

The **Minutes** of the meeting of **Upchurch Parish Council** held in Upchurch Village Hall on **7th April 2022**

Present: Cllr Tyrone Ripley (Chairman), Cllr Pam Denny (Vice Chair), Cllr Helen Boakes, Cllr John Bodycomb, Cllr Alan Horton, Cllr Gerry Lewin and Cllr Neil Sheppard; and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present were two members of the public.

Cllr Ripley welcomed everyone to the meeting.

171. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Ernie Berntsen (work) and Cllr Gary Rosewell (work); apologies accepted.

Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Mike Baldock (at another meeting) and Ward Member Richard Palmer (unwell); apologies noted.

172. Declarations of interest

Cllr Denny declares an interest in item 178.ii and Cllr Horton declared an interest in item 178.ii.

173. Minutes of the meeting on 3rd March 2022

"..for a *Band D* property." was deleted.

Cllr Lewin **PROPOSED** to accept the amended minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2022, as a true record; **SECONDED** by Cllr Denny: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. Cllr Ripley duly signed the minutes as a true record.

Public Time

The meeting was adjourned for the public time

Mr Newbery reported that the image of the village sign is nearly ready for use.

Cllr Horton gave a vote of thanks to Mr Newbery for his sterling work. The Parish Council will make the image available to any group or individual within the village to use in their communications. This will be available free of charge.

ACTION: Cllr Horton to write article for posting.

The meeting was reconvened

174. Correspondence

NALC Smaller Councils Committee letter to smaller councils

Cllr Lewin said it was a wonderful document and the Council awaits the outcome.

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

Burntwick - 21_505502_FULL-Refused-5475293

I have called this application in as I feel the application will have a detrimental effect on residential amenity of neighbours and for the following material planning considerations:

- Overlooking/loss of privacy
- The loss of existing views from neighbouring properties

- Loss of light or overshadowing
- Highway safety
- Over-development of the site

The case officer did inform me, following my call in, that he will get the application into the Planning Committee on the period for comments has passed, the case officer words were “*I will have the application listed for Committee as soon as the consultation period ends*”.

NOTE: One point which is controversial is the relevance in planning terms of the loss of a view. It is often said that “there is no right to a view”. Whilst this is correct in strictly legal terms, *it does not mean that the loss of a view is necessarily irrelevant to planning*. The enjoyment of a view could be an important part of the residential amenity of a neighbouring property, and its loss might therefore have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of that property.

Various Residents’ Concerns

Various residents contacted me about the gas works and the diversions. I raised these with KCC Highways directly owing to the problems residents were facing. I have also received some concerns regarding Canterbury Lane but these I will pass onto the Medway Councillors and the Council.

Blue Bins

Unfortunately, Blue Bins were not collected from some roads last week. I was informed that all that were missed should have been collected today but I do not believe this has not happened yet (4:20pm). As I type I have just received an update that Biffa will collect the blue Bins first thing tomorrow.

Cllr Ripley thanked SBCllr Palmer for his report.

175. Planning

A consultation response will be submitted was added to item 80.ii

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the minutes, as amended, of the meeting held on 16th March 2022 as a true record; the minutes were duly signed by Cllr Ripley.

Ref: 22/500974/FULL Address: 116 Oak Lane Upchurch Kent ME9 7AY

Proposal: Erection of a new front boundary wall and gates to plots 1 and 2 approved under 20/505179/FULL.

Cllr Lewin informed Members that the Council has responded to the proposal; amended plans have been submitted and will be considered at the next Planning Committee meeting.

Ref: 19/503694/FULL

Appeal Ref: APP/V2255/W/20/3254539 Proposal: Change of use of land to an 8 pitch gypsy traveller site, with associated day rooms, new access, drive way, hard standing, package treatment plants, boundary fencing and landscaping (part retrospective)

Ref: 18/501667/FULL

Appeal Ref: APP/V2255/W/20/3244340 Proposal: Application to extend the time limit to submit a site development scheme required by condition 4 of the planning permission granted on a ground A appeal against notice ref 17/500054/CHANGE Location: New Acres Spade Lane Hartlip Nr Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7TT

Cllr Lewin reported that the appeal hearing will be at Swale House on 27 April.

176. General Purposes Committee

“to Full Council.” was deleted.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the amended minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2022, as a true record; Cllr Ripley duly signed the minutes as a true record.

Cllr Horton reported that the annual litter pick had not been well attended this year. The children and young people of the village had done such a good job during the week before that there was not very much litter in the village.

Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Horton for organising the litter pick and also thanked the uniformed organisations, the school and all who helped make the village a better place to live in.

177. Allotments

Cllr Ripley informed Members that the tenancy agreements have been sent out.

178. Finance

i. To receive finance report

Cllr Lewin said the figures for the lighting would seem to show an overspend for the last financial year; there was a strategic decision to pay the lighting early and to reduce the precept.

ii. Payments for approval

Payee	Reason	Amount
EDF	Street lighting electricity Feb	£1026.98
M Belsom & Son Ltd	Repair of churchyard fencing	£138.00
Mrs P Denny	Reimbursement for keys	£32.00
Invicta IT Solutions	Microsoft 365; emails and support	£1,424.16
Lindsay & Co	Removal of fallen leylandii	£60.00
Mr S Betts	Refurbishment of Village sign	£1,130.00
Mr D Kew <i>Chq no 3000016</i>	Wheelie bins and waste bags	£26.73
Upchurch Village Hall	Hall hire- March	£56.00
CPRE	Subscription	£36.00
Lindsay & Co	Remove/ dispose storm damaged branches	£240.00
Mr A Horton	Litter pickers	£50.98
Staff	Salary	£708.06
HMRC	PAYE & NI	£178.92
Administration	Expenses	£49.19
Mr T Honeyman	Litter picker- March	£133.65

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

179. Paddock and Recreation Ground

i. To receive an update

ii. Woodland Trail

Cllr Denny said there had been correspondence with the contractor regarding the signage. When the project was first discussed it was to be aimed at 6- 10 year olds. The school should be contacted for their feedback to ascertain what would be beneficial for the children. A welcome board with a map should be included.

Cllr Horton said the School Council, which is made up of the pupils, should also be consulted. Having the children involved will fit in with the curriculum and also helps the school with its community involvement.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the Head Teacher and School Governors.

Cllr Ripley asked for an update on the grant application from the FCC Communities Fund.

The Clerk reported that there needs to be a second funder in place.

ITEM FOR GPC

180. Burial Ground and Churchyard

i. To receive an update

Cllr Ripley reported that the fallen branch has been removed and work was carried out on a conifer damaged by the storm. The fence by the hall car park has been repaired. The Parochial Church Council has raised concern regarding the lime tree in the church yard.

Cllr Boakes informed Members that she had looked at the lime tree, there was evidence of new breakages but there were no large branches.

ACTION: Clerk to contact contractor to look at the tree.

Cllr Boakes reported that the General Purposes Committee has reviewed the Burial Ground fees which were last increased in 2019 and recommends an increase of the fees.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to increase the fees.

Cllr Denny said a resident has been told that they only ashes plots available are near the bell tower. This is not true as there are plots available in the Burial Ground.

ii. To consider quotation for notice board

Cllr Boakes said the Cemetery notice board needs to be replaced.

ACTION: Clerk to get quote

181. Highways and Street Lighting

Cllr Ripley said there was no update regarding the street lighting.

ACTION: Clerk to send copy of latest EDF invoice to Cllr Berntsen.

Cllr Ripley informed Members that a fridge had been dumped in Breach Lane, this has been reported to Swale Borough Council. Breach Lane needs a litter pick and this has been requested.

Cllr Horton said Oak Lane to the A2 needs a litter pick.

ACTION: Clerk to request litter pick.

Cllr Horton reported that SGN is doing essential gas works in the village, there is an overnight road closure to cure the surface and it should be open tomorrow. SGN is hoping to complete Forge Lane in time for the children to go back to school. KCC Highways has admitted that the bollards in Chaffes Lane should have been installed, hopefully they will be installed soon in the new financial year.

Cllr Lewin said the closure of The Street at the junction of Oak Lane was not in the original works but this had to be done.

Cllr Horton said it is a requirement that the residents on the corner of Church Farm Road must cut back their hedges.

ACTION: Clerk to write to residents

182. Footpaths

There was nothing to report.

183. Environment

i. To receive an update

Cllr Ripley said the village sign has been photographed and needs to be reinstalled.

ii. The Great British Spring Clean 2022

Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Horton for organising the annual litter pick.

Cllr Horton said residents need to be made aware that the Council has a supply of litter pickers and hi-vis jackets which can be borrowed by residents. Residents need to contact the Clerk.

ACTION: Clerk to publicise

Cllr Denny reported the red bin had been moved from The Paddock and put near the Tikspak station. The bin has been moved back to The Paddock.

ITEM FOR GPC

A resident raised that there is a lot of dog fouling in Wallbridge Lane.

ACTION: Clerk to inform Community Warden

184. Defibrillator

Cllr Sheppard reported that there were no issues with the defibrillators and that he had thanked former Councillor John Arnold for his help with the defibrillators.

Cllr Ripley informed Members that the defibrillator at the doctors has been registered, with SECAMB. Swale Borough Council needs a photo of the defibrillator.

ACTION: Clerk to send photo.

185. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations 2022

Cllr Ripley said a tree plaque needs to be ordered for the Jubilee oak tree.

Cllr Horton said the wording has been established on the trees on the green near the bungalows in Oak Lane.

ACTION: Cllr Boakes to send photo of the plaque to the Clerk.

Cllr Ripley said the availability of the Scout Hut for the beacon lighting needs to be ascertained.

ACTION: Clerk.

Cllr Horton said Cllr Rosewell will load the beacon and source the wood and light. Someone in the village could be asked to light the beacon. This is a historic event.

It was agreed that residents would be encouraged to enter into a draw to light the beacon.

Cllr Ripley said the provision of a bar will be followed up; there will be an ice cream van; the WI will sell cakes and savouries; the Guides have been asked to provide drinks and a barbecue. The event will start at 7.30pm.

ACTION: Clerk to check details with vendors.

186. Reports from representatives

i. Village Hall Representative

Cllr Lewin informed Members that the Village Hall Annual General Meeting will be on 14 April. The recent road closure in Forge Lane was unexpected and caused disruption for hall users. The hall operations for the last year ran at a profit and there is a policy which ensures the profit is used wisely to cover costs and also for strategic upgrade to the hall. The success of this policy will only be seen in five years time. The bookings to date have been good, there has been a positive response to the refurbishment of the hall.

Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Lewin for the update.

ii. KALC

Cllr Ripley said all communications from KALC and the Swale Area Committee are circulated to Councillors.

iii. Police Liaison Officer

Cllr Boakes informed Members that the PCSO is aware of incidents with youths using catapults; cyclists, shops, lambs and chickens have been targeted. Investigations are ongoing.

Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Boakes for the update.

187. Administration

i. To consider Parish Council Facebook page

Cllr Boakes reported that she had attended a KALC Social Media course which encouraged Councils to engage with residents through Social Media. If the Council had a Facebook page rather than a Facebook Group, the Council can choose what is posted; there should be two people one of which must be the Clerk or RFO. Social media can be a means of signposting to other tiers; publicise projects; conduct surveys and can link into other community groups' pages. It is a free tool available to Councils. All Councillors are recommended to attend a course on GDPR. Other Social Media platforms are not recommended. Information and statistics can be obtained from Facebook. Web pages and Social Media do not target the same audience.

Cllr Ripley thanked Cllr Boakes for attending the course. The policy is very restrictive.

Cllr Horton said this can all be done through the Council's website and a Facebook page would be introducing something the Council already does. Social Media can be good but it can also be a nightmare. The proper channel of communication is through the Clerk, if people put something on a Social Media site they might think the Council will action it. The Council needs to consider if there is a benefit to a Facebook page, we need to see what we are trying to do and then find a solution.

Cllr Lewin said the Council knows what it is doing and has all the tools it needs.

Cllr Ripley said people need to be encouraged to attend meetings. Over the last few years the Council has proactively informed residents what it is doing, about projects and where the money has been spent.

Cllr Horton said the discussion has been useful but a Parish Council Facebook page would not be beneficial at present.

ii. To consider Social Media Policy

Cllr Horton **PROPOSED** that the Council does not need a Social Media Policy: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

iii. Update on email addresses

Cllr Palmer said there had been a few teething problems but these have been resolved.

ACTION: Clerk to set up email groups for Committees and Working Parties.

188. Arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting 28th April 2022

Cllr Ripley reported that village groups have been contacted and six have said they will be attending to give a report to the Annual Parish Meeting.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** not to provide refreshments due to possible spread of COVID-19.

189. Matters arising

No matters were raised.

190. Date of next meeting- Thursday 5th May 2022 at 7.30pm at Upchurch Village Hall

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.03pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Dated this 5th day of May 2022