

**RIVERHEAD PARISH COUNCIL**  
**May Minutes 2024**

Minutes of the meeting of the Riverhead Parish Council held at 19.30 hours on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL:**

Irene Collins was nominated by Chris Kennett and seconded by Shirley Stewart, of Chairman for the year. *Approved by Show of hands.*

**2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN/S OF THE COUNCIL:**

Chris Kennett was nominated by Irene Collins and seconded by Alan Colnet, Janice King was nominated by Irene Collins and seconded by Shirley Stewart, of Vice-Chairmen for the year. *Approved by Show of hands.*

**3. PRESENT:**

Mrs Collins (Chairman), Mrs Kennett (Vice Chairman), Mrs King (Vice Chairman), Mr Colnet, Mrs Stewart, Mr Smith and Mrs Hunter.

Also present: Mrs Estefani (Clerk), Cllr Kim Bayley SDC

**Apologies accepted:** Mrs Garratt and Cllr Graham Clack SDC

**Not present:** Cllr Chard KCC

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

None declared.

**5. MINUTES:**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 had previously been circulated and was approved and signed.

**6. Reports from District/County Councillors:**

Cllr Bayley reported:

- Change in leadership in Sevenoaks District Council.
- Cllr Nick Chard is working with MP Laura Trott to draft a new plan for the traffic issues in Chipstead Lane and present it to Neil Baker at KCC.

**7. Terms of reference for Committees and Sub-committees:**

Digital copies of the 2023 terms of reference for all the Committees & sub-committees had previously been distributed. Councillors are reminded that they need to be reviewed {and the amendments approved} at their next committee and sub-committees meetings and bring a signed copy to the office within a month (before the next full council meeting in June).

**8. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES**

- Councillors were reminded that the Chairman and Vice Chairmen are ex officio voting members of all committees. Committees must hold their meetings in public and therefore must comply with publishing an agenda 3 clear days in advance. Also that the Standing Orders, which deal with the procedures that Committees and Sub-committees must be followed, are available on the Parish Council website.
- This is the list of each committee and subcommittee and members for the 2024-25 financial year were presented as follows:
  - a. Standing Committee - **Irene**, Chris, Janice, Alan
  - b. Planning Committee - **Alan**, Janice, Avril (everyone)
  - c. Finance - **Phil**, Chris, Irene
    - i. Highways - **Chris**, Shirley, Pam, Janice
    - ii. Village Hall - **Avril**, Alan, Shirley, Pam
    - iii. Parkland - **Janice**, Phil, Avril
    - iv. Allotments/Open Spaces - **Irene**, Janice, Chris

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- v. Communications - **Shirley**, Phil, Avril
- d. Safety - Irene, Chris, Janice, Alan, Avril, Pam
- e. Health Safety Officers:
  - i. Parkland – Phil
  - ii. Village Hall – Alan
  - iii. Highways – Chris
  - iv. OS/Allotments – Irene
- f. Flag Person -Phil /Alan

*All agreed by Show of hands.* Mara will send the list to all.

- Current chairmen of each committee or sub-committee must call the first meeting within a month at which a chairman must be appointed and the terms of reference signed.
- Protocol for minute taking was noted; these need to specify decisions agreed and who will action each point. Someone other than the chair must be appointed to take the minutes. Minute template available in hard copy in the office and electronically for all to follow same format. Minute to be shared with Chairman and clerk as soon as possible after the meetings take place.

#### **9. Report of procedures and policies to be reviewed**

- All the Parish Council documents on policy and procedures need to be reviewed.
- Financial Regulations need to be reviewed by the Finance Committee at its first meeting. NALC has published a new template in April 2024. Mara can provide a copy.
- Code of Conduct to be reviewed. Avril to action.
- In respect of all our other policies, Irene to meet with Mara to sit down and prioritise the order to update them using the support information on the KALC website. Then we can allocate the policies to the best councillor for review.

#### **10. To set meeting dates for Full Council for the year**

- All full council meetings to be held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month apart from;
  - February 24<sup>th</sup> (to avoid Half Term) and
  - April 28<sup>th</sup> (to avoid Easter holidays).
- Annual Parish Meeting to be held on the second or third Thursday in May each year – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 confirmed.

#### **11. MATTERS FOR REPORT**

##### **a. Highways**

i) Outstanding actions from previous meeting:

- Ownership of land South of Maidstone Rd. – Mara spoke to KALC and their advice is that if there is RPC has no ownership of the land, it should not set a precedent by acting on behalf of the resident. The council has no powers to take action. They suggested that the resident contacts the Citizens Advice Bureau for help. Mara to inform resident.
- Boundary Wall at The Heights – KALC recollect given advice regarding this to the previous clerk. KCC engineers' recent visit to the site confirm the wall isn't currently a risk.
- Chipstead Lane – KCC sent a notification on the 2 May 2024 stating that "The Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) on Chipstead Lane will not be moving forward following feedback raised to KCC Officers and Elected Members.". RPC would like to record their frustration with Cllr Charch and KCC officers for their lack of communication in this matter.

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ii) Proposed 20mph zone in Riverhead – response to Kent County Council.

KCC has requested confirmation of RPC's position with regards to extend the proposed 20mph to Riverhead. Approved by *Show of hands*. Mara to request to KCC that Riverhead Infant school is also included in the 20mph zone as the proposed zone only includes Amherst school.

iii) **Clarification of RPC's position regarding traffic issues in Chipstead Lane:**

- Due to recent public inquiries regarding the latest HIP submission to KCC where solutions to alleviate traffic issues in CL were proposed. The council has decided that the Safety Subcommittee will look into new potential solutions and will present to KCC in the 2024 HIP. No present or future residents from CL and surrounding affected roads can be part of this subcommittee and they will refrain from participation in any discussions when such solutions are reviewed at full council.

#### **Street lights**

- Reported faulty lights at The Heights have been replaced. Shirley requested that the Finance team looks at this expense as it was unexpected works that weren't budgeted for and has affected the Highways budget.

#### **Footpaths and pavements**

- No issues to report.

#### **Street furniture**

- Resident from Church Field State has reported that the signs at the gate leading out of Church Field Estate to the car park have been removed. She found them thrown in the hedges and has brought them into the office. Alan to fix them to the gate (one on each side with a closed screw to stop people being able to removed them).
- Basket reported to need replanting. Mara has contacted CJS and waiting to hear back. It should be replanted with the Summer planting of all the basket around the village. Chris to check.
- New notice board ordered for outside the VH should be delivered by mid June.

#### **Traffic and local parking**

- Amherst Hill in Riverhead: Between Tuesday 26th of December and Monday 6th of May. Somebody was at a restaurant and left without paying. Crime Report No. 46/74521/24

#### **Local business and services**

- Sue Kinsella's estimates for the zebra crossings in Riverhead to be added to the agenda in June.
- No further issues to report or questions on Highways.

#### **c. Village Hall**

- **ASK ALAN TO CONFIRM – all ok. Add reading water meter to the list.**
- Terms and Conditions reviewed by Shirley need to be publish asap for new bookings. Cleaning fee (£50-£60) needs to be clearly stated so that hirers are aware this will be taken from their deposit if they leave the hall in inadequate condition. Shirley to send to all before the next meeting.
- Michele has been reminded that she needs to make sure she checks between one-off hirers and that she must inform Mara if she isn't able to with enough notice so that Mara can arrange relief cover. Councillors don't need to be involved unless there is an emergency or any damage that needs urgent action.
- Returfing of grass area – Village hall to discuss at their next meeting and report back.
- Uneven accessible ramp footpath – Village hall to discuss and report back.

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- New regular hirer – Gidae Taekwondo classes starting this week, regular weekly slot on Thursday 4-5pm.
- As agreed by Finance Team, Mara has emailed all regular hirers to inform them that hire fees will increase from September to £17.00 per hour.
- Preschool – Mara informed Sadete about the decision from the Finance Team to accept to extend her session two extra days (Tuesday and Thursday 8am-1pm sessions) and that the new hire fee for all her sessions will increase to £10.00 per hour (charity rate) from September. Sadete has emailed Shirley to accept this but she needs to formally email Mara and sign the new Hire Agreement.
- No further issues to report or questions on Village Hall.

#### d. Parkland

- Sevenoaks Town East to West Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Route. SDC Public consultation open until 3 June.
- Working party update ; only 4 people attended. They cleared paths and brambles. Phil has been mowing the grass areas.
- No further issues to report or questions on Parkland.

#### e. Allotments & Open Spaces

- Weed killers use in the allotments – Open spaces to discuss at their next meeting.
- Second tap at Macartney allotments – approved.

#### f. Communications

- D-Day Tea Party – Helpers needed to set up from 10am. Cake and wine donations needed. Raffle prizes needed. 2<sup>nd</sup> June bunting, banner and decoration to go up around the village. Helpers needed. Poster to be sent to Lucy to post on Facebook.
- Music license quote £371.86 copy available on the table; this is divided between £13.15 for the Band to play live and £296.37 to be able to play background music. Janet phoned the PPL/PRS about the licence. They confirmed we don't need one as it's a D Day celebration.
- Avril gave an update of her good progress with the contact list.
- No further issues to report or questions on Communications.

#### **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- 24/00908/HOUSE - 16 Shoreham Lane Riverhead Kent TN13 3DT
- KCC/SE/0495/2018 - Covers Quarry, Westerham, Kent
- 24/01043/HOUSE - 14 Homefield Road Riverhead Kent TN13 2DU
- 24/00995/ADV – Roundabout At Junction With Aisher Way London Road Riverhead
- 24/00996/ADV - Roundabout At Junction With Blackmead Aisher Way Riverhead
- 24/01170/HOUSE - 45 Pontoise Close Sevenoaks Kent TN13 3ET

#### **12. FINANCE**

- Julia Chamberlain, the Internal Auditor, will pay her 4<sup>th</sup> visit of the year to carry out spot checks and review the processes in place. She will sign the Internal Audit report and Mara will sent to external auditors.
- NS&I account statements have not been received since April 2023. Mara requested them at the beginning of April to be able to reconcile the accounts, but they only sent them this morning for the period 2 January 2024 to May 2024 so she still can't reconcile the account. A new letter requesting the missing statements is ready now for Irene to sign. The NS&I accounts are set up in such old fashion way that no information can be requested without a written letter. As soon as the additional

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accounts are open at HSBC, the funds will be moved and the investment account in NS&I closed.

- a) Consider the Annual Governance Statement previously distributed.
- Mara emailed everyone a copy of the Annual Governance Statement and the working paper used to monitor processes and controls put in place to ensure governance is complied with on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May. No one had any questions about the Council signing this Statement:

**I propose to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24** seconded by Cllr Avril Hunter, *approved by all by show of hands.*

- b) Consider the Accounting Statements previously distributed.
- Mara emailed everyone a copy of the Accounting Statement 2023/24 and the working paper that will be submitted to the External Auditor before the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Mara has signed this Statement as Responsible Finance Officer. No one had any questions about the Council signing this Statement:

**I propose to approve the Accounting Statements 2023/24** seconded by Cllr Alan Colnet, *approved by all by show of hands.*

- c) Approve invoices for payments, including renewal of annual insurance policy.
- Mara emailed the full list of payments and receipts since the last meeting. Large bills from suppliers include £564.00 from R Callow for replacement of lights at The Heights, the renewal of the Scribe accounting software licence for £673.92, Tilbury Tree Care for £440.00 for removal of tree in the river and the quarterly maintenance contract with Streetlights for £722.50. No queries raised.
  - Zurich Insurance renewal quote at the cost of **£2,486.85** (last year £2,482.48) due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of June was approved.
- d) Other matters to report:
- Income received totals £33,047.79 and includes 50% precept £29,615.00 and £1,047.77 VAT refund. The remaining is for hall hire and some allotment rent.
  - No further issues to report or questions on Finance.

#### **14. CORRESPONDENCE**

- Various magazines for Parish Councils were displayed on the table.

#### **15. CLERK'S OFFICE**

- As holidays are being planned, please remember to tell Mara when you are away if you want her to minimise the contact from the office and so she can find a replacement for you if a meeting is called.
- Chair informed the council that Cllr Croucher had resigned. She thanked him for his time as councillor and she will send him a letter in due course.
- No further issues to report or questions.

The meeting closed at 20.55pm