

The **Minutes** of the meeting of **Upchurch Parish Council** held in Upchurch Village Hall on **Thursday 24th June 2021**

Present: Cllr Tyrone Ripley (Chairman), Cllr John Arnold (Vice Chairman), Cllr John Bodycomb, Cllr Pam Denny, Cllr Alan Horton, Cllr Gerry Lewin, Cllr Gary Rosewell and Cllr Neil Sheppard;
and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present were County Councillor Mike Baldock, Ward Member Richard Palmer and three members of the public.

25. Apologies for absence

All Members were present.

26. Declarations of interest

None were declared.

27. Minutes of the meeting on 6th May 2021

Cllr Horton **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 6th May 2021 as a true record; **SECONDED** by Cllr Lewin: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. Cllr Ripley duly signed the minutes as a true record.

Public Time

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time.

SBCllr Palmer reported that he was still chasing planning enforcement issues. Offices made a site visit to Jack Russell Place and ascertained the fence is less than 2m high and did not require planning permission, there were no ground works taking place.
Cllr Ripley thanked SBCllr Palmer for attending and for his report.

KCCllr Baldock paid tribute to his predecessor, Mike Whiting who was a cabinet Member and was an effective division Member and said that he was looking forward to working with Upchurch. Members' Grant Fund is £10,000 for the coming year. The Swale West Parish Forum will be set up for discussions and working together, the first one will be in the Autumn. Cllr Ripley thanked KCCllr Baldock for attending and for his report.

A resident raised concern about the lighting at the chip shop which is causing light pollution and a nuisance.

ACTION: Cllr Arnold to talk to the new manager to find a resolution.

A resident reported the death of Christian Finance Chairman of the Ferques Twinning Committee who had signed the twinning document in the church.

ACTION: Clerk to write letters of condolence.

The meeting was reconvened

28. Correspondence

i) Holy Well at Holywell

Cllr Lewin reported he had received a request for a plaque at the Holy Well site, previously the Council established a policy that if the land was not under the authority of the Council it would be supportive. A response has been sent to the resident.

ii) Request to plant trees

Cllr Lewin said that he was supportive of a request to plant a tree to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, the Council has a tradition of planting commemorative trees, particularly oak trees.

Item for GPC

iii) Traffic and Speeding concerns

Item to be dealt with later in the agenda.

KCCllr Baldock left the meeting.

29. Planning

i) Ref: 21/502543/FULL

Address: 18 The Poles Upchurch Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7EX

Proposal: Erection of a single storey front extension to form wet room.

Councillors considered the application and supported the proposal.

ii) Ref: 21/502694/FULL

Address: 76 Wallbridge Lane Upchurch Gillingham Kent ME8 7XH

Proposal: Section 73 - Application for minor material amendment to approved plans condition 2 (to allow small increase in footprint of ground floor and internal layout alterations) pursuant to 19/503930/FULL for - Erection of a detached two storey, 3 bedroom house with associated car parking at 76 Wallbridge Lane, Upchurch, Kent.

Councillors considered the application and had no further comment to make save that the views of neighbours be taken into account.

iii) Ref: 21/503136/ADV

Address: Suzuki (Medway) Rainham London Road Rainham Gillingham Kent ME8 8PT

Proposal: Advertisement consent for 1no. internally illuminated folded aluminium freestanding double sided 'Suzuki' totem sign, 2no. internally illuminated folded aluminium 'Suzuki Medway' fascia signs, 1no. non illuminated folded aluminium freestanding single sided 'Welcome' totem sign, and 2no. non illuminated free standing directional signs.

Councillors considered the application and had no comments to make.

KCCllr Baldock rejoined the meeting

iv) Swale Borough Council Draft Planning Enforcement Strategy and Charter consultation

Cllr Lewin informed Members that this was an update of a previous document and there were no issues.

v) Swale Borough Council Consultation to agree Listing Criteria for Local Heritage List

No comments were raised.

Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Rosewell for his work on planning matters.

Jack Russell Place

Cllr Horton said there have been issues with Swale Planning Enforcement.

KCCllr Baldock reported that as Swale Borough Council Cabinet Member, he has raised concerns regarding planning enforcement and has urged there be more funding. The pandemic has not helped and staff have been under resourced for a number of years. Cllr Ripley said residents are concerned about the enforcement process.

30. Application for premises Licence under the Licensing Act 2003

Christine House London Road, Rainham, Kent ME8 8PT

SBCllr Horton reported that feedback he had received was concerning the hours being too long and there is no justification. There are two different elements of legislation regarding this, the application may need to be modified.

31. Allotments

Cllr Ripley reported that two vacant plots have been rented out.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to order a speed limit sign.

ACTIN: Clerk to order an A4 speed limit sign.

32. Finance

i. Cheques

Chq no	Payee	Reason	Amount
3995	Mr T Honeyman <i>Paid out of meeting</i>	Litter picker	£109.77
3996	EDF <i>Paid out of meeting</i>	Street lighting electricity	£654.41
3997	Mrs W Licence <i>Paid out of meeting</i>	Expenses, Salary adjustment and bin labels	£136.17
3998	Upchurch Village Hall <i>Paid out of meeting</i>	Hall hire	£52.00
3999	Playsafety PS Ltd	Safety inspection	£166.80
4000	Vincent James Landscapes <i>Paid out of meeting</i>	Recreation Ground cuts 200.00 Cut hedge & treat fence line weeds 125.00 Paddock 110.00 Churchyard and Burial Ground cuts 350.00 Wheelie bin works 425.00 Empty compost bins 40.00 Total	£1250.00
4001	Upchurch Parish Council	Opening deposit for Unity Bank account	£5,000.00
4002	KALC	Subscription 779.78 VAT 155.96 Total	£935.74

The cheque list was noted and the payments to open the Unity Bank account and KALC subscription were agreed.

ii. Annual Governance Statement- To agree the statement

Councillors agreed the Annual Governance Statement which was duly signed by Cllr Ripley and the Clerk.

iii. Annual Return for Year End 31 March 2021- To receive and to consider the adoption of end of year return

The Accounting Statement was approved by Councillors and it was duly signed by Cllr Ripley and the Clerk.

Cllr Horton reported that the Council had amended its finance strategy around the street lighting and was able to deliver the lights quicker and cheaper than anticipated.

Cllr Lewin said consideration needs to be given to a depreciation strategy and the assets need to be reviewed.

33. Paddock and Recreation Ground

Cllr Ripley gave an update on the car park and reported that one person has moved away, another no longer needs to park there, another resident has requested and paid for a key. Four permits have been paid for.

ACTION: Clerk to request the return of the key.

Cllr Ripley reported that he had straighten the bar on the gate, it is still functional. The gates are robust.

Cllr Horton said this will need to be included in the budget.

Cllr Denny reported the Tikspac bags have been given to a contractor to replenish the stations. The area in The Paddock needs its annual maintenance.

ACTION: Clerk to ascertain when this is due.

Cllr Denny reported the corned outside The Paddock in Chaffes Lane has become overgrown.

ACTION: Clerk to contact contractor.

Cllr Horton said the area needs regular maintenance.

Cllr Denny said the Oak Lane junction with Chaffes Lane is overgrown.

ACTION: Clerk to report to KCC Highways.

Cllr Ripley reported that he had met with an organisation which does a lot of community projects and the area in The Paddock could be ideal for a nature trail for children and forestry skills.

Cllr Horton said the school is a forestry school.

34. Burial Ground and Churchyard

Cllr Denny informed Members that the bottom hedge has been cut. Ownership of the bench needs to be ascertained.

ACTION: Clerk to check details.

Cllr Ripley reported that there had been a meeting with the church regarding the trees in the churchyard which shed detritus over the graves, a quotation will be obtained. Some unattended graves have trees growing out of them. The ash trees are the responsibility of the Parish Council.

ITEM FOR GPC

ACTION: Cllr Ripley to obtain quotations to lift the canopy of the two ash trees.

Cllr Denny reported that the gate has dropped.

Cllr Ripley said the post needs to be replaced.

Cllr Denny said moving the wheelie bins has been a great success. The compost bins are full. There needs to be a scheme for the bank.

35. Highways and Street Lighting

i. To receive an update

Cllr Arnold informed Members that the contractor is confident the remainder of the lights will be completed week beginning 19 July. A certificate of work will need to be completed and there will be further paperwork. The streetlights need to be labelled in case of accident. An UMS Certificate will be obtained.

Cllr Arnold reported that two potholes in Wallbridge Lane have been reported.

Cllr Horton informed Members that a resident had been hurt by a sign in Oak Lane which was the wrong height. Cllr Horton and Cllr Arnold have remedied the matter.

Cllr Arnold **PROPOSED** that a white line should be installed outside the white house on the south side of Horsham Lane, about one metre from the fence line, to indicate a pedestrian walkway: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Traffic and Speeding concerns

Cllr Horton said the Parish Highways Improvement Plan was triggered by an article and letter the Council had received. There has been coverage of issues on Social Media which generally have not been well-informed and make incorrect assumptions about the Parish Council's work on Highways Improvements.

Councillors considered the email from a resident and noted that there was a Parish Highways Improvement Plan in place for the road narrowing in Oak Lane and this is being progressed as part of the construction works on the building plot on the junction of Oak Lane and Wallbridge Lane. The responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the scheme which is a condition of the planning permission sits with Swale Borough Council. The Parish Council will carry out another speed survey but it will be in Spring 2022 to ensure the data is comparable.

ACTION: Clerk to respond to the resident.

Cllr Horton gave an update on the Parish Highways Improvement Plan

Horsham Lane: the priority following the Parish Council's consultation for Horsham Lane was speed control and the junction with Oak Lane. KCC Highways will install a ghost island opposite the planter. A speed survey was carried out in Horsham Lane in Spring 2019, it was hoped to have another survey in 2020 but due to the pandemic this was postponed to 2021 and following the extended Covid related restrictions will now take place in 2022. This enables a direct comparison and assessment of the impact of changes in Horsham Lane thus far. Anecdotal evidence suggests the roundels and words in the carriageway had an immediate impact and slowed the traffic however it may be speeds have drifted up as the impact of the mitigation is lost. Re-painting is intended to emphasise the mitigation and lead to a continued impact. The lack of surveys in 2020 and 2021 means we do not have the evidence to confirm or negate this. KCC Highways has suggested a longer lasting paint product, this will be considered by the Council when the lines need re-painting again. The previous survey showed that public perception of traffic speed was that an issue as the vehicles are travelling within KCC tolerances for that road.

Junction Church Farm Road and Chaffes Lane

A new surface has been laid on the footpath in Chaffes Lane. It has been agreed that KCC Highways will install wooden posts in Chaffes Lane either side of the junction with Church Farm Road, this was raised as an issue in the consultation. There is a ten-week wait time for delivery of the scheme. KCC Highways will also install a bend warning and two SLOW signs, The Parish Council is committed to keeping the trees cut back and will mark the edge of the road with white lines to highlight the dangerous stretch of road. It is anticipated that the work will be completed in August and there is funding available from the KCC Small Schemes budget although the Parish Council may have to contribute.

Oak Lane

Cllr Horton said the hedge had been removed at 116 Oak Lane for the construction of the new houses, the developer has accepted the modification of the highways scheme to give priority to vehicles leaving the village and vehicles entering the village will be required to stop to give way. There will be a road surface change with stones in the road marking a small chicane.

Planning permission was granted with the road management scheme to be implemented by the developer (text removed)

Cllr Horton said that when the work has been completed it would be sensible to carry out a speed survey to assess the impact of the scheme.

Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Horton for his report.

KCC Cllr Baldock recognised the benefits to the village of the Highways Improvement Plan and agreed to provide funding from his Grant scheme of up to £1000 if it was required.

Cllr Ripley thanked KCCllr Baldock for the offer of a grant.

ii. Kent County Council consultation – HGV Parking

Cllr Lewin said that as part of the EU exit period a Traffic Regulation Order was introduced preventing HGVs from parking anywhere except designated places, HGVs parking near Spade Lane has been detrimental. The Council should support the consultation.

Cllr Rosewell said Kent County Council needs to provide more areas for HGVs to stop so they can comply with driving regulations. The recent closing of laybys means that there is nowhere for HGVs to park. Insufficient parking for HGVs is a planning issue.

It was agreed to respond that the matter be supported and that KCC be urged to provide more parking for HGVs.

iii. Openreach Crosier Court

Cllr Arnold reported that Openreach had placed a notice 8' up a pole and it cannot be read. A resident, who works for Openreach, has resolved the matter.

36. Footpaths

Cllr Ripley informed Members that overgrown footpaths have been reported.

Cllr Arnold said the footpath has become overgrown again.

Cllr Horton said the Council had applied many times for a kissing gate to be installed at the footpath opposite Bradshaw Close. The landowner has now agreed to this and KCC PROW will install the gate in approximately ten weeks.

37. Environment

Best Kept Garden Competition

ITEM DEFERRED TO GPC

38. Reports from representatives

i) Village Hall Representative

Cllr Lewin said the Village Hall is going well and there will be a village celebration, the Parish Council might like to have a stand.

ITEM FOR GPC

ii) KALC

There was no update.

iii) Police Liaison Officer

Cllr Lewin reported that he had liaised with PCSO John Cork who hopes to attend most Parish Council meetings. The Clerk will inform PCSO Cork of meeting dates. PCSO Cork holds regular Police Surgeries in Snaffles. Crime statistics can be found on the Police website.

Cllr Horton said that the over-riding message is that Upchurch is a safe place to be.

39. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons 2nd June 2022

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to take part in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons.

ITEM FOR GPC

ACTION: Clerk to send Safety Advisory Group papers to Cllr Ripley and Cllr Horton.

40. Matters arising

Cllr Sheppard said the defibrillator has been removed from The Three Sisters, the pub is being redecorated and a new site needs to be found.

Cllr Ripley thanked the landlord of The Three Sisters for having the defibrillator at the pub, this has been an important service to the village and greatly appreciated.

ACTION: Clerk to contact SECamb regarding the defibrillators.

Cllr Horton said that the Council had intended to install a plaque at the church regarding the refurbishment of the church clock to commemorate the Centenary of the Great War. Installing the plaque outside was difficult so it was agreed to put the plaque inside the church. Money has been set aside for the project and this now needs to be completed.

ACTION: Clerk to contact church.

41. Date of next meeting Thursday 2nd September 2021 at 7.30pm

Cllr Ripley thanked everyone for attending.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.35pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: 2nd September 2021