

The **Minutes** of the **Meeting** of **Upchurch Parish Council** held
remotely on **Thursday 1st April 2021** at 7.30pm.

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

Also present were County Councillor Mike Whiting and Mr Jamie Rhodes, Co-op member Pioneer.

Cllr Ripley welcomed everyone to the meeting.

186. Councillor Vacancy

Cllr Ripley informed Members that there had been no call for an election and **PROPOSED** that Mr John Bodycomb be co-opted to the Parish Council; **SECONDED** by Cllr Horton: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

187. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Pam Denny (personal); apology accepted.
Apologies had also been received from Ward Member Richard Palmer (at another meeting); apology noted.

188. Declarations of interest

None were declared.

189. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4th March 2021

Cllr Arnold **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2021 as a true record; **SECONDED** by Cllr Lewin: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. Cllr Ripley will sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting at the next physical Council meeting.

Public Time

The meeting was adjourned for the Public Time.

Mr Rhodes reported that the new priorities for the Co-op are Fairer Access to Food; Fairer Access to Education and Fairer Access to Well-being, both physical and mental well-being. The previous focus on Community Spaces is still a focus. Upchurch has no Food Share Partner and local groups are invited to apply to be a partner with the Co-op. The current recipients of the Local Community Fund, Upchurch Cricket Club, Upchurch Village Hall and Lower Halstow PTA have received payment for 2020-21. Applications to the fund for 2021-22 will be open from 4 May and groups which have received funding are able to apply again. The Co-operate platform for community events and volunteers is available to village organisations. The Co-op takes part in the Great British Spring Clean and staff would like to get involved with a local litter pick. There is a Co-op Community Forum, linking stores and groups on 6 April 4pm-5pm.

Cllr Lewin thanked the Co-op, on behalf of Upchurch Village Hall and Lower Halstow PTA, for the funding which has enabled the projects to go well.

Mr Rhodes said the works outside the Co-op are dealt with by the store managers. The store receives two deliveries a day due to the pandemic, the lorry does not deliver if it is unable to park. The manager has asked that if people want to park in front of the cones, they ask staff who are able track the vehicles.

Cllr Horton said the Council could promote the funding opportunities to residents.
Cllr Ripley thanked Mr Rhodes for attending the meeting and for his report.

KCCllr Whiting reported that he has liaised between Upchurch Cricket Club and KCC Highways regarding the verge between the club and the highway, there is poor sight line due to the fence and hedge. KCC has a CrowdFunding initiative, Upchurch Village Hall attended the virtual seminar. There have been issues with blocked gullies and flooding to the road and adjacent properties. Residents have raised concern regarding the works by Southern Water and traffic going through the village instead of using Breach Lane. Southern Water is replacing the underground pipe with 900m overground pipe. KCC is putting funding into road repairs. There is a consultation to increase the intake at Borden Grammar School from four to five forms of entry from 2022, this is supported by KCC.
Cllr Ripley thanked KCCllr Whiting for attending and for his report.

SBCllr Horton reported that it had been a fairly quiet month. The litter at the entrance to Oak Lane to the bridge has been cleared. A Parish Councillor has cleared the bags of dog waste left on the Public Right of Way. Biffa will litter pick roads and issues need to be reported to Swale Borough Council.
Cllr Ripley thanked SBCllr Horton for his report.
ACTION: Clerk to report litter from Oak Lane/ A2 junction to Gore Farm.

SBCllr Palmer was unable to attend the meeting and sent the following report:

Fly Tipping

I have had several cases of fly-tipping reported which I have passed onto Swale Borough Council. Residents have also raised concerns about the general mess/rubbish on roadside verges.

Boxted Lane Flooding (Newington – Upchurch)

Several residents have raised concern about flooding on this road. Last year, I raised this same issue with KCC Highways who are adamant there was nothing KCC could do to prevent this. KCCllr Whiting has responded to a local Newington resident about this and is speaking to KCC Officers.

Southern Water

The ongoing works has led to several resident raising this.

COVID-19

As the roadmap takes us out of the current restrictions, it is important to ensure the message to follow the rules is shared within our community. People are now permitted to meet with family and friends i.e. six outside or two-family groups. Even with the vaccine rollout progressing extremely well, everyone must still follow the rules. I hope the PC can relay this message and the Governments advice to residents while stressing, **Hands|Face|Space|** and **Fresh Air**. We need to repeat this message far and wide to our residents.

Cllr Ripley thanked SBCllr Palmer for submitting his report.

The meeting was reconvened.

190. Correspondence

Cllr Ripley said that a resident had raised concern about not being able to park at the Co-op, this has been addressed.

Cllr Ripley said The Great British Spring Clean is from 28 May – 13 June, the Council is not able to organise an event at the moment but it can promote it.

ACTION: Clerk to draft article.

191. Planning

i. To receive the minutes of the Meeting held on 17th March 2021 and receive an update on planning matters

Cllr Ripley **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2021 as a true record; **SECONDED** by Cllr Lewin: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

ii. Swale Local Plan Review (Reg 19)

Cllr Lewin said that additions to the draft response need to be made to include that there is nothing in the document which seeks to address the traffic issue west of the A249. To live in an area without public transport means there is a need for increased cars. There is an increase in traffic due to online ordering, the rural lanes are unsuitable for white vans. The infrastructure is not addressed and the parking standards do not deal with the density of cars in rural housing. Concern regarding parking standards and public parking in rural lanes needs to be raised. COVID-19 rates and transmissions were, in Swale, some of the highest in the country. This has now been analysed as being due in part to the density of housing and the high numbers of people in households. This was the cause of higher transmissions of this and potentially other viruses. These health factors should additionally be considered when increasing housing stock is being planned.

ACTION: Clerk to amend document and liaise with Cllr Rosewell, Cllr Ripley and Cllr Lewin before submission.

Cllr Rosewell thanked Cllr Lewin for his work on the response.

8.10pm KC Cllr Whiting left the meeting

iii. Gladman Developments for residential development at Otterham Quay Lane, Upchurch

Councillors had previously declined the request from Gladman Developments for a private meeting and noted the public consultation on the proposed development at Otterham Quay Lane. No formal planning application has been lodged.

iv. Ref: 21/501145/FULL

Address: Bell Grove Stud Farm Halstow Lane Upchurch Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7AB

Proposal: Removal of a mobile home and erection of 1 No. detached dwellinghouse.

Councillors considered the application and noted that work had already started and that there had never been permission for a mobile home. There needs to be a view from an agricultural consultant and there needs to be evidence of a need for the proposal. The proposal would cause a coalescence between the settlements of Upchurch and Lower Halstow; it would cause further urbanising of Halstow Lane; it would change the character of the landscape; there was no business case to justify the proposal Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to object to the proposal.

Cllr Lewin thanked the Clerk for the list of planning applications and report.

192. General Purposes Committee

Cllr Arnold **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2021 as a true record; **SECONDED** by Cllr Lewin: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Arnold said it had been anticipated that the streetlights would have been completed by 18th March but this had not happened, the contractor has paid UK Power networks

193. Allotments

Cllr Ripley reported that the General Purposes Committee recommends to take no action regarding the allotment taps but agreed to review the situation in a year.

Cllr Horton **PROPOSED** to accept the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** that Cllr Bodycomb be the representative for the Allotments.

194. Finance

i. To receive finance report

No matters were raised.

ii. To consider insurance renewal

Cllr Ripley said the Council has a three-year long-term agreement with Zurich.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay the insurance premium of £1445.96 (cheque no 3982).

iii. Cheques for approval and signature

Cllr Ripley informed Members that Fasthosts no longer accept cheques and has destroyed the cheque sent in January (3948) for £132.00. They need payment by BACS or card.

It was agreed that the Clerk pay and be reimbursed (cheque no 3983).

Chq no	Payee	Reason	Amount
3973	Mr T Honeyman	Litter picker	£104.64
3974	Signs & Imaging	Signage	£140.40
3975	EDF	Street lighting electricity	£490.91
3976	Mrs W Licence	Expenses and salary adjustment	£80.86
3977	HMRC	PAYE & NI	£139.20
3978	Tikspak	Station rental	£720.00
3979	Business Stream	Allotments water	£26.42
3980	Vincent James Landscapes	Clearing branches from graves 80.00 Empty compost bins 40.00 Total	£120.00
3981	Upchurch Village Hall	Hall hire	£52.00

Councillors considered the invoices and cheques raised and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to the signing of the cheques.

195. Paddock and Recreation Ground

Cllr Denny had sent in a report that there were no issues at The Paddock or Recreation Ground and that the grass has been cut.

196. Burial Ground and Churchyard

Cllr Ripley said there has been no response from the Diocese regarding the churchyard survey. The quotation for a hard standing for the wheelie bins needs to be considered, it will help the litter picker with his role.

Cllr Horton **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation of £675 from Vincent James Landscapes to relocate the Burial Ground sign; remove the handrail section; level the ground and slab the area; supply and install three new wooden posts and handrail to the left of the steps and to remove the lower section of existing handrail on the right to match new hand rail on the left; **SECONDED** by Cllr Arnold: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Marshall said the bank area near the village hall needs to be addressed and if it is to be a wildflower area the seeds must be planted in April and May.

Cllr Horton **PROPOSED** that a working budget of £670 be given to General Purposes Committee to progress the project: **SECONDED** by Cllr Lewin: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Marshall said the Burial Ground regulations need reviewing to include the responsibility of the memorial roses.

Item for GPC.

197. Church Clock

Cllr Horton reported that there had been correspondence on social media regarding the church clock which had stopped last weekend as part of the process to reset the time from Greenwich Meantime to British Summer Time. When the clocks got forward it has to stop for twenty-three hours.

198. Defibrillator

Cllr Sheppard reported that there were no issues with the defibrillators.

198. Highways and Street Lighting

i. To receive an update

Cllr Arnold reported that the contractor has put UK Power Networks on notice for failing to connect the new lights.

ACTION: Cllr Arnold to contact UK Power Networks.

Cllr Lewin asked when the Council will see a reduction in the electricity bill.

Cllr Arnold said the contractor is negotiating with the energy supplier.

ii. Chaffes Lane bollards

Cllr Arnold said the first draft of the tender specification will need minor tweaks and a closing date for the tenders will be added.

ACTION: Cllr Arnold, Cllr Ripley, Cllr Horton and Cllr Sheppard to have a site meeting.

9pm- Cllr Sheppard left the meeting.

199. Footpaths

There was nothing to report.

200. Environment

i. To receive an update

Cllr Ripley reported that Swale Borough Council no longer installs dog waste bins and will install a litter bin, which can be used for dog waste, in Oak Lane.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept a litter bin.

ii. To consider the quotation for village grounds maintenance

Cllr Horton **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation from Vincent James Landscapes of £5595 for grounds maintenance; **SECONDED** by Cllr Marshall: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Lewin said it is important that the churchyard is not cut in early Spring when the Spring flowers come through and the northeast corner of the closed churchyard needs to be better maintained.

iii. To consider quotations for floral displays and maintenance.

Cllr Ripley reported that the General Purposes Committee recommends accepting the quotation from Amethyst for £1435 for cascade hire, replanting of barrier baskets and maintenance. A quote for four more barrier baskets is yet to be received.

Cllr Horton said the floral arrangements in the village have been a huge success and have drawn positive comments from residents.

Cllr Horton **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation from Amethyst for £1435 for cascade hire, replanting of barrier baskets and maintenance; **SECONDED** by Cllr Lewin: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

ACTION: Clerk to chase the quotation for further baskets.

201. Reports from representatives

i) Village Hall Representative

Cllr Lewin reported that the next Management Committee Meeting is on 14 April. It is hoped to have a community day in August to bring the community together again post- COVID.

ii) KALC

Cllr Ripley said two new representative need to be appointed.

iii) Police Liaison Officer

Cllr Marshall said there have been no anti-social behaviour issues although youths gathering outside the Co-op has been a concern. Speed checks are being conducted in the village.

Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Marshall for her report.

202. Matters arising

Cllr Ripley said the Council will soon be able to meet face-to-face, it has been decided not to meet in June due to the conflict with social distancing and the Council does not usually meet in August.

The Clerk informed Councillors that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return needs to be signed off by Full Council.

Cllr Horton said if the Council meets in June it needs to be after 21 June.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to hold the Full Council meeting on 24 June.

Cllr Lewin said that there have been a few power cuts over the past few weeks.

Cllr Rosewell said UK Power networks are having to lay a new cable, the power cuts were due to the generators breaking down or being refuelled.

Cllr Sheppard said he has received complaints from residents regarding the new development to the west of Otterham Quay Lane.

ACTION: Clerk to report.

Cllr Rosewell said a resident has reported that a woman and child were on a quad bike on the Quilters Yard playing field, he has referred her to the PCSO.

203. Annual Parish Meeting

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to hold the Annual Parish Meeting will be a brief meeting held on 6 May before the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

204. Date of next meeting: 6th May 2021

There being no further business, the meeting finished at 9.27pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: 6th May 2022