie Freeman had been re-elected as Chair. In response to noise complaints, pilots were being asked to follow a specific route in or out of the airfield. A noise complaint by the Big Cat Sanctuary had led to a kind an invitation to airfield staff to come and view the work they do at the sanctuary.

The airfield periodically undertakes litter picks and a Macdonald's receipt picked up during a recent litter pick led to the person responsible for the litter being traced and fined £250.

The next meeting of the committee will take place on 14th October 2025.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8:26pm.

Chairman's Signature: _____

Date: _____