

The **Minutes** of the meeting of **Upchurch Parish Council** held in Upchurch Scout Hut on **2nd December 2021**

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

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

Cllr Ripley welcomed everyone to the meeting.

97. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Ernie Bersten (work), Cllr John Bodycomb (work), Cllr Gary Rosewell (work) and Cllr Neil Sheppard (work); apologies accepted.

98. Declarations of interest

Cllr Ripley declared a pecuniary interest in item 104.ii as a recipient of a payment; Cllr Arnold declared a pecuniary interest in item 104.ii as a recipient of a payment; Cllr Horton declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 104.iii as a School Governor.

99. Minutes of the meeting on 4th November 2021

Cllr Horton **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 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

KCCllr Baldock reported that there is a rush to get public footpaths registered by 2023-24. The Swale West Parishes meeting was successful; funding was discussed and also the impact of COVID regarding loneliness. Lots of Parish Councils have vacancies, the KALC Swale Area Committee will look into this next year.

Cllr Ripley thanked KCCllr Baldock for attending and for his report.

SBCllr Palmer reported that KCC Highways has contacted the owner to clear the overgrown vegetation on the A2. There has been a complaint about the state of the bridleway and the overgrown vegetation on ZR25, KCC PROW have assessed this and say no action is needed. SBCllr Palmer said that he and SBCllr Baldock are against the removal of the Swale Lighting Grant, especially as this is such short notice.

Cllr Ripley thanked SBCllr Palmer for attending and for his report.

SBCllr Horton reported he is aware of a response from the Head of Finance at Swale Borough Council which indicates that the intention is to reduce the Lighting Grant by 50% next year and 100% the next year. He stated he thought that it sounded like a decision had been made but clarified that it was actually a Cabinet decision for next week and not an officer decision, and hoped that they would consider the responses to the consultation, which he was aware KALC were interested in as well. SBCllr Horton reported that he considered the reduction felt like double taxation for parishes which own streetlights, as he thought non-parished areas have their lighting paid for by Swale Borough Council, a point agreed by KCCllr Baldock.

Cllr Ripley thanked SBCllr Horton for his report.

A resident asked if a grant can be made to the knitting group which would like to purchase two metal Tommies next year.

SBCllr Horton said that he and SBCllr Palmer has grant funding budgets.

ACTION: Clerk to send resident grant application form.

The Group Scout Leader asked the Council what the expectation of the Scouts regarding the car park gate is.

Cllr Ripley said the gate is to remain locked at all times, other than when the Scout Hut is in use in which case a sign will be applied to the gate informing the residents who park vehicles at the Recreation Ground. This does not apply for contractors or third parties, in this instance it is the responsibility of the Scouts to ensure the gate remains locked during this time by making the appropriate arrangements. The padlock is to remain on the chain on the gate at all times.

The Chairman of the Village Hall said there is an issue with drug dealers using the Village Hall car park and this could be an issue for people hiring the hall. Vehicles have done donuts on the grass. This has been reported to the Police on numerous occasions.

SBCllr Palmer said the Police must be given as much information as possible as they gather intel from reports.

Cllr Horton said the Police are aware, multiple reports will create a file which will help the Police address the problem. This a law enforcement issue and also a Village Hall issue as it is on private land.

Cllr Ripley said the Council can also report the situation to PCSO John Cork, PCSO Cork changes areas at the end of the year and PCSO Lorraine Holmes will take over.

ACTION: Clerk to report to PCSO Cork and cc PCSO Holmes

100. Correspondence

i. Letter from Scouts

Cllr Ripley said the Scouts have written requesting a defibrillator at or near the Recreation Ground. It has been agreed to have one outside the surgery.

ACTION: Clerk to respond.

ii. Proposed removal of Swale lighting grant

Cllr Ripley said the Parish Council currently receives a Swale Lighting Grant of £2,550 and it is proposed to end this grant. The matter will be decided at Cabinet on 8 December.

ACTION: Clerk to write to Roger Truelove, Leader Swale Borough Council

ii. Jubilee Afternoon Tea

Cllr Ripley said a local business wants to offer an afternoon tea at the Scout Hut on 5 June 2022. The Council extended an invitation to residents to hold their Jubilee Street Parties there. Cllr Horton said that if a business wants to set up in the Scout Hut as part of the Jubilee it is a commercial organisation. The Council would not be involved and the business will have to hire the Scout Hut.

iii. KALC Community Award

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to take part in the scheme.

8.15pm KCCllr Baldock and SBCllr Palmer left the meeting

101. Planning

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

Cllr Lewin reported the response to the Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation has been submitted.
ACTION: Clerk to send response to all Councillors.

102. General Purposes Committee

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

103. Allotments

Cllr Ripley reported that the hard standing will be delivered next week and Cllr Sheppard will lay this.

104. Finance

i. To receive finance report

No questions were raised.

ii. Payments for approval and signature

Payee	Reason	Amount
Upchurch Village Hall	Hall hire	£52.00
Prime One Maintenance Ltd 300010	Lighting upgrade final payment Otterham Quay Lane light repair Breach Lane light repair Total	16,496.52 2,580.64 1,671.01 £20,748.17
Mr J Arnold	Circuit breaker	£25.20
Staff	Salary	£600.34
HMRC	PAYE & NI	£153.25
Administration	Expenses Litter picking hoops and bags Total	22.41 25.74 £48.15
Vincent James Landscapes Chq no 300011	Recreation Ground cuts Paddock Churchyard and Burial Ground cuts Total	100.00 55.00 175.00 £330.00
Mr D Kew Chq no 300012	Wheelie bins and waste bags	£26.73
Mr T Honeyman	Litter picker	£106.92
Mr T Ripley	Christmas back drop	£172.80
EDF Energy	Street lighting electricity	£935.43

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

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to transfer money from the Barclays account to Unity Trust Bank and leave a nominal amount in the account.

iii. To consider request from Holywell School for a grant to purchase Jubilee medals for pupils, staff and Governors.

Cllr Horton did not take part in the discussion or decision of this item

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** give a grant of £760 to Holywell School to purchase Jubilee medals for pupils, staff and Governors.

iv. Review of Financial Regulations

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to adopt the revised Financial Regulations and that Committees be permitted to spend up to £750 without authorisation from Full Council.

105. Paddock and Recreation Ground

Cllr Ripley reported that Cllr Bernsten is awaiting confirmation that company has received the quote from the contractor and for a confirmed date for the remedial repairs to be carried out to the stepper.

Cllr Denny said the Jubilee oak tree will be planted on 9th December.

Cllr Ripley said he will mark the site for the contractor. The contractor has been instructed to cut back the bank on the corner of Chaffes Lane.

Cllr Denny said the roads need to be swept.

ACTION Clerk to chase Swale.

106. Burial Ground and Churchyard

Cllr Denny reported there were no issues.

107. Highways and Street Lighting

Cllr Ripley reported to Member that Sarah-Jayne Ellcock, KCC Swale Project Manager, has now moved on and KCC has no permanent replacement yet. Jennie Watson, KCC Maidstone Project Manager, is now suggesting that bollards are not the answer here and that double yellow lines should be installed.

Cllr Horton said that as a result of the change of staff, a different member of staff is now saying double yellow lines are needed and she will not support bollards. Jennie Watson has been informed that her predecessor and KCC Highways proposed this and that it will be difficult to explain.

ACTION: Clerk to send information to Jennie Watson cc Cllr Ripley, Cllr Horton and KCCllr Baldock.

Cllr Horton said that this is a wholly unsatisfactory situation, the Council was promised the bollards would be installed in August. A plan was agreed and KCC agreed to fund it, now KCC says it will have to wait until the new financial year.

A resident reported the street name plate at the junction of Wallbridge Lane/ Windmill Hill has been knocked over.

ACTION: Clerk to report.

108. Footpaths

There was nothing to report.

109. Environment

There was nothing to report.

110. Defibrillator

Cllr Ripley informed Members that the defibrillator has been installed at Beckenham Park and SECamb has been informed.

Cllr Arnold said a sign has been requested for the defibrillator.

Cllr Arnold said quotations for the defibrillator at the surgery have been obtained and these need to be analysed.

ITEM FOR GPC

111. Village Christmas Arrangements

Cllr Ripley said the tree and lights will be installed on Sunday. Plans for Father Christmas coming to the village on Sunday 19th December are coming together and the event needs to be advertised.

112. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations 2022

Cllr Horton said there has been some interest from residents to have their street parties at the Recreation Ground. Further plans will be made in the New Year.

113. Reports from representatives

i) Village Hall Representative

Cllr Lewin reported the new hire charges will come into effect in the New Year.

ii) KALC

Cllr Ripley said all correspondence has been circulated.

iii) Police Liaison Officer

Cllr Lewin said there will be a new PCSO in the New Year.

114. Matters arising

Cllr Arnold asked for an update on the tree survey quotes.

Cllr Ripley said they will be discussed at General Purposes Committee.

Cllr Ripley informed Members that Cllr Arnold has resigned pending his imminent move. Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Arnold for the phenomenal amount of work he has done for the Parish Council and also for the Parish and the tremendous contribution he has made.

115. Date of next meeting- Thursday 6th January 2021 at 7.30pm at Upchurch Village Hall

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm