

A Meeting of the Parish Council was held at The Memorial Hall, The Street, Frittenden on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 7.30pm.

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

In attendance: Mrs E Nightingale (Clerk)

### **PUBLIC FORUM:**

None.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr R Riley, Cllr R Vernon, Cllr S Holden (County), Cllr A Fairweather (Borough)

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

None.

#### **3. BOROUGH & COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE**

None.

#### **4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON THE 15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022**

It was proposed by Cllr Gosbee, seconded by Cllr Cullingworth, and **RESOLVED** (1 abstention) that the Minutes from the Council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November 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 had sent an email to Cllr Holden asking him to confirm: (i) the proportion of children in Kent with special educational needs; and (ii) the cost incurred by Kent CC in handling refugees over and above any funds received from Central Government for that purpose. The Clerk was yet to receive a response.

##### Stones on the verge outside Ferrers, Sand Lane

Cllr Gosbee has not yet spoken with the new owner of Ferrers.

##### Dog Fouling

Cllr Cullingworth is working on getting a quote for signs addressing this issue. In the meantime, Cllr Staples advised that he got two responses to the article that was published in the Parish Magazine in this regard. One related to a professional dog walker who was using the Parish Field

to walk the dogs in their charge. One of those dogs fouled without the dog walker seeming to notice. They did clear up the mess when it was pointed out to them by a resident, but should have noticed what the dog had done if they were in proper control of it. Cllr Cullingworth reported that dog bags were still being taken from the dispenser at an unsustainable rate.

Parking across driveways on The Street

Cllr Cullingworth had not noted any change in parking behaviour since the school put up a poster addressing this issue.

Santa Dash

The proceeds had been given to the Clerk to bank and the onward payments to Frittenden School and Sissinghurst School would be included in the cheque list for approval at the next meeting of the Council.

King's Coronation Celebrations Open Meeting

This would take place at the Memorial Hall at 7:30pm on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

Meeting Dates 2023

Cllr Tuke will publish the agreed dates on the Council's website. The next meeting of the Council would take place on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023.

Trees planted on the verge outside the Old Chapel

The Council had established in 2004 that the verge did not form part of, and therefore was not in the ownership of, the Old Chapel. Accordingly, the current owner of the Old Chapel should not have planted trees or bushes on the verge. The Council discussed whether a letter should be written to the current owner raising this, but it was agreed that if that action was to be taken in respect of the Old Chapel, it would also have to be taken in respect of all other property owners who had placed items on the public verge outside of their properties. As the trees/plants did not obstruct the view at the junction with Sand Lane/Biddenden Road, it was proposed by Cllr Murray, seconded by Cllr Cullingworth, and **RESOLVED** (2 abstentions) that the matter be kept under review with no further action being taken at this time.

Budget

Cllr Staples noted that the approved budget for 2023/24 would need to be amended to include the election expenses which the Council would be required to pay as 2023 was an election year. This will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council.

Donations

Cllr Gosbee reported that the new school on the site of the former High Weald Academy continued to operate the farm for the benefit of its pupils. It was therefore agreed that the donation approved at the last meeting would be made subject to Cllr Gosbee obtaining contact details for the person the Clerk needed to approach to set up the payment.

## 6. ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

The full council of TWBC was meeting to consider its previous decision to make changes to the electoral arrangements. In advance of that meeting, Cllr Staples had spoken to explain the Parish Council's opposition to the proposed changes at the General Purposes Committee and worked on the submission of a letter which was included as Appendix J in the material to be considered by those attending the full council. Cllr Staples had also submitted a written statement to be read out at the full council meeting given that he could not attend because it clashed with tonight's Parish Council meeting.

## 7. KALC AGM

Cllr Staples reported that Roger Gough, Leader of Kent CC, had given a very good presentation at the AGM which largely dealt with the points covered off by Cllr Holden in his last report to the Parish Council. Kent CC was on a financial knife edge and the drivers of its financial difficulties were largely the cost of adult social care and child support. Matthew Scott, Kent Police & Crime Commissioner, had also given a presentation, during which he had to admit that Kent Police had serious problems with response times in its 101 service. It was noted that its online chat system was often more responsive. Mr Scott explained that more police were being recruited but that it took some time for this to have an impact because it took a while for new officers to complete their training. Cllr Staples noted that Mr Scott did not mention that the number of PCSO's was being cut, but he did say that efforts were being made to get more officers out into the County and away from desk work.

Cllr Staples noted that a comment was made at the AGM about the Highway Authority's reluctance to get involved in planning matters.

## **8. PARISH CHAIRMEN'S MEETING**

This meeting was attended by Cllr Staples and his note is appended to these minutes.

## **9. IDENDEN CHARITY – REAPPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEE**

It was proposed by Cllr Staples, seconded by Cllr Tuke, and **RESOLVED** (1 abstention) that the reappointment of Heather Collins as trustee of the Idenden Charity be approved.

## **10. SPEEDWATCH**

Cllr Staples reported 36 offenders had been recorded over 6 sessions, being a 17% offending rate. The highest speed recorded was 46mph on Biddenden Road.

## **11. PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS**

Cllr Cullingworth reported that a second nut was loose on the basketball hoop back board. Cllr Murray was doing the inspections over the next month and would look at this.

Cllr Cullingworth noted that she was yet to put down any sand on the steps because of the adverse weather conditions. Her Partner, Mark, had kindly donated a bag of sand and this would be applied as soon as conditioned allowed.

Cllr Cullingworth confirmed that the small ladder to the climbing frame had been resecured by Capel Groundcare.

## **12. ROAD REPORT**

Cllr Gosbee reported that the blocked drain by Poplar House had been cleared. The ill-fitting manhole cover outside Park Cottage was under investigation but yet to be resolved.

Cllr Gosbee had noted that bits of the road surface on Staplehurst Road had broken off and reported this to Paul Catt. He had been told that Staplehurst Road was scheduled for repairs in early February 2023. There was also a large pot hole on the Headcorn Road by Brook Wood and Cllr Gosbee was also working on getting the hole by Dig Dog Lane repaired.

The fly tipping in London Lane had been cleared.

Cllr Gosbee would check what salt bins needed to be refilled and ask for this to be done.

In advance of the meeting, Cllr Vernon had circulated his concerns about the lack of any snow clearance or gritting of the roads in and out of the Village. Cllr Cullingworth commented that this was of particular concern because Frittenden did not have a shop and so residents were forced to use these roads to get food and provisions. Cllr Vernon had asked whether local farmers might be paid by Kent CC to clear the snow as they had done in the past. Cllr Staples understood that this had stopped because it was not good for the farmers' equipment and the payment they received was too low to make it worth risking that equipment. Cllr Tuke raised his concerns that Kent CC had not even spread any salt. It was agreed that Cllr Gosbee would raise with Kent CC the Council's serious concerns at the lack of support the Parish had received during the very cold weather.

Cllr Vernon had also reported to the Council an incident in which 3 large articulated lorries parked up for the night outside the Weald Business Park and, in doing so, completely blocked Dig Dog Lane. The Clerk confirmed that she had reported this incident to Cllr Holden but was yet to receive a response. The Clerk was instructed to write to the businesses that were located at the Weald Business Park to ask that they ensure that all drivers, to include any external drivers coming to the site, were aware that they should only attend during business hours as there was no where they could safely park their vehicles and wait for the site to open if they arrived outside of those hours.

### 13. PLANNING

#### New Applications

- None

#### Outcome of Previous applications

22/02927/FULL	Chanceford Cottage, Sand Lane, Frittenden Erection of two garages <b>PERMISSION GRANTED</b>
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#### Planning appeals

- 21/02959/FULL – Land North of Grandshore Farm, Grandshore Lane, Frittenden – Siting of mobile home, touring caravan, utility room & installation of septic tank – APP/M2270/W/22/3302329.

Cllr Vernon had circulated his comments on this appeal in advance of the meeting. He had reviewed the appeal documents and did not feel that there was anything that could usefully be added to the comments already submitted by the Parish Council opposing the application, which formed part of the papers that would be put before the Planning Inspector. It was therefore agreed that no further submissions would be made, notwithstanding the Council's continued opposition this application.

### 14. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

- Closure of Action with Communities in Rural Kent – The Clerk referred the Council to an email she had received advising that this organisation was closing. Cllr Staples expressed the Council's disappointment at this news in light of the great help and assistance AWCRK had provided to the Council and other organisations/initiatives in the Parish over the years.

## 15. FINANCE

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

FRITTENDEN PAYMENTS –December 2022					
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 – November
BACS	£97.58	nil	£97.58	Mrs Emma Nightingale	Clerk’s Expenses – December
BACS	£82.66	nil	£82.66	Mrs Emma Nightingale	Clerk’s Salary – December
BACS	£55.20	nil	£55.20	HMRC	PAYE
BACS	£213.00	£35.50	£177.50	Kent Grassland Services Ltd	Grounds Maintenance – November
BACS	£954.00	£159.00	£795.00	Sean Croucher – B&J	Refund of cost of replacement batteries x 3 for defibrillators
BACS	£300.00	nil	£300.00	Bell & Jorrocks	Tent Team lunch
BACS	£61.20	£10.20	£51.00	Capel Groundcare	Resecuring small ladder to climbing frame
BACS	£281.77	nil	£281.77	Mr M Cooper	Reimbursement of cost of refurbishment of Tent Team Trailer
BACS	£125.00	nil	£125.00	KSS Air Ambulance	s137 Donation
BACS	£50.00	nil	£50.00	Victim Support	s137 Donation
BACS	£100.00	nil	£100.00	Tunbridge Wells CAB	s137 Donation
BACS	£350.00	nil	£350.00	Frittenden PCC	s137 Donation
BACS	£50.00	nil	£50.00	West Kent YMCA – Frittenden Youth Club	s137 Donation
BACS	£75.00	nil	£75.00	Samaritans	s137 Donation
BACS	£50.00	nil	£50.00	Relate	s137 Donation
BACS	£75.00	nil	£75.00	Hospice in the Weald	s137 Donation
BACS	£75.00	nil	£75.00	Frittenden Preschool	s137 Donation
BACS	£100.00	nil	£100.00	Frittenden School	s137 Donation
BACS	£100.00	nil	£100.00	Hawkhurst Community League of Friends – Cottage Hospital	s137 Donation
BACS	£50.00	nil	£50.00	Royal British Legion	s137 Donation
DD	£31.93*	£1.52	£30.41	Npower	Streetlight Energy – October
DD	tbc	tbc	Tbc	Npower	Streetlighting Energy - November
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,344.74</b>	<b>£214.62</b>	<b>£3,130.12</b>		

\*Npower has credited the £51.15 paid for energy charges for October 2022 and recalculated those charges at £31.93.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:00 pm.

Chairman's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX**

Parish Chairmen's Meeting

6<sup>th</sup> December 2022**Key points:****Cost of living support** (Ian Hirst, Head of Digital Services and Communications)

[Cost of living support \(tunbridgewells.gov.uk\)](https://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk) gives details of range of financial support for households in the borough largely with TWBC acting as conduit for government funds.

**Budget** (Lee Colyer, Director of Finance)

£1.4m deficit forecast for next financial year due to rapidly rising costs, especially in subcontracted services, eg waste and leisure areas where, according to LC the market is broken. With leisure rather than receiving a fee from the provides TWBC is now having to provide a subsidy, and waste costs are rising by £2m. The deficit will rise steadily each year partly because of contracts coming up for renegotiation.

General problem in local government but TWBC compares well with other councils on cost management. Latest census shows that the population of TW remained virtually static from 2011-2021 (overall Kent grew by 8%, only TW was unchanged). Consequently the council tax base has stagnated and as council tax rates are capped by the government. Also 1/3 of households are claiming single person relief. So tax income is not rising to meet inflated costs.

There is a 'consultation' on the TWBC website.

[Budget Consultation 2023/24 | Talking Point Tunbridge Wells \(engagementhq.com\)](https://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

TWBC suffers from a problem of recruitment as it is a high cost area and has a high level of employment. The impact of planning policy on this was discussed.

**Local Plan Update** (Ellen Gilbert, Acting Planning Policy Manager)

Independent Examiner's initial report received in November and visible on:

[Examination of the Local Plan \(tunbridgewells.gov.uk\)](https://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

## Main findings

Greenbelt releases reasonable but more justification needed for 'omission' sites – ie sites put forward in call for sites but not taken forward into the Local Plan

Main issue is Tudeley Village. Is it justified and effective? Independent Examiner not yet satisfied re accessibility, especially for cyclists and pedestrians, lack of railway station, limited public transport, and impact on Five Oak Green. He also questioned the delivery rate of housing.

Paddock Wood/East Capel regarded as logical (largely)

T Wells Town – some issues re specific sites eg cinema site , Hawkenbury Sports Field and Colebrook Estate

More generally – housing provision for elderly and disabled questioned.

Re Tudeley Village, three options open:

- a. Justify
- b. Modify allocation to TV
- c. Delete TV

Options will be considered balancing risk and potential delays to finalizing the report

Changes to TV and PW allocations could mean 2,000 fewer houses in the Local Plan.

Overall EG considers that the majority of the changes needed are straightforward.

**BUT** the effect of resolving these issues means that the final adoption of Local Plan likely to be later than planned. Until the Local Plan is adopted TWBC is vulnerable to development being allowed as long as TWBC planners cannot prove a secure five-year housing supply.

AJS

14 Dec 22