



MINUTES OF UPCHURCH ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 11 APRIL 2024 AT 19:30PM IN UPCHURCH VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllr Ripley Cllr Denny Cllr Lewin Cllr Rosewell Cllr Horton Cllr Sheppard Cllr Bodycomb

Officer: Clerk, Nina Henley

External Attendees: Cllr C Palmer Cllr R Palmer PC Chittim

Apologies: Cllr Bernsten Cllr Boakes

External Apologies: Cllr Baldock

1-APM/04/24 Welcome to the meeting by Cllr Tyrone Ripley

Cllr Ripley welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were 15 members of the public including representatives from Upchurch Active Retirement Association, Upchurch Players, Upchurch Choral Society and Upchurch Horticultural Society.

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2-APM/04/24 Minutes

To receive as correct and approval of the minutes of the Annual parish Meeting held on 27 April 2023. Minutes were signed by Cllr Horton as a true representation.

3-APM/04/24 Upchurch Parish Council Annual Report

Cllr Ripley gave verbal report – attached appendix 1

4-APM/04/24 Borough Council

Borough Council Councillors Chris and Richard Palmer gave verbal report. Attached.

5-APM/04/24 County Council

Borough Cllr Baldock Kent County Council was unable to attend.

6-APM/04/24 Local Community Groups

- I. Verbal report received from Upchurch Choral Society. Attached
- II. Verbal report received from Upchurch Active Retirement Association (UpARA).
- III. Verbal report received from Upchurch Horticultural Society. Attached
- IV. Verbal report received from Upchurch Players.
- V. Verbal report received from PC Chittim, Kent Police.

7-APM/04/24 Open Forum

- I. A resident reported concerns with the junction of Forge lane and Holywell Lane. Cllr Horton responded that this junction has been considered as part of the HIP and that KCC had sent an engineer to inspect and deemed this junction safe.
- II. A resident reported a streetlight not working. Clerk to report.
- III. A resident congratulated the council for the quick response received to issues in the Paddock.

8-APM/04/24 KALC Community Award.

Cllr Ripley presented this year KALC Community Award. The certificate was posthumously awarded to Terry Lewis and presented to his family.

For his dedication to helping the people of Upchurch's numerous village groups and activities with enthusiasm and a smile. Terry was part of village life and will be greatly missed.

9-APM/04/24 Meeting closed 8.30pm

Appendix 1

APM Chairman's Report 2023/24

Welcome

For those in attendance last year, you may recall Cllr Alan Horton gave the Chairman's report in my absence, Alan a note of thanks for standing in at short notice, it was very much appreciated. Thank you.

With regards to Parish life, projects and achievements.

Allotments

I would like to thank Cllr John Bodycomb for his commitment with allotment issues.

The Council continues to be committed to improving the standard of our allotments and has worked with plot holders to improve the allotment site. There has been very positive feedback from plot holders with regards to the newly installed Allotment boundary fence line which has certainly improved the appearance when passing through the village.

Our Clerk Nina has installed new accounts software which has been successful.

Paddock and Recreation Ground.

I would like to thank Cllr Pam Denny for her constant supervision of the Paddock and Recreation ground ensuring it is always well maintained. We have carried out tree works as and when required throughout the year.

Dog fouling is still, at times, a problem for the village 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 asks that dog owners ensure that they clean up after their dogs and put the waste in a litter bin or take it home. This is a constant battle for us unfortunately.

The Parish Council have carried out Phase 1 of the Car Park resurfacing at the recreation ground which has received positive comments from the users, particularly the Scouts. Phase 2 will be an agenda item at the next full council meeting, continuing the resurfacing all the way down towards the gate entrance.

Christmas Tree

The village again benefitted from the generosity of Mr Bob Friend and family who has donated a Christmas tree to the village. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Mr Friend for his kind and generous donation of the tree, for all in the village to enjoy during the festive season. Additional thanks to the Councillors who assisted with erection of tree and the Christmas lighting. Upchurch Village Hall organised a Christmas Market again last year at which Santa and his Elves visited the children of Upchurch, each receiving a gift from Santa.

Village in bloom

Our regular Cascade planter in the heart of the village will continue, with further barrier baskets along the fence line at the Recreation ground to provide the springtime blooms throughout the village.

Poppies

The Council had a wreath laid at the service in Upchurch and in Ferques, thanks to Cllr Gerry Lewin for again organising this important event. Thank you to the councillors who assist me every year with installing poppies on lamp posts through the heart of the village - always in torrential rain, which has become tradition for us now unfortunately.

Ladies that knit:

A note of thanks for the time and effort given by the ladies that knit who have continued to put on the amazing displays we have seen in the village. Absolutely outstanding.

Village Caretaker

Our thanks go to Lynne Balcombe who continues to work diligently to help make Upchurch a great place to live. She works closely with the Clerk and regularly reports issues to her.

Burial Ground

Our thanks to Cllr Helen Boakes and Cllr Pam Denny for their constant supervision of this area. With an additional note of thanks to David Kew for his constant role with regards to rubbish and bin duties ensuring order is kept within the burial ground.

Our Clerk is planning to install a new accounts software system for cemeteries and intends to digitalise all of the burial records.

Street Lighting

Particular thanks to Cllr Ernie Berntsen who ensures the streetlights are in working order for the village. Promptly resolving issues should they arise.

Defibrillator

The Parish Council has replaced a number of Defibrillators in the Village, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Neil Sheppard for his constant role in ensuring they are all operating as they should. Hopefully they are not needed.

Planning

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.

Highways

Cllr Alan Horton has taken a keen lead in the Villages Highways Improvement Plan with close correspondence with KCC Highways, which is a challenge in itself, raising issues within the Parish as and when they arise.

The Traffic Management Scheme agreed in Oak Lane near the junction of Wallbridge Lane development is still waiting on KCC and the Parish Council has been informed by the developers they are also keen to get this scheme installed for the village.

Church Clock

Another brief note of thanks to Cllr Alan Horton for ensuring the clock is maintained and in working order for the village.

D-Day Event

Cllr Gary Rosewell has kindly taken the lead role in arranging this event on Thursday 6th June 2024 at the recreation ground - lighting of the beacon, there will be a food vendor there on the evening. Teas and Coffees available in the Scout Hut. All timings for Beacon lighting will be available on the website.

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 to maintain the facilities within the village and also by supporting residents with issues they may have.

So my personal thanks to them all along with a huge thank you to our Clerk Nina.

Report from Borough Cllr Palmer

Since being elected we have had a very busy year. We supported some local groups with our grant money.

We each gave Holywell School some money towards their forest school. We feel that children are the future and that it is important to educate them about the environment and biodiversity, and that the forest school is an excellent way of supporting the activity.

A local charity called Child Vision, that supports children that have witnessed and been affected by domestic violence.

We donated to UpARA, an excellent group within Upchurch that is a lifeline offering social activities and interests to retired residents within Upchurch.

We continue working with our local police officer Jez. Jez has definitely had an impact within the whole ward.

Swale Council has been successful in securing a grant of £30,000.00, to purchase some more covert cameras. We hope that this will help in the battle against fly tipping.

We have supported the Parish Council in planning applications both with objections and support.

Chris is on the Health and Housing committee at Swale and has applied to become a member of the Medway Maritime board of governors. To help with the role.

Waste collection is now provided by Suez and has clearly got off to a worrying start. We have been contacted by many of the residents within Upchurch. And are doing our best to try and resolve some of the issues. It seems to be a data issue, whereby some data sent over from Biffa has not been uploaded for some reason. We have been asking for an apology to be sent out.

We are happy to continue supporting Upchurch and will continue to do the best we can in resolving the current waste collection issues.

UPCHURCH CHORAL SOCIETY

Notes for address to APM 11th April 2024

Upchurch Choral Society was formed over 50 years ago to augment St Mary's church choir for a performance of Handel's *Messiah*. Members today still augment the church choir at services such as Remembrance Sunday, the Christmas Eve carol service and recently for the act of worship on Good Friday, as well as performing two concerts every year.

It is a thriving choral society, with about 35 members. We sing a wide selection of works in four-part harmony and our next concert will be in the church on Saturday 27th April. This concert is entitled "Music for Springtime" and will feature several suitable songs for this time of year. Also, that evening there will be solos and readings, so a good variety is on offer, and of course there will be

our usual refreshments during the interval, courtesy of the Friends of St Mary's church. The concert will be conducted by one of our basses, Bryan Veale, who is a founder member of the Society! Bryan is doing this at the moment as we lost our Conductor, Marius, before Christmas. We have advertised widely for a new one, had lots of interest and one or two applications and we hope to appoint a new Music Director soon following auditions.

We therefore are confident that the Society will continue and we will be performing at some point during the autumn. Watch this space!

New members are always welcome, especially men for the bass and tenor sections, there is no audition, just come along and join in! Don't worry if you cannot read music, lots of people don't but are surprised by how much they learn during rehearsals. We practise in the church on most Friday nights at 7.45pm.

Upchurch Horticultural Society

Thank you to Mr Chairman for the invitation to this meeting.

As you will all be aware the UHS has been in the village for over 70 years and in the society we cater for all villagers be they young, old, healthy or not so healthy and will welcome more members, currently we have over 50 members.

Annually we put on 3 shows, currently July, August, and September plus a plant sale in the Paddock which is coming up soon Saturday 27th April 9 am, and you will all be welcome. Additionally the WI are joining us with a cake stall so a cake and a plant will go down nicely.

We also hold the best garden competition and the winners will be invited to our August show to receive their prize. Judging will take place early August so all have time to prepare.

Several members also hold an allotment to grow their own fruit, vegetables and flowers.

Support given to the Cricket club last year as they asked us to plant up an area in front of the scoreboard and currently we are negotiating for further work.

Thank you for listening to me and my assistant Tracy and I will be available after the meeting to talk to any of you.