

The **Minutes** of the meeting of **Upchurch Parish Council** held in Upchurch Village Hall on **6th January 2022**

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

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

Cllr Ripley welcomed everyone to the meeting.

116. Councillor Vacancy

It was agreed to defer item to the end of the meeting.

117. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Neil Sheppard (work); apologies accepted.

118. Declarations of interest

Cllr Ripley declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 121.i, as a near neighbour and a pecuniary interest in 123.ii as a recipient of a payment; Cllr Rosewell declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 121.iii as he knows the applicant.

119. Minutes of the meeting on 2nd December 2021

Cllr Berntsen **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2021, as a true record; **SECONDED** by Cllr Horton: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. Cllr Ripley duly signed the minutes as a true record.

Public Time

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time

KCCllr Baldock reported that Kent County Council is working on its budget, the early signs are worrying and there may be a reduction in funding for bus services. Inflation is rising, Government funding is diminishing and costs of services are going up. The maintenance of drains and flooding is an increasing issue. KCC does not have the budget to deal with all things and there will be severe cuts. The question is whether KCC should do so much to promote larger businesses when the basics need to be helped, small businesses are struggling.

Cllr Ripley thanked KCCllr Baldock for his report.

SBCllr Palmer reported that things have been quiet over the Christmas and New Year period. Swale Borough Council will have some grant funding for the Jubilee celebrations.

Cllr Ripley thanked SBCllr Palmer for his report.

A resident raised concern about the planning application for 15 Horsham Lane and the adverse impact it will have causing loss of light and loss of privacy. A neighbour has been in hospital and would also object if they had seen the plans.

Another resident said he objected to his loss of light and privacy. He had no objection to the applicant building upwards but was concerned at the proposal to build out. This proposal will double the footprint of the building and increase the upstairs by 70%.

Cllr Ripley thanked the residents for attending and for their comments.

The meeting was reconvened.

120. Correspondence

There was nothing to note.

121. Planning

i. Ref: 21/506248/FULL

Address: Court Lodge Breach Lane Upchurch Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7PH

Proposal: Retrospective change of use from residential property to mixed use as a residential dwelling and dog breeding business.

Cllr Ripley did not take part in the discussion or vote on this matter

Councillors considered the application and noted that there were two objection and one comment in support of the application, all have concerns about the noise. It is a retrospective planning application.

It was agreed that the Council had no objections but would like neighbours' comments to be taken into due consideration.

ii. Ref: 21/506082/FULL

Address: 2 Marstan Close Upchurch Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7BJ

Proposal: Erection of a single storey side and rear wrap around extension with flat roof to rear and pitch roof to side.

Councillors considered the application and had no objections to the proposal save the views of neighbours be given due consideration.

iii. Ref: 21/505502/FULL

Address: 15 Horsham Lane Upchurch Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7AN

Proposal: Demolition of rear conservatory. Erection of part single, part two storey side and rear extension. Creation of first floor including alterations to roof, insertion of front and rear dormers and front rooflights. Alteration to front garden, boundary wall and access.

Cllr Rosewell did not take part in the discussion or vote on this matter.

Councillors considered the application and noted that there were two objections and two comments in support of the proposal on the portal. Concern was raised regarding the impact of the proposal; further information was needed regarding the right to light and the amenity space.

It was agreed to respond that the Parish Council sympathises with the views of the objectors.

iv. Ref: 21/506357/FULL

Address: 116 Oak Lane Upchurch Kent ME9 7AY

Proposal: Proposed 1 year temporary permission for 2no. detached garages for use as residential accommodation during then construction of 2no. new dwellings, previously approved under application 20/505179/FULL.

Cllr Horton abstained from the discussion and voting on this item

Councillors noted that the garages are currently being used as accommodation. There were two comments in support on the portal with one being in support as long as it was only temporary. Local residents are concerned that this is a retrospective application; if the developer wanted to do this they should have temporary structures but they have designed something which they can live in; the application does not explain why this is needed. There is a S278 Agreement that no dwelling shall be occupied until the off-site highways works is completed. Concern was raised that this might become permanent dwellings. The Borough Council needs to satisfy how the permission will cease at the end of the period. There needs to be an answer to the S278 situation.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to object to the proposal.

v. To receive an update on planning matters

20/501475/FULL Land To The Rear Of Eden Meadow Newington

Erection of 20No. residential dwellings and associated car parking, hardstanding, landscaping and open spaces, infrastructure including SuDs and earthworks accessed from the existing junction serving Eden Meadow from the A2 High Street

Cllr Ripley informed Councillors that the application is going to Swale Planning Committee on 13 January. The Parish Council has objected to it. Unfortunately neither he nor Cllr Rosewell are able to attend, would someone else be willing to attend on behalf of the Parish Council please.

121. Allotments

Cllr Bodycomb reported that it is very quiet at the moment, the hard core is still to be laid.

123. Finance

i. To receive finance report

No questions were raised.

ii. Payments for approval and signature

Payee	Reason	Amount
Upchurch Village Hall	Hall hire	£20.00
Oakleaf	Installation of defibrillator at Beckenham Park	£320.00
Branchette Ltd	Fell, chip and recycle 2 lime trees and grind stumps	£475.00
Staff	Salary	£600.34
HMRC	PAYE & NI	£164.58
Administration	Expenses	£17.51
Mr D Kew Chq no 3000013	Wheelie bins and waste bags	£28.96
Mr T Ripley	Christmas event expenses	£20.00

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to make the payments.

iii. To agree budget and Precept for 2022-23

Cllr Lewin said there will be an estimated carry forward of £44,640 and the Finance Working Party wants to hold £27,500 in reserves which means that £17,000 can be put into the Precept. Cllr Horton said £27,500 is six months expenditure and is an appropriate level of reserves.

Cllr Lewin **PROPOSED** the budget be set at £53,754; **SECONDED** by Cllr Horton: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Lewin **PROPOSED** the Precept be set at £36,814; **SECONDED** by Cllr Horton: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Ripley reported that the Council will still get the lighting grant next year thanks to the support of the Ward Members SBCllr Horton and SBCllr Palmer.

124. Paddock and Recreation Ground

Cllr Berntsen reported that the toddler multi-play unit has been inspected and the loose bolts tightened at no cost to the Parish Council. The air walker has been rectified by the company and the works have been completed satisfactorily at no cost to the Parish Council. The soft matting issue can be rectified by lifting the matting, re-sanding and re-laying the matting, quotes are currently being obtained.

Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Berntsen for his work.

Cllr Denny reported the bank opposite Church Farm Road still has not been cut.

ACTION: Clerk to chase contractor.

Cllr Ripley said the oak tree has been planted at the Recreation Ground.

Cllr Denny reported that she is watering the tree, the contractor said the soil is good but it drains easily.

125. Burial Ground and Churchyard

Cllr Denny reported the compost bins need emptying.

ACTION: Clerk to contact contractor.

126. Highways and Street Lighting

Cllr Ripley informed Members that the dislodged bollard on the corner of The Poles and The Street junction has been reported to KCC Highways.

Cllr Horton reported that the contractor putting mitigation in at 116 Oak Lane has been contacted, they are seeking to connect to the Parish Council's lights.

Cllr Berntsen reported that there is an issue with the light at the bottom of Horsham Lane not working sometimes and this is being monitored. Discussions are taking place regarding a maintenance contract. The energy supply is also being considered.

ACTION: Clerk to send Cllr Berntsen EDF invoices.

127. Footpaths

There were no issues to report.

128. Environment

i. To receive an update

Cllr Ripley said the Christmas tree and lights will be removed on Sunday.

Cllr Denny said the area by the bus shelter needs to be cleaned regularly.

Item for GPC

Cllr Denny reported that there were no bags in the Tikspac.

ACTION: Clerk to chase

Cllr Horton asked for an update on the refurbishment of the village sign.

Cllr Ripley said it will be taken down on Sunday and it will take about two weeks.

ii. To consider quotations for tree survey

Item deferred to GPC

129. Defibrillator

Cllr Ripley said that the quotations have been evaluated and **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation from First Rescue for an Aviva cabinet, £469 and Zoll fully automatic defibrillator for £875: **SECONDED** by Cllr Horton: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Ripley said Mr Arnold has kindly agreed to meet the electrician on 7 January to discuss the installation.

130. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations 2022

Cllr Ripley said that following correspondence from Bruno Peeks, the pageant master, the timings of the beacon lighting event will need to be adjusted slightly. It is also suggested that seven trees be planted after the event, there will be a proposal from a local horticulturalist.

Cllr Horton said there has been a good response from residents, who are unable to have a party in their road, about having a street party at the Recreation Ground.

Cllr Lewin said that as part of the beacon ceremony there is a song for choirs to sing and this has been suggested to the church choir,

Cllr Horton said that there is also a request to have a bugler from a local cadet group to play at the end, this is an ongoing item.

131. Reports from representatives

i) Village Hall Representative

Cllr Lewin reported that the omicron variant has produced further regulations for the hall. There will be a small profit at the end of the year which is good news. The hall has been well-booked for January. There is concern about the car park usage and it is now being shut in the evening.

ii) KALC

Cllr Ripley said the next Swale Area Committee meeting has been cancelled.

iii) Police Liaison Officer

Cllr Ripley reported that Lorraine Holmes is Upchurch's new PCSO as John Cork has changed areas. She was unable to attend this meeting as she is on a rest day.

132. Matters arising

Cllr Ripley said IT Support will be on GPC agenda.

Cllr Ripley **PROPOSED** that Cllr Denny be Vice Chairman: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Ripley said the Santa visit had to be cancelled but a new date has been fixed for 10 December 2022.

A resident raised concern about the poor bus service in the village.

KCCllr Baldock said Kent County Council might be cutting the budget for bus service support. Evidence needs to be gathered from people who would use the service and a strategy needs to demonstrate the demand for buses. The Government is trying to wean people off reliance of cars. There is a Swale West Parishes meeting in March and it can look at how the bus service can be improved generally.

133. Date of next meeting

Thursday 3rd February 2022 at 7.30pm at Upchurch Village Hall

Pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Councillors resolved that the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media were excluded from the meeting during the consideration of this item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

134. Councillor Vacancy

Councillors considered the applications and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to co-opt Mrs Helen Boakes to the Parish Council.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: 3 February 2022