

**Minutes of The Full Council Meeting held at The Rackliff Centre on
Monday 13th November 2023 at 7.30pm**

Members Present:

Cllr Liz Ellicott, Chair; Cllr C Ducklin, Cllr B Edwards, Cllr A Funnell, Cllr D Funnell, Cllr P Gripper and Cllr A Britcher-Allan.

Officers Present:

County Councillor J McInroy, Borough Councillor J Sharratt and Alison Stevens, Parish Clerk.

Others and Members of the Public:

There was one member of the public present.

- 1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting**
No one present filmed, photographed or recorded this meeting.

- 2. To receive and approve apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Smith. The reasons for his apologies were accepted by the Full Council.

- 3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**
No declarations of interests were declared.

- 4. Declarations of Lobbying**
There were no declarations of lobbying.

- 5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 9th October 2023**
The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 9th October 2023 were agreed, and it was RESOLVED that the Chair sign them as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
5.1 Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate items). None.
5.2 Matters outstanding from previous minutes. None.

- 6. Open session for questions from the public**
Ms Foster asked;
- i. The Parish Council to consider making a donation towards this year's Lunch Club Christmas Lunch and will submit a formal application in time for the next meeting.
 - ii. How long untaxed cars have to be parked on the road before they can be reported.
Untaxed cars can be reported straight away.
 - iii. For an update on the trees near the Red Lion. The Parish Council understands the Tree Officer at TWBC is going to carry out another site visit later on this week.

- 7. Session for County and Borough Councillor on matters concerning the Parish**
County Councillor McInroy said KCC is looking to sell the land the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) at the top of Edward Street is on, for development. It is understood that the MUGA will cost £20000 to get it up to standard and that it has now been classed as 'surplus to requirements'.

Borough Councillor Sharratt said;

- i. Details of this year's Mayor's Toy Appeal can be found at;
<https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/council/councillors-and-meetings/how-the-council-works/the-mayor/mayors-toy-appeal>
Please donate your gifts between 10th November and 11th December.
- ii. There will be free car parking for visitors at Royal Victoria Place and also at the Meadow Road car park in Tunbridge Wells on each of the five Sundays in December.
- iii. Greg Clark, MP, triggered an Anti-Social Behaviour Review, working with organisations such as Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Community Safety Unit, to stem the wave of Anti-Social Behaviour in the borough. Residents are being asked to help by reporting all instances of Anti-Social Behaviour.
- iv. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is considering making card readers compulsory for taxi drivers. If approved the change will come into force on the 2nd January 2024.

Borough Councillor Britcher-Allan said;

- i. There have been no new updates on the cycle racks.
- ii. The line markings in Common View have now been painted.
- iii. There will be two polling stations at the next elections, one at the Rackliff Centre and one at St Paul's Community Centre.
- iv. She will chase the Common's Ranger up about the tree issue in Rusthall Road.

8. Finance update

8.1: Accounts for Payment – Councillors RESOLVED to pay the following;

				£
02/11/2023	EE	DD	59.54	Mobiles
02/11/2023	NEST	DD	39.07	Pensions
03/11/2023	Business Stream	DD	28.82	Water - Rackliff
09/11/2023	NEST	DD	39.07	Pensions
14/11/2023	Horizon Telecom	BACS	12.00	Anti Virus
14/11/2023	KCC	BACS	550.00	Fremlin Pond
14/11/2023	KALC	BACS	60.00	Cllr Training
14/11/2023	KALC	BACS	6.00	KALC AGM
14/11/2023	Little Loads	BACS	25.00	Rubbish Clearance
14/11/2023	Linda Neusten	BACS	13.34	Poppy Wreath
14/11/2023	C May	BACS	352.00	Locum RFO
14/11/2023	Microshade	BACS	322.44	Hosting
14/11/2023	Linda Neusten	BACS	3.05	Postage
14/11/2023	HMRC	BACS	933.62	Tax/NI
14/11/2023	Matt The Tree Man	BACS	250.00	Fallen Willow
14/11/2023	Alison Stevens	BACS	3.75	Postage
14/11/2023	M O'Callaghan	BACS	12.75	Reimbursement
14/11/2023	VIKING	BACS	158.12	Stationery
14/11/2023	Kevin Watson	BACS	60.00	Reimbursement for keys
14/11/2023	Langton Life Ltd	BACS	750.00	Magazine
14/11/2023	Capel Groundcare	BACS	525.92	October Maintenance
14/11/2023	KALC	BACS	84.00	Allotment Training
14/11/2023	Gallagher	BACS	2040.86	Annual Insurance
14/11/2023	Little Loads	BACS	250.00	Waste Removal
14/11/2023	Milton's Plumbing	BACS	615.91	Heating Repairs
14/11/2023	The Cleaning Lady	BACS	58.50	Rackliff Cleaning
14/11/2023	April Skies Acc	BACS	256.75	Interim Audit
16/11/2023	Mastercard	BACS	206.00	Pay balance
20/11/2023	Employees	BACS	2866.82	Salaries

8.2 The Quarterly Review of Expenditure v Budget – The Summary Receipts and Payments were noted and were used when considering the precept in item 8.7.

- 8.3** The Quarterly Review of Receipts and Payments – The detailed Receipts and Payments were also noted and were used for the same reason.
- 8.4** Budget 2023/2024 Updates – The Budget was also reviewed as part of the same process.
- 8.5** It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £2500 to the Scouts towards the cost of some new tents. The Scout Group has over 100 young people in the Rusthall scout section.
- 8.6** It was also **RESOLVED** to donate £1000 to Home Start South West Kent. The money will be used to help support families in need in Rusthall.
- 8.7** After very careful consideration it was **RESOLVED** that the precept for 2024-2025 will be £95000. The increase equates to 51p a month per Council Band D tax payer and is needed to help cover the increasing costs of inflation. It was also agreed that £5000 will be moved from the tree budget to the allotment maintenance budget and that the Kent High Weald Partnership will manage Fremlin pond twice a year.
- 8.8** It was **RESOLVED** to extend the terms of the £10000 grant for the All Ability Path in Happy Valley for a further year, to March 2025. The work is expected to be carried out in two phases, the first of which should be complete by the end of this financial year.
- 9. Environment Committee** – It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the draft minutes of, and the recommendations made at, the Environment Committee Meeting held on the 23rd October 2023.
- 10. Allotments Committee** – The garage opposite Southwood Road allotments has now been secured. It is now empty and has a new padlock and keys. Councillors expressed their thanks to the Allotment Manager for all his help.
- 11. Defibrillator Update** – The defibrillator at the URC will be risk assessed next on the weekend of the 18th/19th November.
- 12. Highways**
- 12.1** Councillors Ellicott and Gripper, and Dan Colborne (the Commons Ranger) met Nigel Rowe (the Community Engagement Officer from KCC Highways) on the 25th October. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the difficulties and dangers faced when crossing the Langton Road. They agreed the meeting was a very positive one where they emphasised the Parish Council’s new priority which is to get the 40mph speed limit reduced by extending the 30mph speed limit from the junction of Rusthall Road and Langton Road to the Langton Green village sign. The costs involved will be roughly £2850 for a Traffic Regulation Order, £650 for new signs (assuming they are going on new posts), £100 for roundels (if needed) and £280 for each repeater sign. Once the speed limit has been reduced it should then open doors for a new crossing. This new proposal has the support of Tunbridge Wells Commons, Youth Groups, the Parish Council and County Councillor James McInroy.
- Deer signs, subject to the approval of engineers, are also going to be investigated because the Commons has over 200 deer on it. Dropped kerbs will be costed for further consideration and two automated traffic counts will take place later this month.
- 12.2** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Highways Improvement Plan (dated October 2023). The plan has been revised to show the Parish Council’s new priority and was needed to allow the measures in 12.1 to proceed.
- 13. Rusthall Volunteers** - This was deferred until the next meeting so that Councillor O’Callaghan can be present.

14. Rusthall Civic Plaque update – Having considered the Rusthall Commemorative Plaque Scheme it was **RESOLVED** to include an article asking for nominations that meet the criteria in the next edition of Rusthall Life.

15. Chair’s Report – Councillor Ellicott:

- i. Attended the KALC Chairmen’s Conference, at East Malling on the 17th October. Topics discussed were Emergency Plans, Clerk/Chair Relationships and Cyber Security.
- ii. Went to Rusthall Bonfire and Fireworks Night, along with several councillors, on the 28th October.
- iii. Met Ranger Dan Colborne on the 31st October to hear his plans for the All Ability path.
- iv. Represented the Parish Council and laid a wreath at St Paul’s Church on Remembrance Sunday. Councillor O’Callaghan laid a wreath at the Town Hall.
- v. Asked Councillors to consider nominations for the KALC Community Awards and let the Clerk know their suggestions by email.

16. Officers’ Report – Officer Stevens reported:

- i. The Cambridge Building Society and Hampshire Trust Bank have now updated their records to include the new signatories.
- ii. The Parish Council had an interim audit on the 8th November. The report will be included on the next agenda.
- iii. The boiler at the Rackliff has been repaired and the programmer has been replaced because there was a problem with the heating system.
- iv. The Christmas lights will be installed on the 17th November without the three additional ones because those lamp posts would found not to have safety cut outs.

17. Diary Dates

4 th Dec 2023	7.30pm	Allotments Committee Meeting
11 th Dec 2023	7.30pm	Full Council Meeting
22 nd Jan 2024	7.30pm	Environment Committee Meeting

18. Items for Information – The next meeting of the Family History Group is on 16th November at 10.30am at the library.

Councillor Britcher-Allan appealed for more volunteers and a venue for the Community Larder.

19. Next meeting of Full Council -

11th Dec 2023 7.30pm The Rackliff Centre

There was no further business, and the meeting closed at 9.11pm.

..... Chairman

Dated

