

The Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held in Upchurch Scout Hut on Thursday 18th April 2019.

Present: Cllr Tyrone Ripley (Chairman), Cllr John Arnold (Vice Chairman), Cllr Pam Denny, Cllr Alan Horton, Cllr Gerry Lewin, Cllr Janet Marshall, Cllr Gary Rosewell and Cllr Neil Sheppard; Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk); SBCllr Palmer and twenty-three members of the public.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Peter Masson and County Councillor Mike Whiting.

1. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 12th April 2018

Cllr Ripley welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th April 2018 were accepted as a true record and were duly signed by Cllr Ripley

2. Matters Arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

3. Report of the Chairman of Upchurch Parish Council

Cllr Ripley introduced the Members of the Parish Council and gave the following report|:

I wish to thank Cllr Stephen Hunt, who has unfortunately resigned from the Parish Council as he has now moved away from the area, for his past contributions.

I do welcome our most recent Cllr Neil Sheppard who we very much welcome and I am sure will be worthy addition to the Parish Council

In terms of what the Parish has achieved in the past year, we have....

Recreation ground and Paddock

I would like to thank Cllr Pam Denny for her constant supervision of the Paddock and Recreation ground ensuring it is regularly maintained.

We have carried out tree works which were highlighted in the Village Tree Survey in both these areas.

I am very pleased to report the newly installed Play equipment, it is a welcomed addition to the Paddock, Cllr Denny has championed this cause for a number of years, so thank you to Pam, Wendy our Clerk and Streetscapes who assisted us in securing a grant from the Big Lottery Fund which fully funded this project.

Dog fouling continues to blight the village at times causing a potential health hazard especially to young children as inconsiderate dog owners have allowed their dogs to foul in the Paddock. The Parish Council continues to liaise with the Community Warden in her efforts. The Parish Council General Purposes Committee will be discussing a "Dogs on leads policy" in the Paddock, due to the fouling problem and recent dog attacks within the village, particularly as small children often play in the Paddock.

I would like to thank Cllr John Wright who kindly provided us with a SBC Members grant towards a new metal bin which will be of great benefit in the paddock and will aid Cliff in his role as our village care taker.

Christmas Tree:

Another beautiful Christmas tree this year kindly donated by Bob Friend, a thank you to Bob on behalf of the village.

UPC purchased new lights for the tree along with a Santa's sleigh and reindeer's lighting display with the aid from SBC Festive Lighting Grant. Thank you to the Councillors who regularly pitch up to assist me in the installation every year.

Allotments:

We are committed to improving the allotments in the village, with vacant plots being cleared, these have now been all rented by new plot holders, UPC is looking into options into providing disabled friendly allotment plots.

Best Kept Garden Competition 2018:

The judging took place in July and the overall winners were Paul and Pauline Knights for their beautifully presented garden at Beckenham Park. Thank you to all the Judges for their time and effort, particularly Brenda & Bob Quay who made us very welcome during the deliberating process. This Competition would not have been possible without everyone's support.

This year's judging will take place on Saturday 20st July, with presentation taking place in September at the Upchurch Horticultural Show.

Burial ground Church yard:

Our thanks to Cllr Janet Marshall for her constant supervision of this area. Janet has worked tirelessly in updating the policies and regulations. The Parish Council has given careful consideration to providing further burial plots in the Burial Ground and it has taken the decision to remove the rose beds except the one at the top right-hand side of the pathway. Roses and plaques from the other beds have been transferred to this bed for it to be a memorial garden. The owners of the memorial roses have been informed of this decision. An application will now be made for the ground to be consecrated.

Street Lighting:

Following a public consultation in January, the Parish Council has called for tenders to upgrade the lights to LED and these are being evaluated. A KCC Members grant of £2,000 has been received towards this project.

Grants awarded by UPC:

Grants have been awarded to Upchurch Fete Committee, Swale CAB and the Royal British Legion for the Poppy wreaths.

The Great British Spring Clean:

The Upchurch Spring Clean took place this year on 5th and 6th of April. Children from Holywell School went out litter picking around the village, accompanied by their teachers and members of staff. 1st Upchurch Brownies and Guides joined us in force, accompanied by their parents and leaders Tracey and Sophie Snellings. As well as a good number of residents who are always willing to muck in. Another tremendous village effort resulted in dozens of sacks of litter being picked from our public spaces and the surrounding country lanes.

Thank you to Cllr Alan Horton for assisting, and in making the necessary arrangements with Swale and also Louis Newbery for promoting the event on Upchurch Matters as well as litter picking with us on the day.

Highways:

Cllr John Arnold has worked with Kent Highways and has raised issues within the Parish as and when they arise.

As already heard we are looking into a Parish Highways Improvement Plan for Upchurch.

Church Clock:

Thank you to Cllr Alan Horton and Cllr Peter Masson for looking after the Clock.

The Clock modernisation works were carried out to mark the centenary of the end of WW1, The overwhelming support that has been received, together with the number of donations from individuals and groups within our village towards the modernisation of St Mary's Church Clock has been unbelievable. We raised a staggering sum of £5,555. along with £750.00 grant from SBC, making a total of £6,305.

The Battle's Over Commemorations.

I would like to take this opportunity to mention Boakes Joinery and 'The Ladies that Knit' group. Thanks to Boakes Joinery who created and completed the fine installation of the commemorative sleeve around the village sign with the poppy seat and for their kind and generous donation of the magnificent Beacons Oak post.

Thanks to the five ladies who hand crafted 1000 poppies which were beautifully displayed on the new Arch of Remembrance at the church. This was an outstanding construction and installation, and our gratitude goes to every individual in the team for their involvement.

In addition, The UPC purchased a beautiful Memorial Bench again with the aid of a SBC grant of £750.00.

We truly have a magnificent Beacon at the Recreation Ground, along with the bespoke commemorative shield depicting the harsh reality of life for the troops in the trenches on one side, while the other side shows soldiers showing their respect to their fallen comrades.

We raised a further £262.00 on the evening for armed forces charities.

Together, as a village, we have achieved a deserving and worthy tribute to all those who lost their lives.

On behalf of Upchurch Parish Council, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed and was involved with the 100-year commemoration in Upchurch last year, We certainly do and have a village to be proud of.

In Bloom:

Finally, some progress with the village "In Bloom". We have a huge three tier cascade planter arriving in May, which will be situated in the heart of the village near the Sign and the Bus Shelter. We secured a Environmental grant from Swale Borough Council towards this project.

Planning Applications:

Thank you to Cllr Gary Rosewell who is the Chairman of the planning committee, he regularly attends Swale chambers representing UPC on behalf of the village.

All this would not be possible without the help, support and commitment of the Parish Councillors. There are many things which go on behind the scenes to ensure the Parish Council effectively serves its community. Councillors give freely and tirelessly of themselves to maintain the facilities within the village and also by supporting residents with issues they may have.

4. To receive reports from local organisations

Holywell School

The Head Teacher from Holywell School gave an enthusiastic presentation on the school's activities. The School will also be taking on the running of the village fete and this will be held in conjunction with the school summer fayre.

Upchurch Players

Upchurch Players was formed in 1990 with a view to put on two pantomimes in the village and have only missed one. New members are always welcome including those who are able to help backstage. The pantomime for 2019 will be Aladdin.

Upchurch Brownies and Guides

There has been a Brownie group in Upchurch since 1962 and it is still going strong. The group continues to be extremely active and have been on a camp; held a successful strawberry tea; and have taken part in many other activities.

Upchurch Scout Group

Upchurch Scout Group continues to be a very successful group and thanks go to those who help with the groups. Fundraising helps support activities for the young people and also helps to maintain the Scout Hut. More helpers are always welcome.

Upchurch WI

Upchurch WI is open to all women over eighteen years old. The first three visits are free and this allows women to decide whether to join. The Group meets on the second Tuesday of the month except August when there is a Posh Tea in the President's garden. There are usually six or seven speakers who talk on a wide variety of topics and monthly clubs and outings.

Upchurch Active Retirement Association

Upchurch Active Retirement Association is open to retired and semi-retired persons of 50 years of age and over and their partners. The association is fully organised with a constitution and although is based in Upchurch there are also activities elsewhere. The Association is a thriving group with monthly meetings with speakers and monthly coffee mornings for chat and games.

Village Hall Committee and Friends of Upchurch Village Hall

The hall continues to be well-used and supported by village groups. The Friends group has been formed to help raise funds and apply for grants to maintain this valuable amenity for the village. There are plans for extensive refurbishment to the hall to update the electrics and other areas and this will be mainly funded by grants.

Upchurch Horticultural Society

The Chairman of the Horticultural Society thanked the Council for the support of the allotments, allotments are especially important for people with small gardens and are an invaluable asset to the Parish. The Horticultural Society has been running for sixty-seven years. There are three annual shows and a plant sale. The group also has social events in conjunction with Stockbury Cottage Gardeners. Upchurch Horticultural Society meets the first Wednesday of the month except in January.

6. Presentation of the KALC Community Award

Cllr Ripley present the KALC Community Award to Mr Ray Kemsley for selflessly serving Upchurch residents for five decades. Originally our village 'bobby', Mr Kemsley led the village appraisal and has tirelessly served as a school Governor for over forty years.

7. Presentation from Kaine Solar Farm

Mr James Jenkison, Environment and Sustainability Manager New Kaine Solar Farm, gave a presentation on the Solar Farm explaining the potential to increase the planning permission period from existing 25 years to 40 years. The design or size of the solar farm would not be changed, but it would simply provide the option to allow the solar farm to operate for a longer period of time than is stipulated in the condition, and at the same time retain the clauses to remove the solar farm whenever it ceases to operate and restore the land to open farmland.

8. Parish Highways Improvement Plan presentation from KCC

A presentation from KCC Highways was given to the meeting explaining the benefits of a Parish Highways Improvement Plan.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.25pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chairman

Date: 6 May 2021